



North Polk community school district  
Albion, Ellettsburg, Polk City, & Sheldon Iowa USA

**CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL  
HANDBOOK  
2016-2017**

Effective: July 1, 2016

This handbook has been prepared specifically for  
The classified employees of:

North Polk Community School District  
Alleman, IA

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## Welcome to North Polk Community Schools

On behalf of the Board of Education of the North Polk Community School District (hereafter referred to as “North Polk Community Schools” or the “School District”) and your fellow employees throughout the organization, welcome to North Polk Community Schools.

As an employee of the North Polk Community School District we have an obligation that extends far beyond the walls of our school or our individual jobs. As a staff member—whether teacher or support staff—we are responsible for the young people we work with. Please accept this responsibility with a positive attitude. Only with the commitment of each and every employee can we attain our ultimate goal of excellence in education.

## Vision, Mission, & Core Value Statements of the North Polk CSD



**VISION**

North Polk Community Schools exist for **ALL** learners to become:

- Quality Producers
- Knowledgeable People
- Problem Solvers
- Effective Communicators
- Collaborative Workers

**MISSION**

Learning for all **BY** learning from all

**CORE VALUES**

- Resilience
- Resourcefulness
- Responsibility
- Relationships
- Respect



Each and every day you have the opportunity to make an important contribution to this mission through your hard work and a growing knowledge of your specific job. We are glad you are a part of our team! We hope you will use your individual skills, abilities, and knowledge to achieve your fullest potential as a valued member of North Polk Community Schools.



***SECTION I. INTRODUCTION***



## **Scope of this Publication**

This employee handbook applies to all **classified personnel** of the North Polk Community School District. It provides general information about working conditions, employee benefits, and the policies affecting his/her employment.

## **Definition of Classified Personnel**

In general, **classified employees** are those personnel who are assigned to positions which do not require an Iowa Department of Education teaching or administrative license.

Classified employees shall include but are not limited to: custodial and maintenance, administrative assistants, para educators, health services, food service, transportation, finance, and human resource personnel who are employed on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis.

See Board Policy 411.1 Classified Employees Defined for more information.

## **Purpose of this Publication**

This publication has been prepared to acquaint employees with the North Polk Community School District and provide he/she with general information pertaining to his/her employment with the School District. While reading this handbook remember that it is general in nature and does not contain complete details of each subject; nor does it exhaustively address all policies affecting employment. Furthermore, employee benefit information and policies related to a specific job classification can be found in a separate publication which is administered by the District Office.

Employees should read and understand all provisions of this handbook carefully and thoroughly; adherence to these policies is required of all classified personnel. North Polk Community Schools reserves the unilateral right, in its discretion, to interpret, modify, alter, amend, change, discontinue, suspend, cancel, or terminate all or any part of the benefits, terms, or conditions of employment described in this employee handbook, with or without written or verbal notice.

Nothing in this employee handbook is intended to, or creates a guarantee of employment, or a contract of, or right to, employment; and none of the provisions should be construed as a guarantee that an employee will be treated in any specific manner.

Employment with North Polk Community Schools is considered an “at will” arrangement, which means that the Employee may terminate his/her employment at any time, and that North Polk Community Schools has this same right.



The Board of Education retains absolute discretion with respect to all decisions affecting staff employment and policies. Any oral or written representation made to an employee, at the time of hire or during employment, does not create a right to any specific term or condition of employment or treatment unless it is committed to writing and executed by the President of the School District Board of Education.

After reading this booklet, if an employee has any questions about policies or benefits applicable to his/her employment with North Polk Community Schools he/she should direct them to the District Office.

North Polk Community Schools recognizes that our progress and success depends on the ability, initiative, and dedication of our employees. We wish you every success as an employee of North Polk Community Schools!

### **Our Employment Relationship**

Unless otherwise stated in an employment contract signed by the employee and the President of the School District Board of Education, employment with North Polk Community Schools is not offered, contracted, or promised for any specific length of time. Each employee is free to resign at will, at any time, and for any reason. In such cases the School District does expect a two week (10 working days) notice. Similarly, the School District may terminate the employment relationship at will, at any time, and for any reason.

### **Our Community Relations Philosophy**

North Polk Community Schools values its reputation for ethical and honest business dealings with the community at large. The School District is firmly committed to the concepts of professionalism and responsiveness when interacting with the members of our community.

All members of the community must be given prompt and complete answers to their written and verbal inquiries. Additionally, the attitude and demeanor of each School District employee when dealing with a member of the community must communicate the School District's sincere concern for their respective question or problem. Any employee who cannot address such a particular question or area of concern will pursue the matter to another School District employee in a position to help. Only through this uncompromising commitment to our community members will the School District continue to thrive and succeed in the future.

***SECTION II. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES***

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

North Polk Community School is fully committed to avoiding discrimination, and to extend Equal Employment Opportunity to all applicants for employment, and all employees, on the basis of individual merit and qualifications. It is the goal of North Polk Community Schools to utilize all available human resources in an optimal manner by selecting the most qualified individual for each job. We are committed to creating a work environment that is free of discrimination in any form, where employees can be productive, creative, and innovative and challenged in their work. There will be no barriers to fair employment.

It is the policy of North Polk Community Schools to provide Equal Employment Opportunity in full compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, Equal Pay Act of 1963 (as amended), the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended), the Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (as amended), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Act of 1974 (as amended), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (as amended), the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act of 1994 (as amended), The Family and Medical Leave Act (as amended) and Presidential Executive Orders. If you have any questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equality Coordinator, Kristi Mixdorf, Director of the Teaching and Learning, 13930 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Alleman, Iowa [515-984-3400](tel:515-984-3400) [kristi.mixdorf@northpolk.org](mailto:kristi.mixdorf@northpolk.org)

See Board Policy 401.1 for inquiries regarding Equal Employment Opportunity.

## **Our Policy of Mutual Respect**

While it is the policy of North Polk Community Schools to comply with all legal requirements regarding Equal Employment Opportunity and maintaining a discrimination-free workplace, it is also our mission to promote a spirit of teamwork, mutual respect, and cooperation among all employees. To achieve this goal we ask that all employees treat their co-workers, supervisors, subordinates, and students with the same respect, honesty, consideration, and cooperation that they in turn would like to receive.

## **Sexual Harassment and Other Discriminatory Harassment**

North Polk Community Schools maintains a policy of Equal Employment Opportunity and extends Equal Employment Opportunities to all employees and job applicants on the basis of individual merit and qualifications. It is the School District's intent to maintain a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, intimidation, coercion, or harassment, including sexual harassment.

North Polk Community Schools is fully committed to the elimination of all types and forms of workplace harassment. All employees are responsible for conducting themselves in a business-like manner, which includes demonstrating respect to others. Any behavior or action which is unduly coercive, intimidating, harassing, or sexual



in nature is inappropriate and strictly prohibited. This applies to all business or related interactions between employees, supervisors, managers, students, customers, and vendors.

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. No employee, either female or male, should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct either verbal or physical.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior which is not welcome, which is personally offensive, which debilitates morale, and which therefore interferes with our work effectiveness.

Such conduct, whether committed by supervisors or non-supervisory personnel, is specifically prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or degrading verbal comments about an individual or his or her appearance; the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; or any offensive or abusive physical contact.

In addition, no one should imply, threaten, or promise that an applicant or employee's "cooperation" of a sexual nature (or refusal thereof) will have any impact on that individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, career development or any other condition of employment.

To avoid the appearance of favoritism or bias, the School District strongly discourages dating, romantic or intimate relationships—including marriage—between employees if one of the employees exercises supervisory control over the other employee. If such a situation should arise, the School District reserves the right to transfer one or both employees and take any additional action that the School District deems appropriate.

**Other Harassment:** This policy also prohibits unwelcome and offensive conduct or materials that pertain to race, color, national origin, creed, socio-economic status, religion, sex, marital status, gender identity, disability or other protected status. Some examples include but are not limited to: racial or ethnic jokes or comments; disparaging remarks about a person's age, religion or disability; the possession or display of materials that mock or show disrespect for a particular race, religion, ethnic group, age group or disability.

The North Polk Board of Education affirms the right of all staff to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm, and harassment.

If an employee has witnessed or has been the victim of harassment, he/she should immediately report the incident to his/her immediate supervisor. If the situation is not resolved with the supervisor, then the employee should pursue the complaint at the next level.

Level 1: Immediate Supervisor

Level 2: District Equity Coordinator

Level 3: Superintendent

Level 4: Board of Education

All employees are required to report any information or knowledge they may have concerning any violation or alleged violation of this policy to the appropriate individual within North Polk Community Schools. All allegations of sexual harassment or other forms of harassment are taken very seriously and will be thoroughly and promptly investigated by the appropriate personnel within the School District. North Polk Community Schools will take appropriate remedial action, if necessary. The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible and appropriate.

Retaliation against employees who report harassment or discrimination, toward those who participate in the investigation of such allegations is strictly prohibited. Retaliation includes any employment action that might dissuade a reasonable employee from making or supporting an allegation of harassment. Examples vary based on the circumstances, but may include firing, demotion, loss of pay, loss of employment opportunities, or undesirable work assignments.

Employees who engage in harassment or retaliation are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, even for the first offense.

See Board Policy 403.5 Harassment for more information.

### **Requests for Religious Accommodation**

North Polk Community School respects the religious beliefs and practices of all employees and will make, upon written request, an accommodation for such observances when a reasonable accommodation is available that does not create an undue hardship on the School District.

An employee who believes their religious beliefs or practices conflicts with their job, work schedule, or with the School District's policy or practice on dress and appearance, or with other aspects of employment with the School District and who seeks a religious accommodation must submit a written request identifying the specific accommodation to the District Office. The written request will include the type of religious conflict that exists and the employee's suggested accommodation.

The District Office will evaluate the request considering whether a work conflict exists



due to a sincerely held religious belief or practice and whether an accommodation is available which is reasonable and which does not create an undue hardship on the School District. Examples of accommodations include a change in job, using paid leave or leave without pay, or allowing an exception to the dress and appearance code which does not impact safety or uniform requirements.

The District Office and the employee will meet to discuss the employee's request and the School District's decision as to the requested accommodation.

### **Life Threatening and Communicable Illnesses**

North Polk Community Schools recognizes that employees with life threatening and/or communicable illnesses, including but not limited to cancer, heart disease, hepatitis, and AIDS/HIV can often continue in their normal life pursuits, including employment. All employees, however, must be able to meet the expected performance standards of their job, with or without reasonable accommodation. In addition, medical evidence must indicate that the employee's condition does not create a direct threat to the affected employee, other employees or students.

Likewise, where an employee is capable of continuing employment as outlined above, all other employees and supervisors are expected to demonstrate sensitivity toward the affected employee. Personal concerns may not excuse any employee from fulfilling the responsibilities of his or her position. Information concerning an employee's life threatening or communicable illness shall be treated as confidential and will be used or discussed in a professional manner and only on a strict "need to know" basis.

See Board Policy 403.3 Communicable Diseases – Employees for more information.

### **Policy Statement Regarding Individuals with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires employers to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities. It is the policy of the School District to comply with all federal and state laws and guidelines concerning the employment of persons with disabilities.

It is the School District's policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

North Polk Community Schools will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of their assigned job. An individual who can be reasonably accommodated for a job without undue hardship will be given the same consideration for that position as any other applicant.

All employees are required to comply with safety standards. Applicants who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals in the workplace—when such threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation—will not be hired.



Current employees who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the other individuals in the workplace will be placed on appropriate leave until an organizational decision has been made in regard to the employee's immediate employment situation.

The District Office is responsible for implementing this policy, including resolution of requests for reasonable accommodation, safety, and undue hardship issues.

#### Definitions as used in this policy

The following terms have the indicated meaning and will be adhered to in relation to this policy statement.

"Disability" means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more *major life activities* of the individual in question; the individual has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment.

"Major life activities" include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

"Major bodily functions" A *major life activity* also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

"Direct threat" means a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.

"Qualified individual" means an individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the employment position that such individual holds or desires.

