

# **United Community School District Substitute Handbook**



## **2025-2026**

Board Approved August 18, 2025

Equal Opportunity Employer

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# OPENING STATEMENT

## Welcome Letter

Dear Substitute Teacher,

Welcome to the United Community School District! We are so grateful for your presence today. Your role is vital in ensuring that learning continues seamlessly in the absence of the classroom teacher. Our students thrive on consistency, and with your support, we know they will have a positive and productive day.

This guide has been prepared to help you feel confident and supported throughout your time with us. It includes the essential information you'll need about our schedule, procedures, and classroom expectations. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the front office or nearby staff members if you have questions or need assistance during the day.

Thank you for being here and for the difference you make!

Please note:

**This handbook is a general source of information and may not include every possible situation that could arise. It is not intended and does not constitute a contract between the school district and employees. It is the employee's responsibility to refer to the district policies and/or administrative procedures for further information. Whenever the provisions of this handbook conflict with those of a board-adopted policy, an applicable Master Contract, or any other formal employment contract, the terms of the policy, Master Contract, and/or employment contract shall govern.**

We are glad to have you on our team and look forward to a successful year together.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Elyse Brimeyer, Principal  
515-432-5319  
ebrimeyer@united.k12.ia.us

## Definitions

An administrator's title, such as Superintendent or Principal, also means that individual's designee unless otherwise stated.

**"The district"** means the United Community School district.

**"Online learning platform"** means Zoom, Google Classroom, or any other web application used to conduct virtual learning.

**"Parent"** also means "guardian" unless otherwise stated.

**"School activities"** means all school activities in which students are involved whether they are school-sponsored or school-approved, whether they are an event or an activity, or whether they are held on or off school grounds.

**"School facilities"** includes school district buildings and vehicles.

**"School grounds"** includes the school district facilities, school district property, property within the jurisdiction of the school district or school district premises, school-owned or school-operated buses or vehicles and chartered buses.

# **United Mission Statement, Vision Statement, District Goals**

**Mission:** Learning, Thriving, Belonging

## **District Goals:**

1. **Student Learning:** Ensure high achievement and unique learning opportunities for each and every United student.
2. **School Culture:** Maintain a positive and high quality school district environment that attracts and retains students, staff, and families.
3. **Resource Management:** Handle all district funds equitably, efficiently, transparently, and responsibly to provide high-quality learning experiences.

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

It is the policy of the United Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination.

If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator:

**Title IX Equity Coordinator, Elyse Brimeyer**

1284 U Ave, Boone, IA 50036

Phone Number: 515-432-5319

Email address: ebrimeyer@united.k12.ia.us

## **Equal Opportunity Employment**

The district will provide equal opportunity to employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, directives and regulations of federal, state and local governing bodies. The district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation and disability in its employment and personnel practices. Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment includes hiring, placement, promotion, transfer or demotion, recruitment, advertising or solicitation for employment, treatment during employment, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and layoff or termination. The school district will take affirmative action in major job categories where women, men, minorities and persons with disabilities are underrepresented. Employees will support and comply with the district's established equal employment

opportunity and affirmative action policies. Employees will be given notice of this policy annually.

The board will appoint an affirmative action coordinator. The affirmative action coordinator will have the responsibility for drafting the affirmative action plan. The affirmative action plan will be reviewed by the board at least every two years.

Advertisements and notices for vacancies within the district will contain the following statement: *"The United Community School District is an EEO/AA employer."* The statement will also appear on application forms.

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, will be directed to the Affirmative Action Coordinator by writing to the Affirmative Action Coordinator:

**Affirmative Action Coordinator, Elyse Brimeyer**

1284 U Ave, Boone, IA 50036

Phone Number: 515-432-5319

Email address: ebrimeyer@united.k12.ia.us

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, may also be directed in writing to:

- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Milwaukee Area Office, Reuss Federal Plaza, 310 West Wisconsin Ave., Suite 800, Milwaukee, WI., 53203-2292, 1-800-669-4000 or TTY 1-800-669-6820, [www.eeoc.gov/field/milwaukee/index.cfm](http://www.eeoc.gov/field/milwaukee/index.cfm)

**AND/OR**

- The Iowa Civil Rights Commission, 6200 Park Avenue, Suite 100 Des Moines, IA 50321-1270, (515)281-4121 or 1-800-457-4416, <https://icrc.iowa.gov/>.

This inquiry or complaint to the federal office may be made instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

Further information and copies of the procedures for filing a complaint are available in the school district's central administrative office and the administrative office in each attendance center. The affirmative action plan is available at the school district's central administrative office.



# School Calendar

## United Community School District 2025-2026 Calendar

Calendar Summary	
1st Trimester	58
2nd Trimester	58
3rd Trimester	58
Instructional Days	173
Prof. Development Days	13
Total Staff Contract Days	191
Total Instructional Hours	1125

NOTE: instructional days include compensation days for parent-teacher conferences, as reported to the Iowa Department of Education.

Calendar Legend	
School Starts	
Teacher In-Service	
Trimester End	
Parent/Teacher Conferences	
No School and/or Holiday	
<b>BOLD: 2 Hr. Early Release</b>	

Holidays	
<b>Labor Day</b>	<b>Sep-1</b>
Columbus Day	Oct-13
Veterans Day	Nov-11
<b>Thanksgiving</b>	<b>Nov-27</b>
<b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>Dec-25</b>
<b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>Jan-1</b>
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Jan-19
President's Day	Feb-16
Easter	Apr-5
<b>Memorial Day</b>	<b>May-25</b>

Regular Starting/Ending Times	
School Starts	8:10 AM
School Ends	3:20 PM

Early Release Time	
School Ends	1:20 PM

Preschool Information	
Home Visits - Scheduled with Teachers	Aug 21-27
<b>Preschool Pop In</b>	<b>AM 8:30-10a / PM 12:30-2p</b>
First Day of Preschool	Aug 29
Last Day of Preschool	May 28
<b>Preschool Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday</b>	
AM Preschool 8:10-11:10am	Drop-off at 8 AM
PM Preschool 12:10-3:20pm	

Transportation	
Transportation routes are currently being determined. Once we have a finalized schedule, times will be communicated.	

Make-Up Days	
Full days of school missed due to inclement weather will be made up on Feb. 16 and April 6. Remaining days will be made up starting May 29 unless otherwise designated by the Board of Education.	

