

# EMPLOYEE

Morning Sun Community School District

# HANDBOOK

2021-2022

## Non-Discrimination Policy

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Students, parents, employees, and others doing business with or performing services for the Morning Sun School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 or Iowa Code Section 280.3 is directed to contact the school's Affirmative Action Coordinator, Alaura Rappenecker, at 311 Division St., Morning Sun, IA 52640, or phone 319-868-7701. Inquiries may also be directed into the Director of Region VII Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 319 W. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 800, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2292, 414-291-1111, or to the Iowa 14 Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, 515-281-5294.

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# OPENING STATEMENT

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To ensure the district's success in accomplishing its mission, this handbook has been prepared to provide staff with a basic understanding of the district's personnel policies, and their responsibilities as an employee.

This handbook contains general guidelines and information for employees, and it is not a contract. It is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, general school district policies and procedures. Some of the subjects described in this handbook are covered in more detail in other documents. Employees should refer to those documents for more information. Specific questions should be directed to the employee's immediate supervisor or the superintendent. Whenever the provisions of this handbook are in conflict with those of a board-adopted policy, or any other formal employment contract, the terms of the policy and/or employment contract shall take precedence.

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.

## 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 at [www.msccd.org](http://www.msccd.org). Employees are expected to know existing board policies and know to refer to the policies when necessary.

## Compliance Clause

Any individual contract between the Board and an individual employee, hereafter executed, shall be subject to and consistent with the terms and conditions of this document. If an individual contract contains any language inconsistent with this document, this document, during its duration, shall be controlling.

## Duration

This document shall be effective for the 2021-2022 school year and shall commence on July 1, 2021 and continue in force and effect until midnight June 30, 2022.

## Equal Employment Opportunity

(Board Policy [401.01](#))

The Morning Sun Community School District will provide equal opportunity to employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws, directives and regulations of federal, state and local governing bodies. Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment includes hiring, placement, upgrading, 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 shall 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 Morning Sun Community School District is an EEO/AA employer."

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, shall be directed to the Affirmative Action Coordinator by writing to the Affirmative Action Coordinator, Morning Sun Community School District, PO Box 129, Morning Sun, Iowa 52640; or by telephoning (319) 868-7701.

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 Director of the Region VII office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 310 W Wisconsin Ave., Ste. 800, Milwaukee, WI, 53203-2292, 414-291-1111 or the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E 14<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50319-0201, 1-800-457-4416, <https://icrc.iowa.gov/file-complaint>. This inquiry or complaint to the federal office may be done instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Morning Sun Community School District, in cooperation with the community it serves, is to educate all students by providing a future oriented, comprehensive, quality education in a positive, caring environment through unique programs which meet their special needs and prepare them to be contributing members of a changing society.

## **School Calendar**

The school calendar is available at [www.msbsd.org](http://www.msbsd.org).

# **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

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## **Compensation and Salary**

An employee required to hold a license, authorization, or certification for his/her position is solely responsible for ensuring it is current. Failure to do so could, and likely will, result in termination because by law the district cannot pay an employee who does not have a current license, authorization, or certification. Specific information regarding an employee's license, authorization, or certification may be obtained from the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE). The BOEE may be contacted by calling 515-281-3245 or by visiting their website, located at <http://www.boee.iowa.gov/>.

## **Employee Travel Compensation**

(Board Policy [401.07](#))

Employees traveling on behalf of the school district and performing approved school district business will be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses. Reimbursement for expenses will be allowed only if the employee received authorization for the expenses from the superintendent prior to the expenditure.

The school district may pay the transportation costs for travel between school buildings during the performance of their duty. The mileage reimbursement rate will be four cents below the Internal Revenue Service reimbursement rate.

## **Group Insurance Benefits**

(Board Policies [406.5](#) and [412.3](#))

All employees are eligible for group insurance and health benefits. The board will select the group insurance program and the insurance company which will provide the program. Since the district employs less than an average of at least 50 full-time employees (including an equivalent for part-time employees), the district is not subject to the ACAs Employer Mandate.

Licensed employees are eligible to participate in the health and major medical, life, and long-term disability group insurance plans. Regular part-time licensed employees who wish to purchase insurance coverage may participate in group insurance programs by meeting the requirements of the insurer. Full-time and regular part-time licensed employees who wish to purchase insurance coverage for their spouse or dependents may do so by meeting the requirements of the insurer.

Classified employees who work 35 hours per week are eligible to participate in the group health insurance plan. Regular part-time classified employees who wish to purchase insurance coverage may participate in group insurance programs by meeting the requirements of the insurer. Regular classified employees who wish to purchase insurance coverage for their spouse or dependents may do so by meeting the requirements of the insurer.

For additional information, contact the Kim Hagge, Business Manager.

## **Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System**

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 1-800-622-3849 or visit the website at <https://www.ipers.org>.

## **Licensure, Authorization, or Certification**

An employee required to hold a license, authorization, or certification for his/her position is solely responsible for ensuring it is current. Failure to do so could, and likely will, result in termination because by law the district cannot pay an employee who does not have a current license, authorization, or certification. Specific information regarding an employee's license, authorization, or certification may be obtained from the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE). The BOEE may be contacted by visiting their website, located at <https://boee.iowa.gov>.

## **Salary Schedule Advancement**

(Board Policy [406.3](#))

Continued education on the part of licensed employees may entitle them to advancement on the salary schedule. Licensed employees who have completed additional hours will be considered for advancement on the salary schedule. The board shall determine which licensed employees will advance on the salary schedule for continued education keeping in mind the financial condition of the school district, the education and experience of the licensed employee, the educational philosophy of the school district, and any other items deemed relevant by the board.



# DISTRICT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

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## **Employee Relations to the Public**

(Board Policy [402.6](#))

Members of the school district community shall be treated with respect by employees. The board encourages active participation by employees in community activities and events.

It shall be the responsibility of employees as they participate in various community groups and events, to make a conscientious effort to make the school district and its events a real part of the community. Employees shall take advantage of their participation in the community to look for opportunities in which the community and school district can join forces for the betterment of the school district and the community.

## **In-Service Training**

The responsibility of planning, as well as determining the nature and extent of, in-service training will be handled by the Employer. Employees are expected to attend unless they are on leave or excused by an administrator.

