

Certificated and Licensed Employee Handbook



2024 - 2025 School Year

NORTHWEST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT CERTIFICATED AND LICENSED STAFF HANDBOOK

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ATHLETIC PASS

A school or district identification badge will be used as an athletic pass. Misuse may result in forfeiture of the pass.

ADMINISTERING BMV RECORDS CHECKS

All employees and volunteers who drive a district vehicle and/or transport district students in any vehicle at the behest of the Board must undergo a BMV record check and certification from the Transportation office BEFORE operating a district vehicle or transporting the students.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

All employees of the District who know or suspect that a child under 18 years of age or a disabled child under 22 years of age has suffered or is suffering any type of abuse or neglect are required to immediately report such information to the public children services agency or the local law enforcement agency.

To ensure prompt reports, procedures for reporting are made known to the school staff. A person who participates in making such reports is immune from any civil or criminal liability, provided the report is made in good faith.

The Board directs the Superintendent/designee to develop a program of in-service training in child abuse prevention for all school health assistants, teachers, counselors, psychologists and administrators. This program is developed in consultation with public or private agencies or persons involved in child abuse prevention or intervention programs.

Each person employed by the Board to work as a school health assistant, teacher, counselor, psychologist or administrator shall complete at least four hours of in-service training in child abuse prevention, violence and substance abuse and the promotion of positive youth development within two years of commencing employment with the District, and every five years thereafter.

In addition, middle and high school employees who work as teachers, counselors, school health associates, school psychologists and administrators must receive training in dating violence prevention. The curriculum for training in dating violence prevention is developed by the Superintendent/designee and training must occur within two years of commencing employment and every five years thereafter.

Conversely, public children services agencies must notify the Superintendent of any allegations of child abuse and neglect reported to them involving the District, as well as the disposition of the investigation.

CONCEALED CARRY LAW

Amended Sub. House Bill #12 Ohio Revised Code 2923.122

Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 2923.122, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person's control, convey, or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance into a school safety zone.

STAFF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The proper performance of school business is dependent upon the maintenance of unquestionably high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and professional conduct by Board of Education's members, and the District's employees, officers and agents. Further, such characteristics are essential to the Board's commitment to earn and keep the public's confidence in the School District. For these reasons, the Board adopts the following guidelines to assure that conflicts of interest do not occur. These guidelines apply to all District employees, officers and agents, including members of the Board. These guidelines are not intended to be all inclusive, nor to substitute for good judgment on the part of all employees, officers and agents.

1. No employee, officer or agent shall engage in or have a financial or other interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the school system.
2. Employees, officers and agents shall not engage in business, private practice of their profession, the rendering of services, or the sale of goods of any type where advantage is taken of any professional relationship they may have with any student, client, or parents of such students or clients in the course of their employment or professional relationship with the School District.

CONTINUING CONTRACT

A teacher can obtain a continuing contract in the Northwest District provided the following conditions are met:

1. **Completed three (3) years teaching** in the Northwest District (two (2) years if you previously had a continuing contract in another district).
2. Possess a Permanent Teaching Certificate or a 5-year Professional License by April 1.
3. Complete a master's degree or 30 semester hours of coursework in an area related to the teaching field or a master's degree plus 6 semester hours of graduate coursework if a master's degree was held at the time of initially receiving a certificate/license.
4. You must be evaluated and recommended by your building principal for a continuing contract.
5. The continuing contract must be approved by the Northwest Board of Education.

The awarding of continuing contracts is a serious commitment on the part of the Board of Education. **If you wish to be considered for a continuing contract, please schedule a meeting with your principal to discuss expectations and the recommendation process, prior to applying. Next, you must notify Human Resources that you wish to be evaluated for this purpose. This notification must be given to Human Resources by November 1.**

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Policy #2240

In the study of controversial issues, students have four rights which recognize the right to:

1. study any controversial issue which has political, economic or social significance and concern;

2. have free access to all appropriate information, including materials which circulate freely in the community;
3. study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice and
4. form and express their own opinions on controversial issues without jeopardizing relations with teachers or the school.

The study of controversial issues should be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion. The teacher must approach controversial issues in the classroom in an impartial and objective manner and must refrain from using classroom privileges and prestige to promote a partisan point of view.

Teachers determine the appropriateness of certain issues for consideration using the following criteria.

1. Treatment of the issue in question must be within the range, knowledge, maturity and competence of the students.
2. There should be study materials and other learning aids available from which a reasonable extent of data pertaining to all aspects of the issue can be obtained.
3. The issue should receive only as much time as is needed to consider it adequately.
4. The issue should be current, significant and relevant to the students and the teacher.

A teacher who is in doubt about the advisability of discussing certain issues in the classroom shall confer with the principal concerning the appropriateness of doing so. If discussion of an issue is not approved by the building principal, the teacher may refer the issue to the Superintendent.

If parents desire that their child be excused from participation in discussion of such material, arrangements are made to respect that request.

COPYRIGHT LAW

The first revision of the Copyright Law since 1909 went into effect January 1, 1978. The law was revised to eliminate widespread use of copying machines to avoid purchase of copyrighted materials. Penalties for infringement are severe: from \$250.00 to \$10,000.00 (statutory damages) and if the court finds willfulness, up to \$50,000.00; if willful infringement for commercial or private financial gain is proved, fines of up to \$50,000.00 and/or two years' imprisonment or both are provided.

Copyright rules apply to electronic media, including clipart and Internet sites.

Single Copies

A single copy may be made of the following by or for a teacher upon request for scholarly research or use in teaching or in preparation to teach a class:

- A chapter from a book
- An article from a periodical or newspaper
- A short story, short essay or short poem, whether or not from a collective work
- A chart, graph, diagram, drawing, cartoon or picture from a book, periodical or newspaper

Multiple Copies

Multiple copies (not to exceed in any event more than one copy per student in a course) may be made by or for the teacher giving the course for classroom use or discussion -- provided that:

- The copying meets the tests of brevity (less than 250 words for a poem; less than 2,500 for an article, story or essay) and spontaneity as defined below
- Meets the cumulative effect test as defined below
- Each copy includes a notice of copyright

Spontaneity

- The copying is at the instance and inspiration of the individual teacher (but shall not be used to substitute for purchase of books, publisher's reprints or periodicals, and should not be directed by a higher authority.
- The decision to use the work and the moment of its use are so close in time that it would be unreasonable to expect a reply to a request for permission

Cumulative Effect

- The copying of the material is for only one course in the school in which the copies are made
- Not more than one short poem, article, story, essay or two excerpts may be copied from the same author, nor more than three from the same collective work or periodical volume during one class term
- There shall not be more than nine instances of such multiple copying for one course during one class term

VIDEOTAPES/DVDs

The United States Copyright Law-Section 110-(1) states that rented or purchased videotapes may be used in the classroom for **face-to-face** instruction. Such use is not a violation of the copyright law unless the copy was illegally made, i.e., if the teacher made a copy of a video that was rented or purchased.