"Reasonable accommodation" is a modification to a job, employment practice, or work environment that makes it possible for an applicant or employee with a disability to perform the functions of the job. These may include making existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, restructuring a job by reallocating or redistributing marginal job functions, modifying work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or job-related devices, adjustments to marginal work procedures or job functions and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

"Undue hardship" means an action that presents significant difficulty, disruption or expense to the employer, its resources, and the nature of its operations, or that would require violation of safety/health laws or regulations. In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the School District, factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

1. The nature and net cost of the needed accommodation in relation to the employer's type of operation including the composition, structure, and functions of the workforce.
2. The overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in the provision of the reasonable accommodation, the number of persons employed at the facility, and the effect on the expenses and resources of the facility.
3. The overall financial resources of the employer, overall size of the employer's business with respect to the number of employees and the number, type and location of the facilities.
4. Impact of the accommodation upon the operation of the facility, including the impact on the ability of other employees to perform their duties and the impact on the facility's ability to conduct business.

"Essential functions of the job" refers to those job activities that are determined by the employer to be essential or "core" to performing the job; essential functions of the job cannot be modified or removed from the job in question.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality of Medical Information**

North Polk Community Schools has adopted a policy that protects the privacy and confidentiality of protected health information (PHI) whenever it is used by representatives of the School District. The private and confidential use of such information will be the responsibility of all individuals whose job duties require access to protected health information in the course of their jobs.

PHI refers to individually identifiable health information received by the company's group health plans and/or received by a health care provider, health plan or health care clearinghouse that relates to past or present health of an individual. PHI includes medical conditions, health status, claims experience, medical histories, physical examinations, genetic information, and evidence of disability.

Annually or as necessary, the company performs benefits enrollment, changes in enrollment and payroll deductions, provides assistance in claims problem resolution and explanation of benefits issues, and assists in coordination of benefits with other providers. Some or all of these activities may require the use or transmission of PHI. Thus, all information related to these processes will be maintained and communicated in the strictest of confidence and employees will not disclose PHI from these processes for non employment-related actions.

Disclosures that do not qualify as protected health information include the following:

1. Requests by medical or health insurance providers for treatment



and/or payment, disclosures requested to be made to authorized parties by the individual protected health information holder, disclosures to government agencies for reporting or enforcement purposes.

2. Information external to the health plan is not considered protected health information if the information is being furnished for claims processing purposes involving workers' compensation and/or short- or long-term disability plans and medical information received to verify ADA or FMLA status.

Personnel medical records and disclosures of protected health information will be maintained for a period of six years as required by federal law. Records that have been maintained for the maximum interval will be destroyed in a manner to ensure that such data is not compromised in the future in accordance with the School District's document/record destruction policy.

See board policy 401.5 Employee Records for more information.

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

In compliance with state law and to provide protection to victims of child abuse, incidents of child abuse should be reported to the proper authorities.

See Board Policy 402.2 Child Abuse Reporting for more information.

### **Abuse of Students by School District Employees**

Physical or sexual abuse of students, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, by employees will not be tolerated.

See Board Policy 402.3 Abuse of Students by School District Employees for more information.

***SECTION III. EMPLOYMENT PROCESSING AND  
COORDINATION***

## **Physical Examinations**

North Polk Community Schools requires all classified personal, to whom a conditional offer of employment has been extended, to undergo a complete medical examination prior to their initial job assignment.

Successful applicants for employment will be required, as a condition of employment, to take a medical examination to establish their fitness to perform the jobs for which they have applied without endangering the health and safety of themselves or others.

All such medical examinations required by the company will be performed by a physician or licensed medical facility approved and designated by the School District. The School District will reimburse employees at the Board approved rate for the medical examination. Medical examinations paid for by the School District are the property of the School District and the examination records will be treated as confidential information and kept in each employee's confidential medical file. However, records of specific examinations, if required by law or regulation, will be made available to the employee, persons designated and authorized by the employee, public agencies, relevant insurance companies, or the employee's physician.

See Board Policy 403.1 Employee Physical Examinations for more information.

## **Background Checks**

In order to protect the safety and health of its students and employees, North Polk Community Schools requires all applicants for employment to undergo a background screening as a condition of employment.

All applicants for employment with the School District are asked to sign a release form authorizing the appropriate background check. Any applicant who refuses to sign a release form is no longer considered eligible for employment.

When reasonable cause exists, the School District may require an existing employee or contractor to submit to a background check. Reasonable cause in this case means that the School District has discovered reliable information implicating that an employee or contractor may present safety or security risks to the School District's students and/or employees. Current employees or contractors who refuse to sign a release authorizing the appropriate background check will be released from employment with the School District.

If an applicant is denied employment in whole or in part because of information obtained in their background check, the applicant will be informed of this and given the name, address, and telephone number of the screening provider to contact if they have specific questions about the results of the check or if they want to dispute its accuracy.

### Criminal Court Records Search

All applicants are required to disclose on the North Polk Community School's employment application if they have been convicted of a crime in the past or if they are listed on the child abuse registry, sex offender registry, or the dependent adult abuse registry. If they have, they are required to describe the situation in full on the application.

Individuals may be disqualified for employment if they disclose, or if a criminal court record reveals that they:

1. Have a felony conviction or a conviction involving a violent crime;
2. Have a conviction involving theft, robbery, fraud, embezzlement, or drugs;
3. Are listed on a child abuse registry, sex offender registry, or the dependent adult abuse registry; or
4. Have any other conviction, regardless as to when it occurred, which in the School District's judgment causes it to believe that the applicant, employee, or contractor may present a safety, security, health, or public relations risk to the School District, its students, and/or its employees.

When the results of an individual's criminal courts record search contain adverse information, the School District will consider the following: (1) the nature and seriousness of the criminal conviction in relation to the position sought, (2) the time elapsed since the criminal conviction took place, (3) the degree of rehabilitation which has taken place since the incidence took place, (4) the likelihood that the person will commit the crime again, (5) the number of criminal convictions committed by the individual involved.

### Employment Reference and Education Records Verification

Information obtained from employment references and education records is used to: (1) verify the accuracy of employment information provided, (2) verify and/or identify job-related accomplishments, skills, abilities, and characteristics that help establish the applicant's qualification for employment, and (3) determine, evaluate, and ensure the applicant's overall suitability for the position in question.

The following characteristics may be subject to rejection for employment by the School District:

1. Dates of employment significantly disagree with information provided on the employment application or during the interview process;



2. Job titles/duties significantly disagree with what was provided by the applicant;
3. Reason for termination significantly differs from what was provided by the applicant;
4. Any previous employer indicates unsatisfactory performance or misconduct; and
5. Education information obtained from the appropriate institution significantly disagrees with what was provided by the applicant or employee.

### Driving Records Check

Applicants, employees, and contractors who will be assigned a School District motor vehicle will be subject to a driver's record background check. Any instances of the following events or combination of events in the past twelve (12) months may be reason for disqualification of employment:

1. Suspended license;
2. Driving while under the influence (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI) charges;
3. Revoked or barred license; or
4. Maximum amount of points allowed by the State of Iowa, depending on violation type.

Any applicant who provides misleading, erroneous, or willfully deceptive information to the School District on an employment application or form, resume, or during the course of a selection interview is immediately eliminated from further consideration for employment with the School District.

### **Employee Orientation**

Employees must know their role and duties. New employees may be required to participate in an orientation program.

See Board Policy 401.11 Employee Orientation for more information.

## The Performance Management Program

### Definition

The North Polk Community School's Classified Employee Performance Management Program can generally be defined as the following, **(a) a process, (b) for establishing a shared understanding about what is to be achieved on the job, (c) that increases the probability of achieving success.**

**(a) A process...**it is not just about a set of forms and a rating scale—the annual performance appraisal ritual. It is about the everyday actions employees use to improve performance in themselves and others. It can not be separated from the management processes that exist within the organization.

**(b) ....for establishing a shared understanding about what is to be achieve on the job...**To improve performance, individuals need to have a common understanding about what performance and success in their jobs looks like. It can be a list of tasks, objectives, or results. It can also be a set of behaviors. Often it is both. Goals need to be clearly defined so the job holder knows what they are working toward.

**(c) ...that increases the probability of achieving success.** Performance Management has a clear purpose. It is about achieving success in the workplace for individuals and the organization in which they work. A continuous Performance Management process that delivers clarity, support, feedback, and recognition to all those involved will take a major step in ensuring significant performance improvement within the organization.

### The Process

The timing of the Annual Performance Review for each employee is determined solely by the School District but in general is based on either the employee's hire date or their last date of review. The Employee Review process consists of three basic phases which are outlined below:

#### **Phase I. Performance Assignment**

The supervisor and employee meet to plan the upcoming year. In their discussion(s) they come to agreement on the following:

Key Job Elements/Responsibilities: The key job duties and responsibilities of the job—the major areas within which the employee is responsible for getting results. Key job elements should be established based on the School District's Vision/Mission Statement, organizational and department objectives, as well as the personal development needs and goals of the employee.



Objectives/Goals: The specific objectives the employee will achieve with each key job element. These objectives should be established based on the employee's past performance and their current skill set and behaviors which influence their performance level on the job.

The results of this meeting are recorded and readily available for future reference by both the employee and supervisor.

### **Phase II. Annual Performance Review**

The supervisor and employee meet to review the employee's level of performance over the entire past twelve-month period. The supervisor records the results of this meeting and later presents a copy of the annual performance review to the employee for comments and signature. The annual performance review and any supporting documentation, are then forwarded to the Board Secretary.

### **Phase III. Performance Assignment for Upcoming Year**

The supervisor and employee meet to plan the upcoming year. Key job elements/responsibilities, objectives and goals, and personal goals are updated in preparation for the upcoming year.

See Board Policy 411.7 Classified Employee Evaluation for more information.

### **Internal Job Posting Policy**

Job posting or "internal job posting" is a process which helps current classified employees become aware of position openings before they are filled and assists the School District in discovering interested and qualified internal candidates in a timely fashion. It operates within a basic set of guidelines that facilitate the accomplishment of a primary objective—to be one of the several tools available to employees for attaining career goals.

The selection criteria to fill a position are multi-faceted and depend upon the position in question. When it is within its best interest, the School District will fill positions from within the organization, but candidates from outside the School District may also be considered and selected.

In general, the School District will post all open classified positions. The School District reserves the right to make exceptions to this guideline—for example, positions that can be filled from within the applicable department or certain managerial positions may not be posted and can be filled at management's discretion.

Position openings, which are posted, will be communicated via the School District website, bulletin boards, as well as the e-mail and fax systems. In general, open positions will be posted for a period of two weeks.

Interested candidates should complete a Position Interest form, and submit this to the District Office, prior to the stated deadline. Position Interest forms which are filled-out completely and which are legible, will be given top consideration. An accompanying resume is strongly encouraged.

These job-posting guidelines are in place to meet employee and School District needs. In certain situations, the School District may suspend or limit the posting process to expedite the attainment of business needs. Additionally, the process serves as a guideline, and may be changed or eliminated at the School District's discretion without prior notification.

### **Employee Complaints/Concerns**

To enhance the School District's commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity the School District has established a systematic "Fair Treatment Procedure" for addressing employee problems which is available to all employees. This procedure allows employees to receive fair and impartial reviews of issues that affect them.

If an employee has an area of personal concern, such as an argument with a co-worker, unsafe or unhealthy work conditions, disagreement with a disciplinary action, or any issue relating to perceived race, sex, age, national origin, color, pregnancy, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or unfavorable conditions within the workplace, the employee should pursue the following steps, in the sequence given:

1. First, discuss the problem with his/her immediate supervisor.
2. If the first step does not solve the problem, submit a memorandum to his/her supervisor explaining the problem. A copy of this memorandum should also be given to the next higher level of management, and to the District Office.
3. If the situation or issue has not been resolved in a timely manner after the previous step, the School District Superintendent should be notified.
4. If the situation or issue still has not been resolved after the previous steps, the North Polk Board of Education should be notified.

In addition to, or instead of, the procedure outlined above, all employees are welcome to consult with the School District Superintendent at any time, about any question, issue, or concern.

Furthermore, if an employee's concern involves an issue or concern related to illegal discrimination or harassment, *he/she should contact the School District Superintendent directly* if the employee is not comfortable approaching his/her supervisor or the District Office.

If after exhausting all appropriate options and internal resources, the issue or concern can still not be fully resolved, the School District can facilitate the employee in coordinating with the appropriate state agency such as the Iowa Office of Citizens' Aid/Ombudsman or the Iowa Civil Rights Commission which may be able to provide further assistance and guidance.

See Board Policy 401.4 Employee Complaints for more information.

### **Access to Personnel and Medical Files**

The School District maintains a personnel and separate medical file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, resume, compensation information, performance information, and other employment records. The medical file contains such information as benefit enrollment/change forms, workers compensation information, and medical restrictions information. Personnel and medical files are the property of the School District and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only the School District Superintendent and specific management personnel of the School District who have a legitimate business related reason to review information in these files are allowed to do so. Employees may also have access to their own files at all reasonable times. If an employee would like a copy of his/her personnel or medical file, he/she should contact the District Office.

