



**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
2023 - 2024**

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Welcome by Superintendent

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to share the 2022-2023 Mokena School District 159 Employee Handbook. The information found on the pages of this document are provided as an overview for many topics related to your work. While not everything in this document may directly apply to your position, I encourage you to become familiar with all sections as there is valuable information for all D159 employees. As with any handbook, it is never possible to cover all situations and scenarios; let alone all topics that are of importance to you. Therefore, I encourage you to ask questions about the contents and provide suggestions for future updates. Your questions will lead to an updated and improved handbook.

If you are new to District 159, welcome! We are glad that you chose to join our team! If you are returning after one or more years, thank you for making the choice to continue and for your service! Either way, we are excited about the past, present and future of District 159 and we are confident that the information in this document will provide important insights into our collaborative efforts.

Sincerely,

Mark Cohen, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Mokena School District 159

Mission Statement

To engage, inspire, and equip all students with tools for life-long academic, social, and emotional success

Vision Statement

To provide an innovative curriculum that motivates and challenges each individual student, in collaboration with stakeholders, to succeed in a globally competitive society

Core Values

We believe ...

- ...children are the first priority.
- ...the educational community will motivate students to become lifelong learners and develop strategies for problem-solving in an ever-changing world.
- ...education should meet the needs of all students so that every child can learn in a safe, positive and caring environment.
- ...all members of the school community should be respectfully and actively engaged in the learning process.
- ...a quality learning community requires prudent investment of human and financial resources.

Equal Employment Opportunity [\(Board Policy 5:10\)](#)

Mokena School District 159 is an Equal Opportunity Employer and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any kind: We are committed to the principle of equal employment opportunity for all employees and to providing employees with a work environment free of discrimination and harassment. All employment decisions made in the District are based on creating the very best educational experience for our students, job requirements and individual qualifications, without regard to race, color, religion or belief, gender, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, family or parental status, or any other status protected by the laws or regulations in the State of Illinois. Mokena School District 159 will not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on any of these characteristics. We encourage applicants of all ages.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any of the reasons listed above should contact Dr. Teri Shaw or Dr. Kristin Johnson at 708-342-4900.

Recruitment/Selection Procedures

The Board is committed to employing suitable, qualified, and talented individuals to effectively carry out the district's vision, mission and goals. For each position, the Superintendent or designee shall present to the Board one candidate who meets all qualifications established by law and the Board for the position.

Minority Recruitment [\(Board Policy 5:10\)](#)

The District will attempt to recruit and hire minority employees. Such recruiting attempts may include advertising openings in minority publications, participating in minority job fairs, and recruiting at colleges and universities with significant minority enrollments. The District is not required to give preferential treatment or special rights based on a protected status without evidence of past discrimination.

Staffing Practices

The District employs members of two labor unions, the Mokena Teachers' Association and the Mokena Classified Staff Association. All positions have a specific job description. Below, are the positions that are recognized as bargaining members of each Association:

Mokena Teachers' Association (MTA)

General Education Teacher
Physical Education, Music, or Art Teacher
Special Education Teacher
Early Childhood Teacher
ELL Teacher
Social Worker
School Psychologist
Speech/Language Pathologist
Instructional Coach
Interventionist
Occupational Therapist
Physical Therapist

Mokena Classified Staff Association (MCSA)

Administrative Assistant I
Administrative Assistant II
Administrative Assistant III
Bookkeeper / Payroll
Administrative Assistant for Instructional Services
Administrative Assistant for Student Services
Bookkeeper / Accounts Payable
Administrative Assistant for the District Office
Building Aide
Health Service Coordinator
Learning Center Aide
Paraprofessional
Technical Support Aide

The District employs other positions that are not members of a bargaining unit. These positions include:

Superintendent
Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Chief School Business Official
Director of Student Services
Assistant Director of Student Services
Director of Technology
Director of Food Service
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
Human Resources Coordinator
Principal
Assistant Principal
Transportation Coordinator

Bus Driver
Lunch Supervisor
Cook
Assistant Cook
Food Server
Substitute Teacher
Substitute Paraprofessional
Substitute Building Aide
Substitute Nurse
Substitute Bus Driver

Job Descriptions ([Board Policy 5:30](#))

The District has on file a job description for every position it employs. These job descriptions contain the following information:

- Title
- Minimum qualifications
- Accountable to
- Primary objective
- Evaluation
- Essential job functions
- Requirements
- Working conditions
- Terms of employment
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Status (Exempt or Non-exempt)

All non-exempt positions are paid at an hourly rate. All exempt positions are paid according to an annual salary. Substitute positions are paid according to a per-diem rate.

Employee Notice Requirements

Mokena School District 159 complies with all federal and state required labor postings. These postings can be found in the respective faculty lounges of each school.

Internal job postings are posted in the faculty lounge of each school. These postings follow the guidelines set forth in the Negotiated Agreements with the MTA and MCSA.

After five (5) school days of being posted internally, positions that remain available are posted externally. The external postings are listed on the District website as well as near the main entrance to each school.

Pre-employment Requirements

All applicants for licensed/certificated positions will have to submit the following documents via the online application system to be considered for an available position:

1. Letter of Interest
2. Completed Application
3. Resume
4. Copy of Official Transcripts
5. At Least Two Reference Letters
6. References (with names, current positions, and phone numbers)

All applicants for classified positions will have to submit the following documents via the online application system to be considered for an available position:

1. Completed Application
2. At Least Two References (with names, current positions, and phone numbers)

Performance Evaluations

Performance evaluations are a tool designed to drive continuous employee improvement and help the District achieve its goals. The processes involved in performance management are collaborative between the employee and his/her supervisor.

For certified staff, the District utilizes Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* as its evaluation instrument. All procedures set forth from SB 7 and PERA are followed. Each new certified staff member will be provided a copy of the *Evaluation of Certified School District Employees in Contractual Continued Service* at the beginning of their employment with the District.

For classified staff that are members of the Mokena Classified Staff Association, the evaluations will take place once every other year at a mutually agreed upon date and time, but not later than May 31st of the school year the evaluation is to take place.

For classified staff that are not members of the Mokena Classified Staff Association, evaluations will take place every year, not later than May 31st.

Administrators will be evaluated yearly following the procedures set forth from SB 7 and PERA. The Superintendent is responsible for the protocol of all administrative evaluations.

Background Checks ([Board Policy 5:30](#))

The District desires to provide staff with a reasonably safe and secure environment. It is required by law that the district screen persons for positions on the basis of specific criminal conviction records that by law prohibit an individual's employment or raise reasonable doubt as to an individual's fitness for a particular position. All newly hired regular staff and temporary staff assuming positions at Mokena School District 159 will be subject to fingerprinting and a background check. Pursuant to the *Illinois School Code* and the Uniform Conviction Information Act, all newly hired employees will be furnished a copy of the record if convictions are obtained from the Illinois State Police.

Criminal Convictions

The District retains the right to discharge any employee whose criminal background investigation reveals a conviction for committing or attempting to commit any of the offenses outlined in Section 5/21B-80 of The School Code or who falsifies, or omits facts from, his or her employment application or other employment documents.

Immigration Law Compliance

Federal law requires that all persons hired by Mokena School District 159 must show that they are either a citizen of the United States or if a non-citizen, eligible to work in the United States by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") agency. All newly hired employees will be required to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) and provide supporting documentation.

Physical Examinations ([Board Policy 5:30](#))

New employees must furnish evidence of physical fitness to perform assigned duties and freedom from communicable disease. For employees that will be assigned to early childhood programming (3-5 year-olds) the physical shall include a test for tuberculosis. All physical fitness examinations and tests for tuberculosis must be performed by a physician or an advanced practice nurse who has a written collaborative agreement with a collaborating physician licensed in Illinois, or any other state. The employee must have the physical examination and tuberculin test performed no more than 90 days before submitting evidence of it to the District.

Any employee may be required to have an additional examination by a physician or an advanced practice nurse who has a written collaborative agreement with a collaborating physician licensed in Illinois, or any other state, if the examination is job-related and consistent with business necessity. The Board of Education will pay the expenses of any such examination.

Employee Orientation Program ([Board Policy 5:30](#))

As a condition of employment, all newly hired employees must participate in a district orientation program customized to their employee group. This orientation will acquaint all newly hired employees with the District's policies and procedures, the school's rules and regulations, and the responsibilities of their position. Details concerning the dates of this orientation will be given to all new employees.

Teacher Mentoring Program

All newly hired certified personnel (teachers, social workers, psychologists, speech/language pathologists) are required to participate in the Mentoring Program that will provide training in best practices and information about district procedures.

Employee Professional Development

In-House Professional Development

Mokena School District 159 prides itself on providing learning opportunities for all staff that are relevant to job expectations as well as based on current best practices. Many of these opportunities are provided in-house through staff development, extended, or institute days. All staff are required to complete the number of recertification hours to keep their licenses current in accordance with ISBE guidelines. The District will provide an Evidence of Completion for Professional Development at the conclusion of every District-provided professional development session. It is the responsibility of the staff member to collect and maintain these forms for submission for recertification of licensure with ISBE. If a staff member did not obtain a form, he/she can contact the Administrative Assistant for Instructional Services to either a) set up an appointment to obtain past forms, or b) send an email with specific information in regards to the form needed.

Outside Professional Development

At times, staff may seek to attend professional development provided outside of the District. These opportunities may be in the form of a webinar, in-person workshop, or asynchronous learning. In any instance, professional development should be focused around improving teaching and learning and be tied to the District's mission and vision. Prior to receiving authorization to attend an outside professional development session, a staff member needs to:

- a) complete the Professional Development Request Form and submits the form along with supporting documentation, including registration and cost to his/her direct supervisor.
- b) complete the registration form for the professional development session.
- c) **Note:** Incomplete request or registration forms will be returned to the employee, which will result in a delay of registration.

Upon receipt of the required documentation, the supervisor will:

- a) mark the professional development session “Approved” or “Disapproved.”
- b) sign and identify the area of professional development.
- c) forward approved requests to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction.
- d) return disapproved requests to the employee.

Upon receipt of approved requests, the Administrative Assistant for Instructional Services will:

- a) complete the appropriate areas of the Professional Development Request Form.
- b) register the employee for the specific professional development session requested
- c) forward a copy of the final approved request to payroll, supervisor, and employee.