1136 Hours/Year Calendar						
August 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
4	5	6	7	8		
11	12	13	14	15		
18	19	20	21	22		
25	26	27	28	29	5	
September 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
1	2	3	4	5	9	
8	9	10	11	12	14	
15	16	17	18	19	19	
22	23	24	25	26	23	
29	30				25	
October 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
		1	2	3	28	
6	7	8	9	10	33	
13	14	15	16	17	38	
20	21	22	23	24	42	
27	28	29	30	31	47	
November 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
3	4	5	6	7	51	
10	11	12	13	14	56	
17	18	19	20	21	61	
24	25	26	27	28	63	
					63	
December 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
1	2	3	4	5	68	
8	9	10	11	12	73	
15	16	17	18	19	78	
22	23	24	25	26	78	
29	30	31			78	
January 2026						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
			1	2	78	
5	6	7	8	9	83	
12	13	14	15	16	88	
19	20	21	22	23	93	
26	27	28	29	30	98	
February 2026						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
2	3	4	5	6	103	
9	10	11	12	13	108	
16	17	18	19	20	112	
23	24	25	26	27	117	
March 2026						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
2	3	4	5	6	122	
9	10	11	12	13	126	
16	17	18	19	20	126	
23	24	25	26	27	131	
30	31				133	
April 2026						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
		1	2	3	136	
6	7	8	9	10	140	
13	14	15	16	17	145	
20	21	22	23	24	150	
27	28	29	30		154	
May 2026						
M	T	W	TH	F	Student Day	
				1	155	
4	5	6	7	8	160	
11	12	13	14	15	165	
18	19	20	21	22	170	
25	26	27	28	29	173	

Date	August Events
Aug 13-14	New Teacher Orientation
Aug-15	Teacher Quality Day (pending board approval)
Aug 18-22	Teacher In-Service Workshop
Aug-25	Teacher Meet & Greet/Supply Drop Off (7:30a-7:30p)
Aug-26	School Starts (K-6)/2 Hr. Early Release
Aug-27	2 Hr. Early Release
Aug-28	Preschool Pop In Day
Aug-29	School Starts (Preschool)

Date	September Events
Sep-1	No School (Labor Day)
Sep-22	No School (Teacher In-Service)

Date	October Events
Oct-20	No School (Teacher In-Service)

Date	November Events
Nov-3	No School (Teacher In-Service)
Nov-4	Parent/Teacher Conferences (4-7:45)
Nov-6	Parent/Teacher Conferences (2-4:30; 5-7:45); 2 Hr Early Release
Nov-7	No School (Teacher Comp Day)
Nov-25	2 Hr Early Release
Nov 26-28	No School (Thanksgiving)

Date	December Events
Dec-19	2 Hr Early Release
Dec 22-Jan 2	No School (Winter Break)

Date	January Events
Jan-2	No School (Teacher In-Service)
Jan-5	Return from Winter Break

Date	February Events
Feb-16	No School (Teacher In-Service) *built in snow day*

Date	March Events
Mar-9	No School (Teacher In-Service)
Mar-10	Parent/Teacher Conferences (4-7:45)
Mar-12	Parent/Teacher Conferences (2-4:30; 5-7:45); 2 Hr Early Release
Mar-13	No School (Teacher Comp Day)
Mar 16-20	No School (Spring Break)
Mar-23	Return from Spring Break

Date	April Events
Apr-6	No School (Teacher In-Service) *built in snow day*

Date	May Events
May-25	No School (Memorial Day)
May-28	Last Day of School (PK-6); 2 Hr Early Release
May-29	Teacher In-Service

## District Contacts

Admin/Director	Name	Email
Superintendent	Heather Holm	hholm@united.k12.ia.us
School Business Official	Jenn Meinecke	jmeinecke@united.k12.ia.us
Principal	Elyse Brimeyer	ebrimeyer@united.k12.ia.us
Human Resources Director	Christine Oien	coien@united.k12.ia.us
Buildings/Grounds Director	Parvez Faisal	pfaisal@united.k12.ia.us
Transportation Director	Grant Oskvig	goskvig@united.k12.ia.us
Nutrition Director	Cindi Sprecher	csprecher@united.k12.ia.us
School Technology Tech	Sarah Kearney	skearney@united.k12.ia.us

## Board Policies

Board policies are established for the success, safety, and protection of all school employees in the performance of their job duties. Board policies are available on the district website. If you have questions about board policies, please contact Superintendent Heather Holm at [hholm@united.k12.ia.us](mailto:hholm@united.k12.ia.us).

## Handbook Subject to Change

Although every effort will be made to update the handbook on a timely basis, the district reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to change any policies, procedures, benefits, and terms of employment without notice, consultation, or publication, except as may be required by contractual agreements and law. The district reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to modify or change any portion of this handbook at any time.

## **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

### **Licensure**

A substitute teacher is required to hold a current teaching or substitute license or authorization and is solely responsible for ensuring it is current. Specific information regarding an employee's license, authorization, or certification can be obtained from the Iowa Bureau of Educational Examiners (BOEE). The BOEE can be reached by calling (515) 281-3245 or by visiting their website, located at [www.boee.iowa.gov/](http://www.boee.iowa.gov/). A copy of your valid license, official transcripts, and mandatory child & dependent adult abuse reporter training must be on file in the District Office.

Current substitute teaching rates seem adequate and comparable to other districts. Rates are currently Mon-Thu: \$150/day and Fri: \$175/day.

### **Compensation**

The rate of pay for a substitute teacher or nurse is \$150 for a whole day Monday-Thursday and \$175 on Fridays. Substitute teaching assignments for four hours or less will be paid at the half-day rate of \$75 for half days and \$87.50 on Fridays. Assignments for more than four hours will be paid at the full-day rate of \$150. Long-term teacher or nurse substitute assignments of more than ten consecutive days are paid at the rate of \$125 for the first ten days and \$247.40 for each consecutive day thereafter. Substitute associates and secretaries are compensated at \$14.00 per hour.

Regular employees shall be paid in ten (10) or twelve (12) equal installments on the 14th of each month. All regular employees shall be paid through direct deposit to their banking institutions. If the 14th falls on a weekend or holiday, checks will be deposited on the preceding business day. All new staff are required to have direct deposit for their paychecks.

### **Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS)**

The district participates in the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS). This defined benefit plan provides a lifetime retirement benefit to you upon retirement in accordance with a formula based on your age, years of service and the average of your highest five years of wages. For additional information, please contact IPERS at (800) 622-3849 or visit the IPERS website at [About IPERS | IPERS](#).

## **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

### **Assignments & Hours**

A substitute teacher list will be created and maintained by the district office. The building principal has the authority to determine the best substitute candidate to fill each role. Classroom substitutes will be contacted by the principals or his/her administrative office staff.

Substitute teachers may be assigned various before, during, and after school duties throughout the school year. You may be assigned any of the following: hall, breakfast, lunchroom, bus duty, class sponsor, playground, homeroom, or other duties designated by the principal.

Substitutes working a full day should check into the building office by 7:45 a.m. (or at the time otherwise assigned) and should remain at the building until students are dismissed and assigned supervisory duties are completed.

While it is not always possible to check out with the principal after school, substitute teachers are asked to stop by the office and check out with the secretary, noting any information that may be helpful.

### **Attendance**

Regular and predictable attendance is expected. The school should be notified of cancellations as soon as practical, and with at least 24 hour notice prior to shift, except for emergency situations.

### **Background Checks**

Employees are subject to criminal, dependent adult abuse and child abuse background checks at least every five years. The background check will either be conducted by the school district or another agency.

Prior to being added to the substitute list, the school district will perform the background checks. Based upon the results of the background checks, the school district will determine whether an offer will be extended. If the candidate is a teacher who has an initial license from the BOEE, then the requirement for a background check is waived.