See Board Policy 401.5 Employee Records for more information.

### **Employee Suggestions**

All employees are invited to share with the School District any ideas and suggestions they believe may be of benefit to the School District and its operations or the welfare of its employees and students. Ideas or suggestions should be put in writing and given to employee's supervisor. Also, the same procedure may be used to raise specific questions or problems which the School District may need to address.

### **Employment of Relatives**

The School District will consider members of current employee's immediate family for employment on the same basis as any other job applicant by assessing work experience and qualifications.

It is within the discretion of the Superintendent of North Polk Schools to allow one family member employed by the school district to supervise another family member employed by the school district, subject to the approval of the school board.

This policy also applies when assigning, transferring, or promoting an employee. For the purpose of this policy, "immediate family" or "related individual" includes: mother, father, spouse, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or stepchild. This policy also applies to close personal relationships.

See Board Policy 401.3 Nepotism for more information.

### **Employee Resignation**

Classified employees who wish to resign during the school year will give the School Board notice of their intent to resign and final date of employment and cancel their contract thirty (30) days prior to their last working day. Notice of the intent to resign will be in writing to the superintendent.

See Board Policy 413.1 Classified Employee Resignation for more information.

***SECTION IV. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT***

## **Employee Responsibilities and Standards of Conduct**

An employee's most important responsibility is to learn what his/her job requires, and how to perform it efficiently and effectively. The School District will thrive and grow if all employees continually strive in the areas of quality, productivity, personal growth, community relations and safety on the job.

Organizations are judged by the actions of each of their individual employees. An employee's contacts with individuals both within and outside the School District—including students, parents, vendors, suppliers, and other professionals—should reflect positively on the North Polk Community School District at all times.

The School District has established a set of standards pertaining to employee conduct and performance because certain rules are necessary for the efficient operation of the School District and for the safety and benefit of all employees. The standards outlined in this policy apply to employees whenever the employee is representing the School District. As a general rule, the School District will not tolerate any behavior or conduct that might interfere with our daily operations, discredit the School District, or be offensive to students, parents, vendors, suppliers, or other employees.

### **Conduct that is Expected of all Employees**

The following list gives an overview of the kind of positive conduct that is expected of all School District employees:

1. Report to work punctually, as scheduled.
2. Give proper advance notice whenever unable to work or to report to work as scheduled, or in instances in which you must leave work prior to the conclusion of your schedule.
3. Comply with all School District safety, security, and personnel regulations.
4. Wear clothing appropriate to the work being performed.
5. Maintain a clean and orderly work place and work area.
6. Treat all visitors and fellow employees in a courteous and respectful manner.

### **Inappropriate and Unacceptable Conduct**

The School District cannot realistically list every possible inappropriate or unacceptable type of work behavior. To a great degree, the School District must rely on the individual common sense and good judgment of our employees. The following list is not all-inclusive, but lists examples of **conduct that is prohibited:**

1. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs, or the use, sale, dispensing, or possession of alcohol and/or illegal drugs during working hours, or on School District premises, or in School District vehicles.
2. Use of inappropriate, vulgar, or abusive language.
3. Possessing firearms or other weapons on School District property or in School District vehicles.
4. Refusing to follow managerial instructions concerning a job-related matter or engaging in any other type of insubordinate conduct.
5. Fighting or assault on any other employee, student, vendor, or visitor.
6. Engaging in the theft, destruction, defacement or misuse of any School District property, or the property of another employee.
7. Gambling on School District property or in School District vehicles.
8. Falsifying or altering any School District record or report, including employment applications, medical reports, time and attendance records, expense accounts, invoices, absentee reports, or shipping or receiving records.
9. Engaging in threatening or intimidating behavior.
10. Nicotine usage on School District property or in School District vehicles.
11. Violating the School District's policies on solicitation or distribution.
12. Providing false or misleading information in response to a School District investigation or inquiry.
13. Engaging in horseplay, rough housing, or rowdy behavior.
14. Sleeping on the job.
15. Failing to report to work without contacting the School District.

Contact your supervisor or the District Office if you are faced with a situation in which you are not sure of the appropriate conduct or behavior which is expected of you.

## **Reporting of Arrests and Convictions**

In the event that employees experience any arrests, the filing of any criminal charges, the disposition of any criminal charges pending against them, and/or any charges relating to operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated, they must notify the Superintendent. Notifications to the Superintendent must be given within five (5) business days of date on which the employee is arrested, convicted, or receives notification of any action that is covered by this policy.

See Board Policy 404.3 Reporting of Arrests and Convictions for more information.

## **Progressive Discipline**

In some but not all instances, progressive discipline may be used to address unacceptable behavior, misconduct, and/or unsatisfactory job performance. Through a progressive disciplinary program, the School District can match corrective, remedial action with the seriousness and degree of the misconduct at hand. In general, minimal corrective action will be taken for minor offenses, and stronger, more stringent corrective measures are taken to address offenses which the School District considers more serious in nature.

Disciplinary action may take the form of an oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension (with or without pay), or termination of employment. Appropriate discipline in each case may be determined by considering, among other things, the seriousness of the offense, the employee's overall employment record, and previous disciplinary actions involving the employee in question.

See Board Policy 413.3 Classified Employee Suspension and Board Policy 413.4 Classified Employee Dismissal for more information

## **Purpose**

Our progressive discipline policy and procedure is designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable behavior and /or performance issues. It has been designed consistent with our organizational values, HR best practices and employment laws.

Outlined below are the steps of our progressive discipline policy and procedure. North Polk Schools reserves the right to combine or skip depending upon facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Some of the factors that will be considered depend upon whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling and/or training, the employee's work record and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on our organization.

## **Procedure**

### **Step 1: Counseling and Verbal Warning**

Step 1 creates an opportunity for the immediate supervisor to schedule a meeting with an employee to bring attention to the existing performance, conduct or attendance issue. The supervisor should discuss with the employee the nature of the problem or violation of the company policies and procedures. The supervisor is expected to clearly outline expectations and steps the employee must take to improve performance or resolve the problem.

Within five business days, the supervisor will prepare written documentation of a step 1 meeting. The employee will be asked to sign this document. The employee's signature is needed to demonstrate the employee's understanding of the issues and corrective actions needed.

### **Step 2: Written Warning**

While it is hoped that the performance, conduct or attendance issues that were identified in step 1 have been corrected, North Polk recognizes that this may not always be the case. A written warning involves a more formal documentation of the performance, conduct or attendance issues and consequences.

During step 2 the immediate supervisor and a division manager or director will meet with the employee and review any additional incidents or information about the performance, conduct or attendance issues as well as any prior relevant corrective action plans. Management will outline the consequences for the employee of his or her continued failure to meet performance and /or conduct expectations. A formal performance improvement plan (PIP) requiring the employee's immediate and sustained corrective action will be issued within five business days of a step 2 meeting.

A warning outlining that the employee may be subject to additional discipline up to and including termination if immediate and sustained corrective action is not taken may also be included in the written warning.

### **Step 3: Suspension and Final Written Warning**

There may be performance, conduct or safety incidents so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace. When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the employee or others, the immediate supervisor may suspend the employee pending the results of an investigation.

Suspensions that are recommended as part of the normal progression of this progressive discipline policy and procedure are subject to approval from a next-level manager and HR.

Depending upon the seriousness of the infraction, the employee may be suspended without pay in full-day increments consistent with federal, state and local wage-and – hour employment laws. Nonexempt/hourly employees may not substitute or use an accrued paid vacation or sick day in lieu of the unpaid suspension. Due to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) compliance issues, unpaid suspension of salaried/exempt employees is reserved for serious workplace safety or conduct issues. HR will provide guidance so that the discipline is administered without jeopardizing the FLSA exemption status.

Pay may be restored to the employee if an investigation of the incident or infraction absolves the employee.

#### Step 4: Recommendation for Termination of Employment

The last and most serious step in the progressive discipline procedure is a recommendation to terminate employment. Generally, North Polk will try to exercise the progressive nature of this policy by first providing warnings, final written warning and/or suspension from the workplace before proceeding to a recommendation to terminate employment. However, North Polk reserves the right to combine and skip steps depending upon the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense. Furthermore, employees may be terminated without prior notice or disciplinary action.

Managements's recommendation to terminate employment must be approved by HR and division director or designate. Final approval may be required from the CEO or designate.

Nothing in this policy provides any contractual rights regarding employee discipline or counseling nor should anything in this policy be read or construed as modifying or altering the employment-at-will relationship between North Polk and its employee.

#### Appeal Process

Employee will have the opportunity to present information that may challenge information management has used to issue disciplinary action. The purpose of this process is to provide insight into extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the employee performance and/or conduct issues while allowing for an equitable solution.

If the employee does not present this information during any of the step meetings, he or she will have five business days after that meeting to present information.

#### Performance and Conduct Issues Not Subject to Progressive Discipline

Behavior that is illegal is not subject to progressive discipline and may be reported to local law enforcement. Theft, intoxication at work, fighting and other acts of violence

are also not subject to progressive discipline and may be grounds for immediate termination.

### Documentation

The employee will be provided copies of all progressive discipline documentation, including all performance improvement plans. The employee will be asked to sign copies of this documentation attesting to their receipt and understanding of the corrective action outlined in these documents.

Copies of these documents will be placed in the employee's official personnel file.

### Attendance and Tardiness

Attendance on the job each and every day is absolutely essential. The School District recognizes that an employee may legitimately miss a scheduled workday from time to time; however, habitual absenteeism and/or tardiness shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The definition of excessive absenteeism depends on the particular circumstances of each case.

The following six (6) general rules governing absenteeism will be strictly enforced.

1. All employees are expected to meet the requirements of their regular work schedule. Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or leaving work prior to the conclusion of their work schedule will not be tolerated.
2. If an employee is unable to report for work at the scheduled or expected time on any given day, the employee is required to call his or her immediate supervisor with a thorough explanation of the problem prior to the beginning of the shift. If the appropriate individual is unavailable to take the call, the employee should leave a well-detailed voice mail message.
3. Employees are expected to work all hours of their scheduled workday. In no instance should an employee discontinue working and/or leave their work area prior to the end of their scheduled shift. Additionally, in instances when an employee must leave their work area due to unforeseen personal circumstances or emergency situations they are required to inform their immediate supervisor prior to their departure.
4. Employees absent for personal medical reasons for three (3) or more consecutive workdays are required to bring a physician's statement to the District Office indicating the nature of the medical condition and when the employee may return to work without

restriction.

5. Any employee, whose absenteeism and/or tardiness, for any reason, becomes unacceptable, may be so notified and warned. Thereafter, disciplinary action shall be taken which may result in termination from the School District.
6. Employees who are absent from work for three (3) consecutive workdays without giving proper notice to the School District will be considered as having voluntarily quit. At that time, the School District will formally note the termination and advise the employee of this action by certified mail.

The School District keeps accurate attendance and tardiness records which are reviewed regularly to determine the frequency of absence and tardiness.

### **No Solicitation Rule**

The School District takes every feasible measure to prevent interference with employees while at work. Sales representatives, collection agents, or other individuals are not allowed in work areas during working hours without proper approval.

Employees are not permitted to distribute or circulate any printed matter that tends to promote or publicize the activities of any individual or organization while at work, or in established work areas.

### **Employee Political Activity**

Employees will not engage in political activity upon property under the jurisdiction of the School Board. Activities including, but not limited to, posting of political circulars or petitions, the distribution of political circulars or petitions, the collection of or solicitation for campaign funds, solicitation for campaign workers, and the use of students for writing or addressing political materials to or by students are specifically prohibited.

See Board Policy 401.9 Employee Political Activity for more information.

### **Conflict Of Interest and Outside Employment**

The School District respects the right of employees to engage in personal activities and business outside of their employment with the School District, provided such activities do not conflict with the interests of the School District.

The school board believes the primary responsibility of employees is to the duties of their position within the school district as outlined in their job description. The



board considers an employee's duties as part of a regular, full-time position as full-time employment. The board expects such employees to give the responsibilities of their position in the school district precedence over any other employment.

The School District requires that employees refrain from engaging in activities that might injure the reputation of the School District or create a conflict of interest. Further, employees cannot maintain, directly or indirectly, any outside business or financial interest, or engage in any activity, that may conflict with his or her job performance for the School District, or with the interests of the School District. You should contact the District Office, if you have any questions about whether or not a particular activity would violate this rule.

