

HELENA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



2020-2021

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Helena School District Employee Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Helena Public Schools.

The material covered within this employee handbook is intended as a method of communicating to employees regarding general District information, rules, and regulations and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation, or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may, therefore, be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation, negotiated agreement, or changes in state or federal law.

Any information contained in this employee handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination, from time to time, without notice, consultation, or publication, except as may be required by contractual agreements or law.

No information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, or as a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

In this handbook Board policies are noted in *bold and italics*. Please direct any questions to your supervisor or to the Helena Public Schools Human Resources Department.



2020 District

Calendar 2021



July 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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30	31					

September 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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May 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

August 24 & 25 Staff Orientation
 August 26 First Day of School
 Grades 1-5, Grade 6 CRA & IBMS, Grades 10-12 PAL, Grade 9 CIBS & IBIS
 August 27 First Day of School
 Grades 7-8 CRA & IBMS, Grades 10-12 CIBS & IBIS
 August 31 First Day of School for Kindergarten
 September 7 Labor Day - No School - District Closed
 October 15 & 16 Educator Conferences - No School
 November 2 2nd Quarter Begins
 November 25-27 Thanksgiving Break - No School
 November 26-27 District Closed
 December 21 - Jan. 1 Winter Break - No School
 December 24, 25 & Jan. 1 District Closed
 January 18 Martin Luther King Day - No School - District Closed
 January 19-21 High School Semester Testing
 January 21 K-8 12:00 p.m. Early Dismissal
 January 22 HS Staff in Service Records Day, No School K-12
 January 25 3rd Quarter Begins
 February 15 President's Day - No School - District Closed
 March 29 - April 2 Spring Break - No School
 April 5 4th Quarter Begins
 April 23 No School (make-up snow day if needed)
 May 7 Vigilante Parade - No School Grades 9-12/11:00 a.m. Dismissal K-8
 May 31 Memorial Day - No School - District Closed
 June 5 High School Graduation
 June 7-9 High School Semester Testing
 June 9 Last Day & 12:00 p.m. Early Dismissal Students K-8
 P.M. K-8 Staff Records Day
 June 9 Last Day for Staff K-8
 June 9 Last Day for Students 9-11
 June 10 High School Staff In-Service-Records Day
 June 10 Last Day for Staff 9-12

Every Monday are Professional Release days for Helena School District staff. School will dismiss early. Please see below for your school's Professional Release schedule.

- *Elementary: 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- *Middle School: 8:05 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.
- *High School: 8:20 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **Buses will run according to the above schedule on Mondays.

- Holiday/Break - No School - All Grades
- Staff Orientation
- ◇ Last Day of School 9-11 Students
- ◇ High School Semester Testing
- ◇ Early Dismissal Students K-8 Records Day
- ◇ HS Staff in-service-records day - No School K-12
- ◇ Vigilante Day - K-8 released 11:00 a.m./High School - No School

Board Approval:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2020-2021

The Legislature of the State of Montana delegates to the Board responsibility for the conduct and governance of district schools. The Trustees for the 2018-19 school year, as elected by residents of this district, are as follows:

Elementary Trustees

Luke Muszkiewicz, Chair

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

Siobhan Hathorn, Vice Chair

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

Terry Beaver, Vice Chair

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

John McEwen

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

Libby Goldes

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

Jennifer McKee

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

Sarah Sullivan

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

High School Trustees

Jennifer Walsh

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

Superintendent

Tyler Ream

May Butler Center

55 South Rodney, Helena, MT 59601

(Work) 324-2001

Email: tream@helenaschools.org

Student Representatives

TBD, HHS

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

TBD, CHS

E-mail: boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

For general information regarding meetings of the Board of Trustees, please check the District Web Site.

GENERAL TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

The Board is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, marital status, and physical or mental handicap or disability if otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation, and other legally protected categories.. Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities will be made as required by law. If considerations of sex, age or disability have a bona fide relationship to the unique requirements of a particular job or if there are federal or state legal requirements that apply, then sex, age or disability may be taken into account as a bona fide occupational qualification, provided such consideration is consistent with governing law.

If you have questions concerning District compliance with state and federal equal opportunity employment laws, contact the Personnel Department at the District Office. For additional information, please see *Board Policy 5000 – Equal Employment Opportunity*.

HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION

The Helena Board of Trustees intends that employees have a safe and orderly work environment in which to do their jobs. Therefore, the Board does not condone and will not tolerate harassment or bullying of employees, discrimination against employees, or any act prohibited by Board policy that disrupts the work place and/or keeps employees from doing their jobs. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, between employees or by third parties, are strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated this includes bullying, harassment, or intimidation via electronic communication devices (“cyberbullying”)

Employees are expected to be civil, respectful, and act in an orderly manner toward one another. Workplace harassment and bullying may be defined as the deliberate, hurtful, repeated mistreatment of an employee, driven by a desire to abuse or control that individual.

Common behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Injuring, threatening, harassing or intimidating a staff member, board member or any other person;
- Defamation of character and/or reputation;
- Yelling, shouting, and screaming; hostile glares and other intimidating gestures toward fellow employees;
- Behind-the-back-put-downs, insulting, and unfair criticism;
- Damaging or threatening to damage another’s property;
- The deliberate sabotage and undermining of another’s work performance;
- Impeding, delaying, or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of the district employee program or any other activity occurring on school property;
- Operating a motor vehicle in a risky manner to scare or intimidate;
- Exclusion or social isolation; and

- Other inappropriate behavior that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates a co-worker, including occurrences in front of another co-worker, students, parents, contractors or visitors.

Any employee who believes that he or she, or any other employee or student, is being subjected to harassment or discrimination should bring the matter to the attention of their Supervisor and/or Building Principal. The District will investigate any such concerns promptly and confidentially to the extent possible. Please refer to ***Board Policy 1085 - Uniform Grievance Procedure***.

No employee will be subject to any form of reprisal or retaliation for having made a good-faith complaint under this policy. For complete information concerning the District's position prohibiting harassment/discrimination, assistance in reporting and responding to alleged incidents, and examples of prohibited behaviors, employees should refer to the District's policies and related procedures. For additional information if an employee believes that he or she has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, genetic information, or sex, please see ***Board Policies 5000 – Equal Employment Opportunity, 5005 Sexual Harassment and 5015 Bullying Harassment Intimidation Prevention Reporting***.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees receive a copy of their job description and responsibilities for review. Immediate supervisors may assign other duties as needed and direct the methods of completion as determined through best practices. Employees will be expected to perform their position with the upmost professionalism including adhering to established behavioral competencies set by the district.

