

## SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK

### **Welcome to the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township!**

Dear Employee:

You and Warren Township Schools have made an important decision: We have decided you can contribute to our success, and you've decided that Warren Township Schools is the organization where you can pursue your career productively and enjoyably.

We believe we've each made the right decision, one that will result in a mutually beneficial relationship. The minute you start working here, you become an integral part of Warren Township Schools and the future success of our students. Every job in the school district is important, and you will contribute to the education of our students by supporting the efforts of our teachers.

As you will quickly discover, our success is based on delivering high-quality instruction to our students and providing support to our students' families and the Warren community. How do we do it? By working very hard, thinking about our students' and families' needs, and doing whatever it takes. We do it by treating our students, their families, and each other with respect. We do it by acting as a team.

We are providing this handbook to you and to all other members of our support staff to help answer any questions that may arise about the typical procedures, rules, and policies of the school district.

Should you have any questions concerning this Support Staff Handbook, your employment or your benefits, please feel free to discuss them with your building Principal or your supervising administrator or the staff in the Human Resources Office.

Again, welcome to Warren Township Schools!

(This handbook replaces all previous handbooks and supersedes all earlier oral and written materials about the school district's policies and procedures. The MSD of Warren Township reserves the right to change, add or delete benefits and policies as it deems necessary.)

Revised July 2018

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## ***Anti Discrimination & Harassment***

### **Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination**

The school district strives to maintain an environment free from discrimination and harassment, where employees treat each other with respect, dignity and courtesy.

This policy applies to all phases of employment, including but not limited to recruiting, testing, hiring, promoting, demoting, transferring, laying off, terminating, paying, granting benefits and training.

#### **Prohibited Behavior**

We do not and will not tolerate any type of harassment of our employees, applicants for employment, or our students and their families. Discriminatory conduct or conduct characterized as harassment as defined below is prohibited.

The term harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal or physical conduct relating to a person's gender (including pregnancy), race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, military status, ancestry or any other protected category under federal, state or local law that unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile work environment.

Sexually harassing behavior in particular includes unwelcome sexual advances such as: requests for sexual favors, offensive touching, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct may constitute sexual harassment when it:

- is made an explicit or implicit condition of employment;
- is used as the basis for employment decisions;
- unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance; or
- creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

The types of conduct covered by this policy include demands or subtle pressure for sexual favors accompanied by a promise of favorable job treatment or a threat concerning employment.

Specifically, it includes unwanted sexual behavior such as:

- repeated sexual flirtations, advances or propositions;
- continued and repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, sexually related comments and joking, graphic or degrading comments about an employee's appearance or displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures including cartoons and vulgar e-mail messages; and
- any uninvited physical contact or touching or actions, such as patting, pinching or repeated brushing against another's body.

Such conduct may constitute sexual harassment regardless of whether the conduct is between members of management, between management and staff employees, between staff employees, or directed at employees by nonemployees conducting business with the school district, regardless of gender.

#### **Harassment by Nonemployees**

Warren will also endeavor to protect employees, to the extent possible, from harassment by nonemployees in the workplace, including suppliers, students, or other members of the school community.

#### **Complaint Procedure and Investigation**

A report of a possible incident of sexual harassment or other unlawful harassment or discrimination should promptly be filed with the building Principal or supervising administrator. If that person is not available, or you believe it would be inappropriate to contact that person, contact the Director of Personnel or any Associate Superintendent.

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The appropriate administrator will conduct a prompt investigation as confidentially as possible under the circumstances. Employees who raise concerns and make reports in good faith can do so without fear of reprisal; at the same time, employees have an obligation to cooperate with the school district in enforcing this policy and investigating and remedying complaints.

Anyone found to have engaged in such wrongful behavior will be subject to appropriate discipline, which may include termination.

### **Retaliation**

If an employee files a complaint of sexual harassment or other discrimination in good faith, that employee will not be adversely affected in terms or conditions of employment and will not be retaliated against or discharged because of filing the complaint.

In addition, we will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, cooperates in the investigation of a complaint. Anyone who engages in or encourages such retaliatory behavior will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

### **Americans w/ Disabilities Act**

It is the policy of the Board of Education that we will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities with regard to any aspect of their employment. Warren Township Schools are committed to complying with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its related Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as applicable.

We recognize that some individuals with disabilities may require accommodations at work. If you are currently disabled or become disabled during your employment, you should contact your Principal or supervising administrator to discuss reasonable accommodations that may enable you to perform the essential functions of your job.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, employees with AIDS will be treated like any other employee. If the individual is fit to work, he or she will be provided with work in accordance with normal procedures. Usually, no special precautions in the workplace are indicated. However, employees with AIDS may request reasonable accommodations by contacting the school district's Personnel Office. We are committed to safeguarding the health of all employees, helping them to maintain their productivity, while maintaining the confidentiality of their protected health information.

### **Equal Opportunity Policy**

In accordance with the policies of the Board of Education, the school district provides equal opportunities in all of our employment practices to all qualified employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital status, military status or any other category protected by federal, state and/or local laws.

This policy applies to all aspects of the employment relationship including recruitment, hiring, compensation, promotion, transfer, disciplinary action, layoff, return from layoff, training, social, and recreational programs. All such employment decisions will be made without unlawfully discriminating on any prohibited basis.

Any employee who violates the intent of the Board policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment.

**Languages Spoken at Work**

Every employee is expected to treat all others with respect in all aspects of their working relationships.

In particular, employees are prohibited from making offensive remarks or gestures toward fellow employees or visitors to the school district who are not fluent in English.

In turn, we urge employees not to use their fluency in another language in any way to humiliate or offend their fellow employees or visitors to our schools.

## ***Confidential Information & Conflict of Interest***

### **General Confidentiality Obligations**

Information that pertains to the business of Warren Township Schools, including all information concerning our students and employees, is strictly confidential and must not be given to or shared with people who are not employed by the school district.

It is inappropriate and unprofessional to discuss confidential information about our students and employees with other employees (or anyone else) who do not have a need to know such confidential information.

Employees must protect confidential information -- which may include, for example, students' names, addresses, grades, and disciplinary records -- by taking the following precautionary measures:

- Discuss work matters only with other Warren employees who have a specific business reason to know or have access to such information.
- Do not discuss work matters in public areas of the buildings or in places away from school.
- Monitor and supervise visitors to ensure that they do not have access to confidential information.
- Destroy hard copies of documents containing confidential information that is not filed or archived.
- Secure confidential information in desk drawers and cabinets at the end of every business day.

Your cooperation is particularly important because of our obligation to protect the security of our students' and your own confidential information. Use your own sound judgment and good common sense; but, if at any time you are uncertain as to whether you can properly divulge information or answer questions, please consult your building Principal or your supervising administrator.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Employees must avoid any interest, influence or relationship that might conflict or appear to conflict with the best interests of the school district. You must avoid any situation in which your loyalty may be divided, and you should promptly disclose any situation where an actual or potential conflict may exist.

Examples of potential conflict situations include:

- Having a financial interest in any business transaction with Warren Township Schools;
- Owning or having a significant financial interest in, or other relationship with, a customer or supplier of the school district; and/or
- Accepting gifts, entertainment or other benefit of more than a nominal value from a customer or supplier of the school district.

Anyone with a conflict of interest must disclose it to management and remove themselves from negotiations, deliberations or votes involving the conflict. You may, however, state your position and answer questions when your knowledge may be of assistance.

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### **Privacy**

In an effort to safeguard the property of our employees, students, and the school district, we reserve the right to inspect property owned and/or supplied by the school district.

District-supplied property (including but not limited to offices, desks, file cabinets, computers and software, company vehicles, lockers and other storage facilities) is subject to inspection by administrators at any time, with or without notice.

**Therefore, employees should have no reasonable expectation of privacy in property owned and/or supplied by the school district.**

Employees may be permitted to store their personal items in the school district's facilities. However, the school district is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of employees' personal belongings stored in its facilities. So, employees should exercise discretion in storing any personal items at work.



## ***Employment at Will***

Your employment in the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township is "at-will."

All hourly support staff employees of the school district are at-will employees, which means your employment may be terminated at any time and for any reason, with or without advance notice.

At-will employees are also free to quit at any time. If an employee resigns, the school district requests the courtesy of a written letter of resignation with at least two weeks notice.

- Note: Having two weeks notice will give the payroll and benefits staff time to process an employee's final paycheck, make arrangements to cancel or continue insurance benefits, and help the employee apply for a refund from PERF.

Any employment relationship other than at-will must be set out in a written document, signed by the Superintendent of Schools and by the employee in order for the employment relationship to be valid.

## ***General Employment***

### **Employee Classifications**

Employees of the school district are either full-time, part-time, or substitutes.

The school district may on occasion hire temporary or seasonal employees, who generally will not be eligible for benefits.

Part-time and substitute employees work fewer than 30 hours per week. Unless specifically stated, part-time and substitute employees are not afforded any benefits other than wages; for example, they do not accrue benefits such as sick days or vacation days, and they are not eligible to enroll in insurance benefits.

All other employees are full-time.

Your building Principal or your supervising administrator will verify whether you are a full-time or part-time employee, and also whether you are exempt or non-exempt. Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act, while non-exempt employees can qualify for this rate of pay.

If you are paid an hourly rate, then your job has been classified as non-exempt.

### **Employee Records**

An employee's personnel file contains the employee's employment application, reference checks, emergency information and any performance appraisals, benefits data or other appropriate employment-related documents. Tax withholding forms are retained in the payroll file.

Personnel records are considered company property, but those records pertaining to a specific employee are available for review by that employee by contacting the Personnel Office.

**You may be dismissed for misrepresenting any fact on your application or in your personnel file.**

It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Payroll Department or Personnel Office of any changes in the employee's official name, current address, county of residence, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, military service status, and/or beneficiaries.

It is the employee's responsibility to notify the school secretary or supervising administrator of the name, address and telephone number of the person to notify in case (a) the employee is involved in a serious accident or (b) it is necessary to contact the employee at home.

### **Pre-Employment Testing**

The school district requires that all applicants for employment as bus drivers submit to a test for intoxicants prior to employment. Failure or refusal to submit to this test will result in withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment and/or discharge of employment if employed pending receipt of intoxicant test results.

No applicant will be asked to take a test unless an offer of employment has been made. All offers of employment as a bus driver are conditional upon a negative test result.

## **Identity Theft Protection**

The school district respects the privacy of your personal data and is committed to ensuring that it will only be accessed and utilized as necessary, in a professional and confidential capacity. In all circumstances, we take reasonable steps to:

- Give you clear notice when we are requesting information from you, the types of information we request from you, the general purposes for which that information will be used or disclosed, and the categories of users to whom we provide the information; and
- Use safe and secure systems, physical and electronic, to safeguard your non-public personal information, including your social security number.