Additionally, School District employees shall not act as agents in any way, or accept commissions, royalties, rewards, or gratuities from textbook publishers, or the authors or producers of education materials or equipment used by the School District.

See Board Policy 401.2 Employee Conflict of Interest and Board Policy 402.6 Employee Outside Employment for more information.

### **Completion and Signing of Forms**

The School District uses many forms and other documents in determining and describing employee wages and benefits, such as time and attendance records, insurance applications, emergency contact information, etc. Whenever you are presented with a form or document and asked by the School District to complete or sign it, you must read it carefully, complete it accurately, and sign it. In general, School District policy prohibits employees from failing or refusing to complete or sign any of these important records and documents.

### **Personal Appearance**

The image our employees present to the community is important to the success of our School District. Employees are expected to set examples for students by their attire and personal appearance. Employees are expected to maintain a neat and clean appearance. A well-groomed businesslike appearance is expected of all employees. The School District retains sole discretion to determine how employees should appear as it pertains to personal attire and appearance during school hours and school functions.

Radical departure from conventional dress or personal grooming and hygiene standards will not be tolerated. Hairstyles must be neat, conservative and consistent with businesslike appearance. Shaggy unkept hair is not permissible—regardless of length—nor is hair that has shaved designs. Unusual artificial hair colors are unacceptable. Nose rings and other visible piercings anywhere but the ears are not permitted. If an employee is sent home to correct a violation of this policy, he or she

will not be compensated for time lost from work, and repeated violations will be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Personal Issues**

Because so much essential School District business is transacted by telephone, employees must limit personal telephone calls to an absolute minimum. This policy applies to both incoming and outgoing calls.

### **Personal Property**

Desks, lockers, and filing cabinets are School District property, and are provided for use by employees while at work. The School District retains full use and control of the premises and its furnishings at all times. The School District may search any School District property under the control of the employee, including the employee's personal effects and personal vehicle while on School District property. Loss or damage to an employee's personal property on School District premises is the sole liability of the employee.

### **Responsibility for Personal Property**

The School District shall not be held responsible for personal items brought onto school property. It is not the responsibility of the School District to replace, repair, or recover such personal property of employees.

### **Removal or Unauthorized Use of School District Property**

The removal of North Polk Community School District owned (or leased) equipment, furniture, or materials from School District grounds for personal use is prohibited except when receiving direct written authorization from the School District Superintendent. Additionally, it is expected all employees will use care and caution using School District owned or leased property.

The abuse or misuse of School District property is to be reported to the School District Superintendent immediately. The abuse or unauthorized use of School District property, materials, and equipment is subject to disciplinary action.

### **Substance Free Workplace**

The North Polk Community School District enforces a tobacco/nicotine-free policy in compliance with the State of Iowa Smoke Free Air Act of 2008. Use of tobacco and/ or use of other nicotine products, including look-alikes, of any type on School

District properties, grounds, facilities, and within School District vehicles is strictly prohibited at all times.

This policy extends to all employees, students, and visitors and applies at all times to include “sponsored” as well as “non-sponsored” School District events and activities.

See Board Policy 403.6 Substance-Free Workplace and Board Policy 905.2 Tobacco/Nicotine Free Environment for more information.

## **Use of Prescription or Nonprescription Legal Drugs**

### Prescription Drugs

An employee may bring to work and take a prescription drug during work hours only if the drug has been prescribed for the employee by a physician or other authorized prescriber and only if the drug is taken in accordance with the prescriber’s directions. All prescription drugs must be kept in the container in which they were received from the pharmacy or other dispenser.

Such medications should not be used at work if the side effects are such that the employee will be unproductive or may create safety hazards.

### Over-the-Counter Medications

An employee may bring to work and take an over-the-counter medication during work hours only if the over-the-counter medication is used for its intended purposes and in accordance with package directions and any supplemental directions of the employee’s physician.

Such medications should not be used at work if the side effects are such that the employee will be unproductive or may create safety hazards.

### Notification

All employees must notify the school nurse whenever they are using a legal drug (i.e., a prescription or over-the-counter medication), which potentially may affect safety or work-performance. In making this determination, the employee should rely on the warnings or cautions that are received with the particular lawful drug. The School District does not seek information on all drugs that an individual may be taking, but only those where there is an indication that the drug may affect performance, or there is a caution that one should not engage in certain activities which are part of the employee’s job duties while taking the drug.

Depending on the circumstances, employees may be reassigned, prohibited from

performing certain tasks, or prohibited from working if they are determined to be unable to perform their jobs safely while taking prescription or nonprescription legal drugs.

## **Electronic Communication Policy**

North Polk Community School District employees are encouraged to make innovative and creative use of the existing information technology in support of their educational-related day-to-day activities and job responsibilities. To accomplish this goal, it is important to establish a policy as to the proper and authorized use of computer, information technology, and resources. This policy is designed to communicate the acceptable use of School District information technology systems and resources.

This policy applies to “shared resources”—in other words, any computer or network connection capable device which has been purchased by the School District and which may conceivably be connected to the information technology network at some point in time. This policy applies to all employees whether on-site, at a satellite site, a home based site, or customer location, or if connected to the information technology network remotely.

### Electronic mail

While e-mail is very convenient and is representative of North Polk Community School's commitment to technology, it is necessary to have rules governing the use of e-mail. We must all recognize that e-mail is a tool to do our jobs more efficiently, but, like most tools, it must be used properly in order to be effective.

Consequently, North Polk Community Schools has adopted the following rules for employees to recognize and adhere to while using e-mail:

1. The e-mail system is the property of North Polk Community Schools and is intended solely to assist employees in conducting School District business. All messages transmitted via e-mail will be treated as business messages. North Polk Community School employees should understand that any personal messages sent on the system will be viewed as a business message and not a personal confidential message of the employee.
2. North Polk Community Schools has the right to enter the e-mail system and to review, copy, and delete any messages, and disclose messages to others at any time and without prior notice. Do not assume that messages are confidential because of the use of a password as such measures are for the protection of the School District, not the employee using the e-mail system.
3. Additionally, all employees who utilize the School District information technology equipment, resources, and e-mail system, (as well as third party email systems such a Hotmail, Yahoo or Gmail) should constantly be aware that such correspondence falls under the purview of the Open Meetings Law, *Iowa Code* Chapter 21 and the Public Records Law, *Iowa Code* Chapter 22.

4. E-mail users should therefore, keep their messages businesslike and refrain from using the system for gossip and personal messages. E-mail should not be profane, vulgar, defamatory, or harassing in nature or content.
5. North Polk Community School employees should recognize that confidential information should not be forwarded via e-mail outside the School District or even to employees within the School District unless the recipient of the message is authorized to receive such information.
6. Each employee should recognize that information transmitted via e-mail may contain confidential information, and appropriate steps should be taken to protect the security of such information.

#### Internet usage

North Polk Community Schools provides access to the internet to certain employees as a tool for maximizing their performance. The internet provides an access to a wide variety of information about subjects that may be related to matters of interest to North Polk Community Schools.

However, the internet also contains a wide range of uses and information that are not job-related. For this reason, and to ensure the proper usage of this tool, the School District has adopted the following rules on the use of the internet:

1. North Polk Community Schools reserves the right to monitor usage of the internet on its computers and network systems. In the event that any use is detected that is not job-related, North Polk Community Schools reserves the right to block access to the Internet for that particular site or for an employee or department.
2. Do not expect privacy in the use of the internet. All internet activity will be monitored and recorded. Individual use of the internet resources should be for authorized business purposes only.
3. North Polk Community School employees are strictly prohibited from using the internet to receive or transmit materials discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious, or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual-orientation, or any other characteristic protected by the law.
4. The internet is a non-secure transmission media and therefore, anything posted on the internet may become public knowledge. Confidential



information of any kind should not be transmitted across the Internet. All communications should be regarded as public and representative of the School District.

5. Internet users are responsible for defending the North Polk Community School's network from virus damage through the interception of any files at the point of receipt. All received files should be virus checked immediately prior to using the file in any way. Users must respect the licensing agreements when downloading any executable programs.
6. The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the internet is prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee did not create the material, does not own the material, or has not received authorization for its use, it should not be put on the internet.

The use of the internet should be done in a legal, ethical, and responsible manner. This includes abiding by appropriate laws concerning privacy, defamation, copyrights, and harassment. Each employee is responsible for adequately knowing the guidelines as to appropriate conduct.

### Procurement

In order to ensure accurate asset management, depreciation tracking, and consistent network-compliant configuration, compliance with licensing agreements, benefits from volume discount plans, and consistent deployment, all requests for hardware and/or software must be submitted to the School District Technology Director for review and approval. All software and/or hardware purchased by, or on behalf of North Polk Community Schools whether covered by these standards or not, shall remain the property of North Polk Community Schools

### Software

It is important in the work environment to provide efficient transfer of information and consistent application interfaces. File formats must be similar to allow documents and other electronic information to be easily accessed by a large group of people. To accomplish these goals, a standard computer configuration is required and a limit has been placed on which applications can be installed on an individual computer. With this in mind, employees are prohibited from adding, deleting or modifying the software configuration of School District computer and network equipment.

North Polk Community Schools prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its related documentation. Users are responsible for making use of software and electronic materials in accordance with copyright and licensing restrictions. School District equipment may not be used to violate copyrights or the terms of any license agreement. No employee may inspect, modify, distribute, or copy propriety data, directories, programs, files, disks, or other software without proper authorization.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Any employee who is found having a specific software application for which they cannot provide proof of a valid license may be required to purchase such license. In such instances the user will incur all related fees and charges.

### Hardware

To provide consistent support of computers and computer related accessories, it is important to standardize the configuration of computers within the School District and on the information technology network. Employees may not attempt to add, remove, or modify any component installed in or attached to any computer. The unauthorized purchase, deployment, and use of computer or network equipment are prohibited.

### Mobile or remote access

Remote and “mobile” access is provided to specific employees as a service allowing a connection to e-mail and the School District information technology network while traveling and the convenience of working while on the move. Remote portals that may be used to initiate these connections may not be under the administrative control of North Polk Community Schools and should be considered “unfriendly”. North Polk Community School employees that use remote access must make every effort to conduct business in the most secure manner possible. This includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Only School District supplied or approved computers can use the remote access connections.
2. Remote users should connect to the information technology network only long enough to carry out the business at hand.
3. When utilizing the remote access, ensure that File and Print sharing are disabled.

### Additional Guidelines

Employees may not attempt to modify the North Polk Community Schools information technology system or network facilities, or attempt to crash systems. They should not tamper with any software protections or restrictions placed on computer applications or files.

Employees may use only their own computer accounts. Employees should not supply false or misleading data nor improperly obtain another’s password in order to gain access to computers, or network systems, data, or information.

Employees are responsible for all use of their computer account(s). They should make appropriate use of the system and network-provided protection features and take precautions against others obtaining access to their computer resources. Individual password security is the responsibility of each employee.

See Board Policy 401.12 North Polk Community School District Acceptable Use Policy for more information.

### **Social Networking Policy**

North Polk Community Schools takes no position on an employee's decision to start or maintain a blog or participate in other internet related social networking activities. However, it is the right and duty of the School District to protect itself from unauthorized disclosure of information. North Polk Community School's social networking policy includes rules and guidelines for company-authorized social networking and personal social networking and applies to all employees, board members, management, and staff.

#### General Provisions

Blogging or other forms of social media or technology include but are not limited to sites such as Facebook and Twitter, chat rooms, personal blogs, or other similar forms of online journals, diaries, or personal newsletters.

Unless specifically instructed, employees are not authorized and therefore restricted to speak on behalf of North Polk Community Schools. Employees may not publicly discuss clients, products, employees, or any work-related matters, whether confidential or not, outside company-authorized communications. Employees are expected to protect the privacy of the School District and its employees and students and are prohibited from disclosing personal employee and nonemployee information and any other proprietary and nonpublic information. Such information includes but is not limited to student information, employee information, vendor information, business operations information, financial information, and strategic business plans.

#### Employer Monitoring

Employees are cautioned that they should have no expectation of privacy while using the Internet. North Polk Community Schools reserves the right to monitor comments or discussions about the School District, its employees, or its students posted on the internet by anyone, including employees and non-employees. North Polk Community Schools may use blog-search tools and software to monitor forums such as blogs and other types of personal journals, diaries, personal and business discussion forums, and social networking sites.