Upon final approval, the employee will enter his/her absence for the corresponding date into ReadySub. A copy of the Professional Development Request Form may be scanned and attached to the ReadySub request for electronic recordkeeping of one’s professional development. The employee will also forward any email communication regarding acknowledgement and/or receipt of payment to the Administrative Assistant for Instructional Services.

Required Outside Professional Development (Certified only)

If the District requires a certified staff member to attend an outside professional development session, the same process outlined above for outside professional development will be followed.

Global Compliance Network Online Trainings (GCN)

Per the Will County Regional Office of Education and Illinois School Code, there are annual and bi-annual trainings that every employee must complete. Each employee will be assigned login information and required to complete annual or bi-annual training as assigned by the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. All required training is to be completed by no later than September 30th of the school year the training is assigned. Users can access GCN at the website below, using the following login information:

<http://site.gcctraining.com/>

Organization ID: m60183
Personal ID: District-provided username

Employment Classifications [\(Board Policy 5:35\)](#)

The District currently recognized the following two types of employment classifications:

Salaried Exempt

Positions of managerial, administrative, or professional nature, as prescribed by federal and state labor statutes, which are exempt from mandatory, overtime payments

Hourly Non-Exempt

Positions of clerical, technical, or service nature, as prescribed by the federal and state labor statutes, which are covered by provisions for overtime payments.

Compensation and Benefits

Pay Day

The payroll schedule can be found on the District intranet website. Direct deposit is the preferred method to disburse employee earnings. Payroll will be regularly issued bi-weekly on Friday except when the pay day is a banking holiday. Employees that do not have direct deposit will receive a paper check at their work site.

Payroll Deductions

The following mandatory deductions will be made from every employee's gross wages: applicable taxes and retirement contributions.

Every employee must complete and sign a federal and state of Illinois withholding allowance certificate (W-4), on or before his/her first day on the job. These forms must be completed in accordance with state and federal regulations. The employee must complete a replacement W-4 any time his/her circumstances change.

Union dues are determined and set by the two labor unions within the district.

Other optional deductions include the portion of group health, dental or vision insurance not paid by the district, which is deducted from each payroll check except for those months in which there are three pay periods. On the third pay period of the month, no deduction is withheld.

Other voluntary contributions, such as voluntary life insurance, credit union, tax shelter annuities, or charitable contributions, etc. are also deducted each pay period.

Workweek and Compensation

The workweek for District employees will be 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday. Non-exempt employees will be compensated for all hours worked in a workweek including overtime. For non-exempt employees paid a salary, the salary is paid for a 40 hour workweek even if an employee is scheduled to work less than 40 hours.

Overtime

“Overtime” is time worked in excess of 40 hours in a single workweek. A non-exempt employee shall not work overtime without prior approval from the employee’s supervisor. Unauthorized incurrence of overtime work shall subject the employee to discipline. Overtime occurring on a Sunday or holiday shall be paid at the rate of two (2) times the employee’s regular rate.

Holidays

The district is closed on the following holidays, and employees are not expected to report to work. Employees who are classified as 12 month full-time employees will have the day off without the loss of pay. In cases when a holiday falls on a weekend or other non-scheduled work days, the administration will designate another specific day or declare a floating holiday to be taken with prior approval.

Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Friday, Christmas Day, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Day, President’s Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day

All other classified staff will receive paid holidays for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Employee Benefits

The District has an Insurance Committee that is composed of representatives from all employee groups within the District. This Committee makes recommendations to the Superintendent regarding the selection of an insurance carrier and plans presented from the District’s insurance broker.

Medical, Dental and Vision Insurance

Eligible employees may participate in the medical, dental, and vision insurance plans subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between the District and contracted policy providers. Health insurance is a very complex benefit.

Employees should consult the plan summary document given on the date of hire or annually during open enrollment, which occurs in May. A copy of the plan summary can be obtained from the Payroll/Benefits Department.

A change in employment classification that would result in loss of eligibility to participate in the health insurance plan may qualify an employee for benefit continuation under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). As a courtesy reminder, any change in family status such as marriage, divorce, births, or deaths, requires contacting the Payroll/Benefits Department immediately about these changes so that proper adjustments can be made to insurance records.

Health Benefits Continuation (COBRA)

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified dependents the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the District's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at the District's group rates plus an administration fee. Mokena School District 159 provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the company's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

Life Insurance

The District provides a basic life insurance plan for eligible employees in amounts determined by job classifications.

Eligible employees may participate in the life insurance plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between the District and the life insurance company. Employees who retire or leave the District will not be eligible to continue this benefit once employment has ended.

National Conference on Public Employees Retirement Systems(NCPERS)

The plan is specially designed for retirement systems, to be offered to eligible IMRF members regardless of their health conditions, without any enrollment participation requirements and can carry this benefit into retirement. The plan is set up for payroll deduction and then changed to direct billing to the member's home upon retirement.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Workers' Compensation insurance coverage begins on the date of employment and covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment.

Employees must report all accidents immediately to the building Health Service Coordinator. The employee will then complete the *Illinois Form 45: Employer's First Report of Injury*. If the Health Service Coordinator is not available, the employee should notify their building Principal or Assistant Principal. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it is reported immediately. This procedure will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage, in a timely matter.

Flexible Savings Account

The district offers two types of FSAs and are available to eligible employees. The Health Care Account and Dependent Care Account offer employees the opportunity to set aside pre-tax money from their paycheck for health and dependent care related expenses up to the limits that are set by the Internal Revenue Service annually.

Tax Sheltered Annuities - 403(b)

What is a Tax Sheltered Annuity?

Annuities are designed to be long term investments to retirement goals. The tax sheltered annuity arrangement permits an employee to contribute tax-deferred dollars to an annuity program. By contributing to a TSA program, an employee's gross income is reduced and state and federal taxes are reduced. Interest earned on this investment is also exempt from taxes until the money is withdrawn.

Why is an Annuity Worth Considering?

The tax sheltered annuity program serves as a supplemental retirement annuity, in addition to Social Security, Teachers Retirement Services (TRS), Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). The tax sheltered annuity can provide a much higher income replacement ratio in retirement than Social Security and a retirement annuity. Although the TSA program is intended to supplement retirement income, it may be used for emergencies (financial hardship) and can provide a source of income to a survivor in the event of death or as income for disability. When money is withdrawn from a tax sheltered annuity, it is reported as income for tax purposes. The tax impact is generally not as great on withdrawal, especially at age 65 and retirement when annual income is lower.

Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA) Program 403(b)

The Omni Group is the District's third party administrator (TPA) for employees that elect to participate in a TSA. This plan is completely voluntary. Staff has the opportunity throughout the year to meet with a financial advisor. It is the financial

advisor responsibility to sign up the employee, fill out the Salary Reduction Agreement for 403(b) Programs and return it to the Payroll/Benefits department.

How do I participate in the 403(b)?

As an employee for the District, you have the opportunity to contribute up to the maximum allowed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in the 403(b) plan. Contributions are done biweekly through a payroll deduction.

How and When May I Make Withdrawals from a TSA Account 403(b)?

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 placed restrictions on withdrawal of contributions to a TSA program. Contributions may be withdrawn due to:

1. Financial Hardship**
2. Termination of Employment
3. Death or Disability
4. Age 59 ½

** The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has not defined “financial hardship.” It is believed that the hardship definition related to 401(k) plans will also apply to 403(b) plans. This definition is “immediate and heavy financial needs of the employee that cannot reasonably be met through other resources.” Distribution based on financial hardship will be salary contributions only and will not include any earned interest. With any early distribution there is a 20 percent penalty in addition to state and federal taxes.

The Tax Reform Act also requires mandatory distribution of your TSA benefits no later than April 1 of the calendar year following the year in which you become age 70 ½ --regardless of your actual retirement date. If you do not begin distribution by this time, you will be subject to an additional tax equal to 50 percent of the minimum required distribution.

How Many Changes Can I Make?

In accordance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS), effective January 1, 1997, 403(b) participants can legally make unlimited changes in a calendar year.

However, you may not exceed the maximum allowable contribution for the calendar year. A Salary Reduction Agreement must be completed with each change. You must contact your financial advisor to complete the Salary Reduction Agreement and submit it to the Human Resources department.

Teachers' Retirement Services

The State of Illinois requires all certified staff to participate in the Teachers' Retirement Service (TRS). Each certified staff member pays into the TRS system through payroll deductions for their retirement benefits. The rates are adjusted annually in July and are

determined by TRS. The District, as a benefit to the employee, pays a portion each pay period to TRS.

Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund

Illinois state law requires all qualified classified staff to participate in IMRF. To qualify, the position held by the classified employee is expected to work a minimum of 600 hours. The employee will be deducted through a payroll deduction a set rate determined annually by IMRF. The district is also required to pay a portion each pay period on behalf of the employee. That rate is determined annually by IMRF.

IMRF also allows the qualified classified employee to make additional contributions through a payroll deduction up to 10%. Employees wishing to participate in the voluntary contribution may contact Payroll and Benefits Department for the proper forms.

Employee Safety

Mokena School District 159 strives to provide its employees with a safe and healthy workplace environment. To accomplish this goal, administration and employees must diligently undertake efforts to promote safety. One of the requirements for having safe schools is that all adults can be identified easily by wearing their ID badge at all times in a visible location.

Employees shall devote their full time, skill, and attention to the performance of their job responsibilities utilizing the highest standard of care and good judgment. If you feel that an existing situation is a safety or health hazard, please notify your supervisor.

Fob's (electronic keys) are issued by the designated administrative assistant in each school. Only those employees who require specific access to building sites will be issued a fob as determined by the administration.

Injured on the Job

All workplace injuries are to be promptly reported to the health Service Coordinator in your building and administrator. In the case of a serious injury, an employee's reporting obligation will be deferred until circumstances can permit a report being made. Failure to report and injury within 24 hours may preclude or delay the payment of any benefits to the employee and may result in disciplinary action.

If medical care becomes necessary due to a workplace injury, provide both your administrator and Mokena School District 159 with all medical documentation related to initial work status and any subsequent changes to it. Your authorized medical care provider must support, in writing, all injury-related time away from work.

Contact your administrator daily or according to a schedule established by the administrator in order to keep him/her informed about your treatment and recovery. Be sure to attend all of your scheduled medical appointments.

When the medical care provider permits you to return to work, you must be willing and available to return to the workplace (regardless of your assigned limitations or restrictions).

Leaves and Absences

The district offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This section describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of more than five days should call the Payroll and Benefits Department at 708-342-4912 for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the District.