If at any time you feel as if your personal data has been misused or improperly accessed, please report your concerns to the Personnel Office staff for further investigation.

## **HIPAA Privacy and Security Compliance**

It is the intent of the school district to safeguard and protect the privacy and security of its applicants' and employees' "protected health information" as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA").

The phrase "protected health information" refers to and includes individually identifiable information, maintained or transmitted through any medium, relating to an individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health or healthcare. Health information is considered "individually identifiable" if it either identifies a person by name or creates a reasonable basis to believe the individual could be identified (through identifiers such as address, social security number, dates of service, telephone number, email address, or vehicle identification number).

It is the policy of the school district to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of protected health information entrusted to the school district by its applicants and employees by protecting those assets from unauthorized access, alteration, deletion, or unauthorized transmission and to ensure their physical security. Employees of the school district shall not at any time access, use, or disclose to any person or entity, any protected health information of the school district's applicants or employees, except as necessary and authorized in the course of their duties and responsibilities with the school district. Similarly, employees are prohibited from making any unauthorized transmission, alteration, deletion, or unauthorized access of protected health information. Such unauthorized transmission includes, but is not limited to, removing and/or transferring protected health information in the school district's computer system to an unauthorized location.

These privacy and security obligations apply regardless of the manner in which the employee or manager acquires the protected health information, whether it was communicated verbally, in writing, electronically, or in any format, and regardless of whether it was communicated directly to the individual or intended for his/her access.

The unauthorized access, use, disclosure, alteration, deletion, or unauthorized transmission of protected health information in violation of this policy may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **Reference/Background Checks**

The school district checks previous employment history and conducts background checks on all individuals recommended for employment. This includes a multi-state background check performed by Safe Hiring. The employee will have the cost of the background check deducted from his/her first pay check.

The tentative offer of employment made by a school Principal or supervising administrator may be rescinded as a result of the information learned by talking with references and/or previous employers, and/or by reviewing the information on the limited criminal background check.

Applicants who have provided false information may be eliminated from further consideration for employment.

Employees who have falsified information on their employment applications will be disciplined, which could include termination.

Pursuant to Indiana law, beginning July 1, 2017, school corporations must require updated Expanded Criminal History (ECH) checks for *current employees* every five (5) years. The school district will cover the entire cost of the ECH for current employees.

## **Employment of Relatives**

The school district may hire relatives of employees where there are no potential problems of supervision, safety, security, morale or potential conflict of interest.

Employees will not be placed in a situation where they directly supervise a member of their immediate family. Immediate family members include an employee's parent, foster parent, child, spouse, sibling, cousin, in-laws and step relationships.

Employees who marry or become related will be permitted to continue to work as long as they do not directly supervise an immediate family member. Reasonable accommodations will be made when possible in the event a conflict or violation of this policy arises.

## **Job Postings & Promotions**

The school district has a job posting system to inform employees of available staff positions. Job vacancies will be filled whenever possible by promoting qualified employees from within the school district.

To apply for a posted position, an employee must:

- Meet the minimum requirements for the position, and
- Not have received written reprimand(s) within the past 90 days; employees who have received a verbal warning may also be prohibited from applying.

Employees interested in applying for a posted position should submit a memorandum with an updated resume to the Director of Personnel indicating an interest in the position. Qualified employees must inform their school Principal or supervising administrator that they have applied for the job. Candidates will be judged on individual performance, conduct, experience, and potential. Length of service, although considered, shall not be the sole determining factor in selecting candidates for promotion.

The school district has the discretion to fill job vacancies from outside if we consider that circumstances call for outside recruitment.

## **Transfers & Relocation**

### **Involuntary Transfer or Reassignment**

To meet business needs, the school district may occasionally need to transfer employees to different departments, shifts or work locations. The building Principal or supervising administrator will typically meet with the employee(s) affected by the transfer or reassignment to explain the reason for the changes.

### **Request for Transfer**

Employees are welcome to notify their building Principal or supervising administrator if they are interested in requesting to be transferred to a different job or work location. These requests will be reviewed and carefully considered by the appropriate administrators when there are vacancies.

It is the employee's responsibility to monitor the job postings and to notify the appropriate administrator when the employee is interested in being considered for a transfer.

Refer to "Job Postings & Promotions" above for additional information about requesting a transfer.

## **Termination, Resignation and Discharge**

Unless expressly proscribed by statute or by contract, your employment with the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township is "at will" and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause or notice.

Any employment relationship other than at-will must be set out in a written document, signed by the Superintendent of Schools and by the employee in order for the employment relationship to be valid.

Hourly non-exempt "at-will" employees are free to resign at any time. If an employee resigns, the school district requests the courtesy of a written letter of resignation with at least two weeks notice.

- Note: Having two weeks notice will give the payroll and benefits staff time to process employees' final paychecks, make arrangements for insurance benefits, and help the employee apply for a refund from PERF.

Any employee who resigns or is discharged by the school district shall be paid for all wages earned and vacation time accrued to the date and time of the separation.

## ***Conduct Standards***

### **Conduct Standards & Discipline**

The school district expects every employee to adhere to the highest standards of job performance and of personal conduct, including our interpersonal dealings with other school district personnel, students, parents and visitors.

The school district reserves the right to discipline or discharge any employee for violating any school district policy, practice or rule of conduct. The following list is intended to give you notice of our expectations and standards. However, it does not include every type of unacceptable behavior that can or will result in disciplinary action. Be aware that the school district retains the discretion to determine the nature and extent of any discipline based upon the circumstances of each individual case.

Employees may be disciplined or terminated for poor job performance, including, but not limited to the following:

- Unsatisfactory quality or quantity of work;
- Repeated unexcused absences or lateness;
- Failure to follow instructions or school district procedures; or
- Failure to follow established safety regulations.

Employees may also be disciplined or terminated for misconduct including, but not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying an employment application or any other company records or documents;
- Failing to record working time accurately or recording a co-worker's timesheet;
- Being insubordinate or otherwise refusing to perform work as reasonably directed;
- Using vulgar, profane or obscene language, including any communication or action that violates our policy against harassment and other unlawful forms of discrimination;
- Engaging in disorderly conduct, fighting or any other acts of disruption or violence;
- Misusing, destroying or stealing property of the school district or another person;
- Possessing, entering with or using weapons on school district property;
- Possessing, selling, using or reporting to work with alcohol, controlled substances or illegal drugs present in the employee's system, on school district property or during the work day;
- Violating conflict of interest rules;
- Disclosing or using confidential information without authorization;
- Violating the school district's computer or software use policies, and
- Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for a job or presents a threat to the school district, its students or its employees in any way.

Support staff employees are prohibited from transporting students in their private vehicles unless individual is a school police officer. Employees are expected to be familiar with and follow the policies adopted by the Board of Education. Board policy is on the district website and should be reviewed at the time of hiring.

### **Dress Policy**

Appropriate attire or uniform is required at all times. Support Staff must follow the dress code as defined in the building handbook.

Visitors to our schools and offices form impressions about our professionalism based on the image that we project by our attire and behavior. Be guided by common sense and good taste. Specific standards may be required, which will be communicated to you by your building Principal or supervising administrator.

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Business casual dress may be permitted occasionally; your building Principal or supervising administrator will inform you of those occasions.

### **Ethical and Legal Business Practices**

The school district expects the highest standard of ethical conduct and fair dealing from each employee, officer, director, volunteer and all others associated with the school district. Our reputation is a valuable asset, and we must continually earn the trust, confidence and respect of our students, their families, our employees, and the members of our community.

This policy provides general guidance on the ethical principles that we all must follow, but no guideline can anticipate all situations. You should be guided by basic honesty and good judgment, and be sensitive to others' perceptions and interpretations.

If you have any questions about this policy, consult your building Principal or your supervising administrator. Exceptions to this policy may be made only by the Superintendent of Schools.

You are expected to promptly disclose to your building Principal or supervising administrator anything that may violate this policy. We will not tolerate retaliation or retribution against anyone who brings violations to the attention of a school administrator.

### **Complying With Laws and Regulations**

All our activities are to be conducted in compliance with the letter and spirit of all laws and regulations. You are charged with the responsibility of understanding the applicable laws, recognizing potential dangers and knowing when to seek advice from your building Principal or supervising administrator.

### **Giving and Receiving Gifts**

You may not give or receive money or any gift to or from a supplier, government official or other organization doing business with the school district. Exceptions may be made for gifts that are customary and lawful, are of nominal value and are authorized in advance.

You may accept meals and refreshments if they are infrequent, are of nominal value and are in connection with business discussions.

If you do receive a gift or other benefit of more than nominal value, report it promptly to your building Principal or your supervising administrator. It will be returned or donated to a suitable charity.

### **Employee Privacy and Other Confidential Information**

The school district collects personal information about employees, but only information that relates to their employment. Only people with a business-related need to know are given access to this information, and the Superintendent of Schools must authorize any release of the information to others. Personal information other than that required to verify employment or to satisfy legitimate investigatory or legal requirements will be released outside the school district only with employee approval.

If, as part of your job, you have access to any confidential information, including personal employee information, you are responsible for acting with integrity and for protecting the confidentiality of that information. Unauthorized disclosure or inappropriate use of confidential information will not be tolerated.

### **Accounting and Financial Reports**

The school district's financial statements and all books and records on which they are based must accurately reflect the school district's transactions. All disbursements and receipts must be properly

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authorized and recorded.

If you have any responsibility to provide or maintain financial records for any portion of the school district, you must record, maintain and report that financial information accurately. Reimbursable business expenses must be reasonable, accurately reported and supported by receipts in accordance with regulations of the State Board of Accounts.

Those responsible for handling or disbursing funds must assure that all transactions are executed as authorized and recorded to permit financial statements in accord with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

### **Account, Student and Vendor Information**

Employees are prohibited from distributing account, student and/or vendor information to anyone, in any form, except the named account holder, student or vendor.

### **Compliance**

Employees who fail to comply with this policy will be disciplined, which may include a demand for reimbursement of any losses or damages, termination of employment and referral for criminal prosecution. Action appropriate to the circumstances will also be taken against supervisors or others who fail to report a violation or withhold relevant information concerning a violation of this policy.

### **Smoking Policy**

Smoking and/or the use of any tobacco products are prohibited inside Warren facilities, on school district grounds, on school district buses, or at any school-related event at all times.

All employees, patrons and visitors are expected to comply with this policy, and employees who violate it may be disciplined.

Should you have a question, complaint or dispute about smoking or the use of any other tobacco products in the workplace, contact the Director of Personnel.