Unless the video is used in **face-to-face** teaching situations a Public Performance License must be obtained from the copyright owner. Violators of the copyright law are subject to severe civil and criminal penalties for unauthorized public use of a videotape.

All video materials should greatly enhance classroom instruction to be considered for inclusion during the instructional day. Prior to student viewing of a videotape or DVD teachers must seek approval through their building administration for inclusion in their daily lessons. A list of pre-approved videos for middle and high school viewing is available in building media centers.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ABIDE BY THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL IT BE NECESSARY FOR YOU TO VIOLATE COPYRIGHT LAW PROVISIONS IN THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR DUTIES AS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE NORTHWEST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT.

NOTE: For more specific information, you may wish to see your building principal. A copy of the book *Copyright for Schools* is available in each school media center.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Policy #5630

The use of corporal punishment (paddling) as a means of discipline is prohibited in the Northwest Local School District. This policy shall not prohibit the use of force or restraint in accordance with division (B) of Section 3319.41 of the Ohio Revised Code which states:

"Persons employed or engaged as teachers, principals, or administrators in a school, whether public or private, and non-certificated/licensed school employees and school bus drivers may, within the scope of their employment, use and apply such amount of force and restraint as is reasonable and necessary to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of the pupil, for the purpose of self-defense, or for the protection of persons and property."

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK

The Board, through the Human Resources Department, shall request from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) criminal record checks of candidates under final consideration for employment with the district in a position involving the care, custody or control of students.

Any person employed by the Board of Education in the care, custody or control of students without the Board having first received a criminal records report is conditionally employed. Any person conditionally employed who then fails to pass a BCII/FBI criminal background check shall be released from employment.

An applicant for employment may provide a certified copy of a BCII/FBI criminal background check to the district in compliance with the Ohio Revised Code. The district may accept this background check in place of its own background check if the date of acceptance by the district is within one year after the date of issuance by the BCII/FBI.

Any and all information obtained under this policy is confidential and shall not be released or disseminated except to the applicant. When an applicant is not hired because of information received from the record check, the criminal records check shall be destroyed within a reasonable time thereafter. All applicants for whom a record check is made shall reimburse the district for the cost of their record check as a condition of further consideration of their application.

CRISIS INTERVENTION MANUAL

The Crisis Intervention Manual is on file in each school office and in the Navigate Prepared mobile app. The Crisis Intervention Quick Reference Guide is provided to all school employees.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The Board endeavors to provide a safe workplace for all employees realizing that the use/abuse of drugs and alcohol can endanger the health, safety and well-being of the nonuser, as well as the user.

Because of the Board's commitment to provide a safe workplace, no employee shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, sell, possess or use any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcohol or any other controlled substance, as defined in State and Federal law, in the workplace.

"Workplace" is the site for the performance of any work done in connection with the District. The workplace includes any District building, property, vehicles or Board-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities (at other sites off District property) or any school-sponsored or District activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event in which students are under the jurisdiction of District authorities.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall notify his/her supervisor, in writing, of his/her conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace as defined above, not later than five days after such conviction.

Employees are given a copy of the standards of conduct and the statement of disciplinary sanctions and are notified that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory. Employees who violate the policy shall be subject to disciplinary proceedings in accordance with prescribed administrative regulations, local, State and Federal law and/or the negotiated agreement, up to and including termination. Any employee in violation of this policy may be required to participate in a drug-abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved by the Board. Failure to satisfactorily participate in such program may be reason for disciplinary action or termination of employment in accordance with State law, District policy and administrative procedures and/or the terms of the District's negotiated agreements.

All employees are provided the opportunity to participate in a drug-free awareness program to inform them of requirements, services and penalties.

A list of local drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation and re-entry programs and services offered in the community is made available to employees.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

Policy #3122

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes"), or any other legally protected category, in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

ETHICS LAW

The Ohio Ethics Law was originally enacted in 1973 to promote confidence in government. The law (O.R.C. 102) prohibits a teacher, in part, from:

- authorizing or using his/her position as a teacher to secure authorization of any school district contract in which he/she, family members, or business associates have an interest;
- profiting from a school district contract he/she authorized, unless it was awarded to the lowest and best bidder after a competitive bid; and
- having an interest in the profits or benefits of a school district contract.

O.R.C. 2921.43 prohibits a school teacher from accepting or soliciting any compensation, other than as allowed by law, for performing his/her public duties.

All other school district officials and employees, including teachers who do perform, or have the authority to perform, administrative and supervisory functions, are subject to all Ethics Law restrictions, including the post-employment, confidentiality, and conflict of interest provisions of O.R.C. 102.03.

THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (FMLA)

Basic Leave Entitlement

- FMLA requires covered employers to provide 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 the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

Military Family Leave Entitlements

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 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 a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty 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.

Benefits and Protections

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

Eligibility Requirements

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

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 the employee from performing the functions of the employee's 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 3 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

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide 30 days' advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days' notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is 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. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities

Covered employers 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 employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers 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 employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer 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.

FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(a) may require additional disclosures.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The following information is a summary of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a federal law. For more information regarding other aspects of FERPA or for specific language, access the U.S. Department of Education website at www.ed.gov.

1. What is FERPA?

FERPA is the acronym for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The purpose of the Act is two-fold – to assure that parents have access to their child’s educational records, and to protect such individuals’ rights to privacy by limiting the transferability of their records without their consent.

FERPA is not a version of the Federal Freedom of Information Act made applicable to education records. It creates no right to public access.

2. Who has rights under FERPA?

Generally speaking, parents of children who attend or have attended a school or facility that receives federal funding have rights under FERPA. Parents, however, transfer their rights under FERPA to their child when he or she has attained the age of eighteen years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

3. Who is bound by FERPA?

FERPA applies to an educational agency or institution that receives federal funds Administered by the Secretary of Education. In this case it means the Northwest Local School District and all employees of the district must abide by the guidelines of FERPA. This further includes PTA members and/or volunteers who may have access to student information.

4. What are the rights granted by FERPA?

There are three basic rights granted to parents (or eligible students):

- The right to inspect and review the education records relating to the student maintained by the schools the child attends or has attended.
- The right to challenge and require the school to amend any portion of the education records concerning the student that are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights.
- The right to require the school to obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information, except in those instances specifically noted in the statute.

5. What are education records?

The term “education records” refers to those records, files, documents, and other materials which contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution.