Paid leave must be used in half-day or whole day increments. Employees must follow district and department procedures to report or request any leave of absence by entering the time off as soon as possible in Ready Sub.

<https://app.readysub.com/account/login>

“Immediate Family” Definition

For the purpose of leave other than Family and Medical leave, immediate family is defined as the following:

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis
- Parent, step parent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee
- Sibling, step sibling and sibling-in-law
- Grandparent and grandchild
- Brother, sister, brother-in-laws and sister-in-laws
- Any person residing in the employee’s household at the time of illness or death

Sick Leave

Temporary incapacity or other capacity of ill-being that renders an employee physically or mentally unable to perform assigned duties will be considered a temporary illness. During such a period, the employee can use accumulated sick leave benefits. Employees will be afforded days of sick time per year depending upon the terms of their contract.

Sick leave includes:

1. Personal illness, illness of husband, wife, son, daughter, sister, mother or father, brothers, sisters, grandparents, parents-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, legal guardians, or quarantine at home.
2. Funeral of any relative named in item 1 (immediate family) and also grandparents, grandchildren, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, father-in-law, mother-in-law, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece.

The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement as to the seriousness of the illness and the fitness of the employee to return to his/her duties.

A medical release statement is to be submitted to the Payroll and Benefits Department for review before the employee returns to work in the following situations:

- a. Three or more consecutive workdays of absence due to illness or injury;
- b. In all cases of a work-related injury when the employee has been unable to work after the time of the injury;
- c. When returning from a medical or maternity leave of absence.

Personal Leave

Personal leave days are granted annually in July for staff. Personal leave days can be used for recreational, personal, general or medical purposes which cannot be attended to other than during school hours. Except in cases of emergency or unavoidable situations, a personal leave request should be submitted in Ready Sub at least five days in advance. If the request isn't submitted within the time frame allowed, the request may be denied. No personal leave day may be used immediately before or immediately after a holiday or break. Personal leave days may not be used during the first and/or last five days of the school year. Personal leave days cannot be used in conjunction with vacation days. Personal leave days may not be taken in increments of less than one-half day. All personal leaves must be approved by the building principal or supervisor. The Superintendent may, at his/her discretion, grant an exception to the restrictions on a case by case basis after discussing the specific circumstances with the employee involved. Any exceptions granted by the Superintendent shall be done on a non-precedential basis and such decisions are not grievable.

Any personal leave days unused during the previous school year will be accumulated as sick days at the start of the next school year.

Jury Duty

Time off for mandatory jury duty, or a subpoena issued related to school business, will be paid at full salary. Jury duty or subpoena must be submitted in Ready Sub and to the building principal or supervisor promptly. Proof of service could be the check stub stating the date(s) of service or a letter from the courts indicating the date(s) of service. If the employee has to report either a partial day or a day(s) is not required to appear, the employee is expected to report for work.

Inclement Weather/Emergency Days

All employees classified as full-time 12 month are expected to work on days deemed as snow/cold days. A classified full-time 12 month employee who does not make it to work on an inclement weather/emergency day, will be charged a personal or vacation day unless the Superintendent deems the buildings inaccessible, the full-time 12 month employees will not be subject to loss of pay.

Condolence Leave

Up to two days of leave per school year will be granted to all employees working nine months or more per year to attend the funeral of any relative who is considered immediate family. Immediate family for these purposes is defined as husband, wife, children, brother, sister, mother, father, grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or guardian. Sick days will be used when the condolence leave is beyond the two days. The employee must enter the condolence leave in Ready Sub as soon as possible.

Religious Holidays

Building principals or supervisors shall grant an employees' request for time off to observe a religious holiday if the employee gives at least five days prior notice.

Employees may use earned vacation time or personal leave to make up the absence, provided such time is consistent with the District's operations.

Vacation Days

Vacation days are granted to those employees that are classified as full-time 12-month.

All vacation days will be determined from July 1 through June 30 each year. The number of vacation days awarded are based upon the number of years of continuous service in the district. Vacation day accrual is as follows:

Year 1 through year 5:	10 vacation days
Year 6 through year 10:	15 vacation days
Year 11 through year 15:	20 vacation days
Year 16:	25 vacation days

Employees may request use of vacation days to be accrued, but not yet earned. If such a request is granted, and the employee separates from the District having taken more vacation than the employee has earned, the employees' final paycheck will be adjusted to reimburse the District for vacation time used that was not earned as of the date of separation.

Requests for vacation days shall be done through ReadySub. The building principal or supervisor shall make the final approval based on the best interest of the district and to

continue the effective operations of service. Personal leave days cannot be used in conjunction with vacation days.

Vacation days are expected to be used in the year in which they are earned, but may carryover vacation days to the next fiscal year with written consent of the employee's building principal or supervisor and the Chief Business School Official. Vacation days must be used before the end of the next fiscal year in which they are earned or they will be forfeited.

Upon separation of the district, the employee will receive any earned, unused vacation days in salary at the employee's regular daily rate of pay.

Leaves for Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence

Any professional staff member may take an unpaid leave from work who:

1. Is a victim of domestic or sexual violence.
2. Has a family, or household member who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic or sexual violence. The unpaid leave allows the employee to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance without suffering adverse employment action.

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, governs the purpose, requirements, scheduling, and continuity of benefits, and all other terms of leave. Accordingly, an employee is entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of leave during any 12 month period.

Neither the law nor this policy creates a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds that unpaid leave time allowed under, or is in addition to the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family Medical Leave Act of 1993.

Non Paid Leaves of Absence

The Board may grant any employee a leave of absence without pay. Please refer to the current Mokena Public School Professional Negotiations Agreement between Mokena Teachers Association, IEA/NEA and the Board of Education Mokena Public School District 159 or the current Mokena School District 159 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Mokena Classified Staff Association, IEA/NEA and the Board of Education of Mokena School District 159.

Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) ([Board Policy 5:185](#))

An eligible employee may use unpaid family and medical leave (FMLA leave), guaranteed by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. The U.S. Department of Labor's rules (federal rules) implementing FMLA, as they may be amended from time to time, control FMLA leave.

An eligible employee may take FMLA leave for up to a combined total of 12 weeks each 12-month period, beginning September 1 and ending August 31 of the next year.

During a single 12-month period, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement may be extended to a total of 26 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a covered servicemember (defined in the federal rules) with a serious injury or illness. The "single 12-month period" is measured forward from the date the employee's first FMLA leave to care for the covered servicemember begins.

While FMLA leave is normally unpaid, the District will substitute an employee's accrued compensatory time-off and/or paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave. All policies and rules regarding the use of paid leave apply when paid leave is substituted for unpaid FMLA leave. Any substitution of paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave will count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Use of FMLA leave shall not preclude the use of other applicable unpaid leave that will extend the employee's leave beyond 12 weeks, provided that the use of FMLA leave shall not serve to extend such other unpaid leave. Any full workweek period during which the employee would not have been required to work, including summer break, winter break and spring break, is not counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

FMLA leave is available in one or more of the following instances:

1. The birth and first-year care of a son or daughter.
2. The adoption or foster placement of a son or daughter, including absences from work that are necessary for the adoption or foster care to proceed and expiring at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the placement date.
3. The serious health condition of an employee's spouse, child, or parent.
4. The employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job.
5. The existence of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, child, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, as provided by federal rules.
6. To care for the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, as provided by federal rules.

If spouses are employed by the District, they may together take only 12-weeks for FMLA leaves when the reason for the leave is 1 or 2, above, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition, or a combined total of 26 weeks for item 6 above.

An employee may be permitted to work on an intermittent or reduced-leave schedule in accordance with federal rules.

Eligibility

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must be employed at a worksite where at least 50 employees are employed within 75 miles. In addition, one of the following provisions must describe the employee:

1. The employee has been employed by the District for at least 12 months and has been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately before the beginning of the leave. The 12 months an employee must have been employed by the District need not be consecutive. However, the District will not consider any period of previous employment that occurred more than seven years before the date of the most recent hiring, except when the service break is due to fulfillment of a covered service obligation under the employee's Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301, *et seq.*, or when a written agreement exists concerning the District's intention to rehire the employee.
2. The employee is a full-time classroom teacher.

Requesting Leave

If the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee must provide the Superintendent or designee with at least 30 days' advance notice before the leave is to begin. If 30 days' advance notice is not practicable, the notice must be given as soon as practicable. The employee shall make a reasonable effort to schedule a planned medical treatment so as not to disrupt the District's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider administering the treatment. The employee shall provide at least verbal notice sufficient to make the Superintendent or designee aware that he or she needs FMLA leave, and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Failure to give the required notice for foreseeable leave may result in a delay in granting the requested leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice.

Certification

Within 15 calendar days after the Superintendent or designee makes a request for certification for FMLA leave, an employee must provide one of the following:

1. When the leave is to care for the employee's covered family member with a serious health condition, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by the family member's health care provider.
2. When the leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by the employee's health care provider.

3. When the leave is to care for a covered servicemember with a serious illness or injury, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by an authorized health care provider for the covered servicemember.
4. When the leave is because of a qualified exigency, the employee must provide:
 - (a) a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating that the military member is on active duty or call to active duty status, and the dates of the covered military member's active duty service, and
 - (b) a statement or description, signed by the employee, of appropriate facts regarding the qualifying exigency for which FMLA leave is requested.

The District may require an employee to obtain a second and third opinion at its expense when it has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification.

The District may require recertification at reasonable intervals, but not more often than once every 30 days. Regardless of the length of time since the last request, the District may request recertification when the, (1) employee requests a leave extension, (2) circumstances described by the original certification change significantly, or (3) District receives information that casts doubt upon the continuing validity of the original certification. Recertification is at the employee's expense and must be provided to the District within 15 calendar days after the request. The District may request recertification every six months in connection with any absence by an employee needing an intermittent or reduced schedule leave for conditions with a duration in excess of six months.

Failure to furnish a complete and sufficient certification on forms provided by the District may result in a denial of the leave request.

Continuation of Health Benefits

During FMLA leave, employees are entitled to continuation of health benefits that would have been provided if they were working. Any share of health plan premiums being paid by the employee before taking the leave, must continue to be paid by the employee during the FMLA leave. A District's obligation to maintain health insurance coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late and the District notifies the employee at least 15 days before coverage will cease.