Employees should ask their supervisor if they have questions regarding their assigned duties and/or responsibilities. For additional information, please refer to ***Board Policy 5025 – Employment and Assignment***.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Any finalist recommended to be employed in a paid or volunteer position with the District, involving regular unsupervised access to students in schools, as determined by the Superintendent, shall submit to a name-based and fingerprint criminal background investigation conducted by the appropriate law enforcement agency before consideration of the recommendation for employment or appointment by the Board. The results of the name-based check will be presented to the Board, concurrent with the recommendation for employment or appointment. Any subsequent offer of employment or appointment will be contingent on results of the fingerprint criminal background check, which must be acceptable to the Board, in its sole discretion. This policy shall also be applied to an employee of a person or firm holding a contract with the District, if the employee is working on school property, and the employee may have unsupervised access to students.

Any requirement of an applicant or employee of a contractor to submit to a fingerprint background check will be in compliance with the National Child Protection Act and applicable federal regulations. If an applicant has any prior record of arrest or conviction by any local, state, or federal law enforcement agency for an offense other than a minor traffic violation, the facts must be reviewed by the Superintendent, who will decide whether the applicant will be declared eligible for appointment or

employment. Arrests resolved without conviction will not be considered in the hiring process, unless the charges are pending. The Superintendent and/or Board shall keep all criminal record information confidential as required by law.

Any employee who may know or there is probable cause to suspect that an individual engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of law is prohibited from assisting said individual in the acquisition of a new position this includes writing letters on district letterhead. For additional information, please see *Board Policy 5122 Criminal Background Investigations and Board Policy 5032 Prohibition on Aiding and abetting Sexual Abuse*.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In certain circumstances employees may receive confidential information regarding students' or employees' medical, discipline or court records. Employees are required to keep student and personnel information in the strictest confidence and are legally prohibited from passing confidential information along to any unauthorized individual. If employees have any questions about access to confidential information, they should speak to their Supervisor and/or Building Principal.

An official personnel file is established for each person employed by the district. A staff member's personnel file may contain such information as applications for employment, references, records relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, complaints, and written disciplinary actions. All records containing medical-condition information, such as workers' compensation reports and release/permission to return to work forms, will be kept confidential, in a separate file from personnel records.

All personnel records are considered confidential and not open to public inspection.

The employees' personnel records will be maintained in the District's administrative office, under the direct supervision of the Human Resources Office. Employees and their designees will be given access to their personnel records, in accordance with guidelines developed by the Human Resources Office.

SALARIES AND PAYROLL DISTRIBUTION

Checks are issued according to a schedule approved annually by the Board. Determination of and changes to certified employees rank and experience are determined in compliance with the collective bargaining agreement. Classified personnel may be paid on an hourly or salary basis, as determined by the Board.

BENEFITS AND LEAVE

EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

All District employees are members of either the Montana Teachers Retirement System (MTRS) or the Montana Public Employees Retirement System (MPERS). Questions regarding retirement should be directed to the appropriate system.

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

School personnel are reimbursed for travel that is required as part of their duties or for school-related activities approved by their Principal or supervisor. Information regarding expense reimbursement is available by contacting your principal or supervisor.

HOLIDAYS

Holidays for certified staff are dictated in part by the school calendar. Substitute employees will not receive holiday pay. Part-time employees will receive holiday pay on a prorated basis. The District will observe all school holidays as required by statute. When an eligible employee is required to work any of the school holidays, another day shall be granted in lieu of such holiday, unless the employee elects to be paid for the holiday in addition to the employee's regular pay for all time worked on the holiday. ***Board Policy: 5060 Holidays.***

INSURANCE

The Board provides unemployment insurance, workers' compensation and liability insurance for all employees. In addition, the Board provides group health insurance to eligible employees. ***Board Policy: 5051 Insurance Benefits for Employees.***

For more information regarding insurance benefits please refer to the District web site or contact the District Benefits Manager at the May Butler Center.

LEAVE

In order to provide the highest level of service, employees are expected to be at work and on time every day. However, when circumstances dictate, the District provides leave to its employees pursuant to Montana law, collective bargaining agreements and individual contracts. Employees who must be absent should inform their Principal or supervisor as soon as possible but no later than the start of the scheduled start time. Listed below is general information regarding several types of leave available to employees. Please note that in many cases a written request, submitted for approval before leave begins, is required.

Leave of Absence

The District provides leave to its employees pursuant to Montana law, collective bargaining agreements and individual contracts. Those employees in paid leave status continue to accrue seniority and are eligible for District benefits. Employees in unpaid leave status do not accrue seniority and may not be eligible for benefits through the District. ***Board Policy: 5055 Leave of Absence.***

Sick Leave

Certified employees will be granted sick leave according to terms of their collective bargaining agreement. Administrators shall be granted sick leave pursuant to the terms of their individual contracts. Classified employees shall be granted sick leave pursuant to Montana law governing public employees. Unless otherwise stated by contract, "sick leave" means a leave of absence, with pay, for an illness suffered by an employee or his or her immediate family. "Immediate family"

means the employee's spouse, domestic partner, parents, siblings, children and like relations of the spouse or domestic partner. A maximum of ten (10) days of accumulated sick leave may be used per year because of death in the immediate family.

If the District has established, either through collective bargaining or through policy, a sick leave fund, employees may contribute any portion of the employee's accumulated sick leave or accumulated vacation leave to a nonrefundable sick leave fund and become eligible to draw upon the fund pursuant to the rules established for the fund.

Bereavement Leave

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be granted bereavement leave according to the terms of their collective bargaining agreement. Other employees shall be allowed up to five (5) days of bereavement leave for deaths in the immediate family (employee's spouse, domestic partner, parents, siblings, children, grandparent, grandchild and like relations of the spouse or domestic partner). In the event the employee needs additional bereavement time, an additional leave of up to five (5) days may be awarded at the discretion of their immediate supervisor. One (1) day of bereavement leave may be granted to allow an employee to attend a funeral of a family member who does not meet the criteria of "immediate family". Any leave categorized as bereavement leave shall be without loss of pay.

Personal and Emergency Leave

Certified employees will be granted personal and emergency leave according to the terms of their collective bargaining agreement. Administrators will be granted personal and emergency leave pursuant to the terms of their individual contracts, or at the discretion of the Superintendent. Classified staff may be granted personal and emergency leave pursuant to the terms and conditions stated in their collective bargaining agreement. Personal and emergency leave is without pay unless otherwise stated in the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Civic Duties Leave

Employees shall be granted leave for service on a jury, in the Legislature, or in response to a subpoena in accordance with state law. Each employee who is under proper summons as a juror or witness shall collect all fees and allowances payable as a result of the service and forward the fees to the Business Office with an explanation. Juror and witness fees shall be applied against the amount due the employee from his employer. However, if an employee elects to charge his juror or witness time off against his annual leave (vacation or personal), he shall not be required to remit his juror fees to his employer. In no instance is an employee required to remit to the District any expense or mileage allowance paid by the court.

Military Leave

Employees shall be granted leave for service in the military in accordance with state and federal law. The District will comply with all federal regulations regarding the employee's return to service following military leave.