## **Conflict of Interest**

No employee may use his or her position to obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value for the private benefit of himself or herself or his or her immediate family, or for an organization with which he or she is associated. Such actions may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees will not act as an agent or dealer for the sale of textbooks or other school supplies to the school district. Employees will not participate for personal financial remuneration in outside activities wherein their position on the staff is used to sell goods or services to students or parents. Employees will not engage in outside work or activities where the source of information concerning the customer, client or employer originates from information obtained because of the employee's position in the school district.

Since employees have access to information and a captive audience that could present a conflict of interest, employees may only solicit other employees or students for personal or financial gain with the prior, advance approval of the Superintendent. If the approval of the Superintendent is given, the employee must conduct the solicitations within the conditions set by the Superintendent. Further, the Superintendent may, upon five days' notice, require the employee to cease approved solicitations as a condition of continued employment.

## **Employee Records**

The district will maintain personnel records on employees. The records are important for the daily administration of the educational program, for implementing board policy, for budget and financial planning and for meeting state and federal requirements.

The records will include, but not be limited to, records necessary for the daily administration of the school district, salary records, evaluations, application for employment, references and other items needed to carry out board policy. Employee personnel files are school district records and are generally considered confidential records and therefore are not open to public inspection or accessibility.

Only in certain limited instances will employee records be made available to the public. This occurs when the employee gives signed consent or records are non-confidential records such as an employee's salary, an employee's individual contract, or the fact the employee resigned in lieu of termination, was discharged, or was demoted as a result of a disciplinary action, and the documented reasons and rationale why.

Employees may have access to their personnel files, except for letters of reference, and copy items from their personnel files at a time mutually agreed upon between the

School Business Official and the employee. The school district may charge a reasonable fee for each copy made.

## **Employee Searches**

Employees should have no expectation of privacy in their classrooms, desks, computers or other school district-provided space, or equipment. The school district may examine these items when needed. Anything on the school district's computers, server, website, online learning platform, etc. and in school district files, etc. are considered a public record and open to public inspection. If the school district conducts an examination or inspection under the terms of this policy, there will be at least two individuals present at the time of the examination or inspection. Should the school district get a request to see this information, at that time, a determination will be made whether the information can be withheld as confidential information. The school district assumes no responsibility or liability for any items of personal property which are placed in the desk or workspace which is assigned to employees.

## **Mandatory Cooperation in Workplace Investigations**

Any workplace investigation conducted by administrative staff, or their designee will receive complete cooperation from all employees. Employees may be disciplined, up to and including termination, for making any untrue statement or providing information that is dishonest, misleading, inaccurate or incomplete during the investigation and related procedures. Employees may also be disciplined, up to and including termination, for impeding, obstructing or failing to cooperate with the investigation and related procedures.

## **Mandatory Reporting of Post-Employment Arrests and Convictions**

Any employee who is arrested or convicted of any criminal charges shall report such information to Superintendent Heather Holm within 5 days. Failure to do so shall incur discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Nepotism**

More than one family member may be an employee of the school district. It is within the discretion of the Superintendent 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 board.

The employment of more than one individual in a family is on the basis of their qualifications, credentials and records.

## **Release of Credit Information**

The following information will be released to an entity with whom an employee has applied for credit or has obtained credit: title of position, income and number of years employed. This information will be released without prior written notice to the employee as it is all public information. Confidential information about the employee will be released to an inquiring creditor with a written authorization from the employee.

# **DISTRICT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

## **Business Office Procedures**

To ensure smooth and consistent operations across the district, all staff are expected to follow the procedures outlined below when requesting items, records, or making purchases through the business office. Please contact the School Business Official with any questions regarding these procedures.

**Requesting/Purchasing Items** - All requests for purchases and supplies must be submitted through the appropriate channels. Staff should submit a Purchase Order (PO) Requisition Form available in the staff workroom. Requests must include a clear description of the item(s), estimated cost, and intended use or purpose. Purchase order requests must be approved and signed by the Principal or Superintendent prior to purchase.

Reimbursements for personal purchases are discouraged and will be granted only with prior written approval and a receipt. Purchases made without prior authorization may not be reimbursed. Sales tax cannot be reimbursed.

To ensure timely delivery and budget alignment, staff should:

- Submit requests for the upcoming school year by mid-July
- Avoid placing orders after March 15 unless pre-approved for special circumstances
- Submit early for high-volume items or custom orders

All purchased items must comply with current public health standards, especially those intended for student or public use. This includes guidelines related to cleanliness, food safety, sanitation, and medical supplies. Staff must not purchase or bring in any personal-use items for student distribution without prior approval. Staff cannot purchase personal goods or services through the school.

**Use of District Credit Cards** - Use of district credit cards is limited to authorized personnel and must be pre-approved through the above purchasing process. Receipts must be submitted within 48 hours of purchase with a completed purchase order. Misuse or failure to submit proper documentation may result in loss of privileges and/or disciplinary action.

**Use of District Transportation** - Use of district vehicles is limited to authorized personnel and must be pre-approved by the Principal and transportation director through the transportation request process. Requests must be submitted using the



online Transportation Request Form two weeks in advance. The form is available on the Staff Resources section of the school website.

It is the staff member's responsibility to make arrangements with the transportation director for access to the keys and vehicles.

Staff are responsible to inspect the vehicle after use to ensure that all personal belongings are removed, trash is removed, and all messes are cleaned up.

## **Child Labor**

The district complies with both state and federal child labor laws. Under Iowa Child Labor laws, Iowa Code Chapter 92, minors under the age of 18 are prohibited from working in certain occupations, performing certain duties and from using certain equipment. For more information on federal child labor laws, contact the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, in Des Moines at (515) 284-4625 or visit <https://www.iowadivisionoflabor.gov/child-labor>.

## **Complaints**

Concerns or conflict with other employees should be resolved at the lowest organizational level by those individuals closest to the concern.

- a. Unsettled matters from (a) above or problems and questions about individual attendance centers should be addressed to the employee's Building Principal.
- b. Unsettled matters from (b) above or problems and questions concerning the school district should be directed to the Superintendent.
- c. If a matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the Superintendent, it may then be brought to the board for consideration. To bring a concern, the individual shall notify the board president or board secretary in writing, who may bring it to the attention of the entire board.

Complaints will never be made in the presence of other employees, students or outside persons.

## **Copy Machine Use**

The copy machine is available for staff use at any time for educational purposes. Personal copies are prohibited.

## **Copyright**

Copyright is a form of intellectual property that protects original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works. The copyright laws of the United States make it illegal for anyone to duplicate copyrighted materials without permission. Severe penalties are provided for unauthorized copying of all materials covered by the act unless the copying falls within the bounds of the “fair use” doctrine. Any duplication of copyrighted materials by district employees must be done with permission of the copyright holder or within the bounds of “fair use.”

## **Limitations to Employment References**

School employees shall not assist another school employee, volunteer, contractor, or agent in obtaining a new job, apart from the routine transmission of administrative personnel files, if the employee knows, or has probable cause to believe, that such school employee, volunteer, contractor, or agent engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of the law.