Changed Circumstances and Intent to Return

An employee must provide the Superintendent or designee reasonable notice of changed circumstances (i.e., within two business days if the changed circumstances are foreseeable) that will alter the duration of the FMLA leave. The Superintendent or designee, taking into consideration all of the relevant facts and circumstances related to an individual's leave situation, may ask an employee who has been on FMLA leave for eight consecutive weeks whether he or she intends to return to work.

Return to Work

If returning from FMLA leave occasioned by the employee's own serious health condition, the employee is required to obtain and present certification from the employee's health care provider that he or she is able to resume work.

An employee returning from FMLA leave will be given an equivalent position to his or her position before the leave, subject to: (1) permissible limitations the District may impose as provided in the FMLA or implementing regulations, and (2) the District's reassignment policies and practices.

Classroom teachers may be required to wait to return to work until the next semester in certain situations as provided by the FMLA regulations.

Personnel Records ([Board Policy 5:150](#))

The District maintains one, official personnel file for each employee in the District's administrative office. This file contains all matters related to employment, performance evaluations, and compliance with governmental recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

Employees have the right to review his or her personnel file in the presence of an administrator and witness, if desired. Employees also have the ability to respond in writing to any item in his or her personnel file.

For members of the Mokena Teachers' Association or the Mokena Classified Staff Association, please see your respective Negotiated Agreements for further details regarding personnel files.

Change of Address, Phone Number, and Name

Employees that need a change of address or phone number can request these changes through Skyward in the Employee Access area. Changes will be monitored at the District office and approved.

Employees that are requesting a change of name need to contact the Payroll and Benefits Department and provide legal documentation supporting the change.

Separation from Employment

Employees choosing to end their employment with Mokena School District 159 are asked to submit a letter of resignation to their direct supervisor no later than two (2) weeks prior to their intended final day of employment.

All District-owned property, including physical and electronic keys, is expected to be returned in the condition that it was issued.

Exiting employees will be asked to conduct an exit interview. The purpose of the exit interview is to determine areas of improvement for the District to retain personnel that voluntarily separate from employment. This interview will ask pertinent information as to why the employee has chosen to separate from his or her employment. This information does not contain personal identifying information and is aggregated with all exit interviews.

Any employee that is eligible for medical benefits will be given the opportunity to elect continuing health coverage through COBRA. Information regarding COBRA will be sent to all employees separating from employment by Allied Benefits approximately 10-15 days after his or her last day worked.

Any prospective employer that is conducting a reference check on a separating employee will only be given information that is truthful, documented, and that the employee has a reasonable expectation to have full and complete knowledge of. The District will only release wage information if a signed release is on file with the District to disclose such information.

Employees that separate employment from the District are eligible for rehire and must go through the application process as all other applicants for an available position.

Behavioral Expectations

Personal Hygiene and Attire

The Board of Education and Administration expect all employees to maintain a professional appearance, good hygiene and appropriate dress to reflect their position within the district.

Ethics ([Board Policy 5:120](#))

All District employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others. In addition, the *Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators*, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, is incorporated by reference into this policy

Copyright, "Works for Hire," and Copyright Compliance ([Board Policy 5:170](#))

The Superintendent receives complaints about copyright infringement within the use of the District's online services. The Superintendent or designee will register this information with the federal Copyright Office as required by federal law.

Works Made for Hire ([Board Policy 5:170](#))

The Superintendent shall manage the development of instructional materials and computer programs by employees during the scope of their employment in accordance with State and federal laws and School Board policies. Whenever an employee is assigned to develop instructional materials and/or computer programs, or otherwise performs such work within the scope of his or her employment, it is assured the District shall be the owner of the copyright.

Copyright Compliance ([Board Policy 5:170](#))

While staff members may use appropriate supplementary materials, it is each staff member's responsibility to abide by the District's copyright compliance procedures and to obey the copyright laws. The District is not responsible for any violations of the copyright laws by its staff or students. A staff member should contact the Superintendent or designee whenever the staff member is uncertain about whether using or copying material complies with the District's procedures or is permissible under the law, or wants assistance on when and how to obtain proper authorization. No staff member shall, without first obtaining the permission of the Superintendent or designee, install or download any program on a District-owned computer. At no time shall it be necessary for a District staff member to violate copyright laws in order to properly perform his or her duties.

Ethics and Gift Ban ([Board Policy 5:120](#))

Students shall not be used in any manner for promoting a political candidate or issue.

Prohibited Political Activity

The following precepts govern political activities being conducted by District employees:

1. No employee shall intentionally perform any *political activity* during any *compensated time*, as those terms are defined herein.
2. No employee shall intentionally use any District property or resources in connection with any political activity.
3. At no time shall any employee intentionally require any other employee to perform any political activity: (a) as part of that employee's duties, (b) as a condition of employment, or (c) during any compensated time off, such as, holidays, vacation, or personal time off.
4. No employee shall be required at any time to participate in any political activity in consideration for that employee being awarded additional compensation or any benefit, whether in the form of a salary adjustment, bonus, compensatory time off, continued employment or otherwise; nor shall any employee be awarded additional compensation or any benefit in consideration for his or her participation in any political activity.

An employee may engage in any activity that: (1) is otherwise appropriate as part of his or her official duties, or (2) is undertaken by the individual on a voluntary basis that is not prohibited by this policy.

Limitations on Receiving Gifts

Except as permitted by this policy, no employee, and no spouse of or immediate family member living with an employee, shall intentionally solicit or accept any *gift* from any *prohibited source*, as those terms are defined herein, or that is otherwise prohibited by law or policy. No prohibited source shall intentionally offer or make a gift that violates this policy.

The following are exceptions to the ban on accepting gifts from a prohibited source:

1. Opportunities, benefits, and services that are available on the same conditions as for the general public.
2. Anything for which the employee, or his or her spouse or immediate family member, pays the fair market value.
3. Any: (a) contribution that is lawfully made under the Election Code, or (b) activities associated with a fundraising event in support of a political organization or candidate.
4. Educational materials and missions.
5. Travel expenses for a meeting to discuss business.
6. A gift from a relative, meaning those people related to the individual as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, great aunt, great uncle, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, and including the father, mother, grandfather, or grandmother of the individual's spouse and the individual's fiancé or fiancée.
7. Anything provided by an individual on the basis of a personal friendship unless the recipient has reason to believe that, under the circumstances, the gift was provided because of the official position or employment of the recipient or his or her spouse or immediate family member and not because of the personal friendship. In determining whether a gift is provided on the basis of personal friendship, the recipient shall consider the circumstances under which the gift was offered, such as: (a) the history of the relationship between the individual giving the gift and the recipient of the gift, including any previous exchange of gifts between those individuals; (b) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift; and (c) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift also at the same time gave the same or similar gifts to other

Board members or employees, or their spouses or immediate family members.

8. Food or refreshments not exceeding \$75 per person in value on a single calendar day; provided that the food or refreshments are: (a) consumed on the premises from which they were purchased or prepared; or (b) catered. *Catered* means food or refreshments that are purchased ready to consume, which are delivered by any means.
9. Food, refreshments, lodging, transportation, and other benefits resulting from outside business or employment activities (or outside activities that are not connected to the official duties of an employee), if the benefits have not been offered or enhanced because of the official position or employment of the employee, and are customarily provided to others in similar circumstances.
10. Intra-governmental and intergovernmental gifts. *Intra-governmental gift* means any gift given to an employee from another employee, and *intergovernmental gift* means any gift given to an employee from an officer or employee of another governmental entity.
11. Bequests, inheritances, and other transfers at death.
12. Any item or items from any one prohibited source during any calendar year having a cumulative total value of less than \$100.

Each of the listed exceptions is mutually exclusive and independent of every other.

An employee, his or her spouse or an immediate family member living with the employee, does not violate this policy if the recipient promptly takes reasonable action to return a gift from a prohibited source to its source or gives the gift or an amount equal to its value to an appropriate charity that is exempt from income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Enforcement

Written complaints alleging a violation of this policy shall be filed with the Superintendent. If attempts to correct any misunderstanding or problem do not resolve the matter, the Superintendent shall, after consulting with the Board Attorney, either place the alleged violation on a Board meeting agenda for the Board's disposition or refer the complainant to Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Definitions

Unless otherwise stated, all terms used in this policy have the definitions given in the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/1-5.

Political activity means:

1. Preparing for, organizing, or participating in any political meeting, political rally, political demonstration, or other political event.
2. Soliciting contributions, including but not limited to the purchase of, selling, distributing, or receiving payment for tickets for any political fundraiser, political meeting, or other political event.
3. Soliciting, planning the solicitation of, or preparing any document or report regarding anything of value intended as a campaign contribution.
4. Planning, conducting, or participating in a public opinion poll in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.
5. Surveying or gathering information from potential or actual voters in an election to determine probable vote outcome in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.
6. Assisting at the polls on Election Day on behalf of any political organization or candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
7. Soliciting votes on behalf of a candidate for elective office or a political organization or for or against any referendum question or helping in an effort to get voters to the polls.
8. Initiating for circulation, preparing, circulating, reviewing, or filing any petition on behalf of a candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
9. Making contributions on behalf of any candidate for elective office in that capacity or in connection with a campaign for elective office.
10. Preparing or reviewing responses to candidate questionnaires.
11. Distributing, preparing for distribution, or mailing campaign literature, campaign signs, or other campaign material on behalf of any candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
12. Campaigning for any elective office or for or against any referendum question.
13. Managing or working on a campaign for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
14. Serving as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention.
15. Participating in any recount or challenge to the outcome of any election.

With respect to an employee whose hours are not fixed, *compensated time* includes any period of time when the employee is on premises under the control of the District and any other time when the employee is executing his or her official duties, regardless of location.

Prohibited source means any person or entity who:

1. Is seeking official action by: (a) a Board member, or (b) an employee, or by the Board member or another employee directing that employee;
2. Does business or seeks to do business with: (a) a Board member, or (b) an employee, or with the Board member or another employee directing that employee;
3. Conducts activities regulated by: (a) a Board member, or (b) an employee or by the Board member or another employee directing that employee;
4. Has an interest that may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of the official duties of the Board member or employee;
5. Is registered or required to be registered with the Secretary of State under the Lobbyist Registration Act, except that an entity does not become a prohibited source merely because a registered lobbyist is one of its members or serves on its board of directors; or
6. Is an agent of, a spouse of, or an immediate family member living with a prohibited source.

Gift means any gratuity, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other tangible or intangible item having monetary value including but not limited to, cash, food and drink, and honoraria for speaking engagements related to or attributable to government employment or the official position of a Board member or employee.