Vacation Leave

Administrators will be granted vacation leave pursuant to the terms of their individual contracts and Montana law. Classified employees will be granted vacation leave pursuant to Montana law. The District, in its sole discretion and/or subject to the terms of the collective bargaining

agreement, may provide cash compensation for unused vacation leave in lieu of the accumulation of vacation leave.

Maternity Leave

The District will provide maternity leave to its employees pursuant to Montana law.

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

Eligibility

Employees are eligible if they have worked for the District for at least one (1) year, and for one thousand two hundred fifty (1,250) hours over the previous twelve (12) months, **and** if there have been at least fifty (50) District employees within seventy-five (75) miles for each working day during twenty (20) or more workweeks in the current or preceding calendar year.

Length and Purpose of Leave

In accordance with provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), a leave of absence of up to twelve (12) weeks during a twelve-(12)-month period may be granted to an eligible **EMPLOYEE** for the following reasons: 1) birth of a child; 2) placement of a child for adoption or foster care; 3) a serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform functions of the job; 4) to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; 5) because of a qualifying exigency (as determined by regulation) arising out of the fact that the spouse or a son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on covered active duty as a member of the regular Armed Forces or is on covered active duty or is under a call or order to covered active duty as a member of the National Guard or Reserves.

Military Service Member Family Leave

An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member, who is a current member (or a member on the temporary disability retired list) of the Regular Armed Forces, National Guard, Reserves, or is a veteran who has incurred an injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty, shall be entitled to a total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave during a twelve-(12)-month period to care for the service member. The leave described in this paragraph shall only be available during a single twelve-(12)-month period. For additional information, please see ***Board Policy 5045 Family Medical Leave Act***.

LEAVE UNDER FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT

Between April 2, 2020 and December 31, 2020, employees may be eligible for leave for a qualifying reason under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligibility for leave under the FFCRA is set to expire December 31, 2020.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave

Employees are eligible for up to two weeks (80 hours) of paid sick leave based on their regular base rate of pay regardless of the time in which they have been employed. Part-time employees are eligible for hours equivalent to a two-week period. Intermittent leave may not be granted for leave for numbers 1-4 below.

Under the FFCRA, an employee qualifies for paid sick leave if the employee is unable to work (or unable to telework as provided in this Handbook) for the following qualifying reasons:

1. is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
3. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
4. is caring for an individual subject to an order described in (1) or self-quarantine as described in (2);
5. is caring for his or her child whose school or place of care is closed (or childcare provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 related reasons; or
6. is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

An administrator cannot send an employee home unless he/she is symptomatic. For instance, if the employee reports that an individual at his or her spouse's place of employment tested positive for COVID-19, the employee is not automatically entitled to FFCRA leave until or unless the employee or his/her spouse meets one of the criteria in numbers 1-4 above.

Employees are not entitled to leave simply because they may be living or even caring for a vulnerable person (i.e., high risk) unless the employee can demonstrate that number 4 above applies (i.e., quarantine order). Employees may need to request other leave if they believe they cannot come to work; such leave may or may not be approved per these procedures. Employees should be offered safety measures to reduce risk of exposure –social distancing to the extent feasible, protective gear/measures (face masks/shields, barriers), cleaning/disinfecting, areas to change clothes and/or shower at the end of the workday.

Emergency Family & Medical Leave (Expanded Family and Medical Leave)

A full-time employee who has been employed for at least 30 days prior to their leave request may be eligible for up to an additional 10 weeks of partially paid expanded family and medical leave if the individual is caring for his or her child whose school or place of care is closed (or childcare provider is unavailable) due to COVID-19 related reasons (this is in addition to the sick leave from above). Intermittent leave may, if the employee and District agree, be granted for this type of leave.

Requesting FFCRA Leave

Employees should complete the form requesting leave contained in the Appendix prior to taking leave if the leave is related to leave to care for a child. Employees must return this form to the administrator who must forward it to the Payroll Office. For any other type of leave covered above, employees must provide the following information prior to taking leave to the administrator who must forward it to the Payroll Office:

- Employee's name;
- Date(s) for which leave is requested;
- Qualifying reason for the leave; and
- Oral or written statement that the employee is unable to work because of the qualified reason for the leave. The employee needs to include a statement about any request for intermittent leave and the basis for such request.

If Paid Sick Leave is requested for the following reasons, additional information must be provided by the employee:

- If the employee is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19, the employee must also provide the name of the government entity that issued the isolation or quarantine order.
- If the employee has been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19, the employee must also provide the name of the healthcare provider who advised the employee to self-quarantine.

- If the employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking medical diagnosis from a healthcare provider, the employee must also provide the name of the healthcare provider from whom the employee is seeking the medical diagnosis.
- If the employee is caring for an individual who is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 or the individual has been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19, the employee must also provide:
 - The name of the government entity that issued the quarantine or isolation order to which the individual being cared for is subject to; or
 - The name of the healthcare provider who advised the individual being cared for to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.

Absent unusual circumstances, the employee must give notice of the need for leave as soon as feasible and submit this information prior to taking leave.

The administrator shall consult with the Payroll Office and Superintendent regarding the request. If necessary, legal advice may be sought. If the employee meets any of the criteria stated above for FFCRA, the leave request must be approved. The employee shall receive notice of the approval or disapproval for the request for leave. Intermittent leave requests are not required to be automatically granted.

Compensation

Emergency Paid Sick Leave

For leave reasons in numbers 1 through 3, employees are entitled to pay at either their regular rate or the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher, up to \$511 per day and \$5,110 in the total of a 2-week period.

For leave reasons in numbers 4 through 6, employees taking leave are entitled to pay at 2/3 their regular rate or 2/3 the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher, up to \$200 per day and \$2,000 in the total of a 2-week period.

Expanded Family Medical Leave

Employees are entitled to pay at 2/3 their regular rate or 2/3 the applicable minimum wage, whichever is higher, up to \$200 per day and \$10,000 in the total of a 10-week period.

Employee Rights

Employees have the right to continuation of health care coverage while on leave, restoration to the same or equivalent position upon expiration of leave, freedom from discrimination or retaliation for exercising these rights.

Leave and Return to Work

Unless the employee's request for intermittent leave is granted, the employee has no job responsibilities while on leave. If on intermittent leave, the employee can only be required to perform job responsibilities while on duty.

The employee may not be required to use already-accrued paid leave (sick, personal, vacation) if the employee qualifies for Emergency Paid Sick Leave. However, the employee may choose or may be required to concurrently use paid leave if the employee qualifies for Expanded Family Medical Leave provided that the employee could otherwise use paid leave to care for a child.