## **Professional Development**

(Board Policies [408.1](#) and [414.9](#))

High quality teaching is imperative for student success and professional development plays a key role in this success. Employees are expected to attend all professional development opportunities and staff meetings provided by the school district unless they are on leave or have been excused by the building principal.

Requests for attendance or participation in a development program, other than those development programs sponsored by the district, must be obtained prior to attendance by a licensed employee in a professional development program when the attendance would result in the licensed employee being excused from their duties or when the school district pays the expenses for the program.

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

(Board Policy [603.8R1](#))

Public school officials need to be respectful of the religious beliefs of employees and students. The Iowa Department of Education has provided the following non exhaustive checklist for prohibited and permissive activities related to religious holiday celebrations in public schools.

This information may be located at the [Iowa Department of Education](#) website.

## **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. Employees cannot charge a student fee for anything without prior consent of superintendent.

# EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

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## Background Checks

All school employees are subject to pre-employment criminal, dependent adult abuse, and child abuse background checks, and every five (5) years thereafter. The background check will either be conducted by the school district or another agency.

## Employee Complaints

(Board Policy [401.04](#))

Complaints of teachers against fellow employees shall be brought directly to the immediate supervisor or superintendent and shall be made in a constructive and professional manner. Complaints shall never be made in the presence of other teachers, employees, students or outside persons.

## Employee Conflict of Interest

(Board Policy [401.02](#))

Employees' use of their position with the school district for financial gain is considered a conflict of interest with their position as employees and may subject employees to disciplinary action.

Employees have access to information and a captive audience that could award the employee personal or financial gain. No employee may solicit other employees or students for personal or financial gain to the employee without the 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.

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.

## Employee Orientation

(Board Policy [401.11](#))

Employees must know their role and duties. New employees may be required to participate in an orientation program for new employees. The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. Payroll procedures and employee benefit programs and accompanying forms will be explained to the employee by the Business Manager. Regular employees ineligible for the school district's group health plan will be given information regarding where they can obtain health care or health care insurance.

## Employee Records

(Board Policy [401.05](#))

The school district shall 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 shall 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 considered confidential records and therefore

are not generally open to public inspection or accessibility. Only in certain limited instances, when the employee has given a signed consent, will employee personnel records be accessible to individuals other than the employee or authorized school officials.

Employees may have access to their personnel files and copy items from their personnel files at a time mutually agreed upon between the superintendent and the employee. The school district may charge a reasonable fee for each copy made except the total amount charged for all copies cannot exceed \$5.00. However, employees will not be allowed access to the employment references written on behalf of the employee. Board members will generally only have access to an employee's file when it is necessary because of an employee related matter before the board.

## **Employee Searches**

The Morning Sun Community School District respects employee's Fourth Amendment rights and their reasonable expectation of privacy. However, employees should have no expectation of privacy in school district provided space or equipment. The school district may look into these items when needed. Anything on the school district's computers, server, website, etc. and in school district files, etc. are considered a public record and open to public 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 work space which is assigned to employees.

## **Evaluation Procedures**

(Board Policies [405.08](#) and [411.7](#))

Certified Employees: The evaluation system shall consist of formal observations, artifact collection, and review of additional data gathered by the administrator. During the first two years of employment with the Morning Sun Community School District, all beginning teachers will participate in Tier I of the Professional Staff Evaluation System. Staff new to the district, but not new to the profession, will spend one year in Tier I. Tier I staff members may be assigned to Tier I for an additional year by their evaluator. Written notification of this decision will be provided to the employee by March 30. Upon successful completion of Tier I, teachers will be placed on Tier II of this system.

If an evaluator determines, at any time, as a result of a teachers' performance, that a teacher is not meeting district expectations under the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria, and any other standards and criteria established in the certified staff handbook, the evaluator shall recommend to the district that the teacher participate in Tier II, an intensive assistance program. The intensive assistance program and its implementation are not subject to negotiation or grievance procedures established pursuant to chapter 20. Either the staff member or the evaluator(s) may initiate information discussions of progress at any time throughout the cycle. Disagreements occurring between the staff member and the evaluator(s) may initiate informal discussions of progress at any time throughout the cycle. Disagreements occurring between the staff member and the evaluator(s) concerning any aspect of the professional staff evaluation process will be resolved through discussions with the Superintendent and a certified staff representative.

### **I. Notification**

The evaluation process will begin with written notification to the staff member within four weeks of his/her first day of work. Each new staff member will participate in an individual or group orientation conference prior to the beginning of the observation process. During this orientation conference, the procedures, forms, criteria, and timelines for evaluation will be reviewed and discussed.

## II. Formal Observation Process

Formal observations shall include pre- and post-observation conferences that will be scheduled for dates and times mutually agreeable to the staff member and the evaluator(s). For staff members in Tier I, the evaluator(s) shall conduct a minimum of three formal observations in the first year and a minimum of one observation in the second year. For staff members in Tier II, the evaluator(s) shall conduct a minimum of one formal observation during a three-year cycle.

A staff member's participation in any phase of the evaluation process does not mean that an administrator may not visit that staff member's classroom or observe sessions conducted by the staff member. Administrators will continue to monitor the performance of all staff and will address concerns with staff members as they arise.

## III. Evaluation Career Development Plan

On/before October 15 of each year, all staff members in Tier II will submit an Individual Career Development Plan based upon the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria, the District Career Development Plan, and the needs of the teacher. Should a staff member wish to amend the plan during the term of the Career Development Plan, the staff member will discuss proposed changes with the evaluator(s) and submit a revised plan.

Each staff member will complete a Summary Report on/before October 01, January 01, and April 01 of Year One and Two on/before October 01, and April 01 of Year Three. The Summary Report will allow the staff member to reflect on the Individual Career Development Plan and will include the following:

- How the plan impacted student achievement.
- How the plan impacted the teacher's professional growth.
- How the plan addressed the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria.
- Individual teacher reflection about the implementation and outcomes of the plan.

## IV. Professional Portfolio

Teachers holding the initial license will create and maintain a professional portfolio in preparation for the comprehensive evaluation demonstrating evidence of the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria. This will be given to the evaluator on/before March 30 of Year Two.