Expense Reimbursement ([Board Policy 5:60](#))

The District will reimburse employees for **pre-approved** expenses related to performance of their duties, such as travel expenses and expenses for material purchases made if the purchase is pre-approved by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to any purchases. Employees may not be reimbursed in full for expenses that exceed the pre-approved amount.

The original receipt must be submitted for all material purchases. Due to the district's tax exempt status, any sales tax charged to an employee will not be reimbursed. Employees should obtain a copy of the tax exempt letter to provide to a vendor when making a purchase.

Employees must submit all expense reimbursements in a timely manner. They must be turned 30 days after the close of the fiscal year. Employees must submit a signed expense form showing the amount of actual expenses. All receipts must be attached to the expense form for the reimbursement request to be processed.

Reimbursement requests could take up to 45 working days for the request to be processed to conclusion. In order to process these requests as quickly as possible, reimbursement requests should be submitted at least two weeks before the next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting. If a request is submitted after this

time, the request will go to the Board for approval at the next month's regularly scheduled meeting. All forms related to reimbursement can be obtained at each building.

Fundraising/Handling Money ([Board Policy 7:325](#))

Anyone seeking to conduct a fundraising activity needs to complete a Fundraising Approval Form. This form is to be used for all student, parent, or school related groups. The activity should follow Board policy 7:325.

Only the following organizations may solicit students on school grounds during school hours or during any school activity to engage in fund-raising activities:

- 1. School-sponsored student organizations**
- 2. Parent organizations and booster clubs that are recognized pursuant to policy 8:90**

In addition, for school-sponsored student organizations, a school staff member must supervise the fundraising activities, and the student activity funds treasurer must safeguard the financial accounts. The fundraising efforts must be to support the organization's purpose and/or activities, the general welfare, a charitable cause, or the educational experiences of students generally. The funds shall be used to the maximum extent possible for the designated purpose.

Please consult your building supervisor concerning procedures related to collecting money for field trips, lunch money, book fairs, etc.

Employee/Student Privacy and Confidentiality ([Board Policy 5:130](#))

Pupil information employees obtain as the result of their employment with the District is confidential and protected by law unless such information has been designated as pupil directory data as set forth in Board policy. The law and respect for our students require that student issues are only discussed with employees and parents who need to know the information. In addition to student information, confidentiality is expected in other areas, including employee or District business information. Any requests for District records shall be referred to the appropriate administrator.

Personal Relationships

All District employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others.

While it is not the business of the District to involve itself in staff's personal relationships, if those relationships impact the business of the District or are in violation of the *Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators*, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Solicitations by or from Staff ([Board Policy 5:140](#))

District employees shall not solicit donations or sales, nor shall they be solicited for donations or sales, on school grounds without prior approval from the Superintendent. Solicit is defined as canvassing, begging, or asking directly.

Bringing Children to Work

In order to maintain a professional working environment, employees are not to bring their children to work at any time during the work day (student attendance, staff meetings, or professional development sessions) if the purpose for bringing a child to work is to provide child care or supervision for the child because other arrangements have failed.

Problem Resolution (Chain of Command)

The Superintendent has developed an organizational chart indicating the channels of authority and reporting relationships for school personnel. These channels should be followed, and no level should be bypassed except in unusual situations. All personnel should refer matters requiring administrative action to the responsible administrator and may appeal a decision to a higher administrative officer.

Rewards and Recognition - Galaxy Award

The Mokena School District 159 Galaxy Award is a program to specially recognize the above and beyond accomplishments and/or contributions of Mokena School District 159 employees (including teachers, support staff, and administrators), students, parents, community members, and community organizations. These awards are intended to celebrate truly exceptional accomplishments and/or contributions that were so impactful it changed the life of a student, employee, family, or the community at large in a positive and deeply meaningful way. This District 159 program is a partnership with the Mokena Educational Foundation (MEF) and the Mokena Parent-Teacher Association (PTA).

Inclement Weather/Emergency Procedures

If the weather causes schools to close, all students and employees that have a work schedule that is based on the school year (teachers, building aides, paraprofessionals, lunch supervisors, bus drivers, social workers, nurses, etc.) are not required to report to work as they will work an additional day at the end of the school calendar.

However, other employees that work year round or less than twelve months (administrators, central office employees, custodians, building secretaries, maintenance,

etc.) will need to listen carefully to the Skylert message that is sent out regarding the closure of schools.

The following are the two options that will be considered:

No Student Attendance But District & School Offices Open

The Superintendent or designee will make a decision to keep the district office and buildings open without students and less-than-twelve-month employees. If this type of decision is made, the district office and schools will be open. All year-round employees will be asked to report to work (or stay at work). If the employee believes that travel is unsafe and chooses not to report to work or to leave, s/he will be asked to use personal or vacation day(s) to cover the missed work time.

District Closed

The Superintendent or designee will make a decision that conditions are too hazardous for anyone to reasonably travel or that all employees should leave for safety reasons. In this case, the “district is closed” without anyone being asked to report to or stay at work. If this option is chosen, no employee will be asked to use personal or vacation time for the missed work. All employees will receive their normal pay as if they worked those hours.

Outside Employment ([Board Policy 5:120](#))

Outside employment is regarded as employment for compensation that is not within the duties and responsibilities of the employee’s regular position with the school system. Personnel shall not be prohibited from holding employment outside the District as long as such employment does not interfere with assigned school duties as determined by the District. The School Board expects employees to devote maximum effort to the position in which employed. An employee will not perform any duties related to an outside job during regular working hours or for professional employees during the additional time that the responsibilities of the District’s position require; nor will an employee use any District facilities, equipment or materials in performing outside work. When the periods of work are such that certain evenings, days or vacation periods are duty free, the employee may use such off-duty time for the purposes of non-school employment.

Cell Phone Usage

The use of cellular phones and other electronic signaling devices by staff members can be distracting and is not conducive to the learning environment. In general, the use of cellular phones by employees is not permitted on school grounds during working hours except for the following reasons:

- The employee is on a regularly scheduled break period and is not present in a classroom, hallway or any location where students may be present,
- Emergency situations involving the school, staff members or students,
- District issued two-way radios or phones which are being used exclusively for communication between staff members or for district business.

It is expected that all cellular phones or electronic devices are stored in an inconspicuous location during the school day. The devices should be turned off during the regular school day unless the staff members is granted permission to leave them on by the building principal.

Corrective Action

The District recognizes and generally follows the tenets of progressive discipline. Employee discipline generally follows the following process:

1. Informal – a conversation notifying the employee of the alleged incident may be documented
2. Verbal reprimand – may be documented
3. Written reprimand – shall be documented and placed in personnel file
4. Suspension – shall be documented and placed in personnel file
5. Termination

The District reserves the right, in its discretion, to determine the seriousness of an incident and, for matters determined to constitute serious infractions, impose a level of discipline appropriate to the conduct at issue without regard to whether prior less serious disciplinary actions have been taken. Prior to issuance of a written reprimand, suspension or termination, the District shall meet with the Employee and the Employee shall be entitled to Association representation at such meeting.

Attendance and Punctuality

Punctuality and regular attendance are important to the smooth operation of the Mokena Schools. If you are consistently late or excessively absent, the Mokena School District's ability to perform work and serve our public is affected and an unfair burden is placed on your co-workers. Therefore, unless your absence is permitted or excused under the

district's holiday, vacation, sick, other policies, or under the Collective Bargaining Agreement, you are responsible for being at work and arriving on time.

Reporting Times

The Collective Bargaining Agreement provides that teachers are to be at work a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes before the start of the student's instructional day and a minimum of thirty (30) minutes after classes are dismissed. All staff will be able to leave ten (10) minutes after the buses have left the building on Fridays and/or the day prior to Thanksgiving, winter break, and spring break. Teachers will be in their designated position ready to supervise students five (5) minutes before the start of the instructional day.

Paraprofessionals work day shall begin thirty (30) minutes prior to the student instructional day and end thirty (30) minutes following student dismissal. In response to building needs, the Employer may on a temporary basis adjust the actual reporting/dismissal time.

Other employees will be informed about their reporting times by their supervisors.

An administrator may, at his/her discretion, grant an exception to the reporting times on a case by case basis after discussing the specific circumstances with the employee involved. Any exceptions granted by the administrator shall be done on a non-precedential basis and such decisions are not grievable.

Sign In - Hourly Employees

Hourly employees are to sign in and out on the appropriate sign in sheet at each building's front office. Beginning in the 2022-2023 school year all employees will clock in at the beginning of the day and clock out at the end of the day using the Truetime system. The employee is responsible for recording the time of arrival when they arrive for work and time of departure upon leaving from work for the day. This record documents attendance.

Sign In - Traveling Staff

Staff members who are assigned to more than one (1) building or who travel between buildings are to sign in and out on the appropriate sign in sheet at each building's front office, recording the time of arrival and departure. This record documents attendance.

Lunch/Planning Time

The Collective Bargaining Agreement provides planning time for teachers during the student instructional day. Planning time is reserved for teachers to complete school-related business. It is paid "work time", therefore, teachers should remain in the building and be available during all scheduled planning time. The Negotiated Agreement

provides teachers a thirty (30) minutes duty-free lunch. Teachers who leave the building during lunch should note that they are required to resume their assigned duties in the building at the culmination of that time period.

Leaving the Building During the Day

Any staff member needing to leave the building during the day should contact the building administrator or designee for permission to do so. The staff member is required to notify the office when he/she is leaving and returns to the building.

Absence/Tardiness

If you are going to be absent, it is your responsibility to report your absence using the ReadySub absence system, described below. Each employee needs to register his or her absence with ReadySub by at least 6:00 am on the day of the absence. Employees who are not teachers will also need to follow their supervisor's direction for making arrangements for a substitute, if a substitute is needed.

If you are going to be late, it is your responsibility to report your tardiness as directed, preferably in advance and not later than one hour before the start of the workday.

If you anticipate an absence beyond one day, please notify your supervisor. An employee who is absent for reasons other than those permitted or excused by the Mokena School District's holiday, vacation, leave policies, or provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement or who repeatedly fails to provide notice as required, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

If an employee exhibits symptoms of an infectious/communicable disease, the supervisor may ask the employee to leave the workplace in order to have his/her symptoms evaluated by the employee's own health care provider or by the District's occupational medicine provider.

Employees who are habitually absent or demonstrate a pattern of absences may be required to provide a physician's note to justify their absences.