6. What is personally identifiable information?

Personally identifiable information is the information about a student contained in his or her education records that cannot be disclosed without consideration of the requirements of FERPA. It is information that relates to, or concerns, just the student, or a grade. It need not only be embarrassing information, or “private” in any such sense. An “A” in the course is just as much personally identifiable information as an “F.”

7. Are education records limited to written materials?

Not necessarily, but it is clear that the records must be in some tangible forms, or susceptible to reproduction in a tangible form. Otherwise, a parent’s rights of inspection would be difficult to enforce.

A “record” is defined as any information recorded in any way, included, but not limited to handwriting, print, computer media, video or audiotape, film, microfilm, and microfiche.

Generally, oral information based on personal information or knowledge is not an education record subject to FERPA. But, FERPA does restrict the oral communication of personal information about students that is contained in or derived from education records.

8. What are the implications for the end-of-year videos and other recognition projects?

Teachers, PTAs, and other staff members will have to monitor these projects closely to ensure that the end product is not in violation of FERPA. In addition, parents may deny permission to have their child’s photo and/or name included in such publications and/or videos. The Student Services Office maintains a list of parents who have submitted requests to exclude such information.

When in doubt, it is recommended that information be kept confidential. FERPA has implications for discussions that take place in the staff workroom, in the main office, in telephone conversations, etc. In addition, care must be exercised when it comes to posting confidential information in newsletters, on web pages, etc., or other such avenues for sharing information. If you have any questions regarding whether information is protected by FERPA, please feel free to contact the Student Services Office.

FIELD TRIPS

Educational field trips are permissible in the Northwest Local School District for enrichment of curriculum and co-curricular activities. Specific guidelines for field trips and teacher checklists are contained in the District Field Trip Handbook that is available on the NWLSD Intranet in the Curriculum section in the Timelines and Handbooks folder for the current school year.

GRADE BOOK GUIDELINES

All teachers are required to maintain an electronic grade book in Progress Book. All teachers of students in grades 3-12 are required to maintain an electronic grade book in Progress Book. The grade book must be accessible each day at school. Guidelines for grade books are outlined below:

- There must be at least the minimum number of assignments per grading period as indicated in the Board approved grading and reporting handbook.
- Each assessment must be labeled and dated with the total possible points indicated.
- Final grades must be calculated for each grading period.

GRADING AND REPORTING OF STUDENT GRADES

The grading and reporting policies and procedures are found in the Board approved K-8 Grading and Reporting Handbook and the High School Program of Studies Handbook. Current copies of each handbook can be found on the NWLSD Intranet in the Curriculum section in the Timelines and Handbooks folder for the current school year.

HAZING AND BULLYING – JESSICA LOGAN ACT (HARRASMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND DATING VIOLENCE)

The prohibition against hazing, dating violence, harassment, intimidation or bullying is publicized in student handbooks and in the publications that set the standard of conduct for schools and students in the District. In addition, information regarding the policy is incorporated into employee handbooks and training materials.

School Personnel Responsibilities and Complaint Procedures

Hazing, bullying behavior and/or dating violence by any student/school personnel in the District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Hazing bullying and/or dating violence means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to haze, harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity; in any District publication; through the use of any District-owned or operated communication tools, including but not limited to District e-mail accounts and/or computers; on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop.

Hazing, bullying and/or dating violence can include many different behaviors. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and/or attacks;
2. threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors;
5. Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (also known as “cyber bullying”), such as the following:
 - A. posting slurs on web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals;
 - B. sending abusive or threatening e-mails, web site postings or comments and instant messages;
 - C. using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs or videos of students and/or distributing or posting the photos or videos online; and

- D. using web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals, e-mails or instant messages to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.
6. excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes hazing or bullying, special attention is paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

Teachers and Other School Staff

Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence as defined above, promptly notify the building principal/designee of the event observed, and promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed.

Teachers and other school staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected hazing, bullying and/or dating violence promptly notify the building principal/designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, he/she prepares a written report of the informal complaint that is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day.

Complaints

1. Formal Complaints

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence. The reports should be written. Such written reports must be reasonably specific including person(s) involved; number of times and places of the alleged conduct; the target of suspected harassment, intimidation and/or bullying and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator. They are promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

2. Informal Complaints

Students, parents or guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator or other school personnel. Such informal complaints must be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of hazing, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s) and the names of any potential student or staff witness. The school staff member or administrator who receives the informal complaint promptly documents the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member and/or administrator is promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

3. Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaint is reviewed and reasonable action is taken to address the situation, to the extent such action (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence.

Intervention Strategies

1. Teachers and Other School Staff

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence in other interactions with students.

School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, hazing, intimidation and bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying.

2. Administrator Responsibilities

A. Investigation

The principal/designee is notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying. Under the direction of the building principal/designee, all such complaints are investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation is prepared when the investigation is complete. The report includes findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence were verified, and when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action, is included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements are attached to the report.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint is limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of the investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

B. Non-Disciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of the behavior, its prohibition and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, hazing, intimidating and/or bullying.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring some cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim's communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

C. Disciplinary Interventions

When acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, cannot provide the basis for disciplinary action.

In and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence is reserved for serious incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating prohibited behaviors.

Allegations of criminal misconduct are reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines.

D. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator

If, after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the parent or guardian of the perpetrator, in writing, of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline is included in such notification.

Strategies are developed and implemented to protect students from additional harassment, intimidation or bullying, and from retaliation following reporting of incidents.

E. Reports to the Victim and His/Her Parent or Guardian

If, after investigation, acts of bullying or hazing against a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the parent/guardian of the victim of the finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator.

Bullying matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited.

School administrators shall notify both the parents of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

Police and Child Protective Services

In addition to, or instead of, filing a complaint through this policy, a complainant may choose to exercise other options including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit. Nothing prohibits a complainant from seeking redress under any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or common law that may apply.

The District must also investigate incidents of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence for the purpose of determining whether there has been a violation of District policy or regulations, even if law enforcement and/or the public children's services are also investigating. All District personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

NOTE: THIS IS A REQUIRED REGULATION

STAFF INTRANET

Employees are encouraged to access the district intranet for information and various forms. For example, field trip forms, lesson plan forms, and curriculum supports can be found on the curriculum page.

To access the intranet go to www.nwlsd.org. Click on "Staff Links/Resources". Click on the "staff intranet" icon. Enter your user name and password.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Policy #3122

The Northwest Board of Education is committed to maintaining an academic and work environment that is free of discrimination. The district does not discriminate in employment or in educational programs and activities which it operates on the basis of sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, physical or mental handicap/disability, medical condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status or other characteristics protected by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

The Northwest Local School District does not discriminate on the basis of disability with regard to admission, access to services, treatment, or employment.