### **Zero Tolerance for Workplace Violence**

The school district prohibits threats, intimidation and violence of any kind in the workplace either committed by or directed at our employees. Employees who engage in such conduct will be disciplined, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Employees are not permitted to bring weapons of any kind into school district facilities, onto school district property or to school district functions. Any employee who is suspected of possessing a weapon will be subject to a search at the school district's discretion. Such searches may include, but not be limited to, the employee's personal effects, desk and workspace.

If an employee feels he or she has been subjected to threats or threatening conduct by a coworker, student, parent, vendor or customer, the employee should notify his or her building Principal or supervising administrator immediately. If that person is not available, or if you believe it would be inappropriate to contact that person, contact the Director of Personnel or any Associate Superintendent. Employees will not be penalized for reporting such concerns.



## **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The school district seeks to establish and maintain a workplace and educational setting free of drugs and alcohol, and to discourage drug and alcohol abuse by its employees. Misuse of alcohol or drugs by employees can impair the ability of employees to perform their duties and endanger the safety of students and other employees, as well as adversely affect our students' and their families' confidence in our school district.

### **Alcohol**

Employees are prohibited from using or being under the influence of alcohol while scheduled to work, while operating a motor vehicle in the course of their employment or for any job-related purpose, or while on school district premises or a worksite.

### **Illegal Drugs**

Employees are prohibited from using or being under the influence of illegal drugs while at work, while performing school district business or while on school district property. You may not use, manufacture, distribute, purchase, sell or possess an illegal drug while in school district facilities, while operating a motor vehicle for any job-related purpose or while on the job, or while performing school district business.

Employees who are arrested for use, possession, manufacture, distribution, purchase or sale of an illegal drug will be suspended pending the resolution of the arrest and/or prosecution of the case. Employees who are found guilty of use, possession, manufacture, distribution, purchase or sale of an illegal drug will be terminated.

This policy does not prohibit the proper use of prescription medication under the direction of a physician; however, misuse of such medications is prohibited.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Employees who violate this policy may be disciplined or terminated, even for a first offense. Violations include refusal to consent to and comply with testing and search procedures as described.

### **Searches**

The school district may conduct searches for illegal drugs or alcohol on school district facilities or worksites without prior notice to employees. Such searches may be conducted at any time. Employees are expected to cooperate fully.

Searches of employees and their personal property may be conducted when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee has violated this policy or when circumstances or workplace conditions justify such a search. Personal property may include, but is not limited to, purses, boxes, briefcases, backpacks as well as any school district property that is provided for employees' personal use, such as desks, lockers, and files.

An employee's consent to a search is required as a condition of employment and the employee's refusal to consent may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

### **Drug Testing**

The school district may require a blood test, urinalysis, hair test or other drug or alcohol screening of employees suspected of using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol or where other circumstances or workplace conditions justify such testing. The refusal to consent to testing may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

## **Dating In The Work Place**

Supervisors and employees under their supervision are prohibited from forming romantic or sexual relationships with each other. Such relationships can create the impression of impropriety in terms and conditions of employment, and can interfere with productivity and the overall work environment.

If you are unsure of the appropriateness of your interaction or relationship with another employee of the school district, contact the Director of Personnel for guidance.

If you are encouraged or pressured to become involved with another employee in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable and is unwelcome, you should also notify your building Principal or supervising administrator immediately. You should also be aware of, and are expected to comply with, the school district's policy against sexual and other forms of illegal harassment in the workplace. No employee has the right to subject any other employee to sexual or other unlawful harassment, including requests for sexual favors, sexual advances, offensive touching, and any other unwanted verbal, graphic, conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

Appropriate action, which may include a transfer or reassignment, leave of absence, suspension or termination, will be taken against those who violate this policy.

## **Political/Campaign Activities**

The school district encourages employees to exercise their constitutional right to vote and to participate in the political process. However, political and campaign activities can be disruptive to the school environment and must be limited during work hours. In the interest of maintaining a productive and tension-free work environment, the school district has adopted a policy restricting political and campaign-related activities in the workplace. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action, up to termination, for violating this policy.

### **Prohibited Employee Activities**

Employees are not permitted to participate in any political activity that interferes with or disrupts the workplace in any manner. It is against this company's policy for any employee to:

- Use work time or school district resources to accomplish goals which are politically motivated.
- Solicit or encourage monetary contributions or other support for a political party, campaign, candidate, or political belief during work hours.
- Use school district facilities, such as break or eating areas, conference rooms, or offices for any political or campaign activity.
- Utilize the school district's property or school district-issued property, including but not limited to, telephones (both cellular and desk phones), computers, facsimile machines, email systems, interoffice mail or voicemail, photocopiers, postage, paper, envelopes, or other office supplies, for any political or campaign activity.
- Use the school district's name or affiliation in connection with any political or campaign activity, at any time, without the school district's express written approval.

### **Requesting Time Off for Voting**

The school district encourages every employee to play an active role in the election process. Employees are generally permitted to take time off from work to vote in the event the employee's work schedule does not allow sufficient time for voting either before or after work. Employees are encouraged to check local poll operation times before requesting time off to vote. Requests should be made as far in advance of the election date as possible to minimize disruption to work flow and operations.

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The school district will attempt to accommodate all requests for voting leave; however, management has discretion to deny leave requests or designate permissible voting times for business reasons, to the extent permitted by law. The school district also reserves the right to demand proof that a vote was cast as a condition for excusing an employee's absence or issuing pay for time off.

### **Political Coercion, Harassment and Retaliation**

The school district embraces diversity and respects each employee's political beliefs and preferences. It is against Warren's policy for anyone to behave in a threatening, harassing, or discriminatory manner toward any other employee with respect to his or her political beliefs or activities. The school district does not permit its officers or managers to coerce employees into supporting or opposing any political candidate, party, or belief. It is a violation of this school district's policy for any manager to retaliate, threaten to retaliate, or take any adverse action against an employee for his/her support or opposition to any political campaign or party affiliation.

### **Employees Running for Public Office**

Employees who decide to run for public office are expected to keep politics separate from employment, and should not allow political involvement to interfere with work performance. The school district strictly prohibits employees who are seeking public office from using the school district's name in association with any political or campaign activity without the school district's express written permission. Employees wishing to run for public office should notify their supervisor and the Director of Personnel in writing of their intentions, specifying the position and venue in which they are seeking election. Employees running for office are expected to maintain all regular work duties during the campaign and upon election, if the responsibilities of the elected office allow.

Employees elected to a full-time office are encouraged to either resign or request a leave of absence without pay in order to fill any term of public office. The school district does not guarantee that employees will be reinstated to their prior position or any other position upon return from a leave of absence for political service.

Employees elected to public office must disclose to the school district the existence of any potential or actual conflict of interest affecting the employee's duties or loyalty to the school district, and shall cooperate to the extent practicable to resolve such conflicts to the school district's satisfaction.

### **Workplace Solicitation**

The Board of Education has adopted rules about soliciting for any cause and distributing literature of any kind in the workplace. This has been done to promote and maintain a professional and collegial workplace, prevent disruptions or interference with work, and avoid personal inconvenience.

Employees may not solicit on school district property or use school district facilities/resources, such as e-mail, voicemail or bulletin boards during working time for solicitation. This applies to collecting funds, requesting contributions, selling merchandise, gathering employee signatures and promoting membership in clubs or organizations.

Working time means time during which employees are expected to be actively engaged in their assigned work; it does not include scheduled meal breaks.

You may solicit another employee only if both you and the other employee are not on working time, and you may distribute literature only in nonworking areas and while you are not on working time to other employees who are not on working time. Nonemployees may not make solicitations or distribute literature at any time on school property without prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to grant limited exemptions from these rules for charitable purposes at his discretion.

### **Children at Work**

Employees are prohibited from bringing their children to work with them. Employees need to focus all of their attention on performing their job while at work; they cannot be distracted from their job by having the added responsibility of supervising their children at the worksite.

### **Company Equipment and Vehicles**

When using the equipment and/or vehicles of the school district (including computer equipment or hardware), exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines.

Notify your building Principal or supervising administrator if any equipment, machines or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Your prompt reporting could prevent the equipment's deterioration and could also help prevent injury to you or others. Should you have questions about the maintenance and care of any workplace equipment and/or vehicles, ask your building Principal or supervising administrator.

If you use or operate equipment/vehicles improperly, carelessly, negligently or unsafely, you may be disciplined or even discharged. In addition, you may be held financially responsible for any loss to the school district because of such mistreatment.

### **Company Property**

Please keep your work area neat and clean and use normal care in handling company property. Report any broken or damaged equipment to your building Principal or supervising administrator at once so that proper repairs can be made.

Staff members may use the school district's telephones or fax machines to make brief, local (nontoll) calls, provided such calls are made during authorized work breaks, and are not for conducting a private business.

You may not use any school district property for personal purposes or remove any school district property from the premises without prior written permission from your building Principal or supervising administrator.

### **Progressive Discipline**

The school district retains the discretion to discipline its employees. Oral and written warnings and progressive discipline up to and including discharge may be administered as appropriate under the circumstances.

Please note that the school district reserves the right to terminate any employee whose conduct merits (in the view of the Superintendent of Schools) immediate dismissal without resorting to any aspect of a progressive discipline process.

### **Unpaid Suspension as a Disciplinary Measure**

The school district expects the highest standards of personal conduct from its support staff at all times.

In accordance with the school district's policies on harassment, drug or alcohol use, and other work conduct rules, Warren reserves the right to discipline or discharge any employee for violation of rules

## SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK

pertaining to behavior within the workplace.

Support staff may be subject to an unpaid disciplinary suspension for infractions of workplace conduct rules. Suspensions may be for any period of time within the discretion of the building Principal or your supervising administrator.

If you have any questions about the school district's expectations of you that cannot be sufficiently addressed by your building Principal or supervising administrator, you are encouraged to speak with the Director of Personnel.

### **Return of Company Property Upon Separation**

When an employee's employment with the school district terminates for whatever reason, the employee is required to immediately return all district-owned property used during his/her employment, along with all documents, disks, and other materials belonging to the school district (especially those containing proprietary or confidential information).

- This includes all keys, uniforms, identification cards or badges, credit cards, computers, vehicles, communication devices, and any other equipment, materials, or items purchased, leased, owned, or otherwise belonging to the school district.