Uniform Grievance Procedure ([Board Policy 2:260](#))

An employee should notify any District Complaint Manager if he or she believes that the School Board, its employees, or agents have violated his or her rights guaranteed by the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, or Board policy, or have a complaint regarding any one of the following:

1. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act
2. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
4. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000d *et seq.*
5. Equal Employment Opportunities Act (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act), 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.*
6. Sexual harassment (Illinois Human Rights Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)
7. Breastfeeding accommodations for students, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60 (P.A. 100-29, final citation pending)
8. Bullying, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7
9. Misuse of funds received for services to improve educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged or deprived children
10. Curriculum, instructional materials, and/or programs
11. Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, 820 ILCS 180
12. Illinois Equal Pay Act of 2003, 820 ILCS 112
13. Provision of services to homeless students
14. Illinois Whistleblower Act, 740 ILCS 174/
15. Misuse of genetic information (Illinois Genetic Information Privacy Act (GIPA), 410 ILCS 513/ and Titles I and II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), 42 U.S.C. §2000ff *et seq.*
16. Employee Credit Privacy Act, 820 ILCS 70/

The Complaint Manager will first attempt to resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure. If a formal complaint is filed under this procedure, the Complaint Manager will address the complaint promptly and equitably. A student and/or parent/guardian filing a complaint under this procedure may forego any informal suggestions and/or attempts to resolve it and may proceed directly to the grievance procedure. The Complaint Manager will not require a student or parent/guardian complaining of any form of harassment to attempt to resolve allegations directly with the accused (or the accused's parents/guardians); this includes mediation.

Right to Pursue Other Remedies Not Impaired

The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies, e.g., criminal complaints, civil actions, etc. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies. If a person is pursuing another remedy subject to a complaint under this policy, the District will continue with a simultaneous investigation under this policy.

Deadlines

All deadlines under this procedure may be extended by the Complaint Manager as he or she deems appropriate. As used in this policy, *school business days* means days on which the District's main office is open.

Filing a Complaint

A person (hereinafter Complainant) who wishes to avail him or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any District Complaint Manager. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same gender. The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The Complaint Manager shall assist the Complainant as needed.

For bullying and cyber-bullying, the Complaint Manager shall process and review the complaint according to Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

Investigation

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf. The Complaint Manager shall ensure both parties have an equal opportunity to present evidence during an investigation. If the Complainant is a student under 18 years of age, the Complaint Manager will notify his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) that they may attend any investigatory meetings in which their child is involved. The complaint and identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the Complainant.

The identity of any student witnesses will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law or any collective bargaining agreement, or (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the parent/guardian of the student witness, or by the student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

The Complaint Manager will inform, at regular intervals, the person(s) filing a complaint under this procedure about the status of the investigation. Within 30 school business days of the date the complaint was filed, the Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Superintendent. The Complaint Manager may request an extension of time. If a complaint of sexual harassment contains allegations involving the Superintendent, the written report shall be filed with the Board, which will make a decision in accordance with the following section of this policy. The Superintendent will keep the Board informed of all complaints.

Decision and Appeal

Within five (5) school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's report, the Superintendent shall mail his or her written decision to the Complainant and the accused by first class U.S. mail as well as to the Complaint Manager. All decisions shall be based upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.

Within ten (10) school business days after receiving the Superintendent's decision, the Complainant or the accused may appeal the decision to the Board by making a written request to the Complaint Manager. The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Board. Within thirty (30) school business days, the Board shall affirm, reverse, or amend the Superintendent's decision or direct the Superintendent to gather additional information. Within 5 school business days of the Board's decision, the Superintendent shall inform the Complainant and the accused of the Board's action.

This grievance procedure shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Superintendent or Board. The failure to strictly follow the timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.

Professional Personnel Grievance

Please refer to the current Mokena Public Schools Professional Negotiations Agreement between Mokena Teachers Association, IEA/NEA and Board of Education Mokena School District 159.

Harassment and Discrimination Prevention ([Board Policy 5:20](#))

The School District expects the workplace environment to be productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment or bullying. District employees shall not engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's race, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, citizenship status, disability, or other protected status identified in Board policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*. Harassment of students, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, is prohibited by Board policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.

Sexual Harassment

The School District shall provide employees an employment environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or communications constituting sexual harassment as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law.

District employees shall not make unwelcome sexual advances or request sexual favors or engage in any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such

conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to, verbal or physical conduct. The terms intimidating, hostile, or offensive include, but are not limited to, conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Sexual harassment will be evaluated in light of all the circumstances.

Making a Complaint; Enforcement

A violation of this policy may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding sexual harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Aggrieved persons, who feel comfortable doing so, should directly inform the person engaging in sexually harassing conduct or communication that such conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.

Employees should report claims of sexual harassment to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or use the Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. Employees may choose to report to a person of the employee's same sex. Initiating a complaint of sexual harassment shall not adversely affect the complainant's employment, compensation, or work assignments.

There are no express time limits for initiating complaints and grievances under this policy; however, every effort should be made to file such complaints as soon as possible, while facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

Whom to Contact with a Report or Complaint

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Dr. Mark Cohen
Mokena School District 159
11244 Willowcrest Lane
Mokena, IL 60448
whited@mokena159.org
708-342-4900

Complaint Managers:

Dr. Teri Shaw
Mokena School District 159
11244 Willowcrest Lane
Mokena, IL 60448
shawt@mokena159.org

Dr. Kristin Johnson
Mokena School District 159
11244 Willowcrest Lane
Mokena, IL 60448
johnsonk@mokena159.org

Investigation Procedure

The Superintendent or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of harassment and/or bullying, by, among other things:

- a. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within ten (10) school days after the date the report of a harassment/bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident.
- b. Notifying the Building Principal or school administrator or designee of the reported incident as soon as possible after the report is received.
- c. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing privacy rights, providing individuals who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Superintendent, Building Principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of harassment or bullying.

No Retaliation/Reprisal

A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying is prohibited. An act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) are federal laws that require employers with 15 or more employees to not discriminate against applicants and individuals with disabilities and, when needed, to provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodations, so that they may perform the essential job duties of the position.

It is the policy of Mokena School District 159 to comply with all federal, including, but not limited to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities and to act in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Furthermore, it is the District policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

Procedures

When an individual with a disability requests accommodation and can be reasonably accommodated without creating an undue hardship or causing a direct threat to workplace safety, he or she will be given the same consideration for employment as any other applicant. Applicants who pose a direct threat to the health, safety and well-being of themselves or others in the workplace when the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation will not be hired.

The District will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to the District. Contact the Superintendent or designee with any questions or requests for accommodation.

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

Individuals who are currently using illegal drugs are excluded from coverage under the company ADA policy.

The Superintendent is responsible for implementing this policy, including the resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety/direct threat and undue hardship issues.

Terms Used in This Policy

As used in this ADA policy, the following terms have the indicated meaning:

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Major life activities: Term includes caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

Major bodily functions: Term includes physical or mental impairment such as any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems, such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin and endocrine. Also covered are any mental or psychological disorders, such as intellectual disability (formerly termed "mental retardation"), organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific learning disabilities.

Substantially limiting: In accordance with the ADAAA final regulations, the determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity requires an individualized assessment, and an impairment that is episodic or in

remission may also meet the definition of disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active. Some examples of these types of impairments may include epilepsy, hypertension, asthma, diabetes, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. An impairment, such as cancer that is in remission but that may possibly return in a substantially limiting form, is also considered a disability under EEOC final ADAAA regulations.

Direct threat: A significant risk to the health, safety or well-being of individuals with disabilities or others when this risk cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.

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

Reasonable accommodation: Includes any changes to the work environment and may include making existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, telecommuting, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials or policies, the provision of qualified readers or interpreters, and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Undue hardship: An action requiring significant difficulty or expense by the employer. In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on a covered entity, factors to be considered include:

- The nature and cost of the accommodation.
- The overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in the provision of the reasonable accommodation, the number of persons employed at such facility, the effect on expenses and resources, or the impact of such accommodation on the operation of the facility.
- The overall financial resources of the employer; the size, number, type and location of facilities.
- The type of operations of the company, including the composition, structure and functions of the workforce; administrative or fiscal relationship of the particular facility involved in making the accommodation to the employer.

Essential functions of the job: Term refers to those job activities that are determined by the employer to be essential or core to performing the job; these functions cannot be modified.

The examples provided in the above terms are not meant to be all-inclusive and should not be construed as such. They are not the only conditions that are considered to be disabilities, impairments or reasonable accommodations covered by the ADA/ADAAA policy.

Acceptable Use Policy

The use of the District's network and equipment to access the Internet should be viewed as a privilege, not a right. The Acceptable Use Policy does not attempt to state all required or proscribed behavior by users but the use of the District's network, equipment, and the Internet should not interfere with:

- the promotion of educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication; or
- the support of education and/or research, and be in furtherance of the educational mission of the District; or
- legitimate educational purposes necessary to fulfill one's professional responsibilities.

Privacy Statement

There is absolutely no expectation of privacy when using the District's network, equipment, e-mail system, or the Internet. All communications and documents stored on, or sent to or from the District's network may be monitored by the District.

Usage Guidelines

The user is responsible for his or her actions and activities while using technology, the District's network, and the Internet. Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. Some examples of unacceptable use include but are not limited to:

- Accessing, submitting, sending, publishing, or displaying any material that is abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, lewd, vulgar, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, defamatory, inaccurate or illegal material;
- Sending any email, documents, or other communications that discredit the District, the Board, its employees or its families;
- Using the network to gamble;
- Using the network for any illegal activity including violation of copyright or other contracts or transmitting any material in violation of local, state, or federal law;
- Engaging in any Internet activity that violates local, state, or federal law;
- Using another's access privileges, password or accounts;
- Attempting to gain or gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities;
- Using the network while access privileges are suspended or revoked;
- Downloading unauthorized software or downloading copyrighted material for personal use;
- Using technology for financial or commercial gain;
- Examining, modifying, deleting, transmitting, or duplicating, the files and/or data of another user without the original creator's consent;
- Wasteful use of resources, such as file space (as determined by the network administrator and the Superintendent);

- Visiting any social network site (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, e-Harmony, Match.com, etc.) without prior administrative approval.