This limitation does not apply if the matter has been properly reported to law enforcement and any other regulatory authorities required by law, and either:

- the matter has been officially closed by the law enforcement agency;
- the individual is acquitted or otherwise exonerated of the alleged misconduct; or
- more than four years has passed since the case was opened, and no charges or indictment have been filed.

## **Materials and Instruction**

Employees must supply only age-appropriate books, curriculum materials, topics, messages, and teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age group. “Age-appropriate” is defined as not including descriptions or visual depictions of a sex act as defined in section 702.17. There is an exception for sex education.

There will be no instruction on sexual activity or gender identity. Staff will also not include any curriculum, program, survey, material, activity, announcement or materials relating to gender identity or sexual activity to students in grades K-6.

This applies to school libraries and classrooms. Staff will not use or supply any books or materials that have descriptions or visual depictions of a sex act or relate to gender

identity or sexual activity. The materials housed in the library collection will follow the same guidelines.

A link to the school library catalog, the process and form to object to library and instructional materials, and the form to prohibit a student from accessing specific library and instructional materials will be posted on the district website.

## **Payroll Accountability**

The district believes in taking appropriate measures to ensure the accurate expenditure of district funds through payroll. All district employees shall be responsible for checking in with the building secretary upon arrival and departure in order to reporting their time worked. The School Business Official shall be responsible for the timely and accurate disbursement of payroll for the district. No individuals beyond the employee, their direct supervisor, and the School Business Official shall have authority to alter timekeeping for employees without prior approval from the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall develop procedures to ensure the accurate recording of time worked and compensation disbursed for all district employees.

## **Personal Property**

An employee's personal property is not covered for loss under the school's insurance program. Reimbursement for any such loss would have to be covered under the employee's personal insurance program.

## **School Fees**

Iowa law identifies the types of fees schools can charge. School districts only have the authority to charge fees for textbooks, school supplies, eye and ear protective devices, summer school, driver's education and transportation for students not eligible for free transportation. For those that are charged, the fees must be waived or reduced for those students who meet the eligibility requirements for free or reduced-price meals. Students cannot be charged a fee for masks or other personal protective equipment.

Employees cannot charge a student fee for anything without prior consent of the Superintendent.

## **School Nutrition Program**

The district operates a school nutrition program. Substitutes may purchase meals and other items, including milk. All employees must keep a positive balance in their lunch account.

## **School Publicity and Community Relations**

The district staff is the connection between the schools and the community. Employees are expected to work in a professional manner with parents and the community, when appropriate, for their positions.

Teachers especially are expected to work closely with parents throughout the school year to ensure the success of all students, as parents are vital partners in the education of their children. Radio, newspaper or television news releases about a teacher's classroom or students are not to be made without prior approval of administration.

The board president is the spokesperson for the board, and the Superintendent is the spokesperson for the school district. It is the responsibility of the board president and Superintendent to respond to inquiries from the news media about the school district.

## **Surveys**

Active parent consent is required before administering an exam or survey on a minor student's mental, physical, or emotional health that is not required by state or federal law. A copy or link to the survey must be provided. This does not apply to hearing or vision exams. This also does not prohibit health screenings or invasive physical exams in emergent care situations or from cooperating in a child abuse assessment conducted by DHS.

## **Threats of Violence**

In the event a student makes a threat of violence or there is an incident resulting in injury or property damage or assault, the teacher must report this to the Building Principal within 24 hours. If the Building Principal is unavailable, contact the Superintendent. Teachers may also notify the parent(s) or guardian(s), but it is not required. The Building Principal, however, must notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the offender and the victim within 24 hours of getting the report from the teacher.

# CONDUCT IN THE WORKPLACE

## Climate

Building climate is an important aspect of providing a positive workplace and educational experience for our students. All employees are expected to assist in the development of a positive climate. This includes maintaining open and respectful communication with other employees, and avoiding negative and hurtful gossip.

## Communication

The district believes that cooperative, reciprocal communication plays a vital role in the delivery of education, and is a key factor in establishing supportive relationships among all its stakeholders. For this reason, the District is committed to regular and transparent communications with all stakeholders through a variety of means, including: print, electronic, voice and visual. All employees of the United Community School District are expected to serve as positive ambassadors for the District and as appropriate role models for students. It is important to maintain professionalism in all interactions with students, their families and the community. As such, employees of the United Community School District agree to:

- Adopt a proactive approach to providing regular communications with their respective stakeholders
- Be respectful and professional in all interactions
- Maintain confidentiality and respect rights to privacy
- Communicate with leaders (principals and/or Superintendent) when appropriate
- Prioritize classroom and educational activities during the day, but endeavor to reply to parent inquiries in a timely manner and
- Include the following disclaimer on personal social media sites if identified as associated with the district *"The opinions expressed here are my own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the United Community School District"*. Employees' online behavior on social media must reflect the same standards of professionalism, respect, and integrity as face-to-face communications.

## Copyright

Copyright is a form of intellectual property that protects original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works. The copyright laws of the United States make it illegal for anyone to duplicate copyrighted materials without permission. Severe penalties are provided for unauthorized copying of all materials covered by the act unless the copying falls within the bounds of the "fair use" doctrine.

Any duplication of copyrighted materials by district employees must be done with permission of the copyright holder or within the bounds of “fair use.”

## **Employee Use of Phones and Personal Devices**

School district and personal phones and message devices are to be used appropriately at times that do not conflict with the employees’ duties. All personal calls should be made during sanctioned breaks. District telephones are only for official school business. Failure to follow this guideline will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The following guidelines will apply to telephone usage:

- Phone calls will not be forwarded to the classroom during instructional times for any reason except emergencies.
- Personal phone calls are not to be made during student contact times, and must be limited during non-instructional times.
- Except under emergency circumstances, with administration acknowledgement, personal cell phones must be on silent mode during the school day and should not be used during student contact times.
- Long distance calls can be made from all district phones. Personnel are encouraged to make personal long distance calls from your cell/home telephone.
- Use of personal technology (phone/computer) should not occur during student contact time.

## **Employee Use of District-Owned Vehicles**

Certain district employment positions may require regular and extensive travel. Due to the required duties of these positions, the district may provide certain positions with use of district-owned vehicles. Employees who utilize district-owned vehicles during their job duties are fulfilling the public purpose of meeting the needs of the educational community in an efficient, and time-sensitive manner. District-owned vehicles are purchased and maintained with public money and must be used strictly in accordance with fulfilling a public purpose. These vehicles represent the district in carrying out its educational mission. Therefore, district-owned vehicles will always be clearly marked to identify the district.

Staff requesting a district-owned vehicle must complete the Transportation Request form two weeks prior to travel. The form is available in the Staff Resources Google Drive Folder District website in the Staff Resources section. Questions regarding transportation needs can be directed to Grant Oskvig at [goskvig@united.k12.ia.us](mailto:goskvig@united.k12.ia.us) or 515-290-8877.

Staff are responsible to inspect the vehicle after use to ensure that all personal belongings are removed, trash is removed, and all messes are cleaned up.