Upon separation, employees must return any originals or duplicates of any written or other tangible items, whether maintained in hard copy, film, microfiche or electronic medium, belonging to the school district, its subsidiaries, affiliates, successors, or assigns, including without limitation, correspondence, reports, memoranda, records, data, charts, notes, devices, specifications, drawings, customer lists, and any other item containing confidential information relating to the school district, its computer records, databases, student information, financial information, and employee information. **All of these items are property of the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township.**

## ***Compensation & Work Schedule***

### **Work Eligibility Records**

The federal government requires that within three business days of your first day of work, you must complete an employment eligibility verification form (I-9 Form), and show us documentation proving your identity and your eligibility to work in the United States.

If you have worked for this school district previously, you need only provide this information if it has been more than three years since you last completed an I-9 Form for us or if your current I-9 Form is no longer valid.

I-9 Forms are maintained separately from other personnel records and are treated as confidential to the extent possible. If you need additional information about the I-9 Form, please contact the Personnel Office.

### **Pay Schedule**

Paychecks are directly deposited once every two weeks on Fridays. Pay advices are available on the employee portal every payday. It is the employee's responsibility to review the information, and notify the payroll department if one's information does not appear to be accurate. If the regular payday falls on a holiday or on a day when banks are closed, the paychecks will be issued on the last regular workday before the holiday.

The two-week pay period starts on Saturday and includes all work performed up to the close of business on Friday (two weeks later).

**If a paycheck is lost or stolen, notify the Payroll Office immediately. There will be a 10-day waiting period before a lost check will be reissued.**

### **General Pay Information**

Certain **mandatory** deductions will be made from paychecks in accordance with federal and state laws. These deductions include local, state, and federal income taxes, Social Security and Medicare taxes, and Public Employees' Retirement Fund (for eligible employees).

In addition, Warren makes available certain **voluntary** deductions as part of the school district's benefits program. If an employee elects coverage under one of the school district's benefits plans that requires employee contributions, the employee's share of the cost of that benefit will be deducted from his or her checks on scheduled pay periods.

If an employee is not receiving a payroll check (such as due to illness, injury, or leave of absence), the employee will be required to make arrangements with the benefits specialist to pay the cost of those benefits.

### **Determination of Initial Compensation**

#### **Initial Placement on the Salary Schedule**

All employees are placed on a salary schedule that is appropriate for their job. New employees are typically placed on their salary schedule without credit for any prior experience.

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If the Superintendent determines that there is a shortage of qualified skilled candidates for a particular job, then the Superintendent can authorize the hiring of a new employee with some credit for prior experience.

### **Bus Drivers' Placement on the Salary Schedule**

It is the practice of the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township to pay for a maximum of five years of documented school bus driving experience when hired as a bus driver for the township. It is the driver's responsibility to obtain the verification from previous employers. Individuals who have years of employment experience with Warren other than driving a bus will be given credit for those years of experience if they become a bus driver.

### **Advancement on the Salary Schedules**

Full-time employees will advance to the next step on the salary schedule effective on or about July 1st of each year if they have completed a full year of experience as an active employee (i.e., not unpaid/inactive).

### **Attendance & Punctuality**

Every employee is expected to attend work regularly on all days scheduled and report to work on time.

If you are unable to report to work on time for any reason, telephone your building Principal or supervising administrator as far in advance as possible. If you do not notify your building Principal or supervising administrator of an absence in advance, it may be considered an unpaid unexcused absence (at the administrator's discretion).

Unsatisfactory attendance, including reporting to work late or leaving early, may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Work Hours**

Support staff are typically scheduled to work the following number of hours daily:

- 4 hours per day for Bus Drivers;
- 4 hours per day for Bus Monitors;
- 6 hours per day for Bus Monitors with mid-day routes;
- 8 hours per day for Custodial Building Assistants;
- 8 hours per day for Custodians;
- 6.5 hours per day for Warren Food Service Employees;
- 7 hours per day for Early Childhood Development Assistants
- 7 hours per day for Instructional Assistants;
- 8 hours per day for Maintenance, Grounds & Skilled Personnel;
- 8 hours per day for Motor Vehicle Personnel;
- 4 hours per day for Clinic Assistants (elementary and middle school);
- 8 hours per day for School Police Officers;
- 8 hours per day for School and Media Secretaries (less than 246 days);
- 8 hours per day for Secretaries (12-month);
- 8 hours per day for Specialists (12-month)
- 8 hours per day for Technology Support Specialists.

Special situations may require that an individual's daily hours be different than the standard hours shown on this schedule. This schedule does not include the time spent having a meal break.

Your building Principal or supervising administrator will determine when your work day begins and when your work day ends within the number of hours authorized on this schedule.

### **Breaks**

Employees are not guaranteed to have **rest** breaks during the work day. However, the building Principal or supervising administrator may authorize such breaks for employees in your building.

The school district has determined that there will be a daily **meal** break of the following designated length for those employees working in schools on a full-time basis:

- Bus Drivers = no meal break;
- Bus Monitors = no meal break;
- Custodial Building Assistants = 30 minutes;
- Custodians = up to 60 minutes;
- Early Childhood Development Assistants = 30 minutes;
- Food Service staff hired by Warren = 30 minutes;
- Instructional Assistants = 30 minutes;
- Maintenance, Grounds & Skilled Personnel = up to 60 minutes;
- Motor Vehicle Personnel = up to 60 minutes;
- School Security Officers = up to 60 minutes;
- School and Media Secretaries (school year) = 30 minutes;
- Secretaries (12-months) = up to 60 minutes;
- Specialists (12-months) = up to 60 minutes
- Technology Support Specialists = 30 minutes.

The time of your **meal** break may be scheduled and/or rearranged by the building Principal or supervising administrator at staggered times to allow whatever coverage of assignments is determined necessary.

### **Overtime**

Because of the nature of your work, there may be times when you will be directed to work overtime, perhaps on weekends or holidays or additional hours during the regular workday. You are expected to comply with such directions.

Overtime compensation is paid to all nonexempt employees at one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

Overtime work may be assigned by your building Principal or your supervising administrator. If you feel that you need to work additional hours to complete your work, you must receive authorization from your building Principal or supervising administrator before working more than 40 hours in a 5-day work week. In buildings where employees are shared, the administrator who requires that work beyond 40 hours is needed, must approve the overtime.

After you have worked overtime, you must enter it on a timesheet no later than the day after it occurred.

Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time taken for meal breaks is not included as time worked for purposes of computing overtime. Time off work for holidays (even with holiday pay), sick leave, vacation leave, personal leave or any other leave of absence is not factored in as hours worked when calculating overtime.

The practice of recording or taking "**comp time**" is **not authorized** at any time or under any circumstances in the school district. All time worked must be recorded on the date that it was worked; absences must be recorded (either by the employee on a timesheet or by the building Principal or supervising administrator in the time clock system) on the date the absences actually occurred.



### "Nonexempt" Employees

The Fair Labor Standards Act ensures that certain employees of the school district must be paid at least a minimum hourly wage for all hours worked and overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

Some employees, including teachers and administrators, are **exempt** (meaning certain rules do not apply to them) from these provisions of FLSA. However, we have determined that in your job, **you are nonexempt** (meaning that you are not excluded from the provisions of FLSA) and you will be paid at least the federal minimum wage for all hours worked and at an overtime rate for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

### Timekeeping Rules for Non-Exempt Employees

The school district strives to maintain strict compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA is a federal law that protects employees from unfair pay practices and guarantees non-exempt employees payment of minimum wage and overtime. The rules below are designed to help the school district comply with the FLSA and ensure that all employees are paid fairly and legally.

Failure to follow these rules may subject you to discipline up to and including termination. These rules apply to all non-exempt employees. If you are unsure of your status as exempt vs. non-exempt, please ask the Director of Personnel.

- You must keep an accurate record of all of your work hours in the manner designated by the school district (e.g., handwritten timesheet, time clock, timekeeping computer program, etc) and at the location designated by your supervising administrator. This includes clocking in before beginning work, clocking out for meal breaks, clocking in at the end of meal breaks, clocking out and in for any other unpaid time during the day, and clocking out at the end of the work day.
- Enter the exact time that you begin and end working on your time records. Record all breaks during which you are completely relieved from work duties if they exceed 20 minutes, including meal breaks. You should not be performing any work during your recorded breaks, as these entries may be deducted from your total work hours as non-compensable time off.
- If you need to make a change on your time records to correct an error, make the correction before you submit it for processing. When you sign and submit your time records, you are certifying that you have carefully reviewed the records, that the records are complete, and that the records accurately reflect all hours that you worked.
- Employees using **handwritten time sheets** to report their time **should** report their absences (such as illness time, personal business time, or vacation time) on their time sheets.
- Employees using the **time clock system** to report their time should **NOT** enter absences (such as illness time, personal business time, or vacation time) in the time clock system. Those absences should be reported verbally to your building Principal or supervising administrator, who will enter the absence as approved or unapproved leave.
- Review the accuracy of your time records before submitting them to your supervising administrator for processing to ensure that you will be paid for the appropriate number of hours.
- Employees are responsible for maintaining their own time records. Do not clock in or clock out for another employee at any time under any circumstances, and do not allow any other employee to clock in or clock out for you. **Violation of this rule constitutes forgery, which is grounds for**

### **termination of employment.**

- Do not tamper with timekeeping equipment.
- You must obtain your supervisor's approval before working over and above your regularly scheduled work hours. This includes time incurred before or after your regular shift, during unpaid meal breaks, or at your home or another off-site location. **If you have permission and you do perform any work outside of your regularly scheduled hours, you should record the time accurately on your time records.**
- The practice of recording or taking "**comp Time**" is **not authorized** at any time or under any circumstances in the school district. All time worked must be recorded on the date that it is worked; absences must be recorded (either by the employee on a timesheet or by the building Principal or supervising administrator in the time clock system) on the date the absences occurred.
- Do not carry over hours of work from one day to the next, or from one week to the next. Your time records must accurately reflect all of the hours you actually worked for each day indicated on your time records.

### **Performance Evaluations**

Principals, supervising administrators and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals informally with support staff at any time.

Additional formal performance reviews will be conducted annually to provide both supervisors and employees with the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. These formal reviews will be conducted annually, typically in the Spring of each school year. When an employee is hired by two supervisors, it is up to the supervisors to determine who will be responsible for the written evaluation. It is an expectation that input will be given by both supervisors.

### **Child Support Reporting Requirements**

Federal and state laws require us to report basic information about new employees, including your name, address, and social security number to a state agency designated as the State Directory of New Hires. The state collects this information in an effort to enforce child support orders.

Please be advised that if the state agency determines that you owe child support, the state agency will send us an order requiring us to withhold money from your paycheck to pay your child support obligations. The school district is required to comply with such orders as a matter of federal and state law.

- If you have a **voluntary agreement** to pay child support directly from your paychecks, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with the Payroll Office staff to have child support deducted from your pay and automatically forwarded to the Department of Child Services.