Users have a responsibility to follow general rules for behavior and communications when using the District's network, equipment and the Internet. Although Mokena School District 159 has filtering software in place to prevent access to unauthorized web content, a website with questionable content may be inadvertently accessed. Users have a responsibility to immediately notify their building administrator or the Network Administrator of a breach of security and not demonstrate the problem to others.

The District will cooperate with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through District 159's technology.

It is suggested that any electronic mail communications between teachers and their students should be made through the assigned district email account (username@mokena159.org)

Installation of Software

Users may not install software on District owned hardware or the District system unless it has been authorized by the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. All users are required to report the existence of any unauthorized software on individual computers or the network.

Vandalism

Vandalism is defined as any deliberate or intentional attempt to harm or destroy District technology, the District's network, or its equipment or data and is strictly prohibited.

Some examples of vandalism include but are not limited to:

- Disruption of the network or system performance;
- Harming, destroying, or corrupting the data of another user or the District network;
- Harming, destroying, or corrupting District equipment or software;
- Creating and uploading computer viruses.

Users are entrusted to provide reasonable care for the portable equipment in their possession, such as mobile phones, laptops, or projectors. In the event that district-owned equipment becomes damaged or disabled due to normal usage, the user must immediately notify the District Office and return equipment promptly before replacement equipment is issued.

No Warranties

The district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The district will not be responsible for any damages suffered by an individual such as the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at one's own risk. The district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Staff is responsible for all of their personal files on district equipment and network drives. Space is provided to district employees at their own risk. The district will attempt to backup those files but does not warrantee them.

Indemnification

The user agrees to indemnify the school district for any losses, costs, or damages, including attorney fees, incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, any breach of this authorization.

Telephone Charges

The District assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long-distance charges, per-minute surcharges, and/or equipment or line costs.

Disciplinary Actions

Unacceptable uses of technology, installation of unauthorized software, or vandalizing District technology may result in the loss of privilege to access the District's network, equipment, and the Internet. Furthermore, the user agrees to indemnify the school district for any losses, costs, or damages, including attorney fees incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, unacceptable uses of technology, installation of unauthorized software, or vandalizing District technology. Additionally, users may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for staff members, and/or appropriate legal action.

Each teacher, staff member, and employee of Mokena School District 159 must sign this Acceptable Use Policy as a condition for using District technology. Notable exceptions include the Superintendent, his or her designee, and the Network Staff who reserve the right to waive the Acceptable Use Policy for testing, administration, and support of the network and to assist in the investigation of the violation of the Acceptable Use Policy.

Personal Technology and Social Media Acceptable Use ([Board Policy 5:125](#))

Definitions

Includes - Means “includes without limitation” or “includes, but is not limited to.”

Social media - Media for social interaction, using highly accessible communication techniques through the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue. This includes Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, and YouTube.

Personal technology - Any device that is not owned or leased by the District or otherwise authorized for District use and: (1) transmits sounds, images, text, messages, videos, or electronic information, (2) electronically records, plays, or stores information, or (3) accesses the Internet, or private communication or information networks. This includes smartphones such as BlackBerry®, Android®, iPhone®, and other devices, such as, iPads® and iPods®.

Usage and Conduct

All District employees who use personal technology and social media shall:

1. Adhere to the high standards for appropriate school relationships in policy 5:120, Ethics and Conduct at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes District employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students and other employees that is inappropriate as defined by policy 5:20, Workplace Harassment Prohibited; 5:120, Ethics and Conduct; 6:235, Access to Electronic Networks; 7:20, Harassment of Students Prohibited; and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
2. Choose a District-provided or supported method whenever possible to communicate with students and their parents/guardians.
3. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
4. Comply with policy 5:130, Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information. This means that personal technology and social media may not be used to share, publish, or transmit information about or images of students and/or District employees without proper approval. For District employees, proper approval may include implied consent under the circumstances.

5. Refrain from using the District's logos without permission and follow Board policy 5:170, Copyright, and all District copyright compliance procedures.
6. Use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Any duty-free use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.
7. Assume all risks associated with the use of personal technology and social media at school or school-sponsored activities, including students' viewing of inappropriate Internet materials through the District employee's personal technology or social media. The Board expressly disclaims any responsibility for imposing content filters, blocking lists, or monitoring of its employees' personal technology and social media.
8. Be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy ranging from prohibiting the employee from possessing or using any personal technology or social media at school to dismissal and/or indemnification of the District for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, any violation of this policy.

Abused and Neglected Child Reporting ([Board Policy 5:90](#))

Any District employee who has reasonable cause to suspect that a student may be an abused or neglected child shall report such a case to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The DCFS hotline number is: 1-800-25-ABUSE. The employee shall notify the Superintendent or Building Principal that a report has been made. All employees shall sign a statement to the effect that the employee has knowledge and understanding of the reporting requirements of the Act. Below is information from DCFS regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse:

WHEN SHOULD I CALL THE HOTLINE?

You should call the child abuse hotline whenever you believe that a person who is caring for the child, who lives with the child, or who works with or around children has caused injury or harm or put the child at risk of physical injury as defined in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. Some examples include:

If you see someone hitting a child with an object.

If you see marks on a child's body that do not appear to have been caused by Accident.

If a child tells you that he or she has been harmed by someone.

If a child appears to be undernourished, is dressed inappropriately for the weather,
or is young and has been left alone.

These are a few situations when you should call the hotline. Use your own judgment and call the hotline whenever you think a child has been abused or neglected.

WHEN SHOULD I NOT CALL THE HOTLINE?

Some situations do not require calling the hotline. Use good judgment. Call only when you think a child has been or will be injured as described above. Some examples of when you should not call the hotline include:

A situation where a child is causing a problem that concerns you, but the problem is not related to abuse or neglect. In some cases you may wish to call law enforcement or talk to the child's parents or relatives.

Domestic situations where family stress is evident, but the child has not been abused or at risk of abuse. Community service agencies are often available to Help.

WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?

Hotline staff are social workers with special training in determining what constitutes child abuse and neglect under Illinois law. Details are important. Ideally, you should be able to tell the Hotline worker:

The child's name, address and age.

The nature of the suspected abuse or neglect, including when and where it Occurred.

The names of suspected perpetrators and their relationship to the child (parent, teacher, etc.).

Any other information you think may help.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL THE HOTLINE?

When you call, a hotline social worker will listen to what you wish to report. The worker will then ask questions to help gather enough information to determine whether to take a formal report. If there is not enough information to make a report, the worker will tell you so and answer any questions you may have. If a formal report is taken, a child protection investigator will begin the investigation within 24 hours -- much sooner if the child is considered in immediate risk of harm.

HOW AM I PROTECTED?

People who report alleged child abuse or neglect in good faith cannot be held liable for damages under criminal or civil law. In addition, their names are not given to the person they name as the abuser or to anyone else unless ordered by a hearing officer or judge. Members of the general public may make reports without giving their names.

SHOULD I CALL THE POLICE?

Always call the child abuse hotline. However, you should also consider calling the police -- especially in emergencies or when the child has been injured. Employees should discuss the situation with their immediate supervisor.

Drug-Free Workplace ([Board Policy 5:50](#))

All District workplaces are drug- and alcohol-free workplaces. All employees are prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities while on District premises or while performing work for the District:

1. Unlawful manufacture, dispensing, distribution, possession, or use of an illegal or controlled substance.
2. Distribution, consumption, use, possession, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage; being present on District premises or while performing work for the District when alcohol consumption is detectable, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
3. Possession or use of medical cannabis.

For purposes of this policy, a controlled substance means a substance that is:

1. Not legally obtainable,
2. Being used in a manner different than prescribed,
3. Legally obtainable, but has not been legally obtained, or
4. Referenced in federal or State controlled substance acts.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall:

1. Abide by the terms of the Board policy respecting a drug- and alcohol-free workplace; and
2. Notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring on the District premises or while performing work for the District, no later than 5 calendar days after such a conviction.

Unless otherwise prohibited by this policy, prescription and over-the-counter medications are not prohibited when taken in standard dosages and/or according to prescriptions from the employee's licensed health care provider, provided that an employee's work performance is not impaired.

To make employees aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, the Superintendent or designee shall perform each of the following:

1. Provide each employee with a copy of this policy.
2. Post notice of this policy in a place where other information for employees is posted.
3. Make available materials from local, State, and national anti-drug and alcohol-abuse organizations.
4. Enlist the aid of community and State agencies with drug and alcohol informational and rehabilitation programs to provide information to District employees.
5. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
 - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace,
 - b. Available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, re-entry, and any employee assistance programs, and
 - c. The penalties that the District may impose upon employees for violations of this policy.

Tobacco Prohibition

All employees are covered by the conduct prohibitions contained in policy 8:30, *Visitors to and Conduct on School Property*. The prohibition on the use of tobacco products applies both (1) when an employee is on school property, and (2) while an employee is performing work for the District at a school event regardless of the event's location. *Tobacco* shall have the meaning provided in section 10-20.5b of the School Code.

District Action Upon Violation of Policy

An employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. Alternatively, the School Board may require an employee to successfully complete an appropriate drug- or alcohol-abuse rehabilitation program.

The Board shall take disciplinary action with respect to an employee convicted of a drug offense in the workplace within 30 days after receiving notice of the conviction.

Workplace Violence

It is the District's policy to promote a safe environment for its employees. We are committed to working with our employees to provide a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior.

Zero Tolerance Policy

The District has a zero tolerance policy and will not tolerate violence, threats, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior, either physical or verbal, that occurs in the workplace or other areas. This applies to members of administration, co-workers, employees, and non-employees such as contractors, customers, tenants, visitors, or school board members. Workplace aggression or violence can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm, damage to property or any intentional behavior that may cause a person to feel threatened.

Your cooperation is needed to implement this policy effectively and to maintain a safe working environment. Do not ignore violent, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or other disruptive behavior. If you observe or experience such behavior, report it immediately to your supervisor and to the Superintendent.

APPENDIX A

Transportation Staff

This section of the handbook will be focused on the Transportation Department of the District. In addition to all of the information prior to this appendix, all transportation employees are responsible for the expectations and procedures that will result in a fully functioning, positive department and in how to carry out their assigned duties.

Bus Driver Responsibilities ([Board Policy 4:110](#))

Time Requirements

All drivers are required to arrive fifteen (15) minutes before their scheduled route times. In the event a driver is unable to drive, you must notify the Transportation Coordinator at 708-205-7777 on or before:

5:30 am if unable to drive the AM Route
1:00 pm if unable to drive the PM Route

Inspection Forms

Pre-trip inspection must be completed inside and outside as outlined on the inspection forms prior to morning routes. Please keep your book on the bus. If a driver detects a mechanical problem he/she is to complete a repair sheet and/or verbally communicate to the Transportation Coordinator.