## **Fighting**

Any verbal or physical altercations between or among employees or others will not be tolerated and may subject the employee(s) to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Fraud/Unlawful Gain**

Any deliberate deception which secures an employee unfair or unlawful gain will be grounds for discipline and may be turned over to law enforcement. The school district will also file a complaint with the Iowa Bureau of Educational Examiners as a violation of the employee's Code of Ethics and the district will also petition for license revocation.

## **Neglect of Duties**

All employees are mindful that students are not to be left unattended and employees should not place themselves in any position where student safety is at risk or neglect of duty could be claimed. Employees, in a supervisory role, needing to leave an area where students are present must ensure another adult is present before leaving. Willful neglect of duties may also include sleeping during working hours, wasting time, loafing or taking excessive breaks, and deliberate or excessive waste of school materials or abuse of school equipment.

## **Offensive or Abusive Language**

Threatening, intimidating, or using abusive and profane language by school district employees towards others, including derogatory slurs, will not be tolerated. Violation will incur discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Performing Unauthorized Work While on Duty**

All district employees are prohibited from performing unauthorized work while on duty. Doing so could result in discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Use of School Facilities and Equipment**

The district attempts to maintain equipment and supplies which permit work to be accomplished in the most efficient and effective manner possible. While employees are encouraged to use these items, it is important to understand that they are school district property only to be used for conducting school district business. After use, school facilities and equipment are to be sanitized by custodial staff in accordance with public health guidelines.

Abuse or misuse of school district or non-district owned property is to be reported immediately to the Principal. Failure to do so will limit district responsibility and/or increase employee responsibility. It is expected all employees will use care and caution when using district and non-district property.

Abuse or misuse or unauthorized use of district property, private property, materials and/or equipment is subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Use of Time**

An employee is responsible for the time on the job which he/she is assigned. Each employee must develop work habits and systems to eliminate backtracking or poor usage of time. This requires initiative and planning on the employee's part. Do not allow students, teachers, fellow workers or others to interrupt your work with lengthy conversations; simply excuse yourself and say you have work to do.

Actions such as the following are strictly prohibited by employees and will result in discipline, up to and including termination: loafing, loitering, sleeping, engaging in unauthorized personal business or prolonged visiting while on duty.



# **EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

## **Academic Freedom**

The district's curriculum leaves room for teacher discretion and academic freedom within the confines of acceptable materials as outlined in each curriculum. Teachers are expected to use good judgment in their pedagogy and consider the culture and climate of the school and community and age, maturity and intellectual and emotional capacities of the students, as they individualize curriculum and provide a learning environment and assignments for their students. Teachers are expected to create a learning environment of age-appropriate civil discourse where a variety of viewpoints can be freely shared to enhance student learning.

## **Artificial Intelligence**

Teachers have discretion whether to use AI in their classrooms. However, prior to using AI tools, classroom teachers will inform the students how AI tools may be used to engage in and complete educational tasks and assignments. All applicable laws will be adhered to in the classroom and by classroom teachers. Classroom teachers will establish appropriate parameters for AI tool usage and will monitor student use of AI tools as appropriate. Students are expected to abide by their classroom teachers' rules. Classroom teachers will utilize AI tools that have been reviewed by the district.

Privacy must be protected when using AI tools. This means no personally identifiable information about other students or staff will be shared with AI tools, without prior written consent from the parent or guardian of the student or from the staff or student when applicable.

## **Confidentiality**

Substitutes who are made privy to information regarding students, community members, school staff, or district information may not discuss this information or community concerns with any other parties except legitimate school authorities. Administrators or appropriate staff members should be consulted by substitutes if they determine there is a need to relay information as a result of health, safety or wellbeing concerns. Sharing any student information via social media is strictly prohibited.

## **Dress and Grooming**

All employees are required to dress in a professional and appropriate manner in light of the environment in which they work, the duties of their jobs and the impressionable

youth they serve. Clothing should be neat and clean. Discretion and common-sense call for an avoidance of extremes which would interfere with or have an effect on the educational process. Clothing deemed inappropriate will be discussed with the employee. Any clothing which could be deemed unsafe or disruptive to the school environment could result in disciplinary action. Questions about appropriate attire should be addressed to the direct supervisor. Also, as role models for students, all staff members are expected to not only dress appropriately, but to practice exemplary hygiene.

## **Employee Political Activity**

Employees have full equality with other citizens in the exercise of their political rights and responsibilities, but employees shall refrain from certain political activities in the workplace and on district property under the jurisdiction of the board. Such prohibitions include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in any activity for the solicitation, promotion, election or defeat of any referendum, candidate for public office, legislation or other political action during work hours/while engaged in official duties and in the presence of any student.
- Soliciting or receiving from any employee or other person any contribution or service for any political purpose during work hours/while engaged in official duties.
- Using classrooms, buildings or students for solicitation, promotion, election or defeat of any referendum, candidate for public office, legislation or other political action. (This provision does not apply to employee use of district facilities if they are related to third-party events/activities authorized by the district that are outside the employee's scope of employment.)
- Using school equipment or materials for solicitation, promotion, election or defeat or any referendum, candidate for public office, legislation or other political action.

Engaging in prohibited political activities may be grounds for discipline action, up to and including termination.

Employees may request a leave of absence to run for public office. That provision is detailed in the "Political Leave" section of this handbook.

## **Ethics – Bureau of Educational Examiners**

School district employees are expected to perform their jobs in an ethical and honest manner consistent with board policy and the state Bureau of Educational Examiners (BOEE) rules. Any actions deemed unethical or dishonest will incur appropriate

discipline. Licensed staff members are expected to know and understand the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics of the BOEE. The BOEE's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics constitutes mandatory minimum standards of practice for all licensed employees. While classified employees, except coaches, are not subject to the BOEE Code of Ethics, it is good guidance for all employees and recommended reading for classified employees as well.

For a copy of the ethics code, please visit [Ethics | Iowa Bureau of Educational Examiners](#).

## **Gifts**

Employees will not, either directly or indirectly, solicit, accept or receive any gift or series of gifts, unless the gift is valued at less than three dollars or has a negligible resale value. Honorariums may be received but must be turned over to the school district unless the employee was on his or her own time, the donor does not meet the definition of "restricted donor" or the gift or honorarium does not meet the definition of gift or honorarium.

## **Religious Holiday Celebrations in Public Schools**

(IASB sample policy 603.8 and 603.8R1)

Employees should be cognizant of creating an inclusive space for all their students by maintaining a learning environment that is unbiased and objective. Holiday-related activities should reflect this learning environment and will be educationally sound and sensitive to religious differences. Employees must not solicit or encourage religious or anti-religious activities/celebrations. Employees should be especially careful in planning activities that are to take place immediately preceding or on a religious holiday.

Employees must not inhibit students from expressing their religious beliefs or non-beliefs during the school day as long as it is nondisruptive to the instructional day, does not violate student behavior rules, and does not impose religious beliefs on other students. Expressions of belief or nonbelief initiated by individual students are permitted in composition, art forms, music, speech and debate. However, employees may not require activities which indoctrinate or force students to contradict their personal beliefs or nonbelief.