Teachers new to the district, but not new to the profession, will create and maintain a professional portfolio in preparation for the comprehensive evaluation. This professional portfolio will meet the Tier II Portfolio Minimum Requirements as noted in the Professional Staff Evaluation Handbook and be given to the evaluator(s) on/before March 30 of Year One.

Staff members in Tier II will collect evidence of progress in a professional portfolio. This professional portfolio will meet the Tier II Portfolio Minimum Requirements as noted in the Professional Staff Evaluation Handbook and will be shared with the evaluator(s) on/before April 15 of Year One, during the post observation conference of Year Two, and on/before March 30 of Year Three.

## V. Additional Data and Input

Informal or unannounced observations and other informal input may be used to provide additional data in the evaluation process. Other information may include (but is not limited to) observations of the staff member's interactions with students, parents, or other staff members, professional involvement, management of conferences, work on committees, interactions with community agencies, participation staff

meetings or work on teams with fellow staff members. All data and input that is gained from other sources will be made known to the staff member.

If a decision is made to place a complaint directed toward an employee in his/her personnel file, the placement in the personnel file shall be called to the employee's attention, in writing, within five (5) working days of that decision. A response from the employee, in regard to said notice, shall be written and presented to the supervisor within ten (10) days of the employee's notice. The employee's response shall become a part of said file.

Each employee and/or associate, with employee permission, may, upon request, have access to the employee's official evaluation file for purpose of inspection and review, and upon request, will within five (5) calendar days of such request, have available a copy of any material contained therein. The employee may respond in writing to material derived from the evaluation process contained in or hereafter placed in the file, and such response will become a part of the file.

#### VI. Mentoring Program

Teachers who hold an initial license are required to have successfully completed the two-year mentor program. Teachers new to the District, but not new to the profession, are required to successfully complete a one-year mentoring program.

#### VII. Comprehensive Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation will occur at the end of year two for beginning teachers, at the end of year one for staff new to the District, but not new to the profession and at the end of year three for Tier II staff. Prior to the filing of the comprehensive evaluation, the evaluator(s) and staff member will have a final conference to review the evaluation. The staff member will sign and receive a copy. The staff member's signature indicates that the staff member and the evaluator(s) have discussed the evaluation together. It does not necessarily mean that the staff member agrees with all ratings or remarks contained in the evaluation.

The evaluator will submit this review to the Superintendent's office by April 15. The staff member may, if he/she wishes, submit a "rebuttal" to the comprehensive evaluation document. This "rebuttal" must be in writing and must be submitted to the evaluator(s) within ten school days following the summative evaluation.

#### VIII. Remedy

A non-probationary employee may file a grievance concerning any Tier I or Tier II evaluation as permitted by the Grievance Procedure Article of this agreement.

Classified Employees: Evaluation of employees on their skills, abilities, and competencies is an ongoing process supervised by the building principals and conducted by approved evaluators, as required by law. The goal of the formal evaluation process is to improve the education program, to maintain employees who meet or exceed the board's standards of performance, to clarify the employee's role, to ascertain the areas in need of improvement, to clarify the immediate priorities of the board, and to develop a working relationship between the administrators and other employees.

### **Grievance Procedures**

(Board Policy [102.R1](#))

"Grievance" shall mean a complaint that alleges a violation of any of the provisions of this document.

A “grievant” shall mean an employee or group of employees.

Every grievant covered by this document shall have the right to present grievances in accordance with these procedures.

The failure of a grievant to act on any grievance within the prescribed time limits will bar any further appeal of that particular grievance. The failure of any administrator to give a decision within the time limit shall advance the grievance to the next step in the procedure. Time limits may be extended by mutual agreement of the grievant and the administrator, such agreement to be in writing and signed by both parties.

The investigation or other processing of any grievance shall be conducted so as to result in no interference with, nor interruption of the instructional program and related work activities of the grievant.

The steps for grievance resolution are as follows:

First Step: A grievant shall first informally discuss the alleged grievance with the building principal.

Second Step: If a grievance is not resolved informally, the grievant shall, within fifteen (15) school days from the date of the action being grieved, file the grievance in writing and discuss the matter with the building principal, or in his absence, the principal’s designated representative. The written grievance shall be presented on a form, which is “Appendix A”, stating the nature of the grievance, the specific item or items of the document being grieved, the date of the occurrence, and the remedy requested. The building principal shall make a decision on the grievance, communicate it in writing to the grievant and the Superintendent, within five (5) school days after the receipt of the written grievance.

Third Step: In the event a grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved at the Second Step, the grievant shall file within five (5) school days of the principal’s written decision, a copy of the grievance with the Superintendent, or in his absence, the Superintendent’s designated representative. Within ten (10) school days after such written grievance is filed, the Superintendent shall file a written decision with the grievant, which decision shall include the reasons therewith. (See “Appendix B”.)

Fourth Step: In the event a grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved at the Third Step, the grievant shall file within five (5) school days of the superintendent’s written decision, a copy of the grievance with the board secretary. Within ten (10) school days after such written grievance is filed, the Board of Education shall file a written decision with the grievant, which decision shall include the reasons therewith. The decision of the Board of Education shall be considered final. (See “Appendix C”.)

## **Nepotism**

(Board Policy [401.03](#))

More than one family member may be an employee of the school district. It shall be 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 by the board of more than one individual in a family shall be on the basis of their qualifications, credentials, and records.

## **Probationary Status**

(Board Policies [405.09](#) and [411.8](#))

The first three years of a newly licensed employee’s contract is a probationary period unless the employee has already successfully completed the three-year probationary period in an Iowa school district. Newly licensed

employees who have successfully completed a probationary period in a previous Iowa school district will serve a one-year probationary period.

Licensed employees may also serve a probationary period based on performance. Such probationary period is determined on a case-by-case basis in light of the circumstances surrounding the employee's performance as documented in the employee's evaluations and personnel file.

The probationary period for classified employees is one year from initial date of employment unless otherwise stated to an individual employee.

## **Public Complaints about an Employee**

(Board Policy [402.5](#))

Complaints of teachers against fellow employees shall be brought directly to the immediate supervisor or superintendent and shall be made in a constructive and professional manner. Complaints shall never be made in the presence of other teachers, employees, students or outside persons.