Responsibilities

1. Drive the school bus safely along prescribed bus routes picking up and dropping off students as assigned by the Transportation Coordinator
2. Assume responsibility for the safety of the students when they are on the bus
3. Assume responsibility for the general control of the students while passengers on the bus
4. Assume responsibility for reporting any unusual misconduct of the students
5. Drive the school bus safely for field trips and extra-curricular activities as assigned by the Transportation Coordinator
6. Conduct the evacuation drills twice a year
7. All drivers are to make themselves familiar with all of the routes.
8. Drivers and substitute drivers are responsible for fueling their buses and should not allow the fuel to go below 1/2 tank of fuel.
9. The cleanliness of the interior of the bus is the responsibility of the driver or substitute driver. **Each bus is to be clean at all times.** Driver must regularly clean the exterior of the bus including driver windows, mirrors, door glass and rear windows.
10. The driver is responsible for body fluid clean up on their buses following safety precautions as provided in the cleanup kits provided on every bus.

11. It is the responsibility of the driver to inform the Transportation Coordinator when any supply from the medical safety kit needs to be replenished.
12. Any lost articles left on the bus are to be brought back to the school after the routes are completed
13. Each driver will be responsible for maintaining the list of students riding his/her bus. **An updated list is required to be maintained on the bus at all times.**
14. All drivers will complete a seat assignment chart by the end of September. The driver will receive two (2) hours of compensation when this list is turned into the Transportation Coordinator.
15. The bulletin board is to be checked before each run for any changes that may affect runs, students, or changes in field trips, etc.
16. It is the responsibility for the drivers to keep the driver's room clean.
17. Follow all school board policies which are available on the district website:
<https://www.mokena159.org/>
 - a. Board policy 5:50 Drug and Alcohol Free workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition MUST be followed:
https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=mokena_159
 - b. No smoking on the school bus, on school property, or during work hours
18. Test the cellular radio communication device or two-way radio and ensure that it is functioning properly before the bus is operated. Radio communication should be limited to transportation issues only.
19. Perform a visual sweep for children or other passengers at the end of a route, work shift or workday by:
 - a. Activating the interior lights of the school bus to assist the driver in searching in and under each seat, and
 - b. Walking to the rear of the school bus/vehicle checking in and under each seat.

New Hires

New drivers are hired as employees at-will and will be subject to a ninety (90) day probationary period, based on their seniority date. Employees at-will may be terminated during this period as determined by administration.

If an at-will employee resigns or is terminated before the ninety (90) day probationary period, they will be required to reimburse the District for all licensing fees, including physicals, background checks and pre-employment fees.

New drivers are required to pay for their CDL license and permit fees. Upon successful completion of CDL licensing, the District will reimburse the driver with appropriate receipts.

All renewal fees will be reimbursed by the District after a second year of employment.

Mandatory Testing

Bus drivers are required annually to take a physical examination and a drug test. These will be paid for by the District. If a driver leaves for employment elsewhere within three months of the date of the physical exam and the drug test, the driver will reimburse the District for the cost of his/her physical exam and drug test.

Cellular Phones

The use of cellular phones while on the bus is for emergency purposes only. The use of a personal phone is allowed when the driver is alone and the bus is turned off and parked. **At no time is a driver to be driving and using a cellular phone.**

License Renewal

The renewal process begins with a letter from the Office of the Secretary of State approximately (seventy) 70 days prior to the expiration of your bus driver permit. **Please be aware of the date your current permit expires and watch for your notification of expiration.**

Please follow these procedures for renewing your permit:

1. Upon notification from the state, obtain a physical form and a re-application form from the Transportation Department.
2. Take the physical form to your physician for the medical examination. The physician will send a copy of the completed physical to the District and you.
3. The driver is required to attend an annual refresher course.
 - a. Schedule a refresher course at least six (6) weeks prior to the date your permit is to be renewed. The District does schedule one course in early August and is available for all drivers to attend.
 - b. After attending the refresher course, notify the Transportation Coordinator of the date you attended the course.
4. Following the completion of the above steps, return to the Transportation Coordinator your portion of the re-application form to be completed by the District. The driver may:
 - a. Submit a check for \$4.00 with the driver portion of the re-application form filled out to the Transportation Coordinator and he/she will submit the forms to the state; or
 - b. Bring the re-application form to the Transportation Coordinator for completion of the District's portion and return to the driver that requested to mail on their own with the \$4.00 check directly to the state.
5. Please allow sufficient time for state processing so that you can receive your renewal permit before the old permit expires. No driver may drive a bus without a valid permit. If a driver does not receive their permit back within ten (10) days of mailing it to the state, please contact the Transportation Coordinator and he/she will check on the status with the state.
6. Drivers are responsible for maintaining their permit/license and following all license renewal protocols.

Compensation and Benefits

Pay Day

Bus drivers are to use the Skyward time clock each shift. The payroll schedule can be found on the District internet website. Drivers are guaranteed 5 hours per day.

Paid Holidays

Bus drivers will receive the following paid holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, and MLK Day. Each holiday is 5 hours.

Condolence Days

Each driver will receive 2 condolence days.

Sick Days

Each driver will receive 10 sick days.

Personal Days

Each driver will receive 2 personal days.

Leaves and Absences

All absences must be communicated to the Transportation Coordinator as far in advance as possible, but no later than the following:

AM Routes	One (1) hour before departure
PM Routes	before 1:00 pm

If a driver fails to adhere to this, he/she will be subject to the progressive disciplinary steps listed in this handbook.

Sick Leave

For Department of Transportation purposes...If a medical leave is needed, the bus driver will need to inform the Transportation Coordinator as soon as possible. A physician's note is required with the diagnosis and an estimated date to return. If the medical leave extends past the physician's estimated date to return to work, another physician's note with the new estimated date to return to work, will be required.

If the bus driver must leave work, the part of the day missed shall be computed to the nearest half day.

Excessive Absenteeism

A bus driver who is absent in excess amount of accumulated days will days will be subject to the following consequences:

- a. 1st Occurrence - verbal warning

- b. 2nd Occurrence - conference and warning letter about suspension without pay
- c. 3rd Occurrence - suspension for one (1) day without pay and warning about termination for the next absence
- d. 4th Occurrence - termination

Field Trips

The seniority list will apply for drivers picking field trips and choosing new or available routes, unless otherwise designated by the district or Transportation Coordinator. Drivers whose field trips have been canceled on the day of the trip will be compensated three (3) hours pay or placed back in rotation for trip picks.

Trips not chosen through the seniority process will be assigned by the Transportation Coordinator.

“Turn back” - a turn back constitutes a driver choosing a field trip, then turning it back into the rotation or giving the trip up. Exceptions to a “turn back” may include full-day or half-day absences, due to an illness of self or relative. Three (3) consecutive turn backs will prohibit that driver from being allowed to pick up the following month’s field trips.

Every driver and substitute driver is expected to participate in field trips and assignments. A minimum of six (6) trips per quarter are required per driver. Exceptions can include family obligations, prior employment obligations, illness or anything designated by the Transportation Coordinator or the district as a reasonable exception.

To Be Determined (TBD) Trips: TBD trips that are canceled will go back into rotation and drivers will not be compensated.

Student Conduct ([Board Policy 7:220](#))

Student behavior guidelines are listed in the Parent/Student Handbook, which is published on the District website. Bus conduct and discipline procedures are highlighted in the handbook on pages 41 through 43.

Student Riding Procedures

If a student wishes to ride a different bus or exit at a different stop, he/she must:

1. Bring a written note from his/her parent or guardian to the school office or the transportation department.
2. Obtain permission from the transportation department. The Lead Bus Driver will authorize the office to initial the note, which will be handed to the bus driver.

Unless the bus driver receives an authorized note, the student will be unable to ride the bus or exit at a different stop. Students are generally not allowed to ride different buses

than the bus in which they are assigned. The only exception is when a student is permanently changing to new bus route.

Stop Arm Violations

Everyday bus drivers encounter problems along their routes. The biggest and most dangerous problem is cars that do not stop when the bus is loading and unloading students. This is against the law and the Will County State's Attorney and the Illinois State Police drafted the Stop Arm Violation Form that is used throughout the Will County area. This form will aid in ticketing violators and continuing the court process.

A copy of this form is available in the Transportation/District office. If a court appearance is required, the bus driver will be compensated at the daily driver rate of 4.25 hours (not including court time).

Procedures to Follow in Case of a Bus Accident

If a driver is involved in an accident, the following procedures will meet the requirements of the state law. No two accidents are the same. The sequence of the following list may not be practical in every case. Use good common sense. The bus driver's primary responsibility is to the students. Under no circumstances shall a bus driver leave his/her students. The only exception is if the bus driver is injured. If the bus driver is unable to fulfill the responsibility, select the two (2) oldest and most capable students to assist.

1. Notify the Transportation Coordinator, who will contact the Superintendent and building Principal;
2. Set brake;
3. Turn ignition to accessory and leave radio on;
4. Remain calm and reassure the students;
5. Use warning devices to protect the scene;
6. Be alert to a fire or a possibility of a fire;
7. Check for injuries to students and follow the first aid procedures;
8. Keep all students in the bus except in three (3) cases
 - a. Possible fire
 - b. Danger of further collision
 - c. Danger of drowning
9. Account for all students by using your student bus list. List all students' names, ages and addresses;
10. Do not discuss the facts of the accident with other motorists; give information only to investigating officials;
11. Continue the transportation of students
 - a. Only when authorized to leave the scene of the accident by authorities and school officials
 - b. By present bus if released and able
 - c. By another bus

12. Return to school to assist in notifying parents of the accident and to complete the necessary accident forms;
13. A drug and alcohol test is mandatory if one of the following takes place;
 - a. A ticket is issued to you;
 - b. A vehicle had to be towed

Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

This handbook will be reviewed annually. All employees will be given access to the handbook for the current school year. By signing below, I indicate that I will read this handbook and agree to abide by its applicable contents and related Board policies as a condition of my employment. I understand that this is not a contract and that the contents of this handbook can change. If changes are made during the course of a school year, I will be notified in writing of any changes.

Employee Name (Printed)

Date

Employee Signature

Building