Upon return from the approved leave, the employee is entitled to return to his or her same job. The employee may seek extended leave for other reasons, which must be approved. Such leave, if approved, is not covered by the FFCRA. Depending on the basis for leave (whether Emergency Paid Sick Leave or Expanded Family Medical Leave),

TELECOMMUTING DURING THE PANDEMIC

Telecommuting means work performed while an employee is at home or at a location other than the employee's normal workplace pursuant to an agreement with the District. No District employee has an automatic entitlement to telecommute. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and some jobs but not for others.

An employee who is permitted to telecommute is paid the amount of compensation owed under the terms of the employee's employment agreement or contract for employment. Telecommuting does not change the terms and conditions of the employee's employment with the District. All District policies remain in effect.

Any telecommuting arrangement shall require the approval of the administrator/supervisor and Human Resources. It may be discontinued at will or at any time at the request of the employee or the administrator/supervisor/Human Resources. The District will attempt to provide at least 14-days notice of any changes to a telecommuting arrangement to permit time for the employee to make the necessary arrangements to return to the employee's normal workplace. There may be instances when no notice is feasible.

Telecommuting will be considered in the following circumstances:

1. as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
2. as a temporary measure in response to an emergency such as a weather disaster or pandemic;
3. as a flexible arrangement with the approval of the employee and supervisor and where the employee's position is suitable and meets the criteria specified in these procedures.

Each telecommuting request shall be reviewed by the administrator/supervisor, in consultation with the Human Resource Office. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with these procedures.

Three (3) Telecommuting Options:

1. Telecommuting as an Accommodation pursuant to the ADA/Section 504

Employees must submit documentation from a medical provider along with an application for telecommuting as an accommodation for the employee's own disability. The documentation from the medical provider must include:

1. A statement that the employee is significantly limited in any major life activities because of a physical or mental condition if such condition is not obvious.
2. Statements/information from the provider whether the employee is able to perform the essential function of his/her position with or without reasonable accommodation.

3. If accommodations are necessary, statements/information about the nature, extent, and duration of the accommodations the provider believes the employee will require, including but not limited to telecommuting.

Telecommuting may be a reasonable accommodation where the employee's disability prevents successfully performing the job on-site and the job, or parts of the job, can be performed at home or the alternate site.

The District will engage in the interactive process with the employee regarding the request for telecommuting. In addition to the requested medical documentation, the employee must explain what limitations from the disability make it difficult to do the job in the workplace, and how the job could still be performed from the employee's home. The District should discuss whether accommodations are available to allow the person to remain in the normal workplace.

Reasonableness may include consideration of the following but without limitation:

1. Can the employee's essential functions of the position be performed via telecommuting? The District is not required to remove any essential job functions to permit telecommuting, but may consider reassigning minor, non-essential duties or marginal functions if these are the only obstacle to telecommuting.
2. Does the employee require full-time telecommuting or is part-time telecommuting possible?
3. Does telecommuting pose an undue hardship, i.e., significant difficulty or expense?
4. Does the District have work suitable for the employee via telecommuting available?

The District has the right to select any effective accommodation, even if it is not the one preferred by the employee. The District may provide a temporary accommodation permitting telecommuting while the interactive process is ongoing. Such temporary accommodation does not guarantee that the District will permit long-term telecommuting as an accommodation.

2. Telecommuting as a Temporary Arrangement Due to an Emergency

In the event of an emergency, including but not limited to a weather disaster or pandemic, the District may allow or require employees to temporarily work from home to ensure continuity of District operations and employee safety. All determinations for temporary telecommute arrangements due to an emergency shall be made on a non-discriminatory basis and with primary consideration of the District's operational needs.

In the event of an emergency, the District may require certain employees to work remotely. In such event, the administrator/supervisor, in consultation with the Human Resource Office, shall determine which employees shall work remotely and shall notify these employees as soon as possible.

The District may also permit temporary, voluntary telecommuting in the event of an emergency. For voluntary telecommuting arrangements, either the employee or supervisor can initiate a temporary telecommuting agreement during emergency circumstances. The employee and

administrator/supervisor, in consultation with the Human Resource Office, should discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement, including equipment needs, workspace considerations, and scheduling issues.

If ordered or a voluntary arrangement is approved, the employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. The District will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space or phone service, Wi-Fi or internet access.

Employees should not assume any specified period of time for emergency telework arrangements, and the District may require employees to return to the normal workplace at any time. In making any determination about returning employees to the normal workplace, the District consider the following:

- Has the emergency ended or lessened in a manner that would permit employees to safely return to the normal workplace?
- Has the employee been able to meet expectations while telecommuting during the emergency?
- Can any performance issues be managed remotely once the emergency is no longer a primary focus?
- Have the needs of the District changed in a way that physical presence in the workplace is required?
- What has occurred with the employee's productivity?

The District may temporarily excuse employees from performing essential functions of their position while telecommuting because of an emergency. Such excusal shall in no way alter any employee's position permanently.

Employees shall return to the normal workplace and shall perform all job duties once there is a determination that the temporary telecommuting arrangement due to an emergency has ended.

3. Telecommuting as a Voluntary Flexible Work Arrangements

An employee may request a flexible work arrangement permitting part-time or full-time telecommuting. Requests for telecommuting related to the employee's family shall be considered consistent with the criteria specified below and not as an accommodation. Any flexible telecommuting arrangement shall be made on a non-discriminatory basis and with primary consideration of the District's operational needs.

The employee shall submit an application explaining the request to telecommute. This application shall be reviewed by the administrator/supervisor, in consultation with the Human Resource Office, with consideration of the following criteria:

- Is this employee's needs and work habits suitable for telecommuting? Has the employee demonstrated a thorough and productive understanding of his/her job? Does the employee demonstrate the ability to be self-motivated and disciplined? Has the employee demonstrated the ability to work independently with minimal supervision? Is the employee capable of using technology to perform work independently or only with remote assistance? Has the employee consistently met or exceeded performance expectations?

- Can the duties and responsibilities of the position be performed away from the normal workplace through telecommuting? Does the position require duties that must be performed at the normal worksite?
- What are the equipment needs and workspace needs and considerations for telecommuting? Will the employee have a dedicated workspace available at home or an alternate location that has few or no distractions?
- Are there any scheduling issues that would impact telecommuting? Will the telecommuting arrangement impact the employee's ability to timely perform his/her work and inquiries made?
- Does the telecommuting arrangement meet the District's business and operational needs? Does the telecommuting arrangement serve the needs of the District's students?
- Has the employee had any disciplinary incidents previously?
- Is the supervisor able to effectively manage and supervise the employee remotely?
- How will a telecommuting arrangement with one employee impact that employee's colleagues?

If a flexible telecommuting arrangement is approved, the District reserves the right to evaluate the employee's performance while telecommuting on a trial basis. Evaluation of telecommuter performance during the trial period will include regular interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and the administrator/supervisor and weekly face-to-face or virtual meetings, at the administrator/supervisor's discretion, to discuss work progress and problems.