## ***Employee Benefits***

### **Employee Benefits Policy**

Full-time employees are entitled to a wide range of benefits. A number of the benefit programs -- such as Social Security, workers' compensation, state disability and unemployment insurance -- cover all employees as required by law.

Eligibility for most other benefits depends upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Your supervisor can identify the programs for which you are eligible. You can find the details of many of these programs in separate written summaries. For more information, contact the Benefits Administrator in the Human Resources Office.

All benefit programs require some contributions from employees in order to participate. We reserve the right to add, amend, modify or terminate any employee benefit plans or programs or the amount of employees' contributions.

Currently, the school district provides the following benefits:

- Health insurance;
- Dental insurance;
- Vision insurance;
- Life insurance;
- Long-term disability insurance;
- Flexible spending plan (non-reimbursed medical expenses &/or dependent care expenses);
- Accident insurance;
- Cancer insurance;
- Short-term disability insurance;and
- Intensive care medical insurance.

### **Medical Insurance**

Warren offers a choice of a low deductible or a high deductible health insurance plan (single or family coverage) and bears a substantial cost of this plan for the employee. Refer to the printed information from the insurance provider for details of eligibility and coverage or contact the Benefits Specialist in the Personnel Office.

### **Dental and Vision Insurance**

In addition to the medical insurance plans, Warren offers dental insurance and vision insurance. These benefits are available in addition to medical insurance or separately. Refer to the printed information from the insurance provider for details of eligibility and coverage or contact the Benefits Specialist in the Personnel Office.

### **Disability Insurance**

Warren offers long-term disability insurance. The Board pays all but \$1/year of the annual premium for this benefit. Please see the specific plan documents for further explanation of this benefit and its tax implications, or contact the Benefits Office.

## **Flexible Benefits Plan**

Warren offers a flexible benefits plan in which employees can elect to pay for certain expenses with wages excluded from taxable income. The flexible benefits plan covers the premiums for health, dental, vision, and life insurance; out-of-pocket expenses for medical/dental/vision insurance; and dependant care expenses.

New full-time employees may enroll in the plan within the first 31 days of employment. The coverage is then effective the first of the month following enrollment. In the event that an employee signs up for the plan and later needs to make a change in the annual election, the change must be consistent with the qualifying event and be made within thirty (30) days of that event.

Details regarding the flexible benefits plan and the annual election forms are available from the human resources department.

## **Life Insurance**

Warren offers a term life insurance program. This coverage is provided to you at an annual cost of \$1/year. The face amount of coverage equals \$30,000 for eligible support staff.

### **Supplemental Life Insurance**

If you enroll in the basic life insurance program (above), you are eligible to enroll for additional life insurance coverage -- at your own cost -- under the Supplemental Life Insurance program.

### **Life Insurance Beneficiary**

If an employee dies while covered in Warren's life insurance program, the insured amount will be paid to that employee's named beneficiary. You are responsible for naming your beneficiary and you may change that selection at any time by submitting a written request to the Benefits Office.

## **Retirement Savings Plan**

Warren provides a 401(a) retirement savings plan for full-time employees who were hired after June 30, 2004.

Eligible employees are informed at the time of employment that they need to open an account with VALIC. The Board makes contributions to the employee's 401(a) account at VALIC on each payday.

The employee becomes vested in the 401(a) account based on the number of full years of experience in Warren according to the following schedule:

- 10 years of employment in Warren: 33 1/3% vested.
- 15 years of employment in Warren: 66 2/3% vested.
- 20 years of employment in Warren: 100% vested.

Employees who have worked in Warren for at least 10 consecutive years are encouraged to meet with the Director of Human Resources prior to resignation or retirement to confirm their vesting and eligibility to access the funds in their 401(a) account.

## **Retirement/Severance Benefits**

Warren provides retirement/severance benefits for full-time employees who were hired before July 1, 2004, under the following conditions.

The retirement/severance benefits are available to full-time employees (a) who are eligible for insurance benefits through Warren and (b) who retire at or after age 50 with 10 or more consecutive years of full-time PERF-covered employment in Warren. Employees must inform the Director of Personnel in writing of their intent to retire at least 90 calendar days\* in advance of retirement in order to receive the retirement/severance benefits:

The benefits are:

1. \$100 for each year of full-time employment in Warren; and
2. \$20 for each day of unused illness leave and personal business leave time (leave hours are converted to days based on the employee's standard daily hours); and
3. The Board will pay 1/2 of the annual premium for current single health insurance coverage with the retiree paying the remainder of the annual premium until the retiree reaches Medicare eligibility; and
4. The retiree can remain enrolled in the group dental and/or vision insurance plans until the retiree reaches Medicare eligibility by paying the full annual premium(s); and
5. The retiree can convert the current term life insurance coverage(s) by paying the full annual premium(s).

\*The 90-day notice may be waived by the Superintendent of Schools if the employee is determined to have been unable to give the required notice because of an accident, ill health, or for another unforeseen reason.

## **Unemployment Compensation**

The law provides unemployment compensation benefits to protect workers from economic hardship due to a loss of employment. A terminated employee who is unable to secure new employment may file a claim for unemployment compensation. An employee may be eligible for unemployment compensation if he/she was terminated for reasons other than misconduct, as defined by state law. **Generally, employees who voluntary resign without "good cause" are not eligible for unemployment benefits.**

When an employee files a claim for unemployment compensation, the employer is required to provide a written statement detailing the circumstances or reasons for the employee's termination. The employer will also be asked whether payment of unemployment compensation is opposed. The answer provided by the employer may determine the employee's eligibility for benefits. If either party disagrees with the initial determination with respect to coverage, an appeal can be made. A formal hearing is held in the event that there is an appeal.

**Employees are not eligible for unemployment compensation during regularly-scheduled breaks in the school calendar such as Fall Intersession, Winter Recess, Spring Intersession/Break, and Summer Recess** -- if the employees have been given a letter informing them that they have reasonable assurance of continuing employment following these breaks.

## **Workers' Compensation**

Warren provides insurance to compensate for any illness or injury an employee might suffer while working on company premises, traveling on official company business, or attending an activity officially sponsored by the school district in accordance with the laws of the State of Indiana, as administered by our workers' compensation insurance carrier.

If you become ill or injured while at work, please get medical attention at once.

You must also report the details of your illness or injury to your building Principal or supervising administrator immediately. You must also complete a report for every injury, no matter how small, to keep the coverage in force and to get any benefits or other compensation to which you may be entitled. (See *additional information under Safety & Emergency: On-the-job Illnesses and Injuries.*)

## **COBRA**

The right to continuation coverage for group health plan benefits was created by a federal law, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA). COBRA continuation coverage can become available to you when you would otherwise lose your group health coverage. It can also become available to other members of your family who are covered under the group health plan when they would otherwise lose their group health coverage. For additional information about your rights and obligations under the group plan and under federal law, you should review the plan's Summary Plan Description (SPD) or contact a member of human resources.

### **What is COBRA Continuation Coverage?**

COBRA coverage is a continuation of plan coverage when coverage would otherwise end because of a life event known as a "qualifying event." Specific qualifying events are below. After a qualifying event, COBRA continuation coverage must be offered to each person who is a "qualified beneficiary." You, your spouse, and your dependent children could become qualified beneficiaries if coverage under the plan is lost because of the qualifying event. Under the plan, qualified beneficiaries who elect COBRA continuation coverage must pay for COBRA continuation coverage.

If you are an employee, you will become a qualified beneficiary if you lose your coverage under the plan because either one of the following qualifying events happens:

- Your hours of employment are reduced, or
- Your employment ends for any reason other than your gross misconduct.

The spouse of an employee will become a qualified beneficiary if he/she loses coverage under the plan because of any of the following qualifying events:

- The employee/spouse dies;
- The employee/spouse's hours of employment are reduced;
- The employee/spouse's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- The employee/spouse becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both); or
- The individual becomes divorced or legally separated from the employee/spouse.

Your dependent children will become qualified beneficiaries if they lose coverage under the plan because any of the following qualifying events happens:

- The employee/parent dies;
- The employee/parent's hours of employment are reduced;
- The employee/parent's employment ends for any reason other than his or her gross misconduct;
- The employee/parent becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (Part A, Part B, or both);
- The parents become divorced or legally separated; or
- The child stops being eligible for coverage under the plan as a "dependent child."

Sometimes, filing a proceeding in bankruptcy under title 11 of the United States Code can be a qualifying event. If a proceeding in bankruptcy is filed with respect to your employer sponsoring the plan, and that bankruptcy results in the loss of coverage of any retired employee covered under the plan, the retired employee will become a qualified beneficiary with respect to the bankruptcy. The retired employee's spouse, surviving spouse, and dependent children will also become qualified beneficiaries if bankruptcy results in the loss of their coverage under the plan.

### **When is COBRA Coverage Available?**

The plan will offer COBRA continuation coverage to qualified beneficiaries only after the Plan Administrator has been notified that a qualifying event has occurred. When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of hours of employment, death of the employee, commencement of a proceeding in bankruptcy with respect to the employer, or the employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), the employer must notify the Plan Administrator of the qualifying event.

### **You Must Give Notice of Some Qualifying Events**

For the other qualifying events (divorce or legal separation of the employee and spouse or a dependent child's losing eligibility for coverage as a dependent child), **you must notify the Plan Administrator within 60 days, unless the Plan specifically allows a longer notice period, after the qualifying event occurs.**

### **How is COBRA Coverage Provided?**

Once the Plan Administrator receives notice that a qualifying event has occurred, COBRA continuation coverage will be offered to each of the qualified beneficiaries. Each qualified beneficiary will have an independent right to elect COBRA continuation coverage. Covered employees may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their spouses, and parents may elect COBRA continuation coverage on behalf of their children.

COBRA continuation coverage is a temporary continuation of coverage. When the qualifying event is the death of the employee, the employee's becoming entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), divorce or legal separation, or a dependent child's losing eligibility as a dependent child, COBRA continuation coverage may last for up to a total of 36 months. When the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of the employee's hours of employment, and the employee became entitled to Medicare benefits less than 18 months before the qualifying event, COBRA continuation coverage for qualified beneficiaries other than the employee lasts until 36 months after the date of Medicare entitlement.