## **Release of Credit Information**

(Board Policy [402.1](#))

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.

## **Transfers**

(Board Policies [405.07](#) and [411.6](#))

Determining the location where an employee's assignment will be carried out is the responsibility and within the sole discretion of the board. In making such assignments the board shall consider the qualifications of each employee and the needs of the school district.

## **Work Day**

(Board Policy [405.5](#))

The work day for licensed and certified employees will begin at a time established by the superintendent or building principal. "Day" is defined as one work day regardless of full-time or part-time status of an employee. Advance approval to be absent from the school building must be obtained from the principal or supervisor whenever the employees must leave the school building during the work day.

Licensed employees are to be in their assignment during the work day, between the hours of 7:45 A.M. and 3:45 P.M., except on Fridays and days preceding holidays and vacation periods when the working day shall end when the students are released and no pupil supervision is required. Additionally, when students leave early due to inclement weather conditions, the employee's workday shall end when the students are released and no pupil supervision is required.

With administrative approval, teachers may be given the latitude to begin and end their work day needed to accomplish all assigned duties and responsibilities. These duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, professional and parent meetings, instruction, collaboration, planning, and student supervision. Employees shall attend such professional meetings (in-service, staff, parent-teacher conferences, subject area meetings, open house, etc.) called by the administrator for coordinating the work of employees in the school program.



There shall be a paid, duty-free lunch period of twenty-five (25) minutes except when duty is necessary by rotation assignment.

## **EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

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### **Employee Outside Employment**

(Board Policy [402.6](#))

The 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 positions in the school district precedence over any other employment. Employees with external employment must keep the two positions separate and the external job cannot impact the school district job. Should a supervisor believe the external position is impacting the internal one; the supervisor will address it with the employee.

### **Employee Political Activity**

(Board Policy [401.09](#))

Employees will not engage in political activity on district property under the jurisdiction of the board. Activities including, but not limited to, posting or distribution of political circulars or petitions, the collection or solicitation for campaign funds, solicitation for campaign workers, and the use of students for writing or addressing political materials, or the distribution of such materials to or by students are specifically prohibited. Violation of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action.

### **Gifts**

(Board Policy [402.4](#))

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 (3) 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.

### **Staff Technology Use/Social Networking**

(Board Policies [401.13R1](#) and [605.7](#))

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 keep some narrow, specific content within the information 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 e-mail or use of the school district's computer network including web sites 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 consent of the superintendent. The employee shall adhere to all applicable privacy and confidentiality policies adopted by the school district when on external web sites. Employees shall not use the school district logos, images, iconography, etc. on external web sites. Employees shall not use school district time or property on external sites that are not in direct relation to the employee's job. Employees, students and volunteers need to realize that the Internet is not a closed system 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, should contact the building principal and work with him in establishing and maintaining the site.

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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### **Administering Medication**

(Board Policy [507.02](#))

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 Anti-Harassment**

(Board Policies [104](#) and [104R.1](#))

Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by the Morning Sun Community School District. The board is committed to providing all employees and students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. To that end, the board has in place policies, procedures, and practices that are designed to reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment as well as processes and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment of employees and students by other students, by school employees, and by volunteers will not be tolerated in the school or school district.

The board prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization of employees and students, based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. Harassment against employees based upon the employee's race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age or disability is also prohibited.

For additional information on this topic, visit the "Bullying and Harassment" section of the [Iowa Department of Education's website](#).

### **Communicable Diseases – Employees**

(Policy [403.3](#))

Employees with a communicable disease will be allowed to perform their customary employment duties provided they are able to perform the essential functions of their position and their presence does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to students or other employees. The term "communicable disease" will mean an infectious or contagious disease spread from person to person, or animal to person, or as defined by law. Prevention and control of communicable diseases is included in the school district's bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan. The procedures will include scope and application, definitions, exposure control, methods of compliance, universal precautions, vaccination, post-exposure evaluation, follow-up, communication of hazards to employees and record keeping.

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

(Board Policy [403.2](#))

Employee, as well as student safety, is a major district concern, and employees should remove themselves from and report any situations where their safety may be compromised. When 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 employees as quickly as possible.

It is the responsibility of the employee injured on the job to inform the employee's direct supervisor within twenty-four (24) hours of the occurrence. It is the responsibility of the employee's immediate supervisor to file an accident report within twenty-four (24) hours after the employee reported the injury.

## **Smoke and Tobacco Free Workplace**

(Board Policy [905.2](#))

Morning Sun Community School 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 142D, the Iowa Smokefree Air Act, and also motivated by a desire to provide a healthy work environment, Morning Sun Community School 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**

(Board Policy [403.5](#))

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 immediate dismissal.

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 <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/topics/drug/drug.htm?>

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.

# LEAVES, HOLIDAYS, AND VACATION

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## Absenteeism

In order to accomplish the goals and mission of the district, daily attendance by all employees is imperative. Employees are encouraged to limit absenteeism to emergencies and appropriate instances that cannot be scheduled outside of a work day. Employees must notify their immediate supervisor of all times when they will be absent or to submit leave requests. Absences arranged in advance (professional and personal days) do not require a call when absent or when returning to work, unless outside the scheduled time off.

All leaves must be taken in either half (1/2) day or whole day increments.

Misuse of leave procedures or misrepresentation of reasons for leave may lead to disciplinary action.

## Bereavement Leave

(Board Policies [409.4](#) and [414.4](#))

In the event of a death of a member of a licensed employee's immediate family, bereavement leave may be granted. Bereavement leave will be granted to a licensed employee for no more than five days, with "day" being defined as one work day regardless of full-time or part-time status of the employee, per occurrence, for the death of a member of the immediate family. The immediate family includes child, spouse, parent, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or grandparent of the employee.

No more than three days of bereavement leave will be granted for the death of a close friend or other relative not listed above. It shall be within the discretion of the superintendent to determine the number of bereavement leave days to be granted.

In the event of a death of a member of a classified employee's immediate family, bereavement leave may be granted. Bereavement leave granted will be for a maximum of five days, with "day" being defined as one work day regardless of full-time or part-time status of the employee, per occurrence, for the death of a member of the immediate family. The immediate family includes child, spouse, parent, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or grandparent of the employee.