## **Staff Lounge**

A staff lounge is available to substitutes. In order to keep the staff lounge clean, all personnel need to clean and pick up after themselves. Items should be cleaned out of the refrigerators weekly.

## **Staff Technology Use**

Usage of the school district's computer resources is a privilege, not a right, and use entails responsibility. All information on the school district's computer system is considered a public record. Whether there is an exception to keeping some narrow, specific content confidential is determined on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, users of the school district's computer network must not expect, nor does the school district guarantee, privacy for email, online learning platforms or the school district's computer network including websites visited. The school district reserves the right to access and view any material stored on school district equipment or any material used in conjunction with the school district's computer network.

Employees shall not post confidential or proprietary information, including photographic images, about the school district, its employees, students, agents or others on any external web site without the consent of the Superintendent. The employee shall adhere to all applicable privacy and confidentiality policies adopted by the school district when on external websites. Employees shall not use the school district logos, images, iconography, etc. on external websites. Employees shall not use school district time or property on external sites that are not directly related to the employee's job. Employees, students and volunteers need to realize that the internet is not a private platform, and anything posted on an external site may be viewed by others all over the world. Employees, students and volunteers who do not want school administrators to know their personal information should refrain from exposing it on the internet. Employees who would like to start a social media site for school district sanctioned activities must contact the Superintendent for approval. Once approved by the Superintendent, the employee must work with Sarah Kearney, School Technology Technician, in establishing and maintaining the site.

## **Social Media**

District employees enjoy the right to freedom of speech under the US and Iowa Constitutions. However, employees should consider whether their use of social media puts their professional reputation and effectiveness as a district employee at risk. Employees may not post any information concerning students or other employees that is confidential as a matter of law. Staff are encouraged to check and maintain appropriate privacy settings when posting and sharing on social media.

Employees who use social media platforms are encouraged to remember that the school community may not be able to separate employees as private citizens from their role within the district. Employee expression on social media platforms that interferes with or materially disrupts the district's operations or prevents the district or employee

from functioning efficiently and effectively may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Additionally, employees should refrain from using social media for personal use while on work time. Employees should also refrain from using their district email addresses to register for social media platforms such as blogs, networks, or other online tools unless these tools are directly related to work for the district.

Recommendations include:

<b>Do NOT</b>	<b>Do</b>
"Friend" students on social media	Set your personal privacy settings to the highest levels (but understand that posts can still be shared)
Communicate privately with students via social media or texting	Create a professional or closed account for your classroom and share login credentials with the tech director
Use language that is vulgar, discriminatory, inflammatory, or disparaging	Communicate with groups of students and families via text through a professional school account such as Remind or Google Classroom
Post information about students through a personal account	Use a professional account to promote student activities and awards with permission
Post pictures or statements that present your image as unprofessional	Use social media to connect with other educators professional, such as a twitter #iaedchat

## **Theft**

All thefts should be reported immediately to a Principal or immediate supervisor. Any employee found to be involved in theft of the districts or another person's property will result in appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Treatment of Patrons of the District**

Patrons of the district are to be treated with respect on school grounds and at school events. Employees should always be courteous, and report to district administration any mistreatment by district patrons.

## **Employee Expression**

The school district shall take reasonable measures as required by law to protect the intellectual freedom of students and employees and protect students and staff from discrimination based on speech. Employees who file a complaint alleging a violation of their intellectual freedom or discrimination based on speech shall not be retaliated against and shall have whistleblower protections under Iowa law.

Employees will comply with Iowa law to the extent that compliance does not infringe on employee's free speech rights.

Employees who use social media platforms are encouraged to remember that the school community may not be able to separate employees as private citizens from their role within the district. Employee expression on social media platforms that interferes with the district's operations or prevents the district or employee from functioning efficiently and effectively may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

A district employee who acts to protect a student for engaging in free expression or who refuses to infringe on students engaging in free expression and who is acting within the scope of their professional ethics will not be retaliated against or face any adverse employment action based on their behavior provided that expression is otherwise permitted by law and board policy.

If the board or court finds an employee that is subject to licensure, certification or authorization by the Bureau of Educational Examiners discriminated against a student or other district employee, the board will refer the employee to the Bureau of Educational Examiners for additional proceedings as required by law and which may result in discipline up to and including termination.

# **STUDENTS AND THE CLASSROOM**

## **Abuse of Students by a School District Employee**

School district employees are encouraged to create professional relationships with students to assist with their learning. Employees must not create relationships with students that are unhealthy or illegal. Adults must always be trusted to care for students, but the district will not tolerate any inappropriate relationships.

Physical abuse, sexual abuse and sexual misconduct towards a student by employees will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to sexual or physical relationships, grooming behavior, and otherwise inappropriate relationships with students. Employees found in violation of this policy and rule will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

The district will respond promptly to allegations of abuse of students by school district employees by timely reporting to all relevant agencies as required by law. Employees are required to assist in the investigation when requested, to provide information and to maintain confidentiality of the reporting and investigation process.

All concerns of abuse of students by employees must be reported to the Level I Investigator:

**Level I Investigator - Principal Elyse Brimeyer**

1284 U Ave, Boone, IA 50036

Phone Number: 515-432-5319

Email address: ebrimeyer@united.k12.ia.us

## **Child Abuse Reporting**

The district believes in protecting our students and we strive for them to be productive without outside factors weighing on their ability to learn. In compliance with state law and to provide protection to victims of child abuse, the board believes incidents of alleged child abuse should be reported to the proper authorities. All school employees 18 years of age or older are required as mandatory reporters, to report alleged incidents of child abuse they become aware of within the scope of their professional duties.

Child abuse is the result of the acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of a person under the age of 18 who has suffered one or more of the categories of child abuse as defined in *Iowa Code 232.68* (physical abuse, mental injury, sexual abuse, denial of critical care, failure to supervise, child prostitution, presence of illegal drugs,

manufacturing or possession of a dangerous substance, bestiality in the presence of a minor, allows access by a registered sex offender, allows access to obscene material or child trafficking).

When a mandatory reporter suspects a student is the victim of child abuse, the mandatory reporter shall make an oral report of the suspected child abuse to the Iowa Department of Human Services within 24 hours of becoming aware of the abusive incident and shall make a written report to the Iowa Department of Human Services within 48 hours following the oral report.

Mandatory reporters have the responsibility to:

- Mandatory reporters are required by law to make an oral report of suspected abuse within 24 hours when they reasonably believe a child or dependent adult has suffered abuse.
- Submit a written report of suspected child or dependent adult abuse within 48 hours after the oral report. Download the [Report of Suspected Child Abuse](#) or [Report of Suspected Dependent Adult Abuse](#) form. Submit the Report of Suspected Abuse to the Central Abuse Registry via fax at 515-564-4011 or email at [csiu@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:csiu@dhs.state.ia.us)
- Call 911 or make an oral report to law enforcement when they believe a child or dependent adult is in need of immediate protection.
- Know and identify potential child abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 232.68 and potential dependent adult abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 235B.2(5)(a).

If the mandatory reporter believes the child is in immediate danger, the local law enforcement agency will also be notified.

Within six months of their initial employment, mandatory reporters will take a training course involving the identification and reporting of children or submit evidence they have taken the course within the previous three years. The course will be retaken at least every three years.

## **Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Seclusion of Students**

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment, mechanical restraint, and/or prone restraint against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. School employees may use “reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain” to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons.

State law also places limits on school employees’ abilities to restrain or seclude any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may



restrain or seclude a student. If a student is restrained or secluded, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child's parent. District employees will receive Chapter 103 training on physical restraint and seclusion prior to using these behavior interventions with students.

Non-employees whose duties could require the individual to participate in or be present when physical restraint or seclusion is being used will be invited to join employee training on this subject.

Failure to comply with Chapter 103 training or requirements shall result in discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to eligible children. Employees are expected to comply with IDEA. For additional information regarding IDEA, please visit The United States Department of Education website, located at <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>. Additionally, employees are expected to follow school district procedures for identifying students who need additional assistance and meet the needs of identified students.

Employees are also expected to adhere to local school district procedures for identifying and supporting students who may require special education services. All staff have a shared responsibility to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

## **Searches of Students and Property**

To protect the health and safety of students, employees and visitors to the school district and for the protection of the school district facilities, students and their belongings and school-owned lockers and desks may be searched or inspected without a search warrant. Searches are only to be conducted by school administration or their designee, and only if reasonable suspicion exists.

Employees must adhere to district policy and administrative regulations regarding the search, pat down or inspection of a student and his or her belongings.

## **Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices**

The District will take steps to create opportunities for students to engage in peer-to-peer activities, and ensure that student use of personal electronic devices does not occur during instructional time. Personal electronic devices mean any device that is capable of electronically communicating, sending, receiving, storing, recording, reproducing and/or displaying information and data. This may include but not limited to cell phones, ear buds, radios, touch pads, smart watches, etc.

Every district staff member is empowered to assist in the enforcement of this policy and regulation as appropriate. To avoid distraction during instructional time, personal electronic devices must be silenced or turned off, not visible, and not physically attached to the student's body. Students may store their personal electronic devices in their bags/backpacks or lockers. Student electronic devices in the possession of the district will be secured in the main building office.

Staff members may establish classroom rules or protocols for placement of personal electronic devices during instructional times consistent with this regulation. If a student is observed using a personal electronic device during instructional time, the employee who observed the student behavior will notify building administration, who will require the student to turn in the device for safekeeping until the end of the school day. The device will be secured in the building's front office. The district, however, is not responsible for the loss, theft, or destruction of personal electronic devices brought onto school, or district property, or while the student is attending district or school-sponsored events.

Personal electronic devices that have been specifically authorized under a current individual education plan (IEP), a Section 504 plan, or an Individual Health Plan (IHP) are exempt from these rules. Additionally, parents or guardians of students may request to building level administration that a student retain access to the student's personal electronic device during instructional time if the parent or guardian can establish there is a legitimate reason related to the student's mental or physical health for the student to retain access during instructional time. This must be tied to the student's multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework. Any denials may be appealed to the Superintendent, who will be the final decision maker on the request.

## **Student Records**

School employees are entrusted with confidential information – whether it is about students or fellow employees. Employees must not disclose confidential student information unless it is permitted by law. Please contact School Business Official Jenn

Meinecke or the designated building secretary if you have a request for student records.

Give careful thought to what you discuss concerning school matters whether with parents, colleagues, and members of the community. Rumors and criticism are promoted by outside gossip. Many rumors and unnecessary criticism can be avoided by referring community members to the school Principal or appropriate staff member. Employees must exercise significant care and judgment when handling confidential information. A break in confidentiality can result in discipline, up to and including termination, and expose the employee to personal liability for violation of Iowa's privacy law.

## **Student Disclosure of Gender Identity**

It is the goal of the district to provide a safe and supportive educational environment in which all students may learn. This includes transparency and collaboration with parents in an effort to support their students. As part of creating that safe educational environment, no employee of the district will provide false or misleading information to the parent/guardian of a student regarding that student's gender identity or intention to transition to a gender that is different from their birth certificate or certificate issued upon adoption.

If a student makes a request to a licensed employee to accommodate a gender identity, name, or pronoun that is different from what was assigned to the student in the student's registration forms or records, the licensed employee is required by Iowa law to report the request to an administrator. The school administrator receiving the report is then required by Iowa law to report the request to the student's parent/guardian. The administrator will use the [Report of Student Disclosure of Identity](#). Parents and guardians will be given the opportunity to list in the student's registration paperwork any and all nicknames used for students using [Request to Update Student Identity](#). This requirement also applies to all nicknames.

## **Transporting Students by Employees**

Generally, transportation of students is in a motor vehicle owned by the school district and driven by a school bus driver. Students may be transported in private vehicles for school purposes. It is within the discretion of the Superintendent to determine when this is appropriate.

Individuals transporting students for school purposes in private vehicles must have the permission of the Superintendent and meet all applicable requirements set by the district, including public health guidelines. Private vehicles will be used only when:

- The vehicle in in good condition and meets all applicable safety requirements
- The driver possesses a valid drivers' license
- Proof of insurance has been supplied to the Superintendent and insurance satisfies the minimum coverage requirements for driving personal vehicles in the State of Iowa, and
- The parents of the students to be transported have given written permission to the Superintendent.

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### Administering Medication

The supervision of any medication distribution to students shall be in strict compliance with the rules and regulations of the board. District employees may not dispense or administer any medications, including prescription and non-prescription drugs, to students except as outlined in board policy.

### Anti-Bullying and Harassment [\(Board Policy 104 and 104.R1\)](#)

The district is committed to providing all students, employees, and volunteers with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed.

Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, employees, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy and is not tolerated by the board.

Accordingly, school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior while on school property, while in school-owned or school-operated vehicles, while attending or participating in school-sponsored or sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the conduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Complaints may be filed with the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee pursuant to the regulation accompanying this policy. The Superintendent is responsible for implementation of this policy and all accompanying procedures. Complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame. Within 24 hours of receiving a report that a student may have been the victim of conduct that constitutes bullying and/or harassment, the district will notify the parent or guardian of the student.

If, as a result of viewing surveillance system data or based on a report from a school district employee, the district determines that a student has suffered bullying or harassment by another student enrolled in the district, a parent or guardian of the student may request to enroll the student in another attendance center within the district that offers classes at the student's grade level, subject to the requirements and limitations established in Iowa law related to this topic.

A school employee, volunteer, or student, or a student's parent or guardian who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment, in compliance with the procedures in the regulation, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to participation in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report.

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

Retaliation against any person because the person has filed a bullying and harassment complaint or assisted or participated in an investigation is prohibited.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- **“Electronic”** means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optic cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. “Electronic” includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.
- **“Harassment”** and **“bullying”** mean any repeated and targeted electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward an individual that creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
  1. Places the individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property.
  2. Has a substantial detrimental effect on the individual's physical or mental health.
  3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's academic or career performance.
  4. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- **“Volunteer”** means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

## **Filing a Complaint**

An individual who believes that the individual has been harassed or bullied may file a complaint with the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. The complaint form is available at the district office. If the complainant is a school employee, after filing the complaint with the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee, the employee may separately notify the parent or guardian of the student alleged to have been harassed or bullied.