For example, if a covered employee becomes entitled to Medicare 8 months before the date on which his employment terminates, COBRA continuation coverage for his spouse and children can last up to 36 months after the date of Medicare entitlement, which is equal to 28 months after the date of the qualifying event (36 months minus 8 months). Otherwise, when the qualifying event is the end of employment or reduction of the employee's hours of employment, COBRA continuation coverage generally lasts for only up to a total of 18 months. There are two ways in which this 18-month period of COBRA continuation coverage can be extended:

#### **(1) Disability extension of 18-month period of continuation coverage**

If you or anyone in your family covered under the plan is determined by the Social Security Administration to be disabled and you notify the Plan Administrator in a timely fashion, you and your entire family may be entitled to receive up to an additional 11 months of COBRA continuation coverage, for a total maximum of 29 months. The disability would have to have started at some time before the 60th day of COBRA continuation coverage and must last at least until the end of the 18-month period of continuation coverage. You must notify the Plan Administrator of the Social Security Administration's determination within 60 days of the date of the determination.

**(2) Second qualifying event extension of 18-month period of continuation coverage**

If your family experiences another qualifying event while receiving 18 months of COBRA continuation coverage, the spouse and dependent children in your family can get up to 18 additional months of COBRA continuation coverage, for a maximum of 36 months, if notice of the second qualifying event is properly given to the Plan. This extension may be available to the spouse and any dependent children receiving continuation coverage if the employee or former employee dies, becomes entitled to Medicare benefits (under Part A, Part B, or both), or gets divorced or legally separated, or if the dependent child stops being eligible under the Plan as a dependent child, but only if the event would have caused the spouse or dependent child to lose coverage under the Plan had the first qualifying event not occurred. You must notify the Plan Administrator of the second qualifying event within 60 days of the date of the event.

**If You Have Questions about COBRA**

Questions concerning your COBRA continuation coverage rights should be addressed to the Benefits Specialist in the Personnel Office.

For more information about your rights under ERISA, including COBRA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and other laws affecting group health plans, contact the nearest Regional or District Office of the U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) in your area or visit the EBSA website at [www.dol.gov/ebsa](http://www.dol.gov/ebsa). (Addresses and phone numbers of Regional and District EBSA Offices are available through EBSA's website.)



## **Leave**

### **Federal Family and Medical Leave Rights**

#### **Eligibility for Leave**

You may be eligible for a family and/or medical leave under the terms of the Family and Medical Leave Act if (a) you have worked for the school district for at least 12 months and (b) you have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period before the requested leave is to begin.

#### **Reasons for the Leave**

You may be entitled to take up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave:

- to attend to the birth, adoption or foster care placement of your child;
- to attend to the serious health condition of your dependent child, spouse or parent; or
- to receive care for your own serious health condition.

A serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition during which you are incapable of working that involves either:

- treatment requiring inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential care facility, or
- continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that lasts more than three consecutive days, or for pregnancy or prenatal care, or for a chronic health condition which continues over an extended period of time, requires periodic visits to a health care provider and may involve occasional episodes of incapacity, such as serious asthma or diabetes.

A serious health condition also includes a permanent or long-term condition such as Alzheimer's, a severe stroke and terminal cancer. In addition, leave may be used to cover absences due to multiple treatments for restorative surgery or for a condition which would likely make you incapable of working for more than three days if not treated, such as chemotherapy or radiation treatments for cancer.

Fathers eligible for a family leave to attend the birth of a child may use up to five (5) consecutive work days for paternity leave. Accrued illness leave time may be used for those five days. If a holiday falls within this five day leave, the employee is still entitled to take five consecutive work days including the paid holiday.

#### **Substituting Paid Leave**

The school district requires you to substitute accrued illness leave time, personal leave time, and/or vacation time for family and medical leave. If the request for leave is due to your own serious health condition, you may be required to first exhaust all accrued sick leave time. Any accrued vacation or personal leave time will then be used. Your total FMLA leave time, which may include paid vacation and sick time, may not exceed 12 weeks. The school district has the right to designate such leaves as running concurrently with FMLA leave.

#### **Notice of Leave**

If your need for leave is foreseeable, you must give 30 days prior notice if possible. If you do not give such notice, the start of the leave may be delayed for up to 30 days.

If your need for leave is due to a planned medical treatment, you should make every attempt to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the work of your department. If your need for leave is not foreseeable, you must request it as soon as practicable, no later than two business days after the need for leave arises.

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### **Medical Certification**

If leave is requested due to your own or a family member's serious health condition, you must provide medical certification from an appropriate health care provider. The medical certification must include the date on which the condition began and its probable duration. You may be denied leave if you do not provide satisfactory certification. The school district may also require a second opinion or third opinion regarding certification of a serious health condition, at our expense.

### **Returning to Work**

If your leave is due to your own medical condition, you are required to provide medical certification that you are able to resume work before returning to work. Both you and your health care provider must complete a Return to Work Medical Certification that is available in all physicians' offices or from Warren's benefits specialist.

Upon returning to work, you will ordinarily be entitled to be restored to your former position or to an equivalent position with the same employment benefits and pay if possible. If you do not return to work at the end of the leave and do not notify the school district of your status, you may be terminated.

### **Benefits During Leave**

Taking family and medical leave will not cause you to lose any employment benefits accrued prior to the first day of leave. The leave period will be treated as continued service for purposes of determining vesting and eligibility to participate in any retirement plan in effect. However, employees on FMLA leave normally will not accrue any other additional benefits during the leave period, unless it is a paid leave under which benefits would otherwise accrue.

The school district will maintain your insurance benefits while you are on leave, although you may be required to pay your portion of the premium. However, if you do not return to work after the leave, you may be asked to reimburse us for the cost of maintaining insurance coverage during the leave.

### **Misrepresenting Reasons for Leave**

If you intentionally misrepresent the reasons for requesting family and medical leave, you may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Personal Days**

Warren provides full-time employees with two paid personal business days a year, which can be used for any reason. Personal business days are accrued on July 1st of each year.

The annual allocation of personal business days will be prorated for an employee hired for less than a full year, equal to the percentage of the remaining work year that the employee is scheduled to work.

If you are absent for personal reasons, you must call in each day to your building Principal or supervising administrator no later than 15 minutes prior to the usual starting time for work. Failure to notify your building Principal or supervising administrator of your absence prior to the usual starting time for work may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Personal Day Procedures for Township Police Officers**

Requests to use personal days must be submitted in advance in accordance with any rules announced by your supervisor. Whenever possible, school police officers' requests for personal days will be accommodated if the request is timely and the officer's absence will not interfere with the police department's operations or job coverage.

### **Substituting Paid Leave**

If you are absent for personal reasons, your absence will be charged to your accumulated personal

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business leave time. If you are absent for personal reasons after having used all of your personal business time, the absence will be considered unexcused and you will not be paid for it -- unless you qualify for a leave of absence. (See FMLA) Unpaid absences may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Unused personal business days will be carried over to the next school year in the employee's sick leave accumulation.

### **Sick Days**

Beginning on July 1, full-time employees will receive their annual allocation of sick leave hours by being credited with the equivalent of a half (.5) sick day per month worked throughout the year ending June 30. Full-time employees are credited with sick leave hours, up to the following monthly allocation:

- Bus Drivers = 1.6 hours/month for 10 months (no leave time allocated in January or July)
- Bus Monitors (4 hours/day) = 0 hours for part-time employees
- Bus Monitors (6 hours/day) = 1.2 hours/month for 10 months (no leave time allocated in January or July)
- Technology Support Specialists (12-month) = 6 hours/month
- Custodial Building Assistants = 4.8 hours/month for 10 months (no leave time allocated in January or July)
- Custodians = 6 hours/month
- Warren Food Service Employees = 3.9 hours/month for 10 months (no leave time allocated in January or July)
- Early Childhood Development Assistants = 4.2 hours/month for 10 months (no leave time allocated in January or July)
- Instructional Assistants = 4.2 hours/month for 10 months (no leave time allocated in January or July)
- Maintenance, Grounds & Skilled Personnel = 6 hours/month
- Motor Vehicle Personnel = 6 hours/month
- School Security Officers = 6 hours/month
- School and Media Secretaries = 4.8 hours/month for 10 months (no leave time allocated in January or July)
- Secretaries (12-month) = 6 hours/month
- Specialists (12-month) = 6 hours/month

NOTE: If a full-time support staff employee is hired after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, then the first allocation of monthly sick leave hours will be allocated on or about the 1<sup>st</sup> of the subsequent month.

Full-time employees are credited with sick leave hours, up to the following maximum annual allocation:

- Bus Drivers = 16 hours;
- Bus Monitors (4 hours/day) = 0 hours for part-time employees;
- Bus Monitors (6 hours/day) = 12 hours;
- Technology Support Specialists (12-month) = 72 hours;
- Custodial Building Assistants = 48 hours;
- Custodians = 72 hours;
- Warren Food Service Employees = 39 hours;
- Early Childhood Development Assistants = 42 hours;
- Instructional Assistants = 42 hours;
- Maintenance, Grounds & Skilled Personnel = 72 hours;
- Motor Vehicle Personnel = 72 hours;

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- School Security Officers = 72 hours;
- School and Media Secretaries (school year) = 48 hours;
- Secretaries (12-month) = 72 hours;
- Specialists (12-month) = 72 hours.

Sick time may be used for the following reasons:

- (a) when you are too ill to report to work;
- (b) to care for your dependent child, spouse or your parent who is ill; or for any other member of the immediate family who is ill while living as a member of the household; and
- (c) pursuant to an approved leave of absence.

If you are absent for either of the three approved reasons to use sick time, you must call in each day to your building Principal or supervising administrator no later than 30 minutes prior to the usual starting time for work. Failure to notify your building Principal or supervising administrator of your absence prior to the usual starting time for work may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. An employee will be asked to justify why he or she did not follow the call-in procedure when said employee wishes to designate a day off from work as sick time.

Warren reserves the right to request a doctor's certificate for any sick time requested. If such a certificate is requested and you cannot produce it, the absence may be considered unexcused and you will not be paid for it.

An employee is required to remain in the immediate vicinity of h/her home while on sick leave except to receive medical treatment or to attend ordinary and necessary activities directly related to personal or family needs. An employee who feels he or she has a need to leave the immediate vicinity of his or her home while on leave pursuant to District policy must submit a request for review by Human Resources. Human Resources will review the request to determine whether travel is warranted and, if so, will be approved. If Human Resources deems the request unwarranted, then the request will be denied.

Complete the FMLA form for any anticipated absence greater than 3 consecutive workdays for medical reasons, maternity/adoption or other "serious health conditions." **FMLA pages 34-35**

Unused sick leave hours are automatically carried over to the next school year for use as sick leave in the future. There is no limit on the number of days of sick time that can be accumulated.