A maximum of three days of bereavement leave will be granted for the death of a close friend or other relative not listed above.

It shall be within the discretion of the superintendent to determine the number of bereavement leave days to be granted.

## Jury Duty

(Board Policies [409.6](#) and [414.6](#))

The board will allow employees to be excused for jury duty unless extraordinary circumstances exist. The superintendent has the discretion to determine when extraordinary circumstances exist.

Employees who are called for jury service shall notify the direct supervisor within twenty-four (24) hours after notice of call to jury duty and suitable proof of jury service pay must be presented to the school district. The employee will report to work within one (1) hour on any day when the employee is excused from jury duty during regular working hours.

Employees will receive their regular salary. However, any payment for jury duty will be paid to the school district.

## **Military Leave**

(Board Policies [409.7](#) and [414.7](#))

The board recognizes licensed employees may be called to participate in the armed forces, including the national guard. If a licensed employee is called to serve in the armed forces, the employee shall have a leave of absence for military service until the military service is completed.

The leave shall be without loss of status or efficiency rating, and without loss of pay during the first thirty (30) calendar days of the leave.

## **Personal Illness Leave**

(Board Policies [409.2](#) and [414.2](#))

Licensed employees shall be granted ten (10) days of sick leave in their first year of employment. Each year thereafter, one (1) additional day of sick leave will be granted to the licensed employees up to a maximum of fifteen (15) days. "Day" is defined as one work day regardless of full-time or part-time status of the employee. A new employee shall report for work at least one (1) full work day prior to receiving sick leave benefits. A returning employee will be granted the appropriate number of days at the beginning of each fiscal year. Sick leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 105 days for licensed employees.

Evidence may be required regarding the mental or physical health of the employee when the administration has a concern about the employee's health. Evidence may also be required to confirm the employee's illness, the need for the illness leave, the employee's ability to return to work, and the employee's capability to perform the duties of the employee's position. It shall be within the discretion of the board or the superintendent to determine the type and amount of evidence necessary.

Classified employees shall be granted ten (10) days of sick leave in their first year of employment. Each year thereafter, one (1) additional day of sick leave will be granted to the employees up to a maximum of fifteen (15) days. "Day" is defined as one work day regardless of full-time or part-time status of the employee. A new employee shall report for work at least one (1) full work day prior to receiving sick leave benefits. A returning employee will be granted the appropriate number of days at the beginning of each fiscal year. Sick leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 105 days for classified employees.

Should the personal illness occur after or extend beyond the accumulated sick leave, the employee may apply for disability benefits under the group insurance plan. If the employee does not qualify for disability benefits, the employee may request a leave of absence without pay.

Evidence may be required regarding the mental or physical health of the employee when the administration has a concern for the employee's health. Evidence may also be required to confirm the employee's illness, the need for the illness leave, the employee's ability to return to work, and the employee's capability to perform the duties of the employee's position. It shall be within the discretion of the board and the superintendent to determine the type and amount of evidence necessary.

If an employee is eligible to receive workers' compensation benefits, the employee shall contact the board secretary to implement these benefits.

## **Political Leave**

(Board Policies [409.5](#) and [414.5](#))

The board will provide a leave of absence to licensed employees to run for elective public office. The superintendent shall grant a licensed employee a leave of absence to campaign as a candidate for an elective public office as unpaid leave.

The request for leave must be in writing to the superintendent of schools at least thirty (30) days prior to the starting date of the requested leave.

## **Professional Leave**

Leave of absence with pay of regular salary may be granted up to three (3) days per year for attendance at educational meetings, clinics or workshops if said activities are directed towards:

- improving the instructional level of the participant, or
- representing the Morning Sun School District,

and as long as it is mutually agreed between the employee and his/her Supervising Administrator that such absences are not seriously detracting from the performance of the contracted job assignment by said employee. The request for this leave must be made to the building principal at least five (5) days prior to the absence.

## **Unpaid Leave**

(Policies [409.8](#) and [414.8](#))

Unpaid leave may be used to excuse an involuntary absence not provided for in other leave policies of the board. Unpaid leave for employees must be authorized by the superintendent. The superintendent will have complete discretion to grant or deny the requested unpaid leave. In making this determination, the superintendent will consider the effect of the employee's absence on the education program and school district operations, length of service, previous record of absence, the financial condition of the school district, the reason for the requested absence and other factors the superintendent believes are relevant to making this determination.

If unpaid leave is granted, the duration of the leave period will be coordinated with the scheduling of the education program whenever possible to minimize the disruption of the education program and school district operations.

Whenever possible, employees will make a written request for unpaid leave three (3) days prior to the beginning date of the requested leave. If the leave is granted, the deductions in salary are made unless they are waived specifically by the superintendent.

## **Vacation, Holidays, and Personal Leave**

(Board Policies [409.1](#) and [414.1](#))

The board shall determine the amount of holidays and personal leave that will be allowed on an annual basis for licensed employees.

Full-time regular licensed employees who work 192 days a year will be allowed a maximum of three (3) days of personal leave. It shall be within the discretion of the superintendent to grant personal leave. Application for personal leave must be made at least five (5) school days prior to the requested leave date.

Licensed employees not using their allotted personal leave during the 192 work days of the school year shall be reimbursed in June of each year the substitute teacher pay rate for each unused day.

Regular full-time licensed employees who work 192 days a year will be allowed six (6) holidays per year. It shall be within the discretion of the board to set the holidays annually.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to make a recommendation to the board annually on holidays and personal leave for licensed employees.

# SAFETY AND SECURITY

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## Emergency Closings

(Board Policy [518](#))

Early dismissal, late start or school cancellation due to inclement weather will be announced on the following stations:

- [KCRG TV](#) (Cedar Rapids)
- [KWQC TV](#) (Quad Cities)
- [WQAD TV](#) (Quad Cities)

Parents are advised to listen to one of these stations for announcements of early dismissal, late start or school cancellation whenever the weather is questionable. Schedule changes and school alerts will also be announced on the school's website at [www.msccd.org](http://www.msccd.org), where you can also sign up to receive email and/or text alerts, and also on the Morning Sun School Facebook page.