At the end of any trial period, the employee and supervisor will meet to evaluate the arrangement. The administrator/supervisor may make recommendations for continuance or modifications. Evaluation of telecommuter performance beyond the trial period will be consistent with that received by employees working at their normal workplace in both content and frequency but will focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.

At the time any flexible telecommuting arrangement commences, the employee and administrator/supervisor will agree to a plan for regular communication at a level consistent with employees working at their normal workplace or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.

Application

Employees seeking a telecommuting arrangement shall complete an application. See Appendix A. Applications are not necessary where the District orders employees to temporarily telecommute due to an emergency.

The application will be considered by the administrator/supervisor, in consultation with the Human Resource Office, in accordance with these procedures. Approval of the application will be indicated on the application. All determinations on any application shall be communicated to the employee.

The District may require the employee to complete a Telecommuting Agreement. See Appendix B. Breach of this Agreement may result in termination of the telecommuting arrangement and/or discipline.

Work Expectations

Employees working on a telecommuting arrangement under these procedures shall abide by the following expectations:

- The employee shall be available by phone and email during normal work hours. Absences from work must be handled in the same manner as if the employee was working in his or her normal workplace (i.e., sick leave must be reported in the same manner; personal absences require prior approval).
- The employee shall promptly notify the administrator/supervisor when he or she is unable to perform work assignments due to equipment failure, technology issues, or other unforeseen circumstances.
- The employee shall attend all mandatory meetings and, if required by the administrator/supervisor, shall do so in person. The employee report to his/her normal workplace if determined necessary by the administrator/supervisor for any meetings or performance of another job duty.
- The employee will comply with all District policies, procedures, rules, practices and instructions that would apply if the employee were working at his/her normal workplace.
- The employee shall ensure that adequate arrangements are made for any dependent care. Exceptions may be made in the event of any requirement to temporarily telecommute due to an emergency.
- The employee shall not be permitted to have any in-person meetings in homes of students or with peers unless approved in advance by the administrator/supervisor.
- The employee shall maintain a safe and secure work environment at all times.
- The employee will allow the employer to have access to the telecommuting location for purposes of assessing safety and security, upon reasonable notice by the administrator/supervisor.
- The employee will not be employed elsewhere during the standard workday hours.
- The employee will not participate in extracurricular activities (e.g. golfing, biking, jogging, hiking, etc.) during the standard workday hours.

Equipment and Workspace

On a case-by-case basis, the District will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the administrator/supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. IT shall be consulted. The employee is obligated to use all District-provided equipment, including software and any security measures, to perform all work for the District. The employee shall not make any changes to the equipment or software provided by the District without authorization. No District equipment may be used by anyone other than the employee. In the event an employee is allowed by the District to use their own equipment, the employee will be required to verify security measures and appropriate, compatible systems for the delivery of work product.

Requests to use personal equipment for telecommuting work must be detailed in the application. The district will not provide any device-specific tech support for personal equipment. Web-based application support, including Office 365, is available.

The employee is responsible for ensuring that there will be adequate and secure internet access at his/her home or alternate worksite to ensure performance of job duties. The employee is responsible for ensuring that he or she will have adequate phone or cellphone service and internet.

The employee is responsible and liable if any student or District information is compromised physically or digitally. Documents must be maintained in a secure location as determined by policy.

Equipment supplied by the District will be maintained by the District. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the District, will be maintained by the employee. The District accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.

The District reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the District is to be used for business purposes only. The employer must sign an inventory of all District property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. The employee may be required to bring equipment in periodically for maintenance and updates as directed by the District. Upon termination of employment, all District property shall be returned to the District.

The District will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary. The District will also reimburse the employee for business-related expenses, such as shipping costs, that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job if approved prior to the expense.

The employee shall establish an appropriate and dedicated work environment within his or her home for work purposes. The District will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

Security

Consistent with the District's expectations of information security and confidentiality for employees working at their normal workplace, telecommuting employees are expected to ensure the protection of proprietary and confidential District and student information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

Safety

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties are normally covered by the District's workers' compensation policy. Telecommuting employees are required to notify their administrator/supervisor of such injuries as soon as practicable. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her home worksite.

Telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members.

Time Worked

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record and report all hours worked through Time Clock Plus and in conversation with their administrator/supervisor. Some employees may be required to report in daily to team meetings, check in via email and / or report out as directed by their administrator/supervisor. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the employee's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the telecommuting agreement.

Supervision

The administrator/supervisor is responsible for regularly communicating with the employee working on a telecommuting arrangement. The administrator/supervisor is responsible for monitoring the employee's compliance with District policy, conduct, performance and productivity, and time accounting.

SALARY DEDUCTIONS

The District makes all payroll deductions required by law or as authorized by the employee.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

EMPLOYMENT AND ASSIGNMENT

Each certificated employee will be employed under a written contract, subject to the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement and District policies and procedures. Renewal and non-renewal will be determined by the Board after receiving a recommendation from the Superintendent and in conformance with law.

The District reserves the right to change employment conditions affecting an employee's duties, assignment, supervisor, or grade. The Superintendent may assign, reassign, and/or transfer positions and duties of all staff, subject to any provisions contained in the collective bargaining agreement. The Superintendent will provide for a system of assignment, reassignment, and transfer of classified staff, including voluntary transfers and promotions. Nothing in this policy prevents reassignment of a staff member during a school year. For additional information, please see *Board Policy 5025 Employment and Assignment*.

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

District employees who fail to fulfill their job responsibilities or to follow reasonable directions of their supervisors, or who conduct themselves on or off the job in ways that affect their effectiveness on the job, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Behavior, conduct, or action that may call for disciplinary action or dismissal includes, but is not limited to, reasonable job-

related grounds based on a failure to satisfactorily perform job duties, disruption of the District or member school district's operation, or other legitimate reasons.

Discipline will be appropriate to the circumstance and will include, but not be limited to, a supervisor's right to reprimand an employee and the Superintendent's right to suspend an employee, with or without pay, or to impose other appropriate disciplinary sanctions. In accordance with Montana law, only the Board may terminate an employee or non-renew employment. ***Board Policies 5070 Disciplinary Action, 5255 Disciplinary Action, and 5075 Termination of Employment*** contain additional information.

EVALUATIONS

Each non-administrative staff member's job performance will be evaluated by the staff member's direct supervisor. The evaluation process includes scheduled annual evaluations using forms applicable to the job classification and description, and day-to-day appraisals. Certified staff members shall be evaluated according to terms of the collective bargaining agreement, Montana law, and/or District procedures.

The supervisor will provide a copy of the completed evaluation to the staff member and will provide an opportunity to discuss the evaluation. The original should be signed by the staff member and filed in the staff member's personnel file. If the staff member refuses to sign the evaluation, the supervisor should note the refusal and submit the evaluation to the Superintendent. Staff members may have up to 10 working days to submit a rebuttal to the evaluation for inclusion in the file. Failure to sign an evaluation form noting receipt may subject the employee to discipline. ***Board Policy: 5065 Evaluation of Non-Administrative Staff.***

GIFTS AND SOLICITATION

Staff members are to avoid accepting anything of value offered by another for the purpose of influencing his/her professional judgment. No organization may solicit funds from staff members within the schools, nor may anyone distribute flyers or other materials related to fund drives unless it has received District approval.