Inquiries or concerns regarding this policy should be directed to the following individuals:

Coordinator for Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendment

Susan Bunte, Director of Human Resources
Jake Kuhnline, Director of Student Services
Northwest Local School District
3240 Banning Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45239
(513) 923-1000

Coordinator for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Susan Bunte, Director of Human Resources
Chevonne Neal, Director of Special Education
Northwest Local School District
3240 Banning Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45239
(513) 923-1000

Coordinator for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Chevonne Neal, Director of Special Education
Northwest Local School District
3240 Banning Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45239
(513) 923-1000

OHIO FRAUD REPORTING (House Bill 66)

The State of Ohio has established a reporting system whereby public employees can file complaints of fraud and misuse of public funds by public offices or officials. Complaints can be made using any of the following methods:

1. Mail a written complaint to: Ohio Auditor of State's Office
Special Investigations Unit
88 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
2. Report a complaint online by going to: <http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/fraudcenter>, then click on "Report Fraud Online".
3. Report a complaint by telephone by calling: 1-866-FRAUD-OH (866-372-8364)

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Teachers are reminded to take precautions when bringing personal property to school. Keep personal property locked in a desk, file cabinet or locker.

Policy #3281

From time-to-time, Board of Education employees may wish to bring personal property to school either for reasons associated with classified responsibilities or for use during off-duty time. This practice is permitted provided it is understood that the Board is not responsible for any loss, damage, or misuse of said property. Employees who bring personal property onto District premises for work-related purposes must complete Form 4281 F1, Board Notification of Personal Property Being Brought onto District Premises for Work-Related Purposes, and notify the building principal prior to bringing such property onto District premises. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the Board will provide all employees with the equipment and tools necessary to perform their assigned duties.

Board employees are permitted to possess personal communication devices (e.g., cellular telephones) at work in accordance with Policy 7530.01.

PHOTO IDENTIFICATION CARD

All staff members are required to wear a photo identification card, in such a way that is visible, during work hours.

RESIGNATION

Any certificated/licensed employee who intends to resign should notify the human resources administrator, in writing, at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date. A copy of such notification should be given to the school principal by the employee resigning.

A teacher's resignation, if made in accord with statutory requirements, or if accepted by the Board of Education, terminates a contract. Any teacher who has a contract, whether continuing or limited, for the ensuing school year is permitted to resign up to and including July 10 preceding that school year. After that time, and during the school year prior to the termination of the annual session, a teacher may resign only with board consent. (Ohio Revised Code 3319.15)

The notice shall indicate the reasons for the resignation, and, insofar as possible, shall become effective at the end of the school year or semester.

Certificated/licensed employees leaving the district are entitled to request letters of recommendation from all of the individuals who have evaluated them.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Policy #3362

All persons associated with the District, including, but not limited to, the Board, the administration, the staff and the students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or nonverbal, occurring inside or outside of District buildings, on other District-owned property or at school-sponsored social functions/activities, is illegal and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community is in violation of this policy.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development;
2. submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment-type conduct may include, but are not limited to, unwanted sexual advances; demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment or continued employment; repeated sexual jokes, flirtations, advances or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic verbal commentary relating to an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; coerced sexual activities; any unwanted physical contact; sexually

suggestive or obscene comments or gestures; or displays in the workplace of sexually suggestive or obscene objects or pictures. Whether any act or comment constitutes sexual harassment-type conduct is often dependent on the individual recipient.

The Board directs the Superintendent to appoint one or more administrators who are vested with the authority and responsibility for investigating all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedures set forth in the accompanying procedure and staff and student handbooks.

Sexual harassment matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited.

The Board has developed complaint procedures that are made available to every member of the school community. The Board has also identified disciplinary penalties that could be imposed on the offenders.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT INVESTIGATIONS

Students:

Sexual harassment situations involving students will fall into one of the following categories:

1. Student offender and student victim
2. Student offender and employee victim
3. Student offender and general public victim
4. Employee offender and student victim
5. General public offender and student victim

Occurrences involving students as offenders will be handled in the same manner as other disciplinary situations. These procedures will include full due process protections, and could result in suspension, expulsion, referral to law enforcement agencies and/or recommendations for counseling.

Occurrences involving employees as offenders toward students will be investigated by the building principal. If further investigation is warranted, the Superintendent will designate a member of the central office staff to investigate. The information obtained from the investigations will be reported to the Superintendent for proper disposition.

Occurrences involving members of the general public as offenders toward students will be reported to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

Staff v. Staff:

The complainant should fill out the prescribed complaint form and submit it to the administrator in charge of human resources or the Superintendent as soon as possible.

The administrator in charge of human resources will determine the extent of the investigation required and the appropriate personnel to conduct the investigation. Signed statements will be obtained from witnesses or other persons having information related to the complaint.

Upon completion of the investigation, a final report will be made. If the report concludes that the sexual harassment policy has been violated, the Superintendent will institute proceedings that may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

All information received regarding a sexual harassment complaint will be kept confidential.

Protection Against Retaliation

The Board shall not retaliate against an individual who makes a valid report of sexual harassment, nor permit any other employee or student to do so. Any retaliation experienced by the reporting individual should be reported immediately to the designated administrator, or the Superintendent. Any employee or student found to have retaliated against an individual reporting sexual harassment shall be subject to the appropriate disciplinary measures, including, but not limited to, written or oral reprimand, referral to counseling, suspension, or termination.

SICK LEAVE USAGE

When the Superintendent/designee determines abuse of sick leave may exist, a meeting will be arranged with the staff member and the direct supervisor/designee. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the potential abuse of sick leave and to provide the staff member an opportunity to explain, rebut or refute the suspected abuse. If a satisfactory explanation is not provided, action will be taken by the Board, including, but not limited to corrective counseling, progressive discipline, denial of payment of salary and benefits for the unauthorized day(s), or contract termination if falsification of sick leave is confirmed.

For the purposes of this policy, abuse of sick leave is suspected if an employee shows a pattern of using sick leave:

- Before or after holidays or other breaks in the school calendar;
- Before or after weekends or regular days off;
- During multiple in-service days;
- As soon as sick leave has been accrued, thereby reducing the balance to zero or near zero;
- On the same day(s) of each week;
- In conjunction with the use of personal leave days;
- Employees who consistently use more than 10 days in a given school year.

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to make themselves familiar with, and to abide by, the laws of the state of Ohio and the negotiated agreement, the policies of the Board and the administrative regulations designed to implement them.