North Polk Community Schools reserves the right to use content management tools to monitor, review or block content on company blogs that violate company blogging rules and guidelines.

## Reporting Violations

North Polk Community Schools requests and strongly urges employees to report any violations of possible or perceived violations to the Technology Director. Violations include discussions of North Polk Community Schools, its employees, students and clients, any discussion of proprietary information, and any unauthorized or unlawful activity related to blogging or social networking.

## Discipline for Violations

North Polk Community Schools will investigate and respond to all reports of violations of this policy and other related policies. Violations of the School District's social networking policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. Discipline or termination will be determined based on the nature and factors of any blog or social networking post. North Polk Community School District reserves the right to take legal action where necessary against employees who engage in prohibited or unlawful conduct.

## Authorized Social Networking

The goal of authorized social networking and blogging is to become a part of the industry conversation and promote web-based sharing of ideas and exchange of information. Authorized social networking and blogging may be used to promote and raise awareness of North Polk Community Schools, communicate with employees to issue breaking news, and discuss school sponsored activities and events.

When social networking, blogging or using other forms of web-based forums, North Polk Community Schools must ensure that use of these communications maintains our identity, integrity and reputation while minimizing actual or potential legal risks, whether used inside or outside of the workplace.

## Rules and Guidelines

The following rules and guidelines apply to social networking and blogging when authorized by the School District. The rules and guidelines apply to all employer-related blogs and social networking entities, including employer subsidiaries or affiliates.

1. Only authorized employees can prepare and modify content for North Polk Community School's blogs and/or social networking entities. Content must be relevant, add value, and meet the specified goals or purposes developed by the School District.
2. All employees must identify themselves as employees of North Polk Community Schools when posting comments or responses on the School District's blog or on a social networking site.
3. Any copyrighted information where written reprint information has not been obtained in advance cannot be posted.
4. Business units and departments are responsible for ensuring all blogging and



social networking information complies with the School District's written policies. The School District is authorized to remove any content that does not meet the rules and guidelines of this policy or that may be illegal or offensive. Removal of such content may be done without permission or advance warning of the blogger.

### Personal Blogs

North Polk Community Schools respects the right of employees to write blogs and use social networking sites and does not want to discourage employees from self-publishing and self-expression. Employees are expected to follow the guidelines and policies set forth to provide a clear distinction between the "individual" and the "employee."

North Polk Community Schools respects the right of employees to use blogs and social networking sites as a medium of self-expression and public conversation and does not discriminate against employees who use these media for personal interests and affiliations or other lawful purposes. The following rules and guidelines apply to personal blogs which are not created on behalf of or authorized by the School District:

1. Employees cannot post on personal blogs or other sites the name, trademark or logo of the School District. Employees cannot post company-privileged information, including copyrighted information or company-issued documents.
2. Employees cannot post on personal blogs or social networking sites photographs of other employees, clients, vendors or suppliers, nor can employees post photographs of persons engaged in District business or at school events.
3. Employees cannot link from a personal blog or social networking site to the School District's internal or external web sites.

Please contact the Technology Director if you have any questions relating to this policy, your personal blog or social networking guidelines.

See Board Policy 401.13 Staff Technology Use for more information.

### **Use of Personal Cell Phones**

Employees may carry and use personal cell phones during working hours on a limited basis and in a manner which does not detract from the daily operations of the business. In general, employees are required to use personal cell phones during break times and lunch periods to prevent disruptions to the work environment and loss of productivity.

Cell phones shall be turned off or set to silent or vibrate mode while in the classroom, during meetings, conferences, or in other locations where incoming calls may disrupt normal workflow.

If an employee is operating a company vehicle and receives a call on a cell phone, it is recommended that the employee answer, but shall ask the caller to hold, put the



phone down and pull to the side of the roadway, into a parking lot or other safe location to respond to the call.

Disruptions to the work environment, loss of productivity, and failure to abide by this policy shall subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Use of School District Owned Equipment and Vehicles**

Equipment and vehicles owned and provided for employee use are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using School District owned equipment and property, all employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Employees should notify their supervisor immediately if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees and others.

Improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Transporting of Students by Employees**

Generally, transportation of students is in a motor vehicle owned by the school district and driven by an employee. In some cases, it may be more economical or efficient for the School District to allow an employee of the school district to transport the students in the employee's motor vehicle. Employees who transport students for school purposes must have permission of the superintendent.

See Board Policy 401.6 Transportation of Students by Employees and Board Policy 904.1 Transporting Students in Private Vehicles for more information.

### **Use of School District Credit Card**

In order to more effectively control costs and as a means to ensure employee's success on the job, certain qualified employees may utilize the School District credit card for business-related purchases.

The following rules apply as it pertains to the usage of the School District credit card:

- (1) The School District credit card may be checked out at the District



Office. A letter stating the District's tax exempt status should accompany this credit card.

- (2) Credit card purchases are to be utilized for business-related costs and purchases only. In no instance and under no circumstances should the School District credit card be utilized for personal use.
  - a. Employees who utilize the School District credit card for personal use shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- (3) The School District credit card must be returned to the District Office immediately upon the conclusion of the purchase.
- (4) Upon the return of the School District credit card the District Office will assist each employee in completing the necessary supporting documentation to complete the transaction.
- (5) Employees who have checked out the School District credit card are responsible for notifying the District Office immediately in instances in which the credit card is lost or stolen.

See Board Policy 401.10 Credit Cards for more information.

***SECTION V. GENERAL PAYROLL POLICIES***

## **Our Compensation Policy**

It is the policy of the School District to compensate classified employees in a manner that is competitive with other individuals in similar jobs within our region and industry. An important part of administering this policy includes establishing and maintaining a position specification, or job description, for each respective job within the School District. Each job is assigned a pay schedule which defines the rate of pay for each respective job.

See Board Policy 412.1 Classified Employee Compensation for more information.

### **Payroll Administration: General**

Employees are compensated on a monthly basis—the School District issues paychecks on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of each month. In instances when a payday falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday, the School District issues paychecks on the last regularly scheduled workday prior to the weekend or holiday in question.

For payroll administration purposes the School District has designated the work week as each Sunday through the following Saturday.

Employees may choose to receive their paychecks through an electronic funds transfer directly deposited into their personal bank account. To participate in this method of payment, employees should contact the District Office to complete the appropriate direct deposit form.

The District Office issues a payroll schedule prior to the beginning of each fiscal year that lists the actual pay dates, the pay period (*definition of pay period: a four or in some cases, five week period in which labor hours, vacation, personal business, and sick time hours etc. are recorded*), as well as the due dates for submitting timesheets to the payroll department.

The School District requires that all employees record their labor hours and attendance on a timesheet and submit this to their immediate supervisor for review and approval in order to be paid. It is the responsibility of each employee to submit his or her timesheet in a timely and accurate manner. Employees who fail to submit their timesheet for approval by the indicated due date may not be paid until the following pay date.

### **Payroll Administration: Hourly Employees**

Hourly employees are compensated on an “*arrears*” basis according to the labor hours and attendance recorded on their time sheet. For example, labor hours and attendance recorded within the pay period of August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 28<sup>th</sup> will be paid on the next pay date which in this case is September 24<sup>th</sup>.

It must be noted that when recording labor hours, hourly employees should only record hours actually worked each day. For example, time spent traveling from an employee's home to the job site at the start of each workday and from the job site to the employee's home at the end of each workday, should not be recorded on the timesheet.

The three (3) weeks of a newly employed classified employee's assignment shall be a probationary period. "Day" shall be defined as one workday regardless of a full-time or part-time status of the employee. New employees, regardless of the experience, are subject to this probationary period.

"New" employees includes individuals who are being hired for the first time by the school district and those who may have been employed by the school district in the past, but have not been employed by the board during the school year prior to the one for which letters of assignment are being issued.

During the probationary period, the new employee will be compensated at the substitute rate of pay. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, the employee will be compensated at the appropriate board approval rate of pay. The immediate supervisor may extend the probationary period beyond the three (3) weeks.

Reference Board Policy 411.8

### **Payroll Administration: Salaried Employees**

Salaried employees are actually paid through and slightly in advance of each specific pay date. For example salaried employees are actually paid for the period of August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup> on their August 25<sup>th</sup> paycheck.

Salaried employees are required to record labor hours, vacation, and sick time on their time sheet. The usage of *vacation*, *personal business*, and *sick time* hours are then in turn applied to that respective employee's individual account on an **arrears** basis. For example, vacation, personal business, and sick time hours utilized during the pay period of August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 28<sup>th</sup> will be reflected on the employees September 24<sup>th</sup> paycheck.

See Board Policy 412.2 Classified Employee Wage and Overtime Compensation for more information.

### **Pay Deductions**

There are two types of pay deductions: 1) deductions that the School District is required by law to make and 2) deductions that an employee has authorized. The law requires that regular amounts be deducted from your pay and applied toward payment of your federal and state income taxes, Social Security and Medicare taxes, and Iowa

Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS) contributions.

The School District offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. If you choose to participate in these programs and/or benefits, you must specifically authorize a deduction from your paycheck for the cost of the program and/or benefit.

### **Overtime Pay**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (also known as the Federal Wage and Hour Law) outlines certain requirements involving minimum wage, equal pay, and overtime pay requirements. In administering the law, those positions exempted from the provisions of the law are classified as “exempt” positions. Exempt positions are generally those positions which are managerial, project management-oriented, and/or self-directed in nature.

All other positions are classified as “non-exempt” and are subject to The Fair Labor Standards Act. In most cases, non-exempt employees are compensated on an hourly basis. Non-exempt, hourly employees will be paid one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for all time worked in excess of 40 hours per work week as required by law.

***Those employees who are eligible for overtime pay are not permitted to work overtime hours without the prior approval of the School District Superintendent.***

Properly approved paid absences, including but not limited to: vacation, sick time, holidays, jury and witness duty, and bereavement leave are paid at the employee’s regular rate of pay, but such hours are not counted as “time worked” for the purposes of computing overtime.

See Board Policy 412.2 Classified Employee Wage and Overtime Compensation for more information.

### **Compensatory Time**

Compensatory time, more commonly known as “comp time” which is the “banking” or accumulation of hours worked during a given period for the purpose of using such hours for paid time-off from work at a later time is permitted only on a limited basis and only with prior approval from the District Office.

### **Pay Increases**

The continued success of our School District depends on a combination of individual and team effort. The School District’s goal regarding compensation is to be competitive in the regional marketplace on a total compensation basis.

As a general rule, classified employees will receive an annual pay increase based on the compensation schedule which is in place for their respective position.



## **Departing Employees-Final Paycheck**

In general, final paychecks for employees who are terminated from the School District will be processed according to the existing payroll schedule. Unless otherwise indicated by the departing employee, paper versions of final paychecks and pay statements will be forwarded to the employee's address that is on file with the School District.

The School District reserves the right to hold a departing employee's final paycheck until they have ensured that all School District property has been returned and is accounted for. Additionally, in instances of fraud, theft, or missing School District property, the School District may withhold all or a portion of the departing employees paycheck.

## **If You Find an Error in Your Pay**

If an error has occurred within your pay, notify the District Office which will obtain the correct information and determine whether or not an adjustment is in order. If an error is found, you will receive an adjustment on the next regular payday.

## **Garnishments and Attachments**

An employee's failure to pay personal debts can result in court action against the School District, forcing it to withhold a portion of the employee's wages as payment of the debt. This involves the School District in unjustified expense and annoyance. Employees should be aware that the law permits a School District to discharge an employee who incurs more than one garnishment in any twelve (12) month period, where the garnishments involve different debts, and where the garnishments are not for the purpose of enforcing child support obligations.

## **Employee Records**

The Human Resources Department must have accurate and up-to-date records for each employee in order to function effectively, and to ensure that employees receive all the benefits to which they are entitled. Employees must notify the District Office promptly whenever there is a change in any of the following employee information:

1. Name
2. Address
3. Telephone Number
4. Marital Status
5. Person(s) to notify in case of an emergency
6. Exemptions for withholding taxes
7. Beneficiaries for insurance purposes

## **Release of Credit Information**

Credit information including title of position, income and number of years employed with the School District will be released to an entity with whom an employee has applied for credit or has obtained credit. This information will be released without prior written notice to the employee. Confidential information about the employee will be released to an inquiring creditor with a written authorization from the employee.

See Board Policy 402.1 Release of Credit Information for more information.