The solicitation of staff by sales people, other staff, or agents during on-duty hours is prohibited without building principal approval. Any solicitation should be reported at once to the building Principal or supervisor. ***Board Policy: 5105 Conflicts of Interest.***

GRIEVANCES/COMMUNICATIONS

Employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement must use the grievance procedure in the collective bargaining agreement to address alleged violations of the contract.

District employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement shall use the District's Uniform Grievance Procedure to address complaints/concerns about District policies, procedures and directives that cannot be resolved informally. For more information see ***Board Policy 1085 – Uniform Grievance Procedures.***

MEETINGS

Staff meetings are scheduled for the purpose of organization and communication of business that typically cannot be handled through electronic communications, staff bulletins, email, departmental or committee structure. All staff are expected to attend staff meetings unless prior arrangements have been made with the building principal or supervisor.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OR ACTIVITIES

Employees may not perform any duties related to an outside job during their regular working hours.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

The District maintains a complete personnel record for every current and former employee. The employees' personnel records will be maintained in the District's Human Resources Office. Employees and their designees will be given supervised access to their personnel records in the Human Resources Office. Copies may be given to employees and their designees, but under no circumstances may the original file leave the administrative office.

No material derogatory to an employee's conduct, service, character, or personality shall be placed in the file, unless the employee has had the opportunity to review the material. The employee shall be entitled to respond to the material and to have that response placed in the file, if requested in a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 10 working days. ***Board Policy:5040 Personnel Records.***

PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Employees of the Helena Public Schools are encouraged to participate in civic and/or political activities of their choice. Whenever possible, the Helena Public Schools will attempt to make it convenient for employees to engage in such activity. Employees are encouraged to voice their views on civic and political matters as long as it is conducted in compliance with both federal and state law (i.e. Hatch Act, Section 13-35-226 MCA). It is also important that employees distinguish between personal views or position on political issues and the views or position of the Helena Public Schools.

The Board of Trustees and the Superintendent have the responsibility for developing the "Helena Public Schools position" on relevant legislation and regulatory proposals. Unless an employee is specifically designated by the Superintendent to represent the Helena Public Schools position on relevant legislation or regulatory proposals, all views or positions an employee presents must be identified as a personal or professional position and not the position of the Helena Public Schools.

Employees may not use any resources of the Helena Public Schools to promote their personal or professional views or position on political issues (this includes the use of Helena Public Schools letterhead, school property/equipment including computers and district e-mail). Employees may not participate in civic and/or political activity on scheduled or contract work time unless taking pre-approved leave for this activity. This includes the use of social media or testifying in hearings. ***Board Policy: 5035 Ethics & Political Activity.***

Questions regarding the procedure should be directed to the District Human Resources Office.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Absenteeism and Tardiness

Regular and timely attendance is an essential function of each position within the District. Employees are expected to report for work on time and to notify their immediate supervisor if they must be tardy or absent. Failure to provide regular and timely attendance may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Disrupting the Educational Process

Any employee who participates in or encourages activities that disrupt the educational process or the operations of the District may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Policy 5070 – Disciplinary Action

Behavior that disrupts the educational process includes, but is not limited to:

- Conduct that threatens the health, safety or welfare of others;
- Conduct that may damage public or private property (including the property of students or staff);
- Illegal activity;
- Conduct that interferes with a student's access to educational opportunities or programs, including ability to attend, participate in, and benefit from instructional and extracurricular activities; or
- Conduct that disrupts delivery of instructional services or interferes with the orderly administration of the District, school and school-related activities or District operations.

Dress and Appearance

District employees are required to dress in a **professional** manner. No mode of attire will be considered proper if it distracts from or is disruptive to the positive learning environment of the school, department or any District work site to which the employee is assigned.

USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEM/SOCIAL NETWORKING PAGES

Employees cannot expect confidentiality or privacy of the information in their e-mail accounts, and should review Board Policy for specific information regarding use of the Internet. Authorized District personnel may monitor the use of electronic equipment from time to time, and violations of policy may result in discipline up to and including termination.

The on-campus and off-campus conduct of employees may impact their ability to function professionally and effectively in the District. Given student and parent interest in and use of electronic media, this is especially true as related to employees' action on electronic social networking

websites. Employees may not set up or update their personal electronic social networking websites using the District's computers, network, equipment or District time. Employees who set up personal electronic social networking webpages on their home or personal computers are responsible for the content of their webpages, including but not limited to: content added by employees, their friends or members of the public who can access their webpages; or content that is linked to the employees' webpages.

Employees who set up personal websites or webpages do so at their own risk; however, employees are strongly encouraged to keep their personal webpages private and to prevent students and the parents of students from accessing their personal webpages. For additional information, please see ***Board Policy 5090 – Employee Electronic Services.***

USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Employees may not use any District facility, vehicle, electronic communication systems, equipment, procurement cards or materials for personal non-district related reasons. District property that can be accessed for use by the general public is also available for employees who comply with the same process for use as the general public. Employees are prohibited from taking any equipment home for personal purposes, except as authorized by the Superintendent or designee. Utilization is limited to professional district related activities unless otherwise authorized.

Employees who drive any District-owned vehicle and who receive a traffic citation during the year must report the citation to the Superintendent immediately. ***For additional information, please see Board Policy 7405 Procurement Card Use.***

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Contractors, teaching guests, guest art instructors, chaperones, event hosts, accompanists and others, who may provide services to the district and students may be hired through human resources in advance of the work being completed. All contractors must be in compliance with the Department of Labor and Industry and Workers Compensation regulations.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCESS

Student, employee, and visitor accidents, injuries, and serious illnesses occurring on School District property, in transit, or at school-sponsored activities shall be reported promptly to the principal or supervisor who will make a report to the Student Assistance and Safety Programs Manager on the form prescribed for this purpose.

Every effort shall be made to immediately contact the parent or guardian in case of student accidents and injuries. School personnel shall not attempt to diagnose or to give medication or treatment. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be transported to the nearest medical facility

for emergency treatment. Students requiring medical treatment shall not be permitted to travel unattended and shall be accompanied by a parent, guardian or a school employee.

Students and visitors should report incidents on the prescribed accident injury form. School District employees should report incidents on the prescribed worker compensation reporting form within 24 hours of the incident.

Contractors working on school property should report any accidents to the Student Assistance and Safety Manager.

ASSAULTS AND THREATS OF VIOLENCE

Employees should immediately report any threats they receive (oral or written) to their Principal or immediate supervisor and to the appropriate District official.

ASSIGNMENT OF KEYS

Master keys and access cards shall be issued only to personnel (paid employees) who have responsibilities that require admittance to buildings during hours other than the regular school or workday for employment related activities.

Keys and access cards should not be loaned or given to students, friends, or family under any circumstances. No person shall possess keys or access cards for any building without the knowledge of the building principal or supervisor.

CHILD ABUSE

A District employee who has reasonable cause to suspect that a student may be an abused or neglected child shall report such a case to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and notify the building administrator that a report has been made. An employee does not discharge the obligation to personally report by notifying the Superintendent or building administrator. Any District employee who fails to report a suspected case of abuse or neglect to the Department of Public Health and Human Services, or who prevents another person from doing so, may be civilly liable for damages proximately caused by such failure or prevention and is guilty of a misdemeanor. The employee will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Please refer to **Board Policy 5030 – Abused and Neglected Child Reporting**.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE SCHOOLS

Employees must not manufacture, distribute, dispense, be under the influence of, purchase, possess, use, or attempt to obtain in the workplace or in the performance of duties, alcohol or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana (including medical marijuana) or any other controlled substance. For purposes of this regulation, a controlled substance is one that is not legally obtainable, or one that is legally obtainable and not being used as prescribed, or referenced in federal and state controlled substance acts.

Any employee who violates the terms of the District's drug-free/alcohol-free policies may be suspended, nonrenewed or terminated. Violations may result in notification of appropriate legal officials. Any employee convicted of a workplace violation of drug abuse statutes must notify the Superintendent of the conviction within five (5) working days. For additional information, please refer to **Board Policy 5020 Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace**.

EMPLOYEE CONTACT INFORMATION

All employees are asked to keep their personal contact information updated. Updated information should be entered via the secure employee portal available through iVisions. Please allow 48 hours after submittal for changes to be approved and recorded. **Updated information is imperative in the event that staff must be contacted regarding emergencies.** Please contact the Human Resources Office for information regarding the employee portal.

EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All Helena School District personnel are required to wear employee identification badges during work hours while on School District property. The purpose of these badges is to provide school security and to ensure that only authorized individuals are on the premises. Badges must be worn in a clearly visible location on the upper portion of the body.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

It is the intent of the District to provide a safe and healthful working environment for all employees. Employees should report any security hazard or conditions they believe to be unsafe to their Principal or immediate supervisor. For information on the Helena Public Schools Safety Plan and Bloodborne Pathogen Control Plan, contact your Principal or supervisor. For more detailed information contact the District's Student Assistance and Safety Manager.

SCHOOL MESSENGER, EMERGENCY AND GENERAL NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

The District uses an automated notification system called School Messenger. This system will contact parents regarding unverified student absences. All certified staff who are responsible for taking student attendance must do so in a timely manner per school requirements.

Additionally, the system will notify parents and staff regarding general information as well as emergencies. Notifications will be sent by voice, email and text.

RESUSCITATION

No staff member may comply with any directive from parents or others, written or verbal, that life-sustaining emergency care be withheld from a student in need of such care while under the control and supervision of district staff except as required under the Individual with Disabilities Act.

Life-sustaining emergency care means any procedure or intervention applied by appropriately trained district staff that may prevent a student from dying who, without such procedure or intervention, faces a risk of imminent death. Examples of life-sustaining emergency care may include: efforts to stop bleeding, unblocking airways, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

In a life-threatening situation, staff members are expected to dial 911 for paramedic assistance and provide life-sustaining emergency care to any student requiring it in order to sustain life, until relieved by paramedics or other appropriate medical personnel.

SEARCHES AND SEIZURES

For the safety and supervision of students in the absence of parents, to maintain discipline and order in schools, and to provide for the health, safety and welfare of students and staff, school authorities are authorized to conduct searches of students and their personal effects, as well as School District property. Such authorization includes, but is not limited to, the use of canines for searches of school property, personal property and motor vehicles.

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects (e.g., purses, book bags, motor vehicles, etc.) when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence the student has violated or is violating either the law or the District's student conduct rules. The search itself must be conducted in a manner which is reasonably related to its objectives and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. When feasible, the search should be conducted outside the view of others, including students, in the presence of an adult witness and by a certificated employee or administrator of the same sex.

Immediately following a search, a written report shall be made by the school authority who conducted the search. The report shall be submitted to the Principal and forwarded to the Superintendent. The parent of the student shall be notified of the search as soon as possible.

School Property Searches

School property, including, but not limited to, desks and lockers, is owned and controlled by the District and may be searched by school authorities at any time. School authorities are authorized to conduct area-wide, general administrative inspections of school property without notice to or consent of the students or staff members and without reasonable suspicion (e.g. unannounced canine searches).

Seizure of Property

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law, or the District's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

If a school property search produces evidence that a staff member has violated or is violating the law, or the District's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by

school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

SERVICE ANIMALS AND THERAPY – FACILITY DOGS

The District complies with all state and federal laws, regulations, and rules regarding the use of service animals by students, staff, or community members when the service animal is required because the individual has a disability and the service animal is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of that individual.

Please see *Board Policy 4035 – Service Animals and Board Policy 4036 – Facility / Therapy Dog Policy*, contact the school office or the District Administration Office for more information and / or procedures related to the use of service animals in schools.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

During school or school-sponsored functions, students may be transported only in school-approved vehicles operated by authorized school personnel unless specific approval by the Superintendent or designee has been obtained.

The Board specifically forbids any employee to transport students for school purposes without prior authorization by the Superintendent or designee. When transporting students, seat belts must be worn by all occupants and they must be transported in the passenger compartment of the vehicle. Employees may not transport more passengers than the number of seat belts in the vehicle.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

The District maintains tobacco free buildings and grounds, as required by Montana law. Tobacco includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, or any other tobacco or nicotine innovation. Use of tobacco will not be allowed in any District school district buildings, grounds or vehicles, or while on duty during District-sponsored events. Please see *Board Policy: 3150 Tobacco Free Schools*.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The Board recognizes the need to provide a safe learning environment for students and staff. Therefore the Board has authorized the use of video cameras on District property to assist in ensuring the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property and to safeguard District buildings, grounds and equipment.

Video cameras will assist in ensuring that behavior on school property is consistent with the established safety and conduct rules, policies and procedures. If unacceptable behavior is observed and/or reported, timely and appropriate corrective action will occur.

Cameras will be utilized to monitor activity in common areas such as hallways and parking lots. Only employees authorized by the Superintendent may use and/or monitor the video surveillance system.

To protect the privacy rights of staff, students, and visitors all state and federal statutes will be followed. For more information see **Board Policy 3097 – Use of Video Monitoring Cameras** or contact the Student Assistance and Safety Program Manager.

WEAPONS

Carrying, bringing, using or possessing any weapon or dangerous instrument in any District building, school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited. Except for authorized law enforcement officials, the District prohibits carrying concealed weapons on District property. Staff members who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS

ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS TO STUDENTS

When a student's licensed health care provider and parents believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours, the health care provider and parent must request that the school dispense the medication to their child student and otherwise follow the District's procedures on dispensing medication. All medications will be kept in locked storage in the [office] unless a student is authorized to carry medication on his/her person during the school day. Parents of students who must carry and self-administer medication must complete the Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Medication form and return it to the building office.

Teachers may be expected to assist students in remembering when a medication is scheduled to be administered. If the student refuses to take medication, teachers are expected to notify the parent and school nurse whenever possible. Attempts to contact parents must be documented as to date and time. A teacher may not administer medication to a student without parental consent and an appropriate delegation by the school nurse. For more information regarding the administration of medications to students see **Board Policy 3070- Administration of Medication**.

CLASS INTERRUPTIONS

The District is committed to protecting instructional time. Class interruptions of any kind will be kept to a minimum. Students are not to be permitted to interrupt a class in session without authorization from an administrator or the classroom teacher. Intercom use is restricted to administrative use or administrative approved use only.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The use of corporal punishment in any form is strictly prohibited by the district. Corporal punishment is defined as the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain.

A staff member is authorized to employ physical force when, in his/her professional judgment, the physical force is necessary to prevent a student from harming himself/herself, others, or doing harm to district property.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum established for the courses and grade levels of this district provides the flexibility necessary to meet the individual needs of students and their divergent learning rates and styles. Deviations from established curriculum, textbooks, and instructional materials are not permitted without prior building principal approval. Teachers with questions should contact the building principal.

It is the expectation of the district, that all employees implement district adopted curriculum and technological resources in their classrooms and instruction. Teachers will employ instructional

practices and strategies, framework and best practices as defined by administration. Any variation or alternative to district adopted curriculum or technology must receive advanced approval through the curriculum office. District approved scope, sequence and pacing has been established in all curricular areas and posted on sharepoint along with any district developed common unit assessments. Adjustments to sequence and pacing must also receive prior approval through the curriculum office.

Though teaching methodology may vary, classroom instruction is expected to reflect “best practices” consistent with research on effective instruction as defined by district administration. Teachers are expected to deliver program materials with fidelity, meeting program expectation, philosophical methodology and within the directives set by building level administrators and the administration of the district.

Teachers are expected to actively participate in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process with their grade level and/or content area colleagues. Every staff member will annually receive a copy of the District PLC handbook. Staff are expected to familiarize themselves with the handbook’s contents.

The District may receive and/or provide distance, online and technology delivered learning programs, as provided in Montana law and set forth in District procedures. **Teachers and specialists will be required to follow District guidelines including the adaptation of District remote standards, online learning and digital platforms.**

DISMISSAL OF CLASSES

Teachers should never dismiss a class before the established dismissal time. Detaining the entire class after dismissal time is also discouraged. Whenever individual students are detained after class, the teacher is expected to provide the student a note for the student’s next class teacher. This will help reduce unnecessary hall traffic, as students reporting to class late will need to account for their tardiness.

FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Field trips and other student activities involving travel may be authorized by the building principal or program supervisor when such trips or activities contribute to the achievement of desirable educational goals.

Requests should be submitted to the building principal well in advance of the proposed activity. All such requests will be considered, based on such factors as availability of funds, the educational value derived, the safety and welfare of the students involved, impact on the regular school program, and availability of appropriate supervision, either from within school staff or from volunteers.

Written parental permission must be obtained for each approved trip. Teachers are expected to submit the signed forms showing parental approval and acknowledgment of the student conduct guidelines, to the office prior to departure for the scheduled activity.

The presence of a person with a currently valid American Red Cross standard first aid card or current certification from an equivalent first aid course is required during school-sponsored activities, including field trips, athletic and other off-campus events.

Staff members should contact the office for appropriate substitute and vehicle arrangements and related field trip procedures and forms. Substitute teachers should not be participating in the field trip activity in lieu of the regular classroom teacher.

Any out-of-state or out-of-the-country travel or field trips that extend overnight must be approved by the Superintendent.

For additional information, please refer to **Board Policy 2075 – Field Trips and Administrative Procedure 2075P**.

GRADING

The evaluation of student progress is a primary responsibility of all teachers. The highest possible level of student achievement is a common goal of both the district and the home. As a close working relationship between the district and the home is essential to the accomplishment of this goal, regular communications with parents is essential.

Teachers should use a variety of communication devices, including telephone and personal conferences as well as written grade reports, to keep parents well informed. Teachers in grades 4-12 must keep information in PowerSchool updated so parents and students can access current information through the PowerSchool parent and student portals.

At the beginning of the grading period, students and parents are to be informed regarding the basis of the grades and the methods to be used in determining grades.

Grading guidelines can be found in the Student/Parent Handbooks.

LEGAL ACTION INVOLVING STUDENTS

District employees may be asked to testify or provide information to entities involved in legal action involving students. At no time should employees provide any information without first consulting with their building principal or immediate supervisor. This includes subpoenas, depositions, or any other information request related to a legal action involving a student.

STUDENT CONDUCT

In addition to adopted Board policies governing student conduct, administrative regulations specifying student-conduct expectations have been established. These rules apply to actions which occur on district property, at any district-sponsored activity regardless of location; or when traveling to or from school for district-sponsored activities. Disregard of these rules constitutes grounds for suspension, expulsion, or other reasonable disciplinary action.

All teachers are expected to review the student conduct rules contained in the Student/Parent Handbook with their students during the first week of the school year.

Educators may develop student conduct rules unique to their own classroom. All such rules must be consistent with district policy and local building administrative regulations governing student conduct and discipline. Classroom rules and consequences are to be reviewed with students, posted in classrooms, and made available to parents.

VISITORS

Students are not permitted to bring visitors to school without prior approval of the building principal.

Staff members are expected to report any unauthorized person on school property to the building principal or their supervisor.

**HELENA PUBLIC SCHOOL
2020-2021 EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT**

Employees acknowledge through the Insurance Open Enrollment process that they have read, received, understand and will comply with, the Helena Public Schools Employee Handbook and follow all District Policies and procedures.

This handbook is available on the Helena Public Schools Website.

Employees are directed to consult with their Principal, supervisor or District Human Resources Office if they have questions.

By acknowledging receipt, employees commit to and understand:

1. that this Handbook is intended as a general guide to District personnel policies and procedures and that it is not intended to create any sort of contract between the District and any one or all of its employees;
2. that in the event there is a conflict between this Handbook and District policies and procedures, the policies and procedures will control;
3. that the District may modify any or all of these policies and procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without prior notice; and
4. that in the event the District modifies any of the policies or procedures contained in this Handbook, the changes will become binding immediately upon issuance of the new policy or procedure by the District.

Employees understand that as an employee of the District they are required to review and follow the policies and procedures set forth in this Employee Handbook and agree to do so.