The Board expects staff members to conduct themselves in a manner which not only reflects credit to the District, but also presents a model worthy of emulation by students. Staff members are not permitted to bring a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance into a school safety zone unless a staff member is authorized to do so pursuant to the job description.

All staff members are expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities as listed in their job description. Essential to the success of ongoing operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities which are required of all personnel in accordance with the job description:

1. faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work;
2. support and enforcement of policies of the Board and regulations of the administration;

3. diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified;
4. care and protection of District property and
5. concern and attention toward their own and the District's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.

PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS:

In order to address complaints in a more orderly fashion we will establish the following policy in order to expedite concerns and complaints from all staff.

Complaints will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Board. In working towards a resolution at the lowest possible level, the Board advises employees that the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, learning materials, building assignment as related to master contract, district programs) or facilities is in the following order:

- Subject of concern/problem
- Principal / Administrator
- Superintendent or designee
- Board

Concerns about Board policy or administrative regulations, building Principals, supervisors, or directors should be referred directly to the superintendent.

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Policy # 3112

These guidelines define the limitations, procedures and guidelines for the participation of students, employees, members of the Board and members of the public in general to engage in political campaigns and partisan or non-partisan election activities, as well as the limitations, procedures and guidelines for the distribution of political materials upon properties under the jurisdiction of the District or at school-sponsored curricular or extracurricular activities.

Definitions

1. "Distribution" means circulation or dissemination of materials by means of handing out free copies, selling or offering copies for sale, accepting donations for copies, or posting or displaying material. This includes, but is not limited to posting materials on walls, bulletin boards, other building surfaces or anywhere on District property; placing materials in school mailboxes; placing materials on vehicles parked on District property; disseminating electronic information to student or employee e-mail addresses; or placing material in rooms in a District building.
2. "Political materials" include, but are not limited to any documents, papers, handbills, posters, booklets, pamphlets, brochures, advertisements, electronic message, display, or audio or video presentation that pertain to a political candidate or a political issue.
3. "Political issue" is the subject of public referendum, which is being debated by political candidates or organization.
4. "Political activity" is an act that is of a nature, done with intent, or done in a way to influence or tend to influence, directly or indirectly, voting at a primary or at an election.

5. "Political candidate" is a person who seeks nomination or election to partisan or non-partisan public office or who has filed as a candidate for election.
6. "School activities" means any curricular or extracurricular school-sponsored activity, whether occurring on or off District property, including but not limited to classroom instruction, library activities, in-school lunch periods, school assemblies or other similar gatherings, school athletic contests, or other extra-curricular activities.
7. "Work hours" for District employees refer to the period between the time an employee is scheduled to begin work and the end of an employee's assigned work day (excluding lunch and break periods) and any paid overtime hours or extra duty hours for which the employee has volunteered or been assigned.
 - A. "Work hours" do not include the pre-approved use of personal leave or vacation days.
 - B. An employee of the District may be permitted to appear at a public meeting during regular working hours for the purpose of presenting information about school finances, activities and Board actions, even if the purpose of the meeting is to discuss or debate the passage of a school levy or bond issue.
 - C. Because the nature of administrators' jobs requires them to frequently work evenings and weekends, an administrator may take time during normal "work hours" to speak to the public on a bond or levy issue or a referendum affecting District finance.

Guidelines, Limitations and Procedures

1. The District will not expend funds, services, supplies or equipment for the purpose of urging the support or defeat of any political candidate or issue. "Funds, services, supplies or equipment" includes, but is not limited to administrative time (i.e., paid work time), postage, paper, the use of copiers, fax machines, telephones, computers, and the use of District email. However, the District may expend reasonable amounts to apprise voters in the District of facts pertinent to a bond issue, levy or other referendum affecting District funding. In such instance, public funds may be used to inform the District community about the existence of a bond issue, levy or referendum and the District's plan's in the event the bond issue, levy or referendum affecting District funding is accepted or rejected.
2. Employees of the District, while acting in the capacity of a District employee, shall not engage in any political activity during work hours or at school activities.
3. District employees are free to engage in political activities, to campaign and to run for political office outside of work hours or outside the scope of their employment while at a school activity. Employees shall not allow such political activities to interfere with the proper performance of their school duties and shall not use work hours, school supplies, or school equipment in these activities. "Work hours" for District employees refer to the period between the time an employee is scheduled to begin work and at the end of an employee's assigned work day (including planning/conference time, but excluding lunch and break periods) and any paid overtime hours or extra duty hours for which the employee has volunteered or been assigned.
4. Employees shall not use their authority or position with the District to influence or compel a person to take part in a political activity, to pay or promise to pay a political contribution, or apply for membership in or become a member of a political organization.
5. Teachers or other District employees may not use or recruit pupils during work hours or at school activities for either distribution of political materials or other political activities.

6. District employees, while acting within the scope of their employment, shall refrain from any conduct that is intended to be or that reasonably could be perceived as endorsing or opposing specific political issues or political candidates.
7. Political candidates and/or advocates for or against a political or public issue may not campaign on District property or at school activities during the school day, defined as the teacher work day, except as part of a pre-approved forum in which political candidates or advocates from all sides are representing their views.
8. Political candidates and/or advocates for or against a political or public issue may not campaign on District property or at after school activities and events except to distribute political materials outside the venue for the school activity. For example, during after school events and activities, political materials may be distributed:
 - A. Outside a stadium or school during a sporting event.
 - B. Outside a school before a concert or other public event.
 - C. In public access areas like sidewalks during a school sponsored parade.

Political materials may never be distributed:

- A. a stadium or gym
 - B. Inside a school
 - C. By the participants in a parade or other school sponsored event or activity
9. District employees shall not wear buttons or articles of clothing that express political opinions or that express support or opposition to a political candidate or issue during work time or within the scope of their employment at school activities.
 10. Spectators at after school events, including District employees, candidates and other spectators may wear buttons or articles of clothing that express political opinions or that express support or opposition to a political candidate or issue.
 11. Participants in school events, including District employees, candidates and other community members shall not wear buttons or articles of clothing that express political opinions or that express support or opposition to a political candidate or issue. Participants include, but are not limited to: volunteers for school related groups such as PTA or boosters, people on stage at indoor events, people on playing surface level at sporting events and people walking or riding in parades.
 12. All other types of political activities, including large temporary or permanent signage displayed anywhere on school grounds or on vehicles on school grounds, not expressly allowed in these guidelines are prohibited on school grounds and at school events, with the following exception: Visitors at school events, with political signs on their personal vehicles, may park their vehicles in the regular parking areas while attending the school event.
 13. School related groups, including PTA and Boosters, are expected to follow these guidelines.
 14. These guidelines shall be coordinated by the Superintendent. All inquiries regarding these guidelines shall be directed to the Superintendent/designee.
 15. Nothing in these guidelines restricts or modifies the rights vested in State or Federal law.

Violation of Guidelines

1. Violation of these guidelines by a student will be halted and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Board's student discipline policy.

2. Violation of these guidelines by an employee will be halted and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with any individual contract, collective bargaining agreement, District policy or procedures, and/or governing statute.
3. Any other party violating these guidelines will be asked to immediately cease all political activity on District property or at a school activity. If the party fails to comply with this request, they will be requested to leave District property and, if necessary, the police will be called. In addition, other action may be taken as determined within the discretion of the Superintendent.

Notice of Guidelines

A copy of these guidelines will be posted in a central location in each school building. Upon request, the policy will be made available to students, staff, employees and community members in school buildings and the Central Support Offices.

STAFF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

DEFINITION

The term “social media” includes, but is not limited to:

- Social Networking Sites (Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Micro-blogging Sites (Twitter)
- Blogs (including school district and personal blogs, as well as comments)
- Video and Photo Sharing Websites (Flickr, YouTube)
- Forums and Discussion Boards (Google Groups, Yahoo! Groups)
- Online Encyclopedias (Wikipedia)

PURPOSE

Social media is a powerful communication tool that has a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. Because social media blurs the lines between personal voice and institutional voice, the school district has created the following policy to clarify how best to enhance and protect personal and professional reputations when participating in social media for those who choose to use it.

It is your decision whether or not you will create or participate in on-line social media, social networking or other online publishing or discussion. The school district prohibits participation in social media for an employee’s personal use during the work day. Social media may be used to advance the educational mission of the school district or otherwise for job-related purposes, but only with school district administration’s knowledge and consent. All information posted by a school district employee on behalf of the district must comply with the school district’s Acceptable Use Policy, and must be approved by the Public Information Officer. Employees are personally liable for anything they post to social media sites.

NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

The school district’s network, email and Internet system (including any software and files downloaded via the Internet onto the district’s network), cellular telephone services, and other information and communication technologies are the property of the school district. Computer files, email messages, browsing histories, text messages, and other information created, downloaded, uploaded or accessed on the school district’s Internet systems or other school district-owned networks are not the private property of any employee. Employees should not have any expectations of privacy. In addition to being subject to this Policy, Employees are subject to the school district’s Computer/Online Services Policy when utilizing the school district’s computer networks, files, electronic mail system and Internet system.

POLICIES FOR ALL SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Employees have the right to participate in social media using personal equipment on their own time. The school district prohibits all conduct, including online activity, that may negatively impact the school district's reputation, the reputation of its employees, or its educational interests, or that may negatively impact its students or the school community at large. Such activity, even if engaged in on an employee's own time, may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.

- **Separate Personal and Professional Accounts.** School district employees shall maintain separate personal and professional accounts while using all forms of social media. Employees must never use their school district e-mail account or password in conjunction with a personal social networking or social media site. When you might be perceived online as an agent of the school district, you need to be clear that you are sharing your views as an individual and not as a representative of the school district.
- **Do Not Use the School District Logo or Make Endorsements.** Do not use the school district logos, wordmarks, athletic logos, or any other marks or images on your personal online sites. Do not use the school district's name to promote or endorse any product, cause or political party or candidate.
- **Protect Confidential Information.** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the school district, its students, its alumni or district employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow school district policies, as well as state and federal privacy laws.
- **Be Respectful.** Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the school district community. You should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered sensitive – such as politics and religion.
- **Respect Copyright and Fair Use Laws.** When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the school district.
- **Be Aware of Liability.** You are responsible for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or obscene. Increasingly, employers are conducting Web searches on job candidates before extending offers. Be sure that what you post today does not come back to haunt you.
- **Comply with the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.** All employees licensed by the State Board of Education must comply with the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct. Online behavior deemed unbecoming the teaching profession will be reported, and may result in suspension or revocation of a teaching license by the state.
- **Think Before You Post.** There is no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts and pictures years after the publication date. Comments and pictures can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even after you delete a post. Post only pictures and comments that you would be comfortable sharing with the general public.

TEACHER LICENSURE

All teachers are reminded that they must take care of renewing and maintaining a current teaching certificate/license in Ohio. All available certificates/licenses must be submitted to the human resources office and kept on file there. While the human resources office will assist each teacher with the process, it is the individual teacher who is ultimately responsible for seeing that the

certificate/license is renewed in a timely manner. Failure to renew or maintain appropriate licensure may affect an individual's contract status.

Any initial certificate/license must be applied for through a university or college teacher training institution. Renewals must be applied for through the district's Local Professional Development Committee. License upgrades must be applied for through the Ohio Department of Education.

TEACHER EVALUATION

The Board of Education is responsible for a standards-based teacher evaluation policy which conforms to the framework for evaluation of teachers as approved by the State Board of Education and aligns with the "Standards for the Teaching Profession" as set forth in State law.

The Board adopts the OhioES/OTES model as approved by the State Board of Education.

The evaluation policy is intended to provide an evaluation model that is research-based, transparent, fair, and adaptable to the needs of the District. The Board believes in the importance of ongoing assessment and meaningful feedback as a powerful vehicle to support improved teaching performance and student growth, as well as promotion and retention decisions for teachers.

Evaluations will be completed by May 1st and each teacher will be provided a written report of the results of his/her evaluation by May 10th. Written notice of nonrenewal will be provided prior to the first board meeting in May.

Formal Observation Procedure

- a. The first formal observation is designed to be preceded by a conference between the evaluator and the employee prior to the observation in order for the employee to explain plans and objectives for the classroom situation to be observed. All subsequent observations will be unannounced.
- b. A post-observation conference is designed to be held after each formal observation.

Informal Observation/Classroom Walkthrough Procedure

- a. Data gathered from informal observations and classroom walkthroughs shall be shared with the employees in a reasonable amount of time.
- b. Data gathered from informal observations and classroom walkthroughs will contribute to the teachers' overall performance evaluation.

I. Evaluation Timeline

Teacher Evaluation Timeline 2024-2025

Prior To:

September 15th	All Professional Growth or Improvement Plans will be completed.
November 1st	Teachers who want to be considered for continuing contract must notify the Human Resources Department
December 15th	All certified staff evaluated with OTES must have received one formal observation and one walkthrough observation.
March 15th	Teachers under consideration for non-renewal must have received their third cycle observation.
May 1st	Teacher receives notice of non-renewal. All assigned activities must be completed in OhioES.
May 10th	All evaluations must be pinned by evaluator and teacher.
By June 1st	Superintendent makes a written recommendation to the Board for teacher non-renewal.
By June 1st	Teacher receives notice of non-renewal.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND AUP COMPUTER/ONLINE SERVICES

(Staff Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement)

The District provides access to computer networks, electronic mail (“e-mail”) and the Internet to certain employees to assist them in the performance of their jobs and to advance the educational mission of the District. This policy is designed to help employees understand the District’s expectation for the use of those resources and to use those resources wisely.