### **Substituting Paid Leave**

- If you are absent due to being sick or to care for your child, spouse, or parent who is sick, your absence will be charged to your accumulated sick leave. The payroll system will not automatically roll over or change available personal or vacation leave to substitute sick leave. If your sick leave has been exhausted, the day will be unpaid and possibly unexcused.
- If you are absent due to illness after having used all of your accumulated illness leave days, the absence will be considered unexcused and you will not be paid for it -- unless you qualify for a leave of absence. (See FMLA) Unpaid absences may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Sick Leave Procedures for Custodians**

When using accumulated sick leave time, custodians must notify their Head Custodian (or Team Leader) and the Director of Facilities or Facilities Administrator. Failure to contact both parties will result in the absence being recorded as "unpaid/unexcused".

A custodian who needs to be absent for more than one day of illness must call in on a daily basis unless

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the custodian is under written doctor's orders to be off work for several days.

Each custodian is allowed three excused "sick leave episodes" per calendar year before being required to present a doctor's statement prior to returning to work. An example of a "sick leave episode" would be:

- An illness requiring a custodian to be absent for all or part of an 8-hour shift;
- An illness requiring a custodian to be absent for a few consecutive days.

Failure to produce a doctor's statement, which must include an original signature by your physician, following the 3rd "sick leave episode" will result in the 3rd "sick leave episode" being recorded as an unpaid/unexcused absence (first offense). The second offense will result in an additional 3-day unpaid suspension. The third offense will result in a recommendation for termination of employment.

### **Bereavement Leave**

**Full-time** employees are permitted up to *five* consecutive days, includes weekend days, with pay to make arrangements for the funeral and/or attend the funeral of an immediate family member, which includes the following relatives:

- spouse or child (including foster or step)
- brother or sister (including foster, step or in-law)
- parent (including foster, step or in-law)

Full-time employees are permitted up to *three* consecutive days for grandparent, grandparent (in-law) or grandchild (including step), and one day for an aunt or uncle. Bereavement leave shall begin on a date determined by the employee and shall end within five days of the start of the leave, but in no case shall the leave extend beyond 14 days following the death. Non-paid bereavement days may be approved, if requested in writing.

Your building Principal or supervising administrator must approve all bereavement time. The school district may request verification of the facts surrounding the leave, and grant or deny the leave as deemed appropriate. Stillbirth is not included in bereavement leave. May use personal or vacation leave time.

Bereavement leave will not be paid if it occurs when the employee is on a paid vacation, on a paid or unpaid leave of absence, absent due to illness or injury, or not working due to a paid holiday.

### **Vacation**

Full-time 12-month support staff are credited with paid vacation leave time as follows:

- 1st through 9th years = 10 vacation days per year; 1 day per month except Jan. and July      Accumulate up to 160 hours. Over those hours, you lose time.
- 10th through 16th years = 15 vacation days per year; 1 day per month w/addl 1.5 days in Jan. & July      Accumulate up to 200 hours. Over those hours, you lose time.
- beginning with 17th year = 20 vacation days per year; 1 day per month w/addl 4 days in Jan.& July      Accumulate up to 240 hours. Over those hours, you lose time.

Only active, full-time 12-month employees are eligible for paid vacation, and all vacation time must be earned before being taken. Employees on an unpaid leave of absence do not continue to accrue paid vacation time.

Requests to use vacation time must be submitted in advance in accordance with any rules announced by

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your building Principal or supervising administrator. Such requests shall not be for periods greater than ten work days at any one time unless such longer vacation has been approved in advance by the Superintendent of Schools.

Warren reserves the right not to approve a vacation request if the employee's absence will interfere with the operations of the school district or adversely affect coverage of job and staff requirements.

Whenever possible, employees' requests for vacation will be accommodated if the request does not conflict with operations or job coverage. When more than one person in a department requests vacation on the same date(s) resulting in a scheduling conflict, seniority and/or the timing of the submission of the requests will prevail.

### **Holidays**

Warren observes the following holidays and is closed for business on the following days:

- New Year's Day;
- Martin Luther King's Birthday;
- Presidents' Day;
- Memorial Day;
- Independence Day;
- Labor Day;
- Thanksgiving and the day after;
- Christmas Day and the day before.

The Board of Education approves the school district calendar. If one of the following holidays has been designated by the Board as a work day, then support staff must work that day or use their own personal or vacation leave time, and that holiday will not be observed as a paid holiday at a later date.

NOTE: If the Board of Education approves the Wednesday before the Thanksgiving holiday to be closed for business, that day is not a holiday but rather a day schools are closed for students and school staff. All full-time, 12-month support staff must report to work that day or use their own personal or vacation leave time (the rules below explaining eligibility for paid holidays still apply).

You will be paid for these holidays if:

- You are a Custodian; a member of the Maintenance, Grounds, and Skilled Trades Personnel; Motor Vehicle Personnel; a School Security Officer; or a 12-month Secretary/Specialist, School Year Secretaries, Media Assistants;
- and you worked the full day before and the full day after the holiday, unless time off has been approved in advance as vacation, personal business, bereavement or FMLA, (see p. 35) or substantiated Worker's Compensation injury.
- Note: Bus Drivers and Bus Monitors will be paid for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.
- School year secretaries, school safety officers and media assistants (not Independence Day).

Holidays that fall on a Saturday will be observed on Friday; holidays that fall on a Sunday will be observed on Monday. If there is any need to vary this practice, the change in the observation of a holiday will be announced in advance.

Due to business needs, some employees may be required to work on holidays. Your building Principal or supervising administrator will notify you if/when this applies to you.

## **Military Leave**

### **Non-discrimination**

Pursuant to the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Warren prohibits discrimination against persons because of their service in the Armed Forces, the Army National Guard and the Air Force National Guard (when engaged in active duty for training, inactive duty training, or full-time National Guard duty), the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, and any other category of persons designated by the President in time of war or emergency.

USERRA provides job-protection for qualified employees returning from military service in most cases.

### **Leaves for Training and/or Active Service**

Additionally, state law provides that employees who are members of the U.S. reserves can take up to 15 days of leave per year when called for training or service. Warren has determined that such leave will be with pay (i.e., not deducted from illness, personal business or vacation time).

### **Indiana Military Family Leave Act**

The Indiana Military Family Leave Act provides an unpaid leave of absence for up to 10 work days for eligible employees if certain relatives are ordered to active duty. Employees should direct their questions about this new benefit to the Director of Personnel.

## **Jury Duty**

Employees are encouraged to fulfill their civic obligation by serving on jury duty when notified. Employees who are scheduled for jury duty need to provide documentation of the jury duty summons to their supervisor immediately following receipt of the summons.

The school district will compensate employees their regular pay for up to 10 work days of time they are required to serve. The day(s) of absence from work to serve on jury duty must reported by the employee on a time sheet (or by the building Principal or supervising administrator for those employees using the time clock system) as an approved paid absence under the category "Jury/Legal".

Employees must provide evidence of service including documentation of all monies received from jury duty (which is available from the court upon request). This documentation must be submitted to their building Principal or supervising administrator immediately upon return to work from jury duty for submission to the Payroll Department.

- Any monies paid by the court for jury duty will be subtracted from the employee's regular rate of pay for the day(s) of jury duty to avoid "double dipping" payments.

When excused or released from jury duty, employees are expected to return to work promptly.

## **Time Off From Work In Connection With Court Cases**

If you are subpoenaed or otherwise required to serve as a witness in a court case or arbitration, notify your supervisor as soon as you receive the summons/subpoena or are called.

You will not be terminated solely for an absence made necessary by participating in a court case or arbitration.

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### **Substituting Paid Leave**

If you are subpoenaed or otherwise required to serve as a witness in a court case or arbitration that is directly related to your employment in the school district, the time you are away from work to serve as a witness should be recorded on your time sheet as "Jury/Legal".

Unless otherwise required by state or local law, the time you are away from work to serve as a witness in a court case or arbitration that is related to personal business (i.e., not work-related) will not be recorded as paid work time. If you have available personal leave time or vacation time, that leave time will be used to cover the absence.



## ***Safety & Emergency***

### **Emergency Measures**

We realize that bad weather or hazardous commuting conditions may occasionally make it difficult for employees to report to work on time. However, you are expected to make a diligent effort to report to work depending on the following situations:

#### **When Schools Are Delayed Due To Inclement Weather:**

For the ongoing operation of the schools and programs, the following hourly employees are expected to report to work at the usual time or as soon thereafter as safety and common sense allow:

- Custodial Building Assistants;
- Custodians;
- Early Childhood Development Assistants;
- Maintenance, Grounds & Skilled Personnel;
- Motor Vehicle Personnel (mechanics);
- School Police Officers;
- Secretaries & Specialists;
- Supply Personnel (warehouse); and
- Technology Support Specialists.

The duties of the following hourly employees are closely tied to the daily schedule of students. Therefore, they should delay their arrival at school by the same amount of time as school is delayed:

- Instructional Assistants.

Bus Drivers and Bus Monitors should delay their arrival at work by the same amount of time as school is delayed. The Director of Transportation may notify some drivers to report to work early on "school-delayed days" to help start and/or de-ice buses.

Food Service staff should report to work as directed by Chartwells.

#### **When School is Cancelled Due To Inclement Weather:**

In most cases, a cancelled day of school will be made up at the end of the school year. The following hourly employees do not report to work on a day when school has been cancelled:

- Bus Drivers and Bus Monitors;
- Custodial Building Assistants;
- Food Service Staff;
- Instructional Assistants;
- School Nurses;
- Secretaries assigned to schools (including Media Secretaries);
- Technology Support Specialists;
- Substitutes for any of these employees.

The following hourly employees are expected to report to work at the usual time or as soon thereafter as safety and common sense allow:

- Custodians;
- Maintenance, Grounds & Skilled Personnel;
- Motor Vehicle Personnel (mechanics);

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- Early Childhood Development Assistants;
- School Police Officers;
- Secretaries & Specialists on the 12-month schedule;
- Supply Personnel (warehouse).

### **Other Information:**

If you are unable to report to work because of weather conditions, inform your building Principal or supervising administrator as soon as possible. Your absence will be charged to your personal or vacation time.

If it becomes necessary to shut down the schools or offices due to some other emergency, every effort will be made to notify employees. If there is a question as to whether the office will be open, call your place of work. If there is no answer within one hour after the normal start time, assume the office is closed.

### **Fire Safety**

Every employee is responsible for recognizing potential fire dangers and taking an active role in preventing fires.

Employees are required to observe all OSHA safety requirements and regulations. Flammable materials are to be stored in covered metal containers. Employees should not block any fire doors, fire exits, fire extinguishers, windows or doorways.

Review and be familiar with the fire escape routes posted in each work area.