An alternate investigator will be designated in the event it is claimed that the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee committed the alleged bullying or harassment or some other conflict of interest exists. Complaints shall be filed within 15 days of the event giving rise to the complaint or from the date the Complainant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The Complainant will state the nature of the complaint and the remedy requested. The Complainant shall receive assistance as needed.

## **Investigation**

The school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment upon receipt of a written complaint. The High School Principal (hereinafter "investigator") will be responsible for handling all complaints alleging bullying or harassment.

The investigation may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Interviews with the complainant and the individual named in the complaint ("respondent")
- A request for the complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint.
- A request for the respondent to provide a written statement.
- Interviews with witnesses identified during the course of the investigation
- A request for witnesses identified during the course of the investigation to provide a written statement, and
- Review and collection of documentation or information deemed relevant to the investigation

The investigator shall consider the totality of circumstances presented in determining whether conduct objectively constitutes bullying or harassment as defined in board policy. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall issue a report with respect to the findings and provide a copy of the report to the appropriate Building Principal or Superintendent if the investigation involves the Building Principal.

The complaint and identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses will only be disclosed as reasonably necessary in connection with the investigation or as required by law or policy. Similarly, evidence uncovered in the investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible.

### **School Decision**

The investigator, Building Principal or Superintendent, depending on the individuals involved, shall inform the Complainant and the accused about the outcome of the investigation. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of the policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include suspension and expulsion. If after an investigation a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include termination. If after an investigation a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures, which may include exclusion from school grounds.

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying and/or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

### **Employee Injury on the Job**

Employee and student safety is a major district concern. An employee should therefore remove him or herself from and report any situations where employee safety is compromised. If an employee becomes seriously injured on the job, the employee's supervisor will attempt to notify a member of the family, or an individual of close relationship, as soon as the employee's supervisor becomes aware of the injury.

If possible, an employee may administer emergency or minor first aid. An injured employee will be turned over to the care of the employee's family or qualified medical professionals as quickly as possible.

In the case of an emergency where an employee is seriously injured, call 911 and seek immediate treatment.



It is the responsibility of the employee injured on the job to inform your supervisor and call EMC OnCall Nurse at 1-844-322-4668 right away and at least within twenty-four hours of the occurrence. The employee's direct supervisor may make the call to EMC if the employee is unable. The EMC On-Call Nurse will assess the injury and make a recommendation for medical care. You may not be eligible for Worker Compensation if you do not follow this process. First aid materials are available through the Principal and Nurse.

The EMC OnCall Nurse will file an accident report after the employee reported the injury. If the employee refuses to report the incident to the EMC OnCall Nurse, the direct supervisor will file the incident report in the district office.

## **Smoke and Tobacco Free Workplace**

The district is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to promoting the health and well-being of employees. As required by *Iowa Code Chapter 142D*, the *Iowa Smokefree Air Act*, and motivated by a desire to provide a healthy work environment, the district prohibits smoking, and the use of tobacco and nicotine products as cited in board policy, on all school grounds and in school vehicles.

## **Substance Free Workplace**

Alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, and legal substances used illegally shall not be consumed at any time during the employee's work shift. It is in violation of school district work rules for an employee to report to work in an unsafe condition, or in a condition which impairs the employee's judgment or performance of job functions due to the use of alcohol or other substances. Unauthorized possession or use of alcoholic beverages or other substances during work hours, while on district time or property, or while engaging in district business will result in discipline, including termination.

It is a violation of the federal *Substance-Free Workplace* law for an employee to unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of in the workplace any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance or alcohol, as defined in Schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and further defined by regulation at 21 C.F.R. 1300.11 through 1300.15 and *Iowa Code Chapter 124*.

**"Workplace"** is defined as the site for the performance of work done in the capacity as an employee. This includes school district facilities, other school premises or school district vehicles. Workplace also includes off school property if the employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity, event or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the control of the school district or where the employee is engaged in school business.

Employees who operate school vehicles are subject to mandatory random and scheduled federal drug and alcohol testing if a commercial driver's license is required to operate the vehicle and the vehicle transports sixteen or more persons including the driver. For regulations and forms please visit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration website located at: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations>.

**EMPLOYEES ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED** it is a condition of their continued employment that they comply with the above policy of the school district and will notify their supervisor of their conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation committed in the workplace, no later than five days after the conviction.

# **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

## **Asbestos Notification**

Asbestos has been an issue of concern for many years. The *Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986* (AHERA) was designed to determine the extent of asbestos concerns in the schools and to act as a guide in formulating asbestos management policies for the schools. The school district facilities have been inspected by a certified asbestos inspector as required by AHERA. The inspector located, sampled and determined the condition and hazard potential of all material in the school facilities suspected of containing asbestos. The inspection and laboratory analysis records form the basis of the asbestos management plan.

A certified management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for the school district facilities which includes notification letters, training for employees, a set of procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos-containing materials and plans for regular surveillance of the materials. A copy of the management plan is available for inspection in the office.

## **Building Security**

The district is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. In order to accomplish this, it is the responsibility of all employees to do their part in creating this safe and secure environment. Employees should contact the Building Principal, to report any security/safety hazard(s) or condition(s) they identify.

## **Drills and Evacuations**

Periodically the district holds emergency fire and tornado drills. In addition, the district will hold one (1) emergency operations drill. At the beginning of each semester, teachers must notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas must be posted in all rooms. When drills are staged, every staff member and student must follow proper procedures.

## **Emergency Closings, Inclement Weather and Other Interruptions**

When the Superintendent decides the weather threatens the safety of students and employees, notification of inclement weather and emergency closings will be sent out

utilizing the district notification system and over local radio and television stations: WHO-TV and KCCI. Announcements will be made as soon as possible. This will include contact via any of the following: phone, text message and/or email. Other emergency announcements will be made by administration to the staff by email, written communication or personal contact.

## **Emergency Procedures**

All staff members will be issued emergency plan documents (paper/electronic) at the beginning of the year. This will contain specific crisis plan guidelines. Every staff member needs to read these documents carefully and know where the documents are kept. Crisis plans must be clearly labeled and available at all times. Also, a crisis bag full of supplies will be provided for each classroom. The crisis bag must remain fully stocked at all times.

## **Threats of Violence**

All threats of violence - whether oral, written or symbolic - against students, employees, visitors, or to school facilities are prohibited. All such threats will be promptly investigated. Law enforcement may be contacted. Threats issued and delivered away from school or school activities may be grounds for discipline if the threat impacts the orderly and efficient operation of the school. Employees engaging in threatening behavior will face discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Weapons**

The district believes weapons and other dangerous objects in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

Employees are prohibited from bringing weapons and other dangerous objects on school grounds. Weapons under the control of law enforcement officials or other individuals specifically authorized by the board are exempt in accordance with law and board policy.