## Emergency Plans and Drills

(Board Policy [507.05](#))

Periodically the school holds emergency fire, tornado, and other emergency drills. 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.

## Facilities Security

(Board Policy [804.4](#))

To protect the school district buildings, sites, and equipment, the facilities shall be locked when school is not in session. When school activities or public activities are held in the school district facilities, all doors shall remain locked at all times, as determined by the superintendent and the building principals, and shall be unlocked for access to the school district facilities.

The safety of occupants of the facilities under control of the Employer is of utmost importance. In order to maintain this safety, the employees shall conduct themselves in a manner ensuring non-injury to themselves and others. Employees shall immediately report all unsafe conditions of equipment or facilities to their supervision directors.

Use of Reasonable Force: An Employee may within the scope of his employment, use and apply such amount of force as is reasonable and necessary, to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others; to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon the person within the control of the pupil; for the purpose of self-defense; for the protection of persons or property.

Law Enforcement Assistance: The Employer will give full support in working with local law enforcement officials for any assault upon the Employee while acting in the discharge of his duties.

## 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 disciplinary action if the threat impacts the orderly and efficient operation of the school. Employees engaging in threatening behavior will face disciplinary consequences up to and including termination.

## **Use of Video Cameras on School Buses Regulation**

(Board Policy [711.02R2](#))

The board supports the use of video cameras on school buses as a means to monitor and maintain a safe environment for students and employees. The video cameras may be used on buses used for transportation to and from school, field trips, curricular events and extracurricular events. The contents of the videotapes may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding.

## **Visitors and Guests**

(Board Policy [903.3](#))

The board welcomes the interest of parents and other members of the school district community and invites them to visit the school buildings and sites. Visitors, which include persons other than employees or students, must notify the main office of their presence in the facility upon arrival.

Persons who wish to visit a classroom while school is in session are asked to notify the principal and obtain approval from the principal prior to the visit so appropriate arrangements can be made and so class disruption can be minimized. Teachers and other employees shall not take time from their duties to discuss matters with visitors.

Visitors shall conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of others while attending school events. Visitors failing to conduct themselves accordingly may be asked to leave the premises. Children who wish to visit school must be approved prior to visiting.

It shall be the responsibility of employees to report inappropriate conduct. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent and principal to take the action necessary to cease the inappropriate conduct. If the superintendent or principal is not available, a school district employee shall act to cease the inappropriate conduct.

## **Weapons**

(Board Policy [502.06](#))

The Morning Sun Community School District is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. The board believes weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes 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.

School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons, dangerous objects, and look-a-likes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes will be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district. Employees who witness or have knowledge about the presence of potential weapons on school property should notify the proper authorities immediately.

The prohibition of weapons does not pertain to those under the control of law enforcement officials.

# **STUDENT AND CLASSROOM ISSUES**

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

(Board Policy [402.3](#))

Physical or sexual abuse of students, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, by employees will not be tolerated. The definition of employees for the purpose of this policy includes not only those who work for pay but



also those who are volunteers of the school district under the direction and control of the school district. Employees found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

The school district will respond promptly to allegations of abuse of students by school district employees by investigating or arranging for the investigation of an allegation. The processing of a complaint or allegation will be handled confidentially to the maximum extent possible. Employees are required to assist in the investigation when requested to provide information and to maintain the confidentiality of the reporting and investigation process.

The school district has appointed a Level I investigator and alternate Level I investigator. The school district has also arranged for a trained, experienced professional to serve as the Level II investigator. The Level I investigator and alternate will be provided training in the conducting of an investigation at the expense of the school district. The names of the investigators shall be listed in the student handbook, published annually in the local newspaper and posted in all school facilities.

The superintendent is responsible for drafting administrative regulations to implement this policy.

## **Attendance**

(Board Policies [501.09](#) and [501.10](#))

### **Student Absences – Excused**

Regular attendance by students is essential for students to obtain the maximum opportunities from the education program. Parents and students alike are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Students shall attend school unless excused by the principal of their attendance center.

Student absences approved by the principal shall be excused absences. Excused absences shall count as days in attendance for purposes of the truancy law. These absences include, but are not limited to, illness, family emergencies, recognized religious observances, and school-sponsored or approved activities.

Students whose absences are approved shall make up the work missed and receive full credit for the missed school work. It shall be the responsibility of the student to initiate a procedure with the student's teacher to complete the work missed.

Students who wish to participate in school-sponsored activities must attend school the day of the activity unless permission has been given by the principal for the student to be absent.

It shall be the responsibility of the parent to notify the student's attendance center as soon as the parent knows the student will not be attending school on that day. The superintendent may request evidence or written verification of the student's reason for absence.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

### **Truancy – Unexcused Absences**

Regular attendance by the students at school is essential for students to obtain the maximum opportunities from the education program. Parents and students alike are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Students shall attend school unless excused by the principal of their attendance center.

Truancy is the failure to attend school for the minimum number of days established in the school calendar by the board. Truancy is the act of being absent without a reasonable excuse. These absences shall include, but not be limited to, tardiness, shopping, hunting, concerts, preparation or participation in parties and other celebrations and employment. Truancy will not be tolerated by the board.

Students are subject to disciplinary action for truancy. It shall be within the discretion of the superintendent to determine, in light of the circumstances, whether a student may make up work missed because of truancy.



The superintendent shall investigate the cause for a student's truancy. If the superintendent is unable to secure the truant student's attendance, the superintendent should discuss the next step with the school board. If after school board action, the student is still truant, the superintendent shall refer the matter over to the county attorney.

The school will participate in mediation if requested by the county attorney. The superintendent shall represent the school district in mediation. The school district will monitor the student's compliance with the mediation agreement and will report violations of the mediation agreement to the county attorney.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy. The administrative regulations shall indicate the disciplinary action to be taken for truancy.

## **Child Abuse Reporting**

(Board Policy [402.2](#))

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 licensed school employees, teachers, coaches, and paraeducators are mandatory reporters as provided by law and are to report alleged incidents of child abuse they become aware of within the scope of their professional duties.