***SECTION VI. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS***

## **Our Employee Benefit Programs**

In addition to wages, employees of North Polk Community School District may become eligible for certain other benefit programs. Some of these benefits are paid entirely by the School District; in other cases the employee and the School District share the cost, and in some cases, the employee pays the total cost. Some benefits are available to all employees; many are available only to fulltime employees. The most comprehensive source of information about these benefit programs is the plan booklet, or summary plan description, for each benefit, which employees will receive apart from this handbook. If there are discrepancies between the terms of this handbook, or the terms contained in the summary plan description, the terms of the summary plan description are controlling. The descriptions in this handbook are only brief summaries for employees' general information.

Written materials are available from the District Office which describes the following benefit programs:

- Medical Insurance Plans
- Vision Plans
- Dental Insurance Plan
- Flexible Reimbursement Accounts
- Long Term Disability Insurance Plan
- Group Term Life Insurance Plan
- Voluntary Group Term Life Insurance Plan
- Tax Sheltered Annuity Programs
- Employee Assistance Program

The School District recommends employees inform his/her family members about each of his/her benefits and the location of benefit booklets. From time to time employees may receive a summary of his/her individual benefits. Employees should maintain these records as a valuable guide to personal financial planning.

The existence of these employee benefit programs, in and of themselves, does not signify that an employee will be employed for the requisite time necessary to qualify for these benefits. The terms of any employee benefit plan cannot be altered by any oral representation. The School District reserves the right to change or discontinue some or all of these benefits, as conditions warrant. If an employee has any questions, or needs clarification about particular benefits or eligibility requirements, he/she should contact the District Office.

See Board Policy 412.3 Classified Employee Group Insurance Benefits and Board Policy 412.4 Classified Employee Tax Shelter Programs for more information.

## **Paid Holidays**

### **Permanent Full-Time Classified Employees (261 Day Contract Employees)**

Permanent full-time classified employees who work 12 months a year or who work under a 261-day contract will be awarded eight (8) paid holidays per year to include:

1. Memorial Day
2. Independence Day
3. Labor Day
4. Thanksgiving Day
5. Day after Thanksgiving
6. Day of Christmas Eve
7. Christmas Day
8. New Year's Day

### **Permanent Part-Time Classified Employees (Minimum Seven Hours per Day/Minimum 200 Day Contract Employees)**

Permanent part-time classified employees who work a minimum of seven (7) hours a day and who are working a minimum 200 day contract will be awarded five (5) paid holidays to include:

1. Memorial Day
2. Labor Day
3. Thanksgiving Day
4. Christmas Day
5. New Year's Day

Employees will be paid their normally scheduled number of hours at their regular rate of pay for each holiday. It should be noted that holiday hours which are used are not considered as "time worked" for the purpose of calculating overtime eligibility.

### **Paid Holidays: Eligibility**

Unless otherwise approved by the School District Superintendent in advance, in order to receive holiday pay, employees must work all regularly scheduled hours on the last working day prior to and the first working day immediately following the holiday in question.

### **Vacation Benefits**

Paid vacations are important to both employees and the School District since they provide a necessary "change of pace" and allow for personal recreation and rejuvenation. These guidelines describe the North Polk Community School District's vacation program for all eligible personnel.



## **Vacation Benefits: Eligibility and Accrual**

### **Permanent Full-Time Classified Employees (261 Day Contract Employees)**

Permanent full-time classified employees who work 12 months a year or who work under a 261-day contract will be eligible to earn vacation benefits as follows:

Upon the **completion** of one (1) year of fulltime employment with the School District:

10 days or 80 hours of vacation awarded each year

Upon the **completion** of five (5) consecutive years of fulltime employment with the School District:

15 days or 120 hours of vacation awarded each year

The applicable number of vacation days will be awarded to each eligible employee on July 1<sup>st</sup> following the school year in which it was earned. For those employees who were hired after July 1<sup>st</sup>, the number of vacation days awarded the following year will be prorated based on their date of hire.

In no instance will an employee be allowed to use vacation which has not yet been earned or accumulated. Vacation hours which are used will not be considered as "time worked" for the purpose of calculating overtime eligibility.

*Directors, including the Business Managers, under a 261-day agreement shall be given a prorated number of vacations days based on the date of hire and a maximum of 10 days awarded for one year. The fiscal year (July 1-June 30) is the baseline to determine such prorated vacation days.*

### **Permanent Part-Time Classified Employees (Minimum Seven Hours per Day/Maximum 200 Day Contract Employees)**

Permanent part-time classified employees are not eligible for vacation benefits.

#### Approval of Vacation Usage

Earned vacation hours may be taken any time during the year when doing so will not disrupt School District operations. Employees must submit a vacation request form to their immediate supervisor for approval no less than two weeks prior to the first day of requested vacation.

#### Vacation Carryover

Employees must use all earned or accumulated vacation prior to June 30th of the school year in which the benefit was received. Only with written approval from the Superintendent will employees be allowed to "carryover" accumulated vacation from

one vacation cycle (e.g., school year) to the following vacation cycle.

### Vacation Scheduling Conflicts

Accommodating vacation requests while at the same time maintaining efficient business operations, requires balance and planning. Situations may arise when it is not possible to accommodate every employee's request for vacation on a particular date(s). In such instances, vacations will be reviewed and approved based on business necessity.

### Military Service

A leave of absence granted for military duty shall not interrupt an employee's accumulated years of credited service for vacation purposes, provided the employee returns to active service with the School District within the time period specified by federal law for retention of re-employment rights. The employee will not earn or accrue vacation time while serving with the military. Upon return to employment, the employee will immediately begin to accrue vacation time based on their actual date of return to work.

### Departing Employees: Vacation Payout

In general, if an employee is terminated or resigns from the School District, the employee will be paid for any accrued but unused vacation time. Any such payment for remaining vacation time will be made in a lump sum payment, based on the employee's rate of pay at the time of discharge.

### Rehired Employees

If a former employee is rehired, that employee will have the same vacation eligibility as any other employee who has no accumulated service with the School District.

### Amendment or Termination

This vacation policy may be amended by the School District at any time and from time to time, including without limitation, amendments modifying or changing the duration of or periods of service required in connection with accrual of vacation time. The School District may terminate this policy at any time. Any amendment or termination will be effective on the date that the School District determines and may apply to persons eligible to receive benefits or persons receiving benefits under the policy at the time thereof, or both, as well as the persons eligible to receive benefits in the future, except that no modification will reduce currently accrued but unused vacation.

## Administration

The School District will be responsible for the administration of this vacation policy. The School District has the duty and authority to interpret and construe the policy in regard to all questions of eligibility, the status and rights of any person under the policy, and the manner, time and amount of payment of any benefits under the policy. The decision of the School District with respect to any and all such matters will be final and binding.

## **Personal Business Days**

The School District provides paid time off for eligible personnel to attend to personal business needs that cannot be accomplished during non-working hours.

### **Personal Business Days: Eligibility, Accrual, and Carryover**

#### **Permanent Full-Time Classified Employees (261-Day Contract Employees)**

Permanent full-time classified employees who work 12 months a year or who work under a 261-day contract will be eligible to use a maximum of two (2) days or (16 hours) for personal business each school year.

#### **Permanent Part-Time Classified Employees (Minimum Seven Hours per Day/Maximum 200 Day Contract Employees)**

Permanent part-time classified employees will be eligible to use a maximum of one (1) day or (8 hours) for personal business each school year.

Employees are allowed to “carryover” accumulated unused personal business days from one cycle (e.g., school year) to the following cycle. However, employees are not allowed to accumulate more than five (5) personal business days or (40 hours) at one time.

#### **Approval of Personal Business Days**

It shall be within the discretion of the School District Superintendent to review and approve requests for personal business days. Whenever possible, employees must submit a personal business request form to the School District Superintendent for approval no less than three (3) days prior to the day of requested leave.

It should be noted that requests to utilize personal business days on a day immediately prior to or immediately following a holiday or vacation day, will not be approved. Additionally, such requests will not be approved when, at the discretion of the School District Superintendent, the employee’s absence will cause an undue hardship or

interruption to the affected education program or department. In such instances, requests will be reviewed and approved based on business necessity.

### Departing Employees: Payout of Personal Business Days

Employees who are terminated or resign from the School District are not paid for any accumulated, unused personal business days at the time of their departure.

See Board Policy 414.1 Classified Employee Vacations – Holidays – Personal Leave for more information.

### **Sick Leave Policy**

The School District grants paid leave to eligible employees who are unable to perform the essential functions of their job due to personal medical conditions.

### **Sick Leave Policy: Eligibility and Usage**

All employees are granted paid time off from work for personal medical reasons as outlined below:

Within first year of employment	13 Days or 104 Hours
Within second year of employment	14 Days or 112 Hours
Within third year of employment and each year after	15 Days or 120 Hours

The above amounts apply only to consecutive years of employment within the School District. Employees are allowed to “carryover” accumulated unused sick days from one cycle (e.g., school year) to the following cycle but unused accumulated portions may not exceed a total of 130 days or 1040 hours.

Prorate for part-time employees according to work hours scheduled.

### Sick Leave: Return to Work and Coordination

Prior to returning to work, employees who are absent due to a personal illness for three (3) consecutive days or more are required to bring a physician’s statement indicating the nature of the illness and when the employee may return to work without restriction(s). The physician’s statement should be forwarded to the District Office.

Up to five (5) days of the employee’s annual sick leave may be used for the care of a member of the employee’s immediate family (employee’s spouse, child, foster child, father, mother, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, and other member of the



immediate household including step-child, step-father, step-mother, step-father, and step-sister).

One half-day is the minimum unit which may be taken as sick leave.

Employees should contact the District Office with questions regarding their sick leave benefits.

#### Departing Employees: Payout of Sick Time

Employees who are terminated or resign from the School District are not paid for any accumulated, unused sick time at the time of their departure.

See Board Policy 414.2 Classified Employee Personal Illness Leave for more information.

#### Maternity Leave

The District will grant staff, who are disabled by pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, a leave of absence not to exceed 6 weeks or the lesser of the period that staff is disabled because of the staff's pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition. Leave of absence will be deducted from available sick leave balance. If employee does not have enough to accommodate six weeks, the employee may take unpaid leave per FMLA.

Medical certification is required prior to returning to work.

#### **Workers' Compensation**

Through premiums paid in full by the School District, employees are covered under Workers' Compensation insurance. Workers' Compensation benefits may help pay for an employee's medical treatment, and replace part of the income an employee may lose while recovering from a work-related injury or illness. Death benefits may also be paid to dependents of an employee whose death is determined to be compensable under the State of Iowa Workers' Compensation law.

Employees in need of medical treatment due to a work-related injury or illness are directed to seek treatment at one of the following area medical providers:

#### *Non Emergency Care*

Mercy North Family Clinic  
515-643-8100  
800 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 1700  
Ankeny

Iowa Methodist Occupational Medicine  
515-964-6974  
2515 SW State ST. STE. 200  
Ankeny



Emergency Care

Iowa Methodist Medical 515-241-6212 1200 Pleasant Avenue Des Moines	Mercy Medical Center 515-247-3121 1111 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Des Moines
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### **Reporting of Work-Related Injuries or Illness**

For the proper administration of Worker's Compensation benefits, the School District requires that all employees report all work-related injuries or illness to their supervisor immediately. If the employee is unable to contact their immediate supervisor they must contact the School Nurse immediately. Failure to report work-related injuries or illness in a timely manner to the School District may result in the employee being denied benefits under this program.

***This is a mandatory requirement for all employees***—failure to report a work-related injuries or illness will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Continuing Professional Education and Development**

The School District is committed to the belief that continuing education and development for employees benefits both the School District and each employee. Continuing education and development provides a way for an employee to achieve their personal goals, as well as assists the School District in attaining its business objectives. The School District's continued and future growth depends on having well-trained and highly educated employees.

The School District may pay for seminars, courses, or certifications as part of an employee's continued development. All requests to attend such professional education and development activities must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor as well as the School District Superintendent in advance. Application to such activities must be presented to the School District Superintendent no less than five (5) days prior to the beginning of the event in question.

Requests will not be approved when, at the discretion of the School District Superintendent, the employee's absence will cause an undue hardship or interruption to the affected education program or department. In all such instances, requests will be reviewed and approved based on business necessity.

### **Employee Travel and Compensation (Travel Within the School District)**

Employees who are required to travel in their personal vehicle between School District buildings to conduct work-related business may be eligible for mileage



reimbursement at a mileage rate determined by the School District. All such travel must be pre-approved by the employee's immediate supervisor and the School District Superintendent.

Requests for mileage reimbursement should be submitted to the District office by using the appropriate reimbursement request form on a monthly basis.