Ownership and Privacy

1. The District’s network, e-mail and Internet system, including any software and files downloaded via the Internet into the District’s network, is the property of the District, subject to any previously existing trademark or copyright of the originator. Computer files, e-mail messages, history of Internet usage and other information created, downloaded, uploaded or accessed on the District’s Internet systems or networks are not the private property of any employee. Employees should not have any expectation of privacy.
2. The District may limit network, e-mail and Internet access to those employees who demonstrate a legitimate, job-related need for such use.
3. The District reserves the right to monitor, access, read, disclose and use e-mail without prior notice to the originators and recipients of such e-mail. In addition, e-mail may be monitored and read by authorized personnel of the District to review for any violations of the law or Board policy, communications harmful to the District and its Board members, employees, students and staff, or for any other reason. You must be aware that e-mail is inherently insecure, and users should not assume any level of privacy.
4. The District reserves the right to install software and systems that can monitor and record all network, e-mail and Internet usage. The District reserves the right to do so at any time. Additionally, the District may inspect any and all files stored in private areas of the network to ensure compliance with this policy.
5. All existing Board policies apply to an employee’s conduct with regard to the use of the District’s network, e-mail and Internet system.

Network, E-mail and Internet Use

1. The District’s network, e-mail and Internet system are to be used to advance the educational mission of the District and for job-related purposes, and not for an employee’s personal use.
2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, incidental use of the network, e-mail and Internet system by staff members is permitted as long as such use is limited in frequency and duration, does not interfere with the primary intended use of the system, and is initiated during non-work periods.
3. E-mail and attachments may be scanned for viruses at the mail server.
4. The District has installed a variety of security systems to assure the safety and security of the District’s network. Any employee who attempts to disable, defeat, or circumvent any

District security system will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and possible criminal prosecution.

5. User IDs, passwords and e-mail addresses maintain individual accountability for network, e-mail and Internet usage. Any employee who obtains an ID for network, e-mail or Internet access must keep that password confidential. Sharing of user IDs or passwords is prohibited.

Prohibited Conduct

1. Employees may not use the District's network, e-mail or Internet system to view, archive, store, distribute, edit or record material that is threatening, harassing, fraudulent, pornographic, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, lewd, vulgar, intimidating, defamatory, discriminatory, a violation of civil rights or is otherwise unlawful or inappropriate.
2. Employees may not knowingly use the District's network, e-mail or Internet system to violate the law (including copyright law) or Board policy.
3. Employees may not transmit or otherwise disseminate confidential student information in violation of State or Federal law.
4. The District may use software and data to identify inappropriate or sexually explicit Internet sites. Access from within the District's network may be blocked to all such sites that are known. If you find yourself connected inadvertently to a site that contains sexually explicit, offensive or other content that violates this policy, you must disconnect from that site immediately. Inadvertent access to sites containing such content should immediately be reported to your immediate supervisor.
5. Employees may not use the District's network, e-mail or Internet system to deliberately propagate any virus, worm, Trojan horse, trap door, or any other malicious program code.
6. Employees may not use the District's network, e-mail or Internet system to knowingly disable or overload any computer system or network, or to circumvent any system intended to protect the privacy or security of another user.
7. Employees may not use the District's network, e-mail or Internet system to download images or video unless there is a legitimate, job-related or educational use for the material. Employees may not download entertainment software or games, or play games against opponents over the Internet.
8. Employees may not participate in chat rooms or news groups except for those having a legitimate, job-related or educational purpose.
9. Employees may not use the District's network, e-mail or Internet system for personal commercial or profit-making activities.
10. Employees shall not connect any wireless devices to the District network without prior authorization from the District's network administrator.

Discipline

Misuse of the District's network, e-mail or Internet system in violation of this or any other Board policy, or in violation of the law, may result in the revocation of access to the District's network, e-mail and Internet system, along with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment and possible criminal prosecution.

TOBACCO USE ON DISTRICT PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS

The Board is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable and productive environment for its staff, students and citizens. Health professionals have determined that smoking poses health hazards not only for the smoker, but for the nonsmoker as well.

Recognizing these health issues, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco by staff members in all district-owned, leased or contracted buildings, vehicles and property, as well as during an employee's work day.

The Board directs the Superintendent to educate all staff members concerning the mandate of this policy, as well as implementing, as appropriate, educational programming concerning smoking and, if needed, resources available to those who wish to discontinue their smoking habit.

A notice to this effect is posted at the entrance to all school buildings and in a visible place in all school vehicles.

Staff members who violate this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

USE OF UNPAID DAYS ("LEAVE WITHOUT PAY")

Staff attendance is imperative for the effective and efficient operation of the NWLSD school buildings. Student achievement is dependent upon staff reporting to work on a regular basis. While personal leave days are afforded to each staff member, there should be no expectation of additional days being granted to staff, even if they are "unpaid". The Superintendent/Director of Human Resources will have sole discretion in granting unpaid days. **The request for these days will not be approved in most cases. Taking leave without pay after it is denied will result in discipline.**

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Permit not Required

1. A principal may issue a key to the building to an athletic coach or teacher in charge of any other school activity and permit him/her to supervise the use of the building for practice purposes, or for preparation for participation in games or other school activities, without custodial personnel on duty; provided (1) the coach or teacher is specifically delegated to handle this responsibility and shall not have the privilege of transferring this responsibility to another person, (2) the coach or teacher opens the building, supervises its usage, and only students who are participating in the practice activity are allowed to enter the building. The administrator in charge of facilities must be notified when building is to be used.
2. A teacher may enter the building at any time without a permit if he/she is in compliance with the following:

Public school teachers of the Northwest School District shall have the right to be in the building to do school related work at any time a custodian is on duty. If the teacher knows in advance of the need to enter the building, he/she shall notify the principal in advance of arrival time, so a door may be unlocked. If no advance notice is possible, the teacher will have the

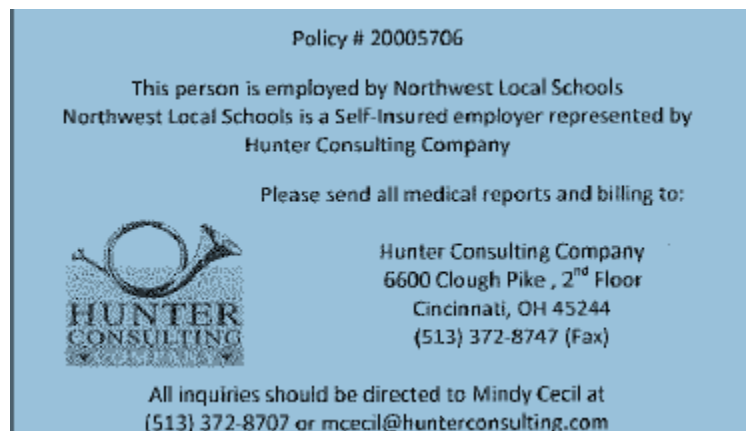
responsibility of notifying the custodian of his/her arrival. In all cases, the teacher shall sign out when he/she leaves the building.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

All district employees are covered under worker's compensation. If you are injured in the course of your employment, please follow the steps outlined below:

1. Report the injury to your supervisor immediately and notify the Benefits Coordinator in the Treasurer's office.
2. Complete an accident report in Public School Works within 24 hours if possible.
3. When seeking medical treatment, please present your Worker's Compensation MCO Card.

This card should be carried with you at all times. If it is misplaced, please call the Human Resources office for a replacement card.



Appendix A
NORTHWEST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMPLAINT OF VIOLATION OF BOARD POLICY PROHIBITING SEXUAL
HARRASMENT

NAME OF EMPLOYEE MAKING COMPLAINT

POSITION

WORK LOCATION OF COMPLAINANT

TODAY'S DATE:

INCIDENT _____

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF PERSON ALLEGED TO HAVE VIOLATED POLICY:
(Description if name unknown)

DATE OF INCIDENT (Specify all incidents):

PLACE OF INCIDENT _____

WITNESS _____

DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED:
(Include any statement made by you, the person charged, and anyone present)

ANY PHYSICAL EVIDENCE AVAILABLE: YES NO (If YES, please describe.)

Name of Person Receiving Complaint

Signature of Complainant

Job Title

If complainant refused to sign, state reason

Signature and Date

Appendix B
NORTHWEST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
HORIZONTAL SALARY PLACEMENTS/ADVANCEMENTS

As per Article 9.0102 of the Master Contract Agreement, this form and an official transcript must be filed with the Human Resources Office by September 15 for advancement effective the beginning of the school year, or by February 15 for advancement effective February 15.

Letters from class instructor(s) indicating completion of the courses and filed with the Human Resources Office by September 15 or February 15 shall be acceptable provided the official transcript is filed by November 1 or April 1 respectively. However, payment for placement on a new column shall not be made until the official transcript is filed.

Please refer to Article 9.0102 for additional information.

Print Name _____
 First Middle Last

School _____ SS# _____

1. I am requesting a horizontal salary advancement effective:

beginning of the school year _____ or Feb.15 _____

2. The attached transcript verifies an increase in (number) _____ semester* hours from my current salary status. (*To convert quarter hours to semester hours divide quarter hours by 1.5.)

3. I am requesting a horizontal salary adjustment:

from _____ (B, B150, M, M+15, M+30)

to _____ (B150, M, M+15, M+30, M+45)

Signature of Employee

Date

Date received in Human Resources Office _____

Appendix C
NORTHWEST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
TUITION REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

Staff Member's Name: _____

Date: _____

Building Assignment: _____

I. DIRECTIONS FOR APPLYING

- A. Tuition reimbursement is for coursework taken from September 1st through August 31st at the rate for that given year.
- B. All tuition reimbursement requests must be received no later than November 1st.
- C. Send reimbursement requests to: Director of Human Resources, Northwest Local Schools, 3240 Banning Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio 45239

II. ATTACHMENTS REQUIRED

- A. One (1) original copy of a transcript. Highlight courses for which you are applying for reimbursement.
- B. Proof of earned credit/grade.
- C. Receipt or proof of payment. If vouchers were purchased, proof of payment must be included.

Application cannot be processed unless all attachments are included.

III. COURSEWORK APPLICATION

Name of Course	# of Hours	Check One		Reimbursement Amount**
		Sem.	Qtr.	
Total Reimbursement Requested				

**** Multiply the number of semester hours by \$135.00 or the number of quarter hours by \$90.00 for your reimbursement amount. A maximum of 6 semester or 9 quarter hours may be used for reimbursement in any given year.**

**** The district will pro-rate the reimbursement amount based on the participation if the total amount exceeds the negotiated agreement.**

NOTE: The following conditions must be met by any member wishing to be reimbursed for college coursework:

- A. The coursework must be in one of the following areas: 1) the member's area(s) of certification/licensure or the area(s) that they are teaching, including work to maintain or upgrade certification/licensure; 2) related to their Local Professional Development Committee's (LPDC) approved Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP); 3) in the field of education or technology; 4) in other coursework areas approved in advance and in writing by the Superintendent or designee.
- B. The member must earn at least a "B" in a graded course, and must pass a pass/fail class in order to receive reimbursement.
- C. The member must be employed with the Northwest Local School District at the time of reimbursement. If the member leaves the District before the time of reimbursement, the member shall forfeit the reimbursement payment.

COMMENTS: For Office Use Only

Date _____ Director of Human Resources Signature _____

REVIEWED FOR PAYMENT: For Office Use Only

Amount Paid for Approved Courses _____

Date _____ Treasurer's Signature _____

Appendix D
NORTHWEST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
REQUEST FOR ACCUMULATION OF UNUSED PERSONAL LEAVE

Staff Member's Name: _____

Date: _____

Building Assignment: _____

1. CRITERIA FOR APPLYING

- a. Staff member must have at least one unused personal day to apply
- b. Staff member must have missed no more than five (5) days in the ending school year.

Personal Leave Use

8.0702 Personal leave may be denied in the event that more than 10% of a building's licensed teaching staff will not be in attendance as a result of a scheduled leave/absence for that date. In the event a building has less than 30 assigned certified staff members, the 10% limitation shall be modified to 3 certified staff members on a scheduled leave/absence. In the event that an employee has an emergency, and requests emergency personal leave in accordance with accepted procedures, the 10% limitation will not apply to that request. An employee requesting emergency personal leave shall be required to provide the Personnel Administrator a reason for the requested leave. If the Personnel Administrator or his/her designee, in his/her sole discretion, approves the request for emergency leave day(s), it shall be granted.

8.0705 At the end of a work year, an employee's unused personal leave will be rolled into his/her sick leave accumulation to the maximum accumulation allowed by the contract. If a member has reached his or her maximum sick leave accumulation, the member shall be paid \$84.00 for each personal leave day that could not be rolled into the sick leave accumulation.

For Office Use Only

Number of absences in the ending school year: _____

Number of Personal Days as of June 1: _____

Date

Human Resources Signature