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

Within six (6) months of their initial employment, mandatory reporters shall take a two-hour training course involving the identification and reporting of child abuse or submit evidence they've taken the course within the previous three (3) years. After July 1, 2019, employees who have previously taken mandatory reporter training will be required to take the two-hour training course before the expiration of their current training certificate. Once the training course has been taken, the certificate will remain valid for three years. Employees who have taken the post-July 1, 2019 two-hour training course will take the one (1) hour follow up training course every three (3) years and prior to the expiration of their certificate.

## **Child Abuse Reporting Regulation**

(Board Policy [402.2R1](#))

Iowa law requires licensed employees to report to the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) instances of suspected child abuse which they become aware of within the scope of their professional practice.

The law further specifies that a licensed employee who knowingly or willfully fails to report a suspected case of child abuse is guilty of a simple misdemeanor and that the licensed employee may be subject to civil liability for damages caused by the failure to report.

Employees participating in good faith in the making of a report or in a judicial proceeding that may result from the report, are immune from liability.

"Child abuse" is defined as:

- Any nonaccidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of it, suffered by a child as the result of the acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of the child.
- The commission of a sexual offense with or to a child . . . as a result of the acts or omissions of the person responsible for the child. . . . Sexual offense includes sexual abuse, incest, and sexual exploitation of a minor.
- The failure on the part of a person responsible for the care of a child to provide for the adequate food, shelter, clothing or other care necessary for the child's welfare when financially able to do so. A parent or guardian

legitimately practicing religious beliefs who does not provide specified medical treatment for a child for that reason alone shall not be considered abusing the child.

- The acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of a child which allow, permit or encourage the child to engage in acts prohibited pursuant to Iowa Code, section 725.1 which deals with prostitution.

Teachers in public schools are not "persons responsible for the care of the child" under this definition. However, a teacher who abuses a child is subject to civil, criminal, and professional sanctions.

Reporting Procedures: Licensed employees, including teachers and school nurses, are required to report, either orally or in writing, within twenty-four hours to the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) when the employee reasonably believes a child has suffered from abuse within the scope of employment. Within forty-eight (48) hours of an oral report, a written report must be filed with DHS.

Each report should contain as much of the following information as can be obtained within the time limit. However, the law specifies a report will be considered valid even if it does not contain all of the following information:

- name, age, and home address of the child;
- name and home address of the parents, guardians or other persons believed to be responsible for the care of the child;
- the child's present whereabouts if not the same as the parent's or other person's home address;
- description of injuries, including evidence of previous injuries;
- name, age, and condition of other children in the same home;
- any other information considered helpful; and,
- name and address of the person making the report.

Board policy states it is not the responsibility of employees to prove that a child has been abused or neglected. Employees should not take it upon themselves to investigate the case or contact the family of the child. The DHS is responsible for investigating the incident of alleged abuse.

For more information and to access a guide for mandatory reporters please go to the [Iowa Department of Human Services website](#).

## **Corporal Punishment**

(Board Policy [503.5](#))

Corporal punishment is defined as the intentional physical punishment of a student and is prohibited. It includes the use of unreasonable or unnecessary physical force or physical contact made with the intent to harm or cause pain. No employee is prohibited from:

- Using reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain, in order to accomplish any of the following:
  - To quell a disturbance or prevent an act that threatens physical harm to any person.
  - To obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object within a pupil's control.
  - For the purposes of self-defense or defense of others as provided for in Iowa Code section 704.3.
  - For the protection of property as provided for in Iowa Code section 704.4 or 704.5.
  - To remove a disruptive pupil from class or any area of school premises or from school-sponsored activities off school premises.
  - To protect a student from the self-infliction of harm.
  - To protect the safety of others.
- Using incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact to maintain order and control.

Reasonable physical force should be commensurate with the circumstances of the situation. The following factors should be considered in using reasonable physical force for the reasons stated in this policy:

1. The size and physical, mental, and psychological condition of the student;
2. The nature of the student's behavior or misconduct provoking the use of physical force;
3. The instrumentality used in applying the physical force;
4. The extent and nature of resulting injury to the student, if any;
5. The motivation of the school employee using physical force.

Upon request, the student's parents shall be given an explanation of the reasons for physical force.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

For additional information regarding Iowa law on this issue, please visit the "Timeout, Seclusion, and Restraint" section of the [Iowa Department of Education's website](#).

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

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 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.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

(Board Policy [557](#))

Building principals will work with teachers on the process for scheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences. Teachers are expected to regularly communicate with parents in regard to student welfare and progress.

## **Search and Seizure**

(Board Policy [502.08](#))

In order 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 property may be searched or inspected. A search of a student will be justified when there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or school district policy, rules, or regulations affecting school order. Employees must never search, pat down or otherwise inspect a student and his or her belongings without the notification of the principal. The principal will determine whether there is a reasonable belief that a law, school rule or board policy has been violated to justify the search or whether law enforcement should be contacted. Employees should never search or inspect a student's person or belongings without another adult present and only adults of the same sex of the student should be present during the search or inspection. For additional information regarding searches of students and property, please consult [IOWA CODE 808A.1](#).

## **Student Field Trips and Excursions**

(Board Policy [606.5](#))

The principal may authorize field trips and excursions when such events contribute to the achievement of education goals of the school district. The school district will provide transportation for field trips and excursions.

In authorizing field trips and excursions, the building principal shall consider the financial condition of the school district, the educational benefit of the activity, the inherent risks or dangers of the activity, and other factors deemed relevant by the superintendent. Written parental permission will be required prior to the student's participation in field trips and excursions. The superintendent's approval will be required for field trips and excursions outside the continental United States. Board approval shall be required for field trips and excursions which involve unusual length or expense.

Field trips and excursions are to be arranged with the building principal well in advance. A detailed schedule and budget must be submitted by the employee. The school district will be responsible for obtaining a substitute teacher if one is needed.

## **Student Fundraising**

(Board Policy [504.5](#))

Students may raise funds for school-sponsored events with the permission of the superintendent. Collection boxes for school fund raising must have prior approval from the principal before being placed on school property.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

## **Student Illness or Injury at School**

(Board Policy [507.04](#))

When a student becomes ill or is injured at school, the school district shall attempt to notify the student's parents as soon as possible.