The School District may elect to administer a monthly travel allowance to employees who travel on a regular basis within the School District.

Employees with questions on these issues should contact the District Office.

### **Employee Travel and Compensation (Travel Outside the School District)**

Employees traveling outside of the North Polk Community School District, in order to perform pre-approved School District business will be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses. Actual and necessary expenses will include but may not be limited to: transportation and/or mileage costs, lodging expenses, meal expenses and registration related costs.

Travel outside of the School District must be pre-approved by the School District Superintendent. The pre-approval process will evaluate the necessity of the travel, the reason for the travel and an estimate as to the overall cost for the travel in question.

If pre-approval is not obtained, reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses will not be paid. As part of the reimbursement process, the employee must complete the appropriate request for reimbursement form and provide the District Office with detailed receipts (other than merely a credit card receipt) indicating the date, purpose, and nature of the expense for each reimbursement item. Employees who fail to produce a detailed receipt will be responsible for the expense(s) in question.

When possible, travel within three-hundred (300) miles of the School District Business and Personnel office will be made by automobile. If a School District vehicle is not available, the employee will be reimbursed at the mileage rate established by the School District.

Pre-approved expenses for transportation outside of the three-hundred miles of the School District Business and Personnel office may be by public carrier. Reimbursement for air travel will be at the tourist class fares. Should an employee choose to travel by automobile, reimbursement will be limited to the public carrier amount. Pre-approved expenses for transportation in a rental car are limited to the cost of a Class "C" rental car at a medium priced agency unless the number of people traveling on behalf of the School District warrants a large vehicle. Employees should contact the District Office for current reimbursement rates for daily meal expenses.

See Board Policy 401.7 Employee Travel Compensation for more information.

### **Admission Passes**

Admission passes distributed to School District employees shall only be used by the individual whose name appears on each pass; admission passes are not transferrable to other individuals.

## ***SECTION VII. LEAVES OF ABSENCE POLICIES***

## **General Policies Regarding Leaves of Absence**

There are several general policies that pertain to all types of leaves of absence.

1. Unless an extension is requested and approved in advance, employees are expected to report for work at the end of their approved leave. Employees who fail to report for work on the first workday after the expiration of the leave may be considered to have voluntarily terminated their employment.
2. Any leave of absence obtained through false pretenses shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
3. Unless otherwise indicated in advance, while on unpaid leave, employees must pay the School District directly for their share of the premium on any appropriate group insurance plans which are normally payroll deducted in order to maintain coverage.
4. Working elsewhere—including self-employment—without prior approval while on leave of absence, or pursuing an interest that conflicts with the purpose of leave, shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **Bereavement Leave**

The School District realizes the emotional stress and additional responsibility that results from a death of an employee's loved one. Therefore, bereavement leave benefits are provided to both full-time and part-time classified employees.

Up to five (5) days of leave per death (limited to ten (10) days for multiple deaths resulting from a single occurrence) an any one time will be granted on request in the event of death of an employee's spouse, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in law, grandparent, or grandchildren.

Up to two (2) days may be granted to attend the funeral of other relatives and up to one (1) day to attend the funeral of a person of unusually close relationship. Requests for this leave shall be recorded in writing and granting of the leave will be in writing.

See Board Policy 414.4 Classified Employee Bereavement Leave for more information.

## **Jury Duty Leave**

To reduce interruptions in work that may be caused by an employee's absence, an employee is requested to report promptly to the School District Superintendent instances in which they have been summoned for jury duty or subpoenaed for other court related issues. Any employee called by a state or federal court for jury duty or subpoenaed to appear during school hours, who is required to appear, shall be allowed to fulfill such obligations with full pay. Any compensation for services (other than reimbursement for mileage, travel, or parking) received by the employee during this leave shall be paid over to the School District. Employees on jury duty or related court duty are expected to work as much of their regular schedule as the court schedule permits. An employee may be asked to provide written confirmation of the jury duty or court duty in question.

See Board Policy 414.6 Classified Employee Jury Duty Leave for more information.

## **Military Service Leave under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)**

North Polk Community Schools is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (as amended). It is the School District's policy that no employee or prospective employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination on the basis of membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Specifically, no individual will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion, or other benefit of employment on the basis of such membership. Furthermore, no individual will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because they have exercised their rights under the applicable law or the contents of this policy. If any individual believes they have been subjected to discrimination in violation of this policy, they should immediately contact the District Office to discuss this matter.

### Eligibility

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are eligible for benefits under this policy. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the uniformed services, including Reservists, National Guard members for training, periods of active military service, and funeral honors duty, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service.

Subject to certain exceptions under the applicable laws, the information and benefits outlined in this policy cease when the employee's absence exceeds five years.

### Procedures for Military Leave

1. Unless military necessity prevents it, or is otherwise impossible or unreasonable, an employee should provide the School District with notice of the need for leave as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances. Written notice is preferred, but not required under the law or this policy.
2. To request a temporary or extended military leave of absence, the employee should generally obtain a Request for Leave of Absence Form from the District Office. However, a written application is not required under the law or this policy.
3. The District Office will review and sign the Request for Leave of Absence Form, collect any applicable insurance premiums from the employee, generate other applicable documents, and process accordingly.
4. Employees on temporary or extended military leave may, at their option, use any or all accrued paid vacation or personal leave during their absence.
5. When the employee intends to return to work, he or she must make application for re-employment to the District Office within the application period set forth below.

### Benefits

If an employee is absent from work due to military service, benefits will continue as follows:

1. An employee on extended military leave may elect to continue group health insurance coverage for the employee and covered dependents under the same terms and conditions for a period not to exceed 31 days from the date the military leave of absence begins. The employee must pay the amount of the premium normally paid by the employee. After the initial 31 day period, the employee and covered dependents can continue group health insurance up to 18 months at 102% of the overall (both employer and employee) premium rate.
2. The group term life/AD&D insurance provided by the School District will terminate the day the employee becomes active military.
3. The group long term disability insurance provided by the School District will terminate the day the employee becomes active military.
4. Employees do not accrue vacation, personal leave or sick leave while on military leave of absence status.

5. With respect to the School District's retirement plan, upon reemployment, for purposes of vesting, employees who have taken military leave will be credited with the time spent in military service and will be treated as not having incurred a break in service. Immediately upon reemployment, the employee may, at the employee's election, make any or all employee contributions that the employee would have been eligible to make had the employee's employment not been interrupted by military service. Such contributions must be made within a period that begins with the employee's reemployment and that is not greater in duration than three times the length of the employee's military service. Employees will receive all associated company match for such contributions.
6. Voluntary supplemental life/AD&D insurance will terminate the day the employee becomes active military. Converting to an individual policy may continue voluntary dependent life insurance coverage. To exercise this conversion option, dependents must submit a written application and the first premium payment within 31 days immediately following the termination of coverage.

#### Reemployment

Upon an employee's prompt application for reemployment (as defined below), an employee will be reinstated to employment in the following manner depending upon the employee's period of military service:

1. Ninety (90) days or less of military service - (i) in a position that the employee would have attained if employment had not been interrupted by military service; or (ii) if found not qualified for such position after reasonable efforts by the School District, in the position in which the employee had been employed prior to military service.
2. More than 91 days and less than 5 years of military service - (i) in a position that the employee would have attained if employment had not been interrupted by military service or a position of like seniority, status and pay, the duties of which the employee is qualified to perform; or (ii) if proved not qualified after reasonable efforts by the School District, in the position the employee left, or a position of like seniority, status and pay, the duties of which the employee is qualified to perform.
3. Employee with a service-connected disability - if after reasonable accommodation efforts by the employer, an employee with a service-connected disability is not qualified for employment in the position he or she would have attained or in the position that he or she left, the employee will be employed in (i) any other position of similar seniority, status and pay for which the employee is qualified or could become qualified with reasonable efforts by the Company; or (ii) if no such position exists, in the nearest approximation consistent with the circumstances of the employee's situation.

### Application for Reemployment

An employee who has engaged in military service must, in order to be entitled to the reemployment rights set forth above, submit an application for reemployment according to the following schedule:

1. *If service is less than 31 days (or for the purpose of taking an examination to determine fitness for service)* - the employee must report for reemployment at the beginning of the first full regularly scheduled working period on the first calendar day following completion of service and the expiration of eight hours after a time for safe transportation back to the employee's residence.
2. *If service is for 31 days or more but less than 181 days* - the employee must submit an application for reemployment with the District Office no later than 14 days following the completion of service.
3. *If service is over 180 days* - the employee must submit an application for reemployment with the District Office no later than 90 days following the completion of service.
4. *If the employee is hospitalized or convalescing from a service-connected injury* - the employee must submit an application for reemployment with the School District no later than two years following completion of service.

### Exceptions to Reemployment

In addition to the employee's failure to apply for reemployment in a timely manner, an employee is not entitled to reinstatement as described above if any of the following conditions exist:

1. The School District's circumstances have so changed as to make reemployment impossible or unreasonable
2. Reemployment would pose an undue hardship upon the School District.
3. The employee's employment prior to the military service was merely for a brief, non-recurrent period and there was no reasonable expectation that the employment would have continued indefinitely or for a significant period.
4. The employee did not receive an honorable discharge from military service.

### General Benefits Upon Reemployment

Employees reemployed will have the same amount of credited service with the School District prior to their leave. Employees on military leave do not accrue vacation, personal business, days or other paid time off benefits. An employee's time spent on active military duty will be counted toward their eligibility for FMLA leave once they return to their job.

Federal Law also protects returning veterans from discharge without cause for a period of time after reemployment. If the returning veteran's military service lasted between 31 and 180 days, the veteran may not be terminated without cause for 180 days after the date of reemployment.

If the veteran's period of military service was more than 180 days, this protection applies for one year after reemployment.

Veterans with less than 31 days of military service do not have protection against discharge without cause, but like other returning veterans, they are protected from discrimination based on military service or a continuing service obligation.

#### Documentation

An employee's manager will, upon the employee's reapplication for employment, request that the employee provide The Company with military discharge documentation to establish the timeliness of the application for reemployment, the duration of the military service, and the honorable discharge from the military service.

See Board Policy 414.7 Classified Employee Military Service Leave for more information.

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

North Polk Community Schools complies with the Family and Medical Leave Act as amended January 16, 2009. The School District posts the mandatory FMLA Notice and upon hire provides all new employees with notices required by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) on Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Act.

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with a general description of their FMLA rights. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, employees will be afforded all rights required by law.

Employees should notify the District Office in writing with any questions, concerns, or disputes with this policy.

#### A. General Provisions

Under this policy North Polk Community Schools will grant up to 12 weeks (or up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) during a 12-month period to eligible employees. The leave may be

paid, unpaid or a combination of paid and unpaid leave, depending on the circumstances of the leave and as specified in this policy.

B. Eligibility

To qualify to take family or medical leave under this policy, the employee must meet both of the following conditions:

1. Employees must have worked for the School District for 12 months or 52 weeks. The 12 months or 52 weeks need not have been consecutive. Separate periods of employment will be counted, provided that the break in service does not exceed seven years. Separate periods of employment will be counted if the break in service exceeds seven years due to National Guard or Reserve military service obligations or when there is a written agreement stating the School District's intention to rehire the employee after the service break. For eligibility purposes, an employee will be considered to have been employed for an entire week even if the employee was on the payroll for only part of a week or if the employee is on leave during the week.
2. Employees must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately before the date when the leave is requested to commence. The principles established under The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) determine the definition of hours "worked" by an employee. The FLSA definition does not include time spent on paid or unpaid leave as hours worked. Consequently, these hours of leave will not be counted in determining the 1,250 hours eligibility test for an employee under FMLA.

C. Type of Leave Covered

To qualify as FMLA leave under this policy, the employee must be taking leave for one of the reasons listed below:

1. The birth of a child and in order to care for that child.
2. The placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child.
3. To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition (*described below*).
4. Due to the serious health condition (*described directly below*) of the employee. An employee may take leave because of a serious health condition that makes them unable to perform the functions of their position.
  - a. Definition of Serious Health Condition

A **serious health condition** is defined as a condition that requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care or a condition that requires continuing

care by a licensed health care provider.

This policy covers illnesses of a serious and long-term nature, resulting in recurring or lengthy absences. Generally, a chronic or long-term health condition that would result in a period of three consecutive days of incapacity, with the first visit to the health care provider within seven days of the onset of the incapacity and a second visit within 30 days of the incapacity, would be considered a serious health condition. For chronic conditions requiring periodic health care visits for treatment, such visits must take place at least twice a year.

