

**SUPPORT STAFF**

**HANDBOOK**

**2022-2023**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The success of North Mahaska Community School District depends on our employees. It is expected that the information in this manual is understood and practiced by **every** employee in **every** position. Employees who do not comply with the procedures noted in this manual will be subject to disciplinary action. A resources section is provided at the end of the manual with additional expectations for practices and procedures.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

North Mahaska will be recognized as an educational leader with students who fulfill our mission by being productive citizens who reach their maximum potential.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Prepare students to be positive, productive citizens with the passion and skills for life-long learning.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

1. Guide personal conduct by the highest moral standards.
2. Uphold ethical standards by which the profession is judged.
3. Place service for the good of others above personal gain.
4. Seek new knowledge in professional work and apply this knowledge to improve the quality of that work.
5. Deal with fellow employees in a professional manner.
6. Maintain confidentiality concerning student development and records.
7. Dress professionally according to your position. Follow these same guidelines established for students. This includes use of cell phones.

## **DRESS CODE**

We are all professionals, so please dress accordingly. Friday is a casual day, dress casual but professional. Jeans will be allowed on Fridays' only. This includes support staff.

## **PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS**

The relationship of licensed and support staff should be that of partners working together to provide the best possible learning situation for the students of this school district

## **DEFINITIONS OF SUPPORT (NON-CERTIFIED) PERSONNEL**

The term "support personnel" shall include the following employees:

- A. Custodial and maintenance employee
- B. Secretarial employees
- C. Para-educators
- D. Child Nutrition employees

- E. Transportation employees
- F. Nurses
- G. Part-time personnel for any of the above classifications.

### **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

Disrespect and/or disregard for administration or other co-workers and staff will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal. North Mahaska employees are a highly customer-orientated business, therefore the disrespect of co-workers, guests, students and parents will not be tolerated.

### **ATTENDANCE**

It is critical that employees report to work as assigned as your attendance is essential. The staff selected to work is designed for a specific time of day and day of week based on the needs of co-worker and student's needs. If a conflict in your schedule arises be sure to contact your building administration. Documentation of such extenuating circumstances may be requested.

### **PUNCTUALITY**

On-time arrival for work is essential. Tardiness when reporting for work will not be tolerated. Repeated tardiness could result in removal from the staff. If extenuating circumstances cause a delay, contact your building administrator immediately.

### **WORK ETHIC**

The school system can be a mentally and physically demanding place that is also time sensitive. Therefore, a strong work ethic is important. It is critical staff demonstrates a high customer service orientation. Employees that do not exhibit the drive to work hard and get the job done may be permanently removed from the staff. Characteristics that may lead to this may be, but are not limited to excessive break times, unwillingness to complete assigned tasks, reluctance to find new tasks, and general lack of initiative.

### **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLY NEGLIGENCE AND SAFETY**

School equipment is expensive as well as very fragile. Accidents do occur and are understood; however, repeated negligence with equipment and supplies may lead to removal of the employee from the staff.

### **HARASSMENT POLICY**

At North Mahaska Schools, we value our staff and strive to treat each employee with respect and dignity. We have similar expectations for our staff. North Mahaska strictly prohibits and

does not tolerate harassment of any employees or students. Any form of harassment related to an individual's race, sex, age, disability, religion, or any other protected status is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Harassment can take on many different forms; some common forms include offensive verbal, physical, and/or visual conduct, and threatening reprisals. Violation of this policy in any form will result in disciplinary action for the employee, up to and including removal from the staff.

If at any time you feel as though you are being harassed by another employee or a parent you should tell the individual how you feel, remove yourself from the situation, and then immediately report the incident to your building administrator. Action will be taken as needed.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

The resolution of complaints and grievances between support staff employees should be secured by the employee involved, whenever possible. The building principal shall be directly responsible for addressing complaints/grievances that cannot be resolved at the employee-to-employee level.

### **LETTERS OF ASSIGNMENT OF EMPLOYMENT**

Letters of Assignment for support personnel shall be issued yearly in writing. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall determine the date for commencement of work and the hours worked.