The school district, while not responsible for medical treatment of an ill or injured student, will have employees present administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. An ill or injured child will be turned over to the care of the parents or qualified medical employees as quickly as possible.

It shall be the responsibility of the employee to file an accident report with the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours after the student is injured.

Annually, parents shall be required to complete a medical emergency authorization form indicating the procedures to be followed, if possible, in an emergency involving their child. The authorization form will also include the phone numbers of the parents and alternative numbers to call in case of an injury or illness.

The superintendent shall be responsible, in conjunction with the school nurse, to develop rules and regulations governing the procedure in the event a student should become ill or be injured at school.

## **Student Records**

(Board Policy [520](#))

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 the superintendent 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 disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and expose the employee to personal liability for violation of Iowa's privacy law.

## **Transporting of Students by Employees**

(Board Policy [401.11](#))

Generally, transportation of students shall be 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 the permission of the superintendent.

This policy statement applies to transportation of students for school purposes in addition to the regular bus route transporting students to and from their designated attendance center.

## **Tutoring**

(Board Policy [408.3](#))

Every effort will be made by the licensed employees to help students with learning problems before recommending that the parents engage a tutor. Since there are exceptional cases when tutoring will help students overcome learning deficiencies, tutoring by licensed employees may be approved by the superintendent. Licensed employees may only tutor students other than those for whom the teacher is currently exercising teaching, administrative or supervisory responsibility.

Tutoring for a fee may not take place within school facilities or during regular school hours unless approved by the superintendent.

# **TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

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## **Early Retirement**

(Board Policies [407.4](#) and [413.3](#))

The board may in its discretion offer an early retirement program.

## **Licensed Employee Contract Release**

(Board Policy [407.2](#))

Licensed employees who wish to be released from an executed contract must give at least twenty-one (21) days' notice to the superintendent. Licensed employees may be released at the discretion of the board. Only in unusual and extreme circumstances will the board release a licensed employee from a contract. The board shall have sole discretion to determine what constitutes unusual and extreme circumstances.

Release from a contract shall be contingent upon finding a suitable replacement. Licensed employees requesting release from a contract after it has been signed and before it expires will be required to pay the board up to \$500 for expenses incurred to locate and hire a suitable replacement. Upon written mutual agreement between the employee and the superintendent, the costs may be deducted from the employee's salary. Payment of these costs shall be a condition for release from the contract at the discretion of the board. Failure of the licensed employee to pay these expenses may result in a cause of action being filed in small claims court.

The superintendent is authorized to file a complaint with the Board of Educational Examiners against a licensed employee who leaves without proper release from the board.

## Reduction in Force

(Board Policies [407.5](#) and [413.5](#))

When in the sole, exclusive and final judgment of the Employer, decline in enrollment, reduction of program or any other reason requires reduction in staff among employees, the following policy will be implemented:

- If there is attrition in other position(s) the Employer will then attempt to accomplish the necessary staff reduction by reassignment of the employee(s) in the position(s) to be reduced, as long as the Board determines, such reassignment will have no adverse effect on the quality of the education program in the district.
- In the event the District determines that employees shall be laid off, the following procedures will be followed:
  - The Board may lay off anyone without regard for categories based on the Board's discretion as to what is in the best interest of the school district and/or students.
  - The Board's decision on layoff is not grievable.
  - Any laid off employee may apply for recall and it will be the Board's sole discretion whether it is granted.
- An Employee who is terminated because of staff reduction and who is re-employed shall be placed on the salary schedule one step advanced from the employee's position on the schedule at the time of departure. The re-employed employee shall retain the seniority held at the time of termination. There shall be no accrual of seniority during the recall period.
- Any Employee who resigns upon request for reasons of staff reduction, shall be afforded the recall rights unless specifically waived in writing.
- Any teacher who acquired seniority shall lose such seniority and recall rights for the following reasons:
  - If a teacher voluntarily resigns.
  - If, upon recall, a teacher fails to respond in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days after being notified at his last known address, unless prevented by illness or other reasons satisfactory to the Employer.
  - A teacher who is terminated for cause shall lose all recall rights.

## Resignation

(Board Policy [407.1](#) and [413.1](#))

### Licensed Employees at Year End

A licensed employee who wishes to resign must notify the superintendent in writing prior to June 1. This applies to regular contracts for the licensed employee's regular duties and for an extracurricular contract for extra duty. Resignations of this nature will be accepted by the board.

The board may require an individual who has resigned from an extracurricular contract to accept the resigned position for only the subsequent school year when the board has made a good faith effort to find a replacement and the licensed employee is continuing to be employed by the school district. (*Reference Board Policy 407.1*)

### Classified Employees

Classified employees who wish to resign during the school year shall give the board notice of their intent to resign and final date of employment and cancel their contract fourteen (14) days prior to their last working day. In its discretion, the board may choose to not accept a resignation of a classified employee prior to finding a suitable replacement.

Notice of the intent to resign shall be in writing to the superintendent.

## APPENDIX A

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### Grievance Report – Level II

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Filed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Aggrieved Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Morning Sun Community School District  
Building

A. Date Violation Occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Section(s) of Handbook Violated: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Statement of Grievance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
D. Relief Sought: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

E. Disposition by Principal or Immediate Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal or Immediate Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



APPENDIX B

Grievance Report – Level III

Date Received by Superintendent

A. Signature of Aggrieved Person:

B. Disposition of Superintendent or Designee:

Form area with multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

Signature of Superintendent or Designee

Date

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## APPENDIX D

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### Acknowledgement of Receipt

I acknowledge that I have received, or can access a copy of, the Morning Sun Community School District's Employee Handbook. It is available on the district website or in the business office. I understand the employee handbook contains important information about the district and my role, responsibilities, and duties as an employee. I acknowledge I am expected to be familiar with the contents. I also understand that I should consult with the superintendent regarding any questions I have about the contents of the employee handbook or any questions that I feel are not addressed.

I understand that the employee handbook is a general source of information and may not include every possible situation that may arise. I acknowledge that the Employee Handbook is not intended and does not constitute a contract between the district and any one or all of its employees.

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Employee's Signature

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Date

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Employee's Printed Name

– *Original, signed copy to be placed in employee's personnel file, and a copy of original provided to employee.* –