Employees with questions about what illnesses are covered under this FMLA policy or under the School District's sick leave policy are encouraged to consult with the District Office.

If an employee takes paid sick leave for a condition that progresses into a serious health condition and the employee requests unpaid leave as provided under this policy, the School District may designate all or some portion of related leave taken as leave under this policy, to the extent that the earlier leave meets the necessary qualifications.

5. Qualifying exigency leave for families of members of the National Guard or Reserves or of a regular component of the Armed Forces when the covered military member is on ***covered active duty or called to covered active duty***.

An employee whose spouse, son, daughter or parent either has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active military duty or who is already on covered active duty may take up to 12 weeks of leave for reasons related to or affected by the family member's call-up or service. The qualifying exigency must be one of the following:

- a. short-notice deployment
- b. military events and activities
- c. child care and school activities
- d. financial and legal arrangements
- e. counseling
- f. rest and recuperation
- g. post-deployment activities and
- h. additional activities that arise out of active duty provided that the School District and employee agree, including agreement on

timing and duration of the leave.

**“Covered active duty”** is defined as:

- i. in the case of a member of a regular component of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country; and
- ii. in the case of a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty under a provision of law referred to in section 101(a)(13)(B) of title 10, United States Code.

The leave may commence as soon as the individual receives the call-up notice. (Son or daughter for this type of FMLA leave is defined the same as for child for other types of FMLA leave except that the person does not have to be a minor.) This type of leave would be counted toward the employee’s 12-week maximum of FMLA leave in a 12-month period.

6. Military care giver leave (also known as **covered service member leave**) to care for an injured or ill service member or veteran.

An employee whose son, daughter, parent or next of kin is a covered service member may take up to 26 weeks in a single 12-month period to take care of leave to care for that service member.

Next of kin is defined as the closest blood relative of the injured or recovering service member.

**“Covered service member”** is defined as:

- a. a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness; or
- b. a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, for a **serious injury or illness** and who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) at any time during the period of 5 years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes that medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

**“Serious injury or illness”** is defined as:

- i. in the case of a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves), means an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating; and
- ii. in the case of a veteran who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) at any time during a period when the person was a covered service member, means a qualifying (as defined by the Secretary of Labor) injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on an active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran.

#### D. Amount of Leave

An eligible employee can take up to 12 weeks for the FMLA circumstances (1) through (5) above under this policy during any 12-month period. The School District will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy. Each time an employee takes leave, the School District will compute the amount of leave the employee has taken under this policy in the last 12 months and subtract it from the 12 weeks of available leave, and the balance remaining is the amount the employee is entitled to take at that time.

An eligible employee can take up to 26 weeks for the FMLA circumstance (6) above (military care giver leave) during a single 12-month period. For this military care giver leave, the School District will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured forward. FMLA leave already taken for other FMLA circumstances will be deducted from the total of 26 weeks available.

If a husband and wife both work for the School District and each wishes to take leave for the birth of a child, adoption or placement of a child in foster care, or to care for a parent (but not a parent "in-law") with a serious health condition, the husband and wife may only take a combined total of 12 weeks of leave. If a husband and wife both work for the School District and each wishes to take leave to care for a covered injured or ill service member, the husband and wife may only take a combined total of 26 weeks of leave.

#### E. Employee Status and Benefits During Leave

While an employee is on leave, the School District will continue the employee's health benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued to work.

If the employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member or a circumstance beyond the employee's control, the School District will require the employee to reimburse the School District the amount it paid for the employee's health insurance premium during the leave period.

Based on the School District's current benefit plans, in some instances the employee will pay a portion of the monthly health insurance premium. While on paid leave, the School District will continue to make payroll deductions to collect the employee's share of the premium. While on unpaid leave, the employee must continue to make this payment, either in person or by mail. The payment must be received in the District Office by the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of each month. If the payment is more than 30 days late, the employee's health care coverage may be dropped for the duration of the leave. The School District will provide 15 days' notification prior to the employee's loss of coverage.

If the employee contributes to a life insurance or disability plan, the School District will continue making payroll deductions while the employee is on paid leave. While the employee is on unpaid leave, the employee may request continuation of such benefits and pay his or her portion of the premiums, or the School District may elect to maintain such benefits during the leave and pay the employee's share of the premium payments. If the employee does not continue these payments, the School District may discontinue coverage during the leave. If the School District maintains coverage, the School District may recover the costs incurred for paying the employee's share of any premiums, whether or not the employee returns to work.

#### F. Employee Status After Leave

An employee who takes leave under this policy may be asked to provide a fitness for duty (FFD) clearance from the health care provider. This requirement will be included in the School District's response to the FMLA request. Generally, an employee who takes FMLA leave will be able to return to the same position or a position with equivalent status, pay, benefits and other employment terms. The position will be the same or one which is virtually identical in terms of pay, benefits and working conditions. The School District may choose to exempt certain key employees from this requirement and not return them to the same or similar position.

#### G. Use of Paid and Unpaid Leave

Employees who are taking FMLA leave must use all accrued paid vacation, personal

business and sick leave benefits prior to being eligible for unpaid leave. Vacation, personal business and sick leave benefits will run “concurrently” with the FMLA leave. Once all paid vacation, personal business, and sick leave benefits are used the remaining portion of the twelve (12) week FMLA period will be unpaid.

Additionally, employees placed on workers' compensation leave will also be placed on FMLA leave and will be required to use all accrued paid vacation, personal business and sick leave benefits prior to being eligible for unpaid FMLA leave

#### H. Intermittent Leave or a Reduced Work Schedule

The employee may take FMLA leave in 12 consecutive weeks, may use the leave intermittently (take a day periodically when needed over the year) or, under certain circumstances, may use the leave to reduce the workweek or workday, resulting in a reduced hour schedule. In all cases, the leave may not exceed a total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks to care for an injured or ill service member over a 12-month period).

The School District may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate the intermittent or reduced schedule, in instances of when leave for the employee or employee's family member is foreseeable and for planned medical treatment, including recovery from a serious health condition or to care for a child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care.

For the birth, adoption or foster care of a child, the School District and the employee must mutually agree to the schedule before the employee may take the leave intermittently or work a reduced hour schedule. Leave for birth, adoption or foster care of a child must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the child.

If the employee is taking leave for a serious health condition or because of the serious health condition of a family member, the employee should try to reach agreement with the School District before taking intermittent leave or working a reduced hour schedule. If this is not possible, then the employee must prove that the use of the leave is medically necessary.

#### I. Certification for the Employee's Serious Health Condition

The School District will require certification for the employee's serious health condition. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. Medical certification will be provided using the DOL Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition form.

The School District may directly contact the employee's health care provider for verification or clarification purposes using a health care professional, an HR professional, leave administrator or management official. *The School District will not use the employee's direct supervisor for this contact.* Before the School District makes this direct contact with the health care provider, the employee will be given an opportunity to resolve any deficiencies in the medical certification. In compliance with

HIPAA Medical Privacy Rules, the School District will obtain the employee's permission for clarification of individually identifiable health information.

The School District has the right to ask for a second opinion if it has reason to doubt the certification. The School District will pay for the employee to get a certification from a second doctor, which the School District will select. The School District may deny FMLA leave to an employee who refuses to release relevant medical records to the health care provider designated to provide a second or third opinion. If necessary to resolve a conflict between the original certification and the second opinion, the School District will require the opinion of a third doctor. The School District and the employee will mutually select the third doctor, and the School District will pay for the opinion. This third opinion will be considered final. The employee will be provisionally entitled to leave and benefits under the FMLA pending the second and/or third opinion.

J. Certification for the Family Member's Serious Health Condition

The School District will require certification for the family member's serious health condition. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. Medical certification will be provided using the DOL Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition form.

The School District may directly contact the employee's family member's health care provider for verification or clarification purposes using a health care professional, an HR professional, leave administrator or management official. *The School District will not use the employee's direct supervisor for this contact.* Before the School District makes this direct contact with the health care provider, the employee will be given an opportunity to resolve any deficiencies in the medical certification. In compliance with HIPAA Medical Privacy Rules, the School District will obtain the employee's family member's permission for clarification of individually identifiable health information.

The School District has the right to ask for a second opinion if it has reason to doubt the certification. The School District will pay for the employee's family member to get a certification from a second doctor, which the School District will select. The School District may deny FMLA leave to an employee whose family member refuses to release relevant medical records to the health care provider designated to provide a second or third opinion. If necessary to resolve a conflict between the original certification and the second opinion, the School District will require the opinion of a third doctor. The School District and the employee will mutually select the third doctor, and the School District will pay for the opinion. This third opinion will be considered final. The employee will be provisionally entitled to leave and benefits under the FMLA pending the second and/or third opinion.

K. Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave

The School District will require certification of the qualifying exigency for military family

leave. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. This certification will be provided using the DOL Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave form.

L. Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Service Member for Military Family Leave

The School District will require certification for the serious injury or illness of the covered service member. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. This certification will be provided using the DOL Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Service member form.

M. Recertification

The School District may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member no more frequently than every 30 days and only when circumstances have changed significantly, or if the employee receives information casting doubt on the reason given for the absence, or if the employee seeks an extension of his or her leave. Otherwise, the School District may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member every six months in connection with an FMLA absence. The School District may provide the employee's health care provider with the employee's attendance records and ask whether need for leave is consistent with the employee's serious health condition.

N. Procedure for Requesting FMLA Leave

All employees requesting FMLA leave must provide verbal or written notice of the need for the leave to the District Office. Within five business days after the employee has provided this notice, the District Office will complete and provide the employee with the DOL Notice of Eligibility and Rights Response form.

When the need for the leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide the School District with at least 30 days' notice. When an employee becomes aware of a need for FMLA leave less than 30 days in advance, the employee must provide notice of the need for the leave either the same day or the next business day. When the need for FMLA leave is not foreseeable, the employee must comply with the School District's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave, absent unusual circumstances.

O. Designation of FMLA Leave

Within five business days after the employee has submitted the appropriate certification form, the District Office will complete and provide the employee with a written response

to the employee's request for FMLA leave using the DOL Designation Notice form.

P. Intent to Return to Work From FMLA Leave

On a basis that does not discriminate against employees on FMLA leave; the School District may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

See Board Policy 414.3 Classified Employee Family and Medical Leave for more information.

**Political Office Leave**

The School District may provide a leave of absence to classified employees for the purpose of campaigning for political office. If approved, the School District Superintendent will grant this leave to the appropriate employee on an unpaid basis.

See Board Policy 414.5 Classified Employee Political Leave for more information.

**Classified Employee Unpaid Leave**

Unpaid leave may be used to excuse an involuntary absence not provided for in other leave policies. Unpaid leave for classified employees must be authorized by the Superintendent. Whenever possible, classified employees will make a written request for unpaid leave ten (10) days prior to the beginning date of the requested leave.

See Board Policy 414.8 Classified Employee Unpaid Leave

***SECTION VIII. SUMMARY***

## Summary

The policies, practices, and benefits expressed in this handbook are those currently in effect at North Polk Community Schools as of the date of this publication. This handbook does not create a contract of employment between the School District and the employee. Because the continued success of our, or any, School District requires the ability to change and adapt to the times, these policies, practices and benefits may be suspended, modified or cancelled, without advance notice. Should the School District determine that changes are required, we will make every effort to contact you as soon as practical, in writing, with details on the new policy.

This Employee Handbook replaces and supersedes any previous Employee Handbook you may have received from the School District or any oral or written agreement relating to the same or similar subject matter that you may have entered into with the School District with respect to your employment. This Employee Handbook may not be changed in any detail by any verbal statement, representation or other agreement made by any other School District employee, or by any written document signed by any School District employee other than the School District Board of Education.

The information contained in the Employee Handbook has been prepared to give you a better understanding of your job at North Polk Community Schools and to give you a summary of the benefits and personnel policies of the School District. Although the handbook reflects our current policies, it may be necessary to make changes from time-to-time to best serve the needs of our organization.

If, in this handbook, we have mistakenly said anything that is different from the actual provisions of the applicable benefit plan documents, the actual provisions of the benefit plan will govern. Further, the policies and statements contained in this publication (and any future changes) are not considered as an employment contract. Instead, this publication serves the purpose of a guideline to help improve our mutual communications.

Also, it should be noted that your employment is considered an "at will" arrangement, meaning that you may terminate your employment at any time and the School District has this same right. If you have any questions about any of the policies contained in the handbook, please contact the District Office.