Para-educators who have an AA degree in education, a BA in Education or have completed ½ of their program in education shall provide documentation. Para-educators who have their documentation verified will be compensated at a higher rate.

It is expressly understood and agreed by the parties that the employment relationship created herein is an employee-at-will relationship. This provision shall supersede any other provision of this agreement or any school board policy or any employment handbook, which would indicate anything other than an employment-at-will relationship.

### **EVALUATION**

Support staff employees will be evaluated at least once every three years. It shall be the responsibility of the building principal to inform support staff employees of the evaluation procedures and instrument, which will be used to evaluate the employee's performance.

### **TERMINATION**

Either party may terminate this employment relationship by giving 30 days written notice, provided however, this provision shall not in any way affect the right of the District, if it so

elects to terminate immediately for proper cause.

### **REASSIGNMENTS**

All reassignments shall be made only after discussion of those principally concerned and with the full knowledge of the related parties. Final action on reassignments shall not be taken until approval has been given by the Superintendent.

### **REDUCTION IN FORCE**

It is expressly understood and agreed by the parties that the employment relationship created herein is an employee-at-will relationship. This provision shall supersede any other provision of this agreement or any school board policy or any employment handbook, which would indicate anything other than an employment-at-will-relationship.

However, as a general guideline, staff reduction shall be accomplished where possible through attrition within the support staff.

### **RETIREMENT**

There is no mandatory retirement age.

### **WORK DAYS/HOURS OF WORK**

The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall determine the date for commencement of work and the hours of the workday. No overtime, unless approved by the superintendent or the superintendent's designee. All employees must sign in and out through the Time Clock System. If an employee is unable to report to work for any reason, it is the responsibility of the employee to notify their immediate supervisor and/or administrator in advance of the shift. For planned absences employees must obtain prior approval from their immediate supervisor and administrator. All leave requests must be submitted through the Absence Management System.

### **SALARIES AND WAGES**

The Board of Education shall establish salaries and wages for the non-certified positions in the school system. The building principal with approval of the Superintendent shall establish work schedules for those non-certified personnel working in their building. The Superintendent and/or designee shall establish work schedules for transportation employees.

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

1. Personal Illness: All sick leave must be exhausted before using any unpaid day.

Sick Leave is provided for school employees only according to the following schedule:

1 <sup>st</sup> year of employment:	10 days
2 <sup>nd</sup> year of employment:	11 days
3 <sup>rd</sup> year of employment:	12 days
4 <sup>th</sup> year of employment:	13 days
5 <sup>th</sup> year of employment:	14 days
6 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent years of employment:	15 days

These amounts shall apply only to consecutive years of employment in the school district. Unused sick leave days shall be accumulated from year to year with a maximum of ninety (90) days. Part-time employees shall be entitled to benefits on a pro-rated basis in accordance with their employment.

Use of Sick Leave days: Sick leave days may be used for physical or mental personal illness, bodily injury or other medically related disability:

- a. Which requires the employee's confinement
- b. Which renders the employee unable to perform assigned duties.
- c. When performance of assigned duties would jeopardize the employee's health recovery.

Sick leave days may also be used for medical appointments (MD, DDS, Optometrist) which cannot be scheduled at another time upon Superintendent's and/or their designee's approval.

2. Family Illness: All family illness must be exhausted before using any unpaid day. Family days may or may not be available.

Non-certified personnel receiving absence for family illness shall be: full time custodians, secretarial employees, lunchroom employees (35 hours or more a week and 12 months a year), regular route drivers and bus mechanics.

Full-time (35 hours or more a week and 12 months a year) non-certified personnel may be granted leave up to 5 days annually for serious injury or illness within the immediate family, which shall include father, mother, child or spouse. This leave is not to be an extension of personal leave. The Superintendent may request a certificate from the attending physician verifying the seriousness of illness or injury of the immediate family member.



3. Funeral Leave: All funeral leave must be exhausted before using any unpaid day.

A. Immediate Family Funeral-Immediate family may or may not be available.

Non-certified personnel receiving absence for immediate shall be: full time custodians, secretarial employees, lunchroom employees (35 hours or more a week and 12 months a year), regular route drivers and bus mechanic.

Employees as described above may be granted up to three (3) days leave annually in the event of death in employee's immediate family. Immediate family shall be defined as spouse, children, parents, siblings, or parents-in-law of the employee.

B. Extended Family Funeral-Extended Family Funeral may or may not be available.

Non-certified personnel receiving absence for immediate shall be: full time custodians, secretarial employees, lunchroom employees (35 hours or more a week and 12 months a year), regular route drivers and bus mechanic.

Employees as described above may be granted up to two (2) days leave annually in the event of a grandparent, grandchild, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent-in-law or others living in the home of the employee.

C. Funeral Leave-Is available to all employees.

Employees are granted one (1) day of leave annually in the event of any leave for someone other than an immediate family or extended family.

All such leave shall be requested in advance from the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall have the power to extend the above provisions in any specific instance.

4. Personal Leave: All personal leave must be exhausted before using any unpaid day.

Employees will be granted three (3) days per year of unidentified personal leave without loss of pay. All requests for personal leave shall be made on the Absence Management System. Requests for personal leave must be filed with the building principal at least one (1) week in advance of the date, except in cases of emergency. No more than one (1) employee can be absent from a building on a given day for personal leave unless approved by the Superintendent.

5. Professional Leave – as determined by employee and Administration. Leave requests are to be submitted no less than 7 days ahead of the leave.
6. Family and Medical Leave Act  
Employees of the District are entitled to unpaid family and medical leave to the same extent and subject to the same terms and conditions as set forth in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.
7. Jury Duty  
Non-certified personnel may be excused for jury duty without loss of pay. Pay received for jury service shall be transmitted to the Board Secretary as soon as possible after receipt by the employee. The employee must give the principal five (5) days prior written notice of the summons for service, except under extenuating circumstances and must furnish satisfactory evidence that the service was performed on the days for which payment is claimed. An employee not required to perform jury duty all week shall return to work.
8. Vacation Days: All vacation days must be exhausted before using any unpaid day.

Vacation days may or may not be available.

Full time year round employees are entitled to vacation pay. Vacation is provided according to the following:

6 months-1 year	5 days
2 years-9 years	10 days
10 years and subsequent years of employment	15 days

The superintendent of schools shall establish a vacation schedule for all non-certified employees. Vacation time will not accrue from one year to the next. No vacation will be granted to any part-time employees.

### **HOLIDAYS**

Are available to full time year round employees only. There are 7 paid holidays consisting of: Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day and Fourth of July.

### **REQUEST TO BE EXCUSED FROM DUTY FORM**

Leave requests are to be completed on line. If for family medical, please state if for employee's spouse, employee's parent or employee's child. NOTE: Transportation Department policy regarding pre-excused absences: Use forms provided for leave requests. Verified documentation of leave may be requested by the immediate supervisor or superintendent. Those failing to provide appropriate documentation may be subject to an unpaid leave and/or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

### **PAY PLAN**

The pay period is from the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month to the end of the month. ALL absences must be submitted in the Absence Management system. If for some reason you were not able to submit in the absence Management System by the day of your absence, a leave request form must be filled out the day of your return and submitted to the business office. Individuals who submit their leave request late after payroll has been figured, will not be paid for that absence date until the following payroll.

All time card entries for daily work hours, must be submitted into Frontline Time and Attendance daily. If for some reason, the employee forgets to clock in or clock out, the hours must be submitted through a time clock adjustment form. Individuals who submit their time clock adjust form request late after payroll has been figured, will not be paid for the hours until the following payroll.

Checks are issued on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. When a pay date falls on or during a school holiday, vacation or weekend, employees shall receive their paychecks on the last working day. Summer checks shall be mailed to the address designated by the employees, unless prior arrangements have been made to pick up your check.

### **INSURANCE**

Health Insurance: Group Health Insurance premiums shall be paid at a flat dollar amount as stated in the master contract. Health Insurance is provided for: full-time regularly employed custodians, secretarial employees, lunchroom employees (35 hours or more a week and 12

months a year), full-time route drivers and bus mechanic. Health Insurance may be purchased by part-time employees at the employee's expense.

**WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION:** Each employee shall be covered by the workmen's compensation insurance required by Iowa Law.

### **EMPLOYEE PHYSICALS**

Every newly appointed employee shall furnish a certificate signed by a physician attesting to the employee's physical fitness to perform the assigned duties. The form shall be filed in the superintendent's office before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of September. The Board shall pay up to \$150.00 toward the cost of the examination upon presentation of the employee's liability. For example, your physical cost \$200.00, the insurance paid \$25.00, and you were responsible for \$175.00. The board would reimburse you \$150.00. Bus drivers are required to do a DOT physical every 1-2 years depending on physician evaluation.

### **ACTIVITY PASS**

Each non-certified employee of the school district will receive one (1) non-transferable activity pass to all school sponsored activities.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Support personnel are encouraged to stop destructive action by students or other individuals. When such action is stopped or observed, please report any significant and/or ongoing incidents to the building principal or authorities in charge of the facility.

### **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

State law requires licensed employees to report to the State Department of Human Services within 24 hours when, in the course of their employment, they reasonably believe a child has suffered from abuse and follow up with a written report within 48 hours. Support staff is also encouraged to report child abuse to the proper authorities.

### **ABUSE OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

Iowa law prohibits the abuse of students by school employees. Chapter 102 of the Iowa Administrative Code provides the rules for implementation of this law.

### **VANDALISM**

Any support personnel discovering a building being damaged, entered, burglarized or any other act of vandalism should immediately report to the principal in order that the local police department and administrative office may be notified.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/TORNADO AND FIRE**

The support staff is expected to participate in the drills and know the proper procedures to ensure safety for all.

### **TELEPHONE/ELECTRONICS USE**

Telephone and electronic use for personal use is prohibited during the peak hours of work and always in the presence of students. Ideally, phone usage should be avoided during work hours, unless an emergency has occurred. Cell phones must be kept on vibrate or silent during work hours.

### **SUBSTANCE USE**

North Mahaska wants to protect the safety of all, and has a zero-tolerance policy in effect. The use of illegal substances before or during work hours is prohibited. The consumption of alcohol before or during work hours is prohibited. A staff member caught violating any of these standards will be removed from the current staff immediately, and may be subject to removal from staff permanently.

### **PUBLIC IMAGE**

Our staff members are our best form of advertisement. Remember when you are working, **you** are representing North Mahaska Schools. The staff which represents North Mahaska every day must uphold high standards so as to not affect the strong public image that North Mahaska exudes. Any misconduct or incidents which arise during work hours will have a direct effect on this public image. A poor public image could ultimately result in a loss of customers and loss of work for all staff. One negative image can have long-term consequences. Be mindful of your actions.

### **DISCIPLINARY RULES AND ACTIONS**

It is extremely important to the success of North Mahaska that policies and procedures are enforced and followed. Violation of a policy listed within this handbook, or any house rule that is posted and/or verbally communicated to employees by the direct supervisor and/or building administrator may result in disciplinary action. These actions may begin with the following steps, depending on the severity of the incident: counseling (or coaching, written reprimand, final warning, suspension or probation, and dismissal. However, certain egregious violations could result in immediate dismissal without any of the preceding steps; including but not limited to theft and violence.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

It shall be the responsibility of the building principal to inform support staff employees of the inclement weather procedures/expectations when there is a late start or an early dismissal. The hours and expectations for different classifications of support staff personnel will vary. Employees shall sign up with the Superintendent for text alerts through PowerSchool Alert System.

# Acknowledgement of Support Staff Handbook

## Acknowledgement of Support Staff Handbook

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the contents of the North Mahaska Support Staff Handbook. If at any time questions or concerns arise regarding the information within the handbook I will contact Doug Ray or Angela Livezey immediately for clarification. I will follow all procedures and expectations outlined to their fullest extent. Additionally, I understand that not following these procedures and expectations may result in removal from North Mahaska Support Staff.

Staff signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrator signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- 
- Copy to employee
  - Copy to North Mahaska Schools