### **First Aid**

Our goal is to provide employees with the necessary information regarding appropriate techniques associated with administering medical assistance to others. The school district is concerned about employees who may be exposed to blood and other bodily fluids when rendering first aid to other employees. The following "Universal Precautions" are to be used when administering first aid:

- Always use latex gloves that are distributed to all employees annually.
- In the event CPR becomes necessary, a CPR Micro-Shield should be used if available. Only those employees who are certified to perform CPR should perform CPR.
- Any materials, including latex gloves and CPR Micro-Shields, used in administering first aid should be discarded in the red biohazard bags located in the classroom or nurse's office.
- Hands should be thoroughly washed following any first aid procedure.

The red biohazard bags will be picked up by special arrangement with the local waste management company on a regular basis.

### **On-the-job Illnesses and Injuries**

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Act requires that we keep records of all illnesses and accidents that occur on the job. OSHA also provides for your right to know about any health hazards which might be present on the job.

Your cooperation is required to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all employees and students.

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Report all accidents, injuries, potential safety hazards, safety suggestions and health and safety related issues immediately to your building Principal or supervising administrator.

If you or other employees are injured at work or become ill at work, contact your building Principal or supervising administrator immediately. Seek help from outside emergency response agencies, if needed. Contact information is posted on bulletin boards.

In addition, the state Workers' Compensation Act also requires that you report any illness or injury caused at the workplace, no matter how slight. **If you do not report an on-the-job illness or injury, you may jeopardize your right to collect workers' compensation payments as well as to receive appropriate medical benefits.**

You must complete a "First Report of Employee Injury/Illness" form regardless of whether your injury/illness requires immediate medical attention or not. This form may be completed by you, or by someone who observed your injury/illness, or by the building Administrator. Filing this report protects your right to medical treatment in accordance with Indiana's Workers' Compensation Act and helps ensure that any existing safety hazards are corrected.

You can obtain the "First Report of Employee Injury/Illness" form from the school secretary or from the Business Office.

### **Safety**

Your cooperation is required to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all employees and students. Report all accidents, injuries, potential safety hazards, safety suggestions and health and safety related issues immediately to your building Principal or supervising administrator.

If you or other employees are injured at work or become ill at work, contact your building Principal or supervising administrator **immediately**. Seek help from outside emergency response agencies, if needed. Contact information is posted on bulletin boards.

You, or someone who observed your injury/illness, or the building Administrator must complete the "First Report of Employee Injury/Illness" form, regardless of whether you have an injury/illness that requires medical attention or not. This form must be completed as soon as possible following an on-the-job injury or illness in case medical treatment is later needed and to ensure that any existing safety hazards are corrected. You can obtain the required forms from the school secretary or from the Business Office.

A federal law, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, requires that we keep records of all illnesses and accidents that occur on the job. OSHA also provides for your right to know about any health hazards which might be present on the job.

In addition, the state Workers' Compensation Act also requires that you report any illness or injury caused by the workplace, no matter how slight. If you do not report an injury, you may jeopardize your right to collect workers' compensation payments as well as health benefits.

### **Security**

The school district is committed to ensuring employees' security. Our premises are equipped with security alarms that are active outside working hours, security cameras, and a fire alarm system. If you have a security concern or need more information about operating these systems, contact the Director of Operations.

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All employees are given photo identification cards when they become employees of the school district. Wear your ID at all times while on school district business, whether you are on or off the school district's premises.

If you end your employment with the school district, you must surrender your ID (along with keys and any other company property you have been issued).

### **Lock Out/Tag Out General Procedures**

Across the country, the unexpected start-up of machines during maintenance or servicing has been the cause of many deaths and serious workplace injuries. As a result, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued a hazardous energy standard known as the lock out/tag out standard, to minimize the hazards to which employees are exposed.

The school district is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all employees and we require the strictest adherence to this standard. Below is a summary of the key provisions of OSHA's lock out/tag out requirements. The school district will provide additional training on these issues as needed to ensure the safety of our workforce.

#### **Definitions**

**Lock Out:** A lock out is a locking device, which may be a padlock, placed on a switch, lever or valve in order to prevent accidental machine startups or accidental energy and electrical releases.

**Tag Out:** A tag out is a conspicuous written warning that informs employees not to operate a switch or any other mechanism that may release hazardous energy or set a machine in motion.

**Affected Employees:** Employees designated to operate machinery or equipment for which maintenance or servicing is performed under lock out or tag out, or whose job requires them to work in an area which maintenance or servicing is being performed.

**Authorized Employees:** Employees designated to lock out or tag out machines or equipment in order to perform servicing or maintenance on equipment or machinery.

#### **Lock Out/Tag Out General Requirements**

The school district shall adopt specific procedures regarding the control of hazardous energy, equipment isolation, preparation for shutdown, lock out/tag out application, release of stored energy, verification of isolation, and the restoration of equipment back to normal production operations. Procedures must be implemented to ensure safety when equipment is tested during servicing, when a crew servicing equipment needs a multiple lock out, when outside contractors are working at the site, and when personnel or shifts change. All "affected employees" must be notified that a lock out or tag out system is to be followed, and that each lock out/tag out device shall only be removed by the worker who applied it. "Authorized employees" must be knowledgeable about the same issues, as well as the type and magnitude of energy required by the equipment and specific hazards involved.

#### **Sequence of Lock Out/Tag Out System Procedures**

Although supplemental training will be provided as needed, below are the basic lock out-tag out procedures to be followed by authorized employees for equipment maintenance or repair.

- Prepare by conducting a survey to identify and locate all valves, switches, and/or other energy isolating devices that are associated with the equipment that is to be locked or tagged out. It is possible that more than one energy source (mechanical, electrical or others) is involved in an operating system.
- Shut down equipment or machine that is operating by using the normal stopping procedure. This

## SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK

- will isolate the equipment.
- Use reliable methods such as blocking, bleeding down, and repositioning to dissipate stored energy.
- Have designated individual apply lock out/tag out energy isolating devices.
- Ensure that personnel are not exposed, and check to see if energy is disconnected, by operating the push button, or other normal operating controls to make certain equipment will not operate. Operating controls must be returned to off position after the test.
- When servicing or maintenance is complete, and equipment is ready to be operated, ensure that no one is exposed to any energy source by checking the area around the machine or equipment.
- Remove all lock out and tag out devices only after all tools have been removed from equipment or machine, guards have been reinstalled, and employees are in the clear.
- Machine or equipment may be restored to normal operation.

The school district recognizes that the control of hazardous energy sources for prevention of workplace accidents is a serious issue. It is critical that employees remain aware of possible dangers associated with energy sources and adhere strictly to the lock out/tag out procedures described in this policy and in supplemental training.

## ***Corporate Communications & Technology***

### **Bulletin Boards**

Check all the bulletin boards regularly to obtain important information about school district events and policies. Your building Principal or supervising administrator must approve all postings, and only information important to the staff in your building should be posted on these bulletin boards.

### **Communication with Press or Media**

Media inquiries of the school district -- including requests for off-the-record or anonymous statements -- must be handled in accordance with the following guidelines:

Inquiries regarding a specific matter should be referred to the individual in charge of that matter. If that person is not available, then the inquiry should be referred immediately to the appropriate Associate Superintendent.

All other inquiries should be referred immediately to the staff in the Office of the Superintendent.

### **Investigations**

There may be times when the building Administrator, a supervising administrator, and/or the school security personnel will conduct an investigation. All employees are expected to cooperate with the building Administrator, supervising administrator and/or school security personnel in their investigations.

Failure to be cooperative and completely truthful during an investigation may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of information learned during the course of an investigation. However, the individuals conducting investigations cannot promise that all information will remain confidential since some information may need to be revealed to support disciplinary action.

### **Software Policy**

The school district controls employees' use of computer software that is used at work.

You may not duplicate any software that is licensed to the school district for use either on another district computer or elsewhere, unless you are expressly authorized to do so by the Director of Technology.

You may not provide copies of district-licensed software to anyone outside the school district.

The illegal duplication of software may result in the filing of criminal copyright charges by the owners of the copyrights and can subject both the employee and the district to liability.

All software that the school district acquires must be purchased with the prior approval of the Director of Technology. Prior to installation, all software must be tested by the Technology Department staff, registered properly with the Technology Department and installed by Technology Department staff.

You may not load personal software on school district computers.

## **Use of Company Communication Systems**

Because the school district reserves the right to access any personal communication without prior notice, employees should not use the school district's communication systems to transmit any messages or to access any information that they would not want a third party to hear or see.

Although incidental and occasional personal use of the school district's systems is permitted, any such personal use will be treated the same as all other communications under this policy.

Inappropriate use of the school district's communication systems may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Telephone Usage**

The telephone system (including voicemail) within the school district is the property of the school district and is provided primarily for business purposes. The school district may periodically monitor the usage of the telephone system to ensure compliance with this policy. Therefore, employees should not consider their conversations on the school district's telephone system to be private.

### **Personal Mail**

All mail delivered to the school district is presumed to be related to the school district's business. Mail sent to you at your school or work location may be opened by the office staff and placed in your school mailbox. If you do not wish to have your correspondence handled in this manner, please have it delivered to your home.

### **E-Mail**

All e-mail sent to or from the school district's accounts is routed through the school district's servers. The school district reserves the right to monitor e-mail traffic and/or content to ensure that inappropriate materials are not being sent or received on the school district's system. Employees should not consider their e-mail messages on the school district's system to be private.

### **Internet**

All use of the Internet through the school district's accounts is routed through the school district's servers. The school district reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic and/or content to ensure that inappropriate materials are not being accessed on the school district's system. Employees should not consider their Internet usage on the school district's system to be private.

## ***Acknowledgement***

### **THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO THE PERSONNEL OFFICE.**

I acknowledge that I have received the MSD of Warren Township Employee Handbook and that I have read and understand the policies.

I understand that this Handbook represents only current policies and benefits, and that it does not create a contract of employment. The MSD of Warren Township retains the right to change these policies and benefits, as it deems advisable.

Unless expressly proscribed by statute or contract, my employment is "at will." I understand that I have the right to terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or notice, and that the school district has the same right. I further understand that my status as an "at will" employee may not be changed except in writing and signed by the Superintendent of Schools.

I understand that the information I come into contact with during my employment is proprietary to the school district and accordingly, I agree to keep it confidential, which means I will not use it other than in the performance of my duties or disclose it to any person or entity outside the school district. I understand that I must comply with all of the provisions of the Handbook to have access to and use school district resources. I also understand that if I do not comply with all provisions of the Handbook, my access to school district resources may be revoked, and I may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

I further understand that I am obligated to familiarize myself with the school district's safety, health, and emergency procedures as outlined in this Handbook or in other documents.

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Signature

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Date

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Please Print Your Name



## SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK

# SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK