



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

PREFACE

The material covered within this staff handbook is intended as a method of communicating to employees regarding general district information, rules, and regulations and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation, or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may, therefore, be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation, negotiated agreement, or changes in state or federal law.

Any information contained in this staff handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination, from time to time, without notice.

No information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, or as a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

Equal employment opportunity and treatment shall be practiced by the district regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, and disability, if the employee, with or without reasonable accommodation, is able to perform the essential functions of the position.

The principal/Lead Teacher has been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements, including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and other civil rights or discrimination issues, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and may be contacted at the office for additional information and/or compliance issues:

STAFF ORGANIZATION

Administration

Krista Booher, Lead Teacher

Certified Staff

Krista Booher, K

Carolyn Wieringa, 5-6

Andina Markuson, 4

Kati Knutson, 1, Gym, Music

Ali Downey, 3

Kristen Hebert, Library, 2

Melissa Kempke, Art, SPED

Classified Staff

Monica Young, Clerk

Kristina Counts, Custodian

Lisa Burrell, Aide

Special Assignments

Alida Wright, speech pathology

School/District Vision Statement:

West Glacier Elementary, through a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment, empowers and challenges every child to reach their greatest potential by providing a diverse and dynamic curriculum.

School/District Mission:

The community, parents, and staff of West Glacier Elementary are committed to creating an environment that encourages continual growth socially, academically, and personally. This partnership will use challenging and engaging curriculum that focuses on each individual child, enabling them to become responsible, respectful, and successful students and citizens; and to encourage them to become life-long learners.

School/District Philosophy of Education:

The focal point of West Glacier Elementary is the student. The Board of Trustees will provide leadership to create, maintain, and improve the school for the children's educational needs, guided by the conviction that every student has the right to the best education this community can provide. Responsibility for this rests with community, parents, school staff, educational partnerships, and students. The community of West Glacier Elementary must work every day to help our young people question, invent, anticipate and dream so that they will be prepared to succeed and to make a difference. The school recognizes that a child learns best at his or her own rate according to ability and that learning is best accomplished by using a variety of teaching approaches, encouraging students to challenge themselves in a safe environment. West Glacier Elementary will provide a balanced program including academics, creative arts, physical education, and the use of technology. The following goals have been established in order for our students to learn and develop personally, academically, and socially to their highest potential.

All students will:

1. Attain high academic standards;
2. Develop personal and social responsibility;
3. Contribute responsibly to society;
4. Engage in life-long learning;
5. Effectively communicate ideas and knowledge;
6. Use problem solving skills in a changing world;
7. Challenge themselves to push past failures for ultimate success.

Adopted February 8, 2011

Board of Trustees Mission Statement:

The Board of Trustees, as representatives of this community, will strive to provide the necessary resources and leadership to create and maintain a high quality learning environment for all students.

ASSOCIATIONS

The MEA Association is the bargaining unit for all certified staff. The MEA President is Andina Markuson.

BOARD MEETINGS/COMMUNICATIONS

Regular Meetings

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings will be held in the West Glacier Elementary School. Regular meetings shall be held at 6:00 p.m. on the 1st Tuesday of each month, or at other times and places determined by a majority vote. Except for an unforeseen emergency, meetings must be held in school buildings or, upon unanimous vote of the Trustees, in a publicly accessible building located within the District. If regular meetings are to be held at places other than the place stated above, or are adjourned to times other than the regular meeting time, notice of the meeting shall be made in the same manner as provided for special meetings. When a meeting date falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the next business day.

BUILDING HOURS

The building is accessible during the course of the school year between the hours of 7:30am-5:00 PM Monday through Thursday.

COMMUNITY USE OF BUILDING

School facilities are available to the community for education, civic, cultural, and other uses consistent with the public interest, when such use does not interfere with a school program or school-sponsored activities. Use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses. Persons on school premises must abide by the district's conduct rules at all times. A full use agreement and application including the fee structure is available in the front office. (See Policy 43330F)

STAFF OPERATIONS

ABSENCES

Sick Leave

Certified employees shall be granted sick leave according to the terms of the current collective bargaining agreement.

Classified employees shall be granted sick leave benefits in accordance with § 2-18-618, MCA. For classified staff, "sick leave" means a leave of absence, with pay, for a sickness suffered by an employee or his or her immediate family. Each request will be judged by the district in accordance with Policy 5321 and the governing collective bargaining agreements.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Eligibility

Employees are eligible for benefits under the Family Medical Leave Act when the District has fifty (50) or more employees. The West Glacier Elementary School District has less than fifty (50) employees and therefore employees are not eligible for FMLA benefits. (Board Policy 5328)

Vacation

The classified and 12-month administrative employees shall accrue annual vacation leave benefits in accordance with §§ 2-18-611, 2-18-612, 2-18-614 through 2-18-617 and 2-18-621, MCA.

Personal and Emergency Leave

Teachers will be granted personal and emergency leave according to the terms of the current collective bargaining agreement. Upon recommendation of the principal/lead teacher, classified staff may be granted emergency/personal leave without pay. For more information, contact the principal/lead teacher. (See Policy 5321)

BREAKS

Scheduled breaks are provided to all classified employees to ensure safety and efficiency. All classified staff members who work four or more consecutive hours are entitled to one 15-minute break. Those working eight-hour days are entitled to two 15-minute breaks.

Classified employees are expected to adhere to the break schedule established by the principal/lead teacher. Deviation from the regularly scheduled break period requires prior supervisor approval.

CARE/USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY

All staff members are encouraged to exercise continuous and vigilant care of all district-owned property. Such items as computer and audio/visual equipment, typewriters, and musical instruments are priority items for theft and damage.

Incidents of theft or willful destruction of district property through vandalism or malicious mischief should be reported immediately to the principal.

Teacher laptop computers and/or other equipment must be checked out by the clerk and approved by the administration. Such equipment may not be used for personal financial gain.

In the event of loss or damage, a fee will be assessed by the district according to the repair or replacement costs.

CASH IN DISTRICT BUILDINGS

Money collected by staff as a result of fund raisers or other school-related purposes is to be deposited in the office whenever the sum accumulated in any one day, by a class, staff member, or others, exceeds \$25. At no time are substantial amounts of money to be kept overnight or held during holidays or for long periods of time in classrooms.

Staff members are asked to emphasize to students the importance of promptly depositing money collected, with appropriate school officials.

Accurate records must be kept in regards to amounts collected, by whom and from whom and when for submission to the district clerk for accounting purposes.

CHECKOUT

Work Day Checkout

Teachers and classified staff may leave the building and district grounds during lunch as necessary. Teacher departures during preparation periods must be approved by the principal/lead teacher.

All staff members are required to check out/in with the office if they leave the building and district grounds during the academic day. This will enable office staff to respond appropriately in the event of message and emergency situations that may arise.

Year-End Checkout

The clerk will issue final paychecks upon receipt of classroom inventory and successful completion of the year-end checkout procedures.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Any staff member who has reasonable cause or reasonable suspicion to believe that any child under 18 years of age with whom he/she has come in contact has suffered abuse or neglect, or that any adult with whom he/she is in contact has abused a child, shall immediately orally report to the Department of Family Services or local law enforcement agency. The principal is also to be immediately informed.

Written documentation of this report must be completed and submitted to the principal. Failure to report a suspected child abuse is a violation punishable by law and by district disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Forms are available in the office. (See Policy 5232F)

A staff member who, based on reasonable grounds, participates in the good-faith making of a child abuse report shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as provided by law.

CLASSROOM SECURITY

When leaving the classroom, locker room, or other work areas between classes or at the end of the day, teachers are expected to turn out the lights and secure all doors and windows. Students should be instructed to leave valuables at home. The district will not be responsible for the loss of or damage to, personal property due to such causes as fire, theft, accident, or vandalism.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE/BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS/INFECTION CONTROL PROCEDURES

The district provides for the reasonable protection against the risk of exposure to communicable disease to all staff while engaged in the performance of their duties. Protection is provided through immunization and exclusion in accordance with Montana Code Annotated and the Administrative Rules of Montana. Infection control procedures, including provisions for handling and disposing of contaminated fluids, have also been established through Board policy and administrative regulations for staff and student protection.

All staff shall comply with measures adopted by the district and with all rules set by the Montana State Health Department and the county health department.

Staff members have a responsibility to report to the district when infected with a communicable disease unless otherwise stated by law.

COMPLAINTS

Student/Parent Complaints

The district recognizes that complaints regarding staff performance, discipline, grades, student progress, and homework assignments will be made by students and parents from time to time. Every effort will be made to ensure that such complaints are handled and resolved informally and as close to their origin as possible. Students, parents, and others with complaints will be encouraged to discuss the complaint directly with the staff member. All such meetings should be held in confidence and not in the presence of others.

If the complaint is not informally resolved, staff should advise the complainant that he/she may submit the matter directly to the building principal or immediate supervisor, as appropriate. The complainant will be provided with necessary formal complaint procedure guidelines in accordance with Board policy.

When a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to an individual Board member, it will be referred to the principal/lead teacher for appropriate follow-up.

All staff members should familiarize themselves with Board policy regarding the handling of complaints. (See Policy 1700)

Staff Complaints

Staff member complaints contending a violation, misinterpretation, or inappropriate application of district personnel policies and/or administrative regulations should be directed to the principal/lead teacher for informal discussion and resolution.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, formal complaint procedures may be initiated by staff in accordance with Board policy and administrative regulations. (See Policy 1700)

This complaint procedure may not be used to resolve disputes and disagreements related to the provisions of any negotiated agreement.

CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION

Contracts for certified and classified staff members will be initiated for all new employees when hired.

Salaries, including compensation for extracurricular assignments over and above the duties associated with a staff member's regularly assigned duties, will be determined in accordance with salary schedules and salary placement guidelines established by the Board and/or policies adopted by the Board which are consistent with salary schedules and salary placement provisions of negotiated agreements.

It is the staff member's responsibility to provide all information necessary for placement on the salary schedule to the office in accordance with timelines established by the district and negotiated agreements.

COPYRIGHT

A variety of machines and equipment for reproducing materials to assist staff in carrying out their educational assignments is available to staff in both the school and home setting.

Infringement on copyrighted material, whether prose, poetry, graphic images, music, audio tape, video, or computer-programmed materials, is a serious offense against federal law, a violation of Board policy, and contrary to ethical standards required of staff and students.

All reproduction of copyrighted material shall be conducted strictly in accordance with applicable provisions of law. Unless otherwise allowed as "fair use" under federal law, permission must be acquired from the copyright owner prior to reproduction of material in any form. (See Policy 2312, 2312P)

CONFERENCES

Planned conferences between teachers and parents are essential to the district's efforts to further understanding and close cooperation between the home and school. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled each fall.

Conferences should be treated as an opportunity for constructive, mutual exchange of information and ideas for the welfare and continued social and academic growth of the student.

Occasionally, teachers or parents may arrange for conferences outside regularly scheduled conference dates, to meet more immediate student needs. Teachers should be prepared to provide after-school or pre-school time to meet with students and/or parents as necessary.

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKS/FINGERPRINTING

Any finalist recommended for hire to a paid or volunteer position with the district, involving regular unsupervised access to students in schools, as determined by the principal, shall submit to a name-based and fingerprint criminal background investigation conducted by the appropriate law enforcement agency prior to consideration of the recommendation for employment or appointment by the Board. The results of the name-based check shall be presented to the Board concurrent with the recommendation for employment or appointment. Any subsequent offer of employment or appointment shall be contingent upon results of the fingerprint criminal background check, which must be acceptable to the Board, in its sole discretion.

The following applicants for employment, as a condition for employment, shall be required, as a condition of any offer of employment, to authorize, in writing, a name-based and fingerprint criminal background investigation to determine if he or she has been convicted of certain criminal or drug offenses:

- * a certified teacher seeking full- or part-time employment within the district;
- * an educational support personnel employee seeking full- or part-time employment within the district;
- * an employee of a person or firm holding a contract with the district, if the employee is assigned to the district;
- * a volunteer assigned within the district who has REGULAR unsupervised access to students.
- * Substitute teachers

Any requirement of an applicant to submit to a fingerprint background check shall be in compliance with the Volunteers for Children Act of 1998 and applicable federal regulations.

CURRICULUM

West Glacier Elementary belongs to the Northwest Educational Cooperative. Curriculum guides are available through the Northwest Educational Cooperative and are reviewed in a cyclical nature by participating co-op members. Northwest Educational Cooperative log in information for WGE is available from the site level administrator. Curriculum guides reflect a sequential structure for the attainment of state and national standards..

The curriculum guides established for the courses and grade levels of this district provide the flexibility necessary to meet the individual needs of students and their divergent learning styles and abilities. It is expected that teachers will use the curriculum guides to develop highly engaging, differentiated lessons that address the unique aptitudes and sensibilities of the students in their classroom. Deviations from established curriculum, textbooks, and instructional materials require principal approval prior to implementation.

Though teaching methodology may vary, classroom instruction is expected to reflect “best practices” consistent with research on effective instruction. Lessons should address the following four questions:

- What is it that students should know and be able to do (aka the learning goals/objectives)?
- What strategies will be used to help them reach the learning goals?
- How will you know that they’ve met the learning goals (assessment)?
- What will be done for those that haven’t met the learning goals by the end of the lesson/unit AND what will be done for those that have already mastered the learning goals?

DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

Discipline and dismissal of staff will follow due process, administrative regulation, relevant provisions of negotiated agreements, and applicable law. (See Policy 5255)

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

No staff member engaged in work in connection with a direct federal grant shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use on or in the workplace or have in their system any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance or alcohol, as defined in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and as further defined by regulation at 21 CFR 1300.11 through 1300.15.

“Workplace” is defined to mean the site for the performance of work done in connection with a federal grant or contract. That includes any school building or any school premises; any school-owned vehicle, or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; off school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event, or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district where work on a federal grant is performed.

The district reserves the right to drug test any employee without notice.

Each staff member engaged in work related to a district federal grant or contract of \$5,000 or more must notify his/her supervisor of his/her conviction of any criminal drug statute based on conduct occurring in the workplace, as defined above, no later than five days after such conviction. (See Policy 5226)

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

In the event of hazardous or emergency conditions, the school may be closed or schedules altered to provide delayed openings of school and/or early dismissal of students as appropriate.

A phone tree will be distributed to all staff for use in the event of delayed openings or school closures. In addition, district administration shall follow all county policies and procedures in regards to school closure. The Flathead County Superintendent’s office shall contact media as per policy.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND DISASTER PLANS

All staff will be provided with a copy of the district’s emergency procedures plan detailed staff responsibilities in the event of such emergencies as disorderly behavior, unlawful assembly, disturbances at school activities, natural disasters, fire, illness or injury of a student or staff member, and the authorized use of force on school property.

An emergency flip chart is provided for every classroom. The flip chart should remain near the door and class telephone for ready access. An updated school roster must be kept in the back of the chart for staff and emergency personnel reference. When exiting the building for an emergency the responsible staff should take the flip chart and its accompanying roster to the designated meeting area. Maps with red exiting guidelines are posted in each room but staff should use their discretion in selecting the safest route to safely get the students and themselves out of the building.

EVALUATION OF STAFF

The district’s evaluation program is designed to provide an opportunity for staff to set goals and objectives, including plans for professional growth and career opportunities, and receive administrative responses to them; to have formal and informal observations of the teaching of licensed staff and the performance of assigned duties and job responsibilities of all other staff; to receive verbal and written comments and suggestions for improvement from supervisors; and to have clear opportunities to make improvement within specific timelines.

Staff behaviors are to align with the district vision, mission and philosophy; position description; and district goals and policies including the Five Year Comprehensive Education Plan (5YCEP). High performers are those that perform their assigned duties, exemplify caring towards those they serve and support their fellow staff. The evaluation program provides a tool for administrators who are responsible for making decisions about promotion, retention, dismissal, and discipline as well as provides an opportunity for continual professional growth for the employee.

Certified probationary staff will be formally evaluated at least twice per year. All other licensed staff will be formally evaluated at least annually.

Classified staff will be formally evaluated at least twice during their first year of employment with the district and at least annually thereafter.

Copies of the district’s evaluation procedures will be provided to all staff. Evaluation of all staff will be conducted in accordance with established Board policy and applicable district evaluation procedures, negotiated agreements, and Montana Code Annotated.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

Regular working hours for all classified staff will be set by the principal/lead teacher. Classified staff is not to work before, beyond, or outside their established working hours and are not to work overtime without prior authorization from the principal/lead teacher.

All time sheets must be a true reflection of all time worked, whether it is more or less than regularly scheduled work hours.

Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action in accordance with applicable provisions of Board policy 5221 and 5336, administrative regulations, and negotiated agreements.

HARASSMENT

Harassment of staff members is strictly prohibited on district property, including non-district property while a staff member is at any district-sponsored, district-approved, or district-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events, in which students are under the control of the district or where the staff member is engaged in district business.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, martial status, disability, and sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. The staff member's submission to the conduct or communication is made a term or condition of employment;
2. The staff member's submission to, or rejection of, the conduct or communication is the basis for decisions affecting employment and assignment;
3. The conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance;
4. The conduct or communication has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Other types of harassment may include, but not be limited to, jokes, stories, pictures, or objects that are offensive, tend to alarm, annoy, abuse, or demean certain protected individuals and groups.

A staff member whose behavior is found to be in violation of Board policy 5015 may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. A student whose behavior is found to be in violation of Board policy may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

Any staff member who is subject to, or knows of, such harassment is directed to notify the principal immediately. If the complaint is not satisfactorily settled, the staff member may file a complaint directly with the Montana Human Rights Commission or with the U.S. Department of Labor, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Such complaints may also be filed with the appropriate enforcement agency, in lieu of the district's complaint process, at any time, as provided by law.

There will be no retaliation by the district against any person who, in good faith, reports harassment.

KEYS

Keys are issued to staff by the clerk. In order to protect property, students, and staff and to ensure the building is adequately secured when no authorized personnel are present, all staff are expected to follow the following key-control procedures:

1. The duplication of keys is prohibited;
2. Keys are not to be left unattended. Avoid having keys on desks, tables, in mailboxes, unattended coat pockets, etc.;

3. Keys may not be loaned to students or to individuals not employed by the district. Under no circumstance should staff provide keys to students to “run errands”, “unlock/lock” doors, etc.;
4. Lost or stolen keys must be reported to the principal within 24 hours of discovery of the loss or theft so that measures may be taken to protect district property
5. Upon presentation to the clerk of the broken or damaged key(s), and submission of assessed fees, replacement keys will be issued within 72 hours;
6. Charges for lost or stolen keys will be made to the staff member to whom the key(s) have been issued, which may include the fees incurred to rekey the facility.

LESSON PLANS

The quality of the instructional program reflects the effort invested by teachers in developing lesson plans consistent with district curriculum and appropriate to the individual needs of students.

To insure proper planning and continuity of instruction, the Board requires that the teacher prepare lesson plans for daily instruction. To facilitate more effective instruction, lesson plans must be prepared at least five (5) days in advance of actual class presentation. The format for the lesson plan will be specified by the principal and will be reviewed on a regular basis. The lesson plans must be readily available, when a substitute teacher is needed.

An up-to-date seating chart, class schedules, and information identifying any classroom student aides or other special student needs should be included in all lesson plan books.

In addition, scope and sequences for all courses of study should be available for review by administration and used by the teacher as a guide to ensure the presentation and acquisition of all grade level content standards during the course of an academic year

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTION

Requests of staff by individuals or groups to distribute pamphlets, booklets, flyers, brochures, and other similar materials to students for classroom use or to take home are to be referred to the principal/lead teacher. The materials and proposed method of distribution will be reviewed and a decision made based on the educational concerns and interests of the district.

MEETINGS

Staff meetings are scheduled for the purpose of organization and communication of business that typically cannot be handled through staff bulletins, departmental or committee structure. All staff members are expected to attend staff meetings unless prior arrangements have been made with the principal. Meetings sponsored or called by recognized collective bargaining units during contract hours are subject to prior approval of the principal/lead teacher. Attendance of staff members at such meetings is left to the discretion of each employee.

PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Staff members may exercise their right to participate fully in affairs of public interest on a local, county, state, and national level, on the same basis as any citizen in public or private employment and within the law.

Staff members may, within the limitations imposed by state and federal laws and regulations, choose any side of a particular issue and support their viewpoints as they desire, by vote, discussion, or persuading others. Such discussion and persuasion, however, may not be carried on during the performance of district duties.

On all controversial issues, staff members are expected to make clear that the viewpoints they represent are personal and are not to be interpreted as the district's official viewpoint.

No staff member may use district facilities, equipment, or supplies in connection with his/her campaigning, nor may he/she use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

An official personnel file is established for each person employed by the district. A staff member's personnel file may contain such information as applications for employment, references, records relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, complaints, and written disciplinary actions.

All records containing medical-condition information, such as workers' compensation reports and release/permission to return to work forms, will be kept confidential, in a separate file from personnel records.

All personnel records are considered confidential and not open to public inspection. Access to personnel files is limited to use and inspection only by the following or as otherwise required by law:

1. The individual employee. An employee or designee may arrange with the office to inspect the contents of his/her personnel file on any day the office is open for business;
2. Others designated in writing by the employee;
3. The comptroller or auditor, when such inspection is pertinent to carrying out their respective duties, or as otherwise specifically authorized by the Board. Information so obtained will be kept confidential. No files will be removed from their central location for personal inspection;
4. A Board member, when specifically authorized by the Board. Information will be kept confidential. No files will be removed from their central location for personal inspection;
5. The superintendent and members of the central administrative staff;
6. District administrators and supervisors who currently or prospectively supervise the employee;
7. Employee in charge of personnel records;
8. Attorneys for the district or the district's designated representative on matters of district business.

The principal/lead teacher may permit persons other than those specified above, to use and to inspect employee records when, in his/her opinion, the person requesting access has a legitimate official purpose. The principal/lead teacher will determine, in each case, the appropriateness and extent of such access.

In accordance with federal law, the district is required to release information regarding the professional qualifications and degrees of teachers and the qualifications of aides/paraprofessionals to parents upon request, for any teacher or aide/paraprofessional who is employed by a school receiving Title I funds, and who provides instruction to their child.

Release of personnel records to parties other than those authorized to inspect them will be only upon receipt of a court order.

PREP PERIODS/INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF PLANNING TIME

Instructional staff will be allotted time each week to prepare for their classes during the academic day in accordance with OPI accreditation standards.

PURCHASE ORDERS

No obligation may be incurred by any staff member, unless that expenditure has been approved by the site administration via a requisition form. Forms are available in the front office.

RELEASE OF GENERAL STAFF INFORMATION

A staff member's address and personal phone number will not be released by the district. Such information may be disclosed if a staff member authorizes the district to do so.

The district may also disclose information about a former employee's job performance to a prospective employer, under the following conditions:

1. Disclosure of information is upon the request of the prospective employer; or
2. Disclosure of information is upon the request of the former staff member;

3. The information is related to job performance;
4. The disclosure is presumed to be in good faith.

The district will not disclose information that is knowingly false, deliberately misleading, rendered with malicious purpose, or is in violation of the staff member's civil rights.

RESIGNATION OF STAFF

The Board authorizes the principal to accept on its behalf resignations from any school district employee. The principal shall provide written acceptance of the resignation, including the date of acceptance, to the employee setting forth the effective date of the resignation.

Once the principal has accepted the resignation it may not be withdrawn by the employee. The resignation and its acceptance should be reported as information to the Board at the next regular or special meeting.

Legal Reference: *Booth v. Argenbright, 225 M 272, 731 P2d 1318, 44 St. Rep. 227 (1987)*

RETIREMENT

To assist the district in its planning efforts, staff members considering retirement are encouraged to notify the district as early as possible, preferably at the beginning of the school year in which the retirement will take place.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS

Supplementary materials from non-school sources require principal/lead teacher approval prior to their use in school. This includes educational films and all video rentals secured from or through commercial sources.

Generally, materials that are of obvious educational quality and supplement and enrich instructional and reference materials for definite school courses, and are timely may be considered for approval.

STAFF CONDUCT

Employees are expected to maintain high standards of honesty, integrity and impartiality in the conduct of district business.

In accordance with state law, an employee should not dispense or utilize any information gained from employment with the district, accept gifts or benefits, or participate in business enterprises or employment which creates a conflict of interest with the faithful and impartial discharge of the employee's district duties. A district employee may, prior to acting in a manner which may impinge on any fiduciary duty, disclose the nature of the private interest which creates a conflict. Care should be taken to avoid using, or avoid the appearance of using, official positions and confidential information for personal advantage or gain.

Further, employees should hold confidential all information deemed to be not for public consumption as determined by state law and Board policy. Employees shall also respect the confidentiality of people served in the course of the employee's duties and use information gained in a responsible manner. Discretion should be employed even within the school system's own network of communication.

STAFF DRESS AND GROOMING

All staff are expected to be neat, clean, and to wear appropriate dress for work that is in good taste and suitable for the job at hand.

Teaching as a profession demands setting a good example for students in every possible way. As adults and professionals, teachers are expected to be guided in their grooming habits by what is most generally acceptable in the business and professional world.

STAFF/PARENT RELATIONS

The district encourages parents to be involved in their student's school experience. Teachers are advised that unless otherwise ordered by the courts, an order of sole custody on the part of one parent does not deprive the other parent of certain rights. It is the responsibility of the parent with sole custody to provide to the district any court order that curtails the rights of the non-custodial parent.

A non-custodial parent may receive and inspect the school records pertaining to their student and to consult with teachers concerning their student's welfare and education.

Non-custodial parents will not be granted visitation or telephone access to their student during the school day. Students may not be released to the non-custodial parent without the written permission of the parent having sole custody.

In the case of joint custody, it is the responsibility of the parents to provide the district, in writing, any special requests or clarifications in areas concerning the student and the district's relationship and responsibilities. Such information will be maintained on file in the office and provided to staff as appropriate.

Staff members with questions regarding custodial and/or non-custodial parent rights with respect to particular students should contact the office.

STAFF ROOM

A staff room is provided for staff use during break, lunch, and preparation periods as may be appropriate. All staff are expected to "pitch in", as needed, to help keep this gathering area clean and orderly.

Personal items of value should not be left in the staff room. Staff members leaving such items in the staff room do so at their own risk.

Students are not permitted in the staff room.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Staff members are responsible for the supervision of all students while in school or engaged in school-sponsored activities.

All teachers are expected to be in their classrooms prior to the arrival of students.

Under no circumstances are classrooms or other areas where students are under the supervision of assigned staff to be left unattended while students are present. Teachers who may need to temporarily leave the classroom or their assigned duties in an emergency situation while students are present are expected to contact the office to arrange for temporary coverage.

No other staff member may leave their assigned group unsupervised except as appropriate supervision arrangements have been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaged in school-sponsored activities, students may be released only into the custody of parents or other authorized persons.

TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION

Religious education is the responsibility of the home and religious institutions. Public schools are obligated to maintain neutrality in all such matters.

However, as religion influences many areas of education, such as literature and history, its role in civilization may be taught when consistent with curriculum and teaching assignment. In such instances, teachers may provide information and opportunity for students to study the forms of various religions.

Teachers may not advocate, openly or covertly or by subtlety, a particular religion or religious belief.

TELEPHONES

Telephones are available throughout the building for staff convenience. Long-distance calls for district business and personal use may be placed from a telephone with an unrestricted line, located in the office. Staff members are responsible for all costs related to long-distance calls made for personal use.

TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT

In order to protect the health of students, staff, and the general public, provide a healthy working environment, and promote good health for students, tobacco use is prohibited on all district property, in district-owned vehicles and in all public school buildings. (See Policy 8225)

Tobacco use is defined as the carrying or smoking of any kind of lighted pipe, cigar, cigarette, or any other smoking equipment or material or the chewing or sniffing of a tobacco product.

USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES FOR DISTRICT BUSINESS

The use of private vehicles for district business is generally discouraged. No staff members may use a private vehicle for district business without permission from the principal.

Use of private vehicles to transport students will not be allowed except by West Glacier Elementary staff for trips within a five mile radius of West Glacier School.

STUDENT OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

Students who must take prescription and/or over-the-counter medication at school, on a temporary or regular basis, must provide a written request to administer medication, signed by the parent. All medications will be kept in locked storage in the office unless a student must carry medication on his/her person during the school day. (See Policy 3416 and 3416F)

Teachers are expected to assist students in remembering when a medication is scheduled to be administered. If the student refuses to take medication, teachers are expected to notify the parent whenever possible. Attempts to contact parents must be documented as to date and time.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/STUDENTS WITH HIV, HBV, AIDS

Protection from communicable disease is generally provided through immunization, exclusion, or other measures provided for in Montana Code Annotated and rules of the county health department. Services generally will not be provided to students excluded unless otherwise required by law.

In those cases where a communicable disease is diagnosed and confirmed and the student would not be excluded from school, the district will inform the appropriate staff member to protect against the risk of exposure.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The use of corporal punishment in any form is strictly prohibited by the district. Corporal punishment is defined as the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain.

A staff member is authorized to employ physical force when, in his/her professional judgment, the physical force is necessary to prevent a student from harming himself/herself, others, or doing harm to district property.

DISMISSAL OF CLASSES

Teachers should never dismiss a class before the established dismissal time. Detaining the entire class after dismissal time is also discouraged. Whenever individual students are detained after class, the teacher is expected to provide the student a note for the student's next class teacher. This will help reduce unnecessary hall traffic, as students reporting to class late will need to account for their tardiness.

DISASTER DRILLS

There will be at least eight (8) disaster drills a year, four (4) of which will be fire drills. All teachers will discuss fire drill procedures with their class at the beginning of each year. The drills will be held at different hours of the day or evening to avoid distinction between drills and actual disasters.

A map/diagram of the fire escape route to be followed should be posted near the classroom doorways and reviewed with students. Upon the sounding of a fire alarm, teachers are required to:

1. Immediately direct all students to orderly exit the building using the evacuation route posted. Students may not stop at lockers, drinking fountains, restrooms, etc., along the way;
2. Close windows, turn off lights, and leave doors unlocked but closed;
3. Take the emergency flip chart with updated rosters located near the door;
4. Escort class at least 50 feet from the building and take roll. If it is prudent, take the students to the basketball court located on the playground and have them line up by grade. Report any unaccounted students to the building principal.
5. Upon "all clear" signal, announced by the clerk and/or administrator, escort students directly back to class. Check roll.

FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The Board recognizes that field trips, when used as a device for teaching and learning integral to the curriculum, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the schools. Such trips can supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment beyond the classroom. The Board also recognizes that field trips may result in lost learning opportunities in missed classes. Therefore, the Board endorses the use of field trips, when educational objectives achieved by the trip outweigh any lost in-class learning opportunities.

Field trips which take students out of county must be approved in advance by the Board; the principal/lead teacher may approve all other field trips.

The principal/lead teacher will develop procedures for operation of a field trip. Each field trip must be integrated with the curriculum and coordinated with classroom activities which enhance its usefulness.

All transportation for school-sponsored activities, including field trips, athletic, and other off-campus events, will be carried out through the bus contractor. Use of private vehicles to transport students will not be allowed except by West Glacier Elementary staff for trips within a five mile radius of West Glacier School. (See Policy 2320)

GRADING

The evaluation of student progress is a primary responsibility of all teachers. The highest possible level of student achievement is a common goal of both the district and the home. As a close working relationship between the district and the home is essential to the accomplishment of this goal, regular communications with parents is essential.

Teachers should use a variety of communication devices, including telephone, email and personal conferences as well as written grade reports, to keep parents well informed. At the beginning of the grading period, students and parents are to be informed regarding the basis of the grades and the methods to be used in determining grades.

Due-process procedures will be provided to all students whose grade is reduced or credit denied for attendance rather than academic reasons. Reasons for the student's absence will be considered. No grade may be reduced or credit denied based on absence due to religious reasons, a student's disability, or an excused absence as determined by district policy. Such notice is to be included in each teacher's syllabus and distributed to students at the beginning of the grading period.

Special education students are to receive grades based on progress toward goals stated in the Individual Education Program (IEP).

HOMEWORK

Teachers at all grade levels are encouraged to consistently assign homework, which is expected to increase in complexity with the maturity or grade level of the student.

Homework may refer to an assignment prepared during a period of supervised study in class or outside of class or which requires individual work in the home.

Homework is expected to be designed to improve learning, to aid in the mastery of skills and to stimulate interest on the part of the student.

The information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment. Homework should not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most homes, school libraries, or the public library. Homework should require the use of those materials only when the student has had instruction in such use. With the shift to a four day academic week, assigned additional continued study at home is encouraged to ensure the continuum of knowledge acquisition over the extended weekend.

Homework assignments outside the academic day should be written in student's passports. Passports should be a relevant and useful tool to communicate academic and behavioral expectations from school to home. In the upper grades students can take more ownership of the entries with teacher supervision while in the primary grades entries will need to be more teacher directed and can be entered on a week by week basis. Teachers need to not only instruct the students but the parents/guardians on the value of homework and insure that they have the proper tools they need to ensure that parents/guardians, teachers and community are working together to effectively educate all children.

MAKE-UP WORK

A student who has an excused absence from class is to be permitted to make up those assignments that he/she has missed. The student is expected to make arrangements with the teacher on his/her first day back in class, for the work missed due to absence.

Any student truant from school will be permitted to make up missed work, at the discretion of the teacher.

A student suspended from school may be permitted, as provided by Policy 3300, to make up school work upon his/her return from the suspension, if the work reflects achievement over a greater period of time than the length of the suspension. For example, the student is allowed to make up final, midterm, and unit examinations, without an academic penalty. Students will not, however, be allowed to make up daily assignments, laboratory experiments, class discussions or presentations missed while under suspension.

RESUSCITATION

No staff member may comply with any directive from parents or others, written or verbal, that life-sustaining emergency care be withheld from a student in need of such care while under the control and supervision of district staff.

Life-sustaining emergency care means any procedure or intervention applied by appropriately trained district staff that may prevent a student from dying who, without such procedure or intervention, faces a risk of imminent death. Examples of life-sustaining emergency care may include: efforts to stop bleeding, unblocking airways, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

In a life-threatening situation, staff members are expected to dial 911 for paramedic assistance and provide life-sustaining emergency care to any student requiring it in order to sustain life, until relieved by paramedics or other appropriate medical personnel.

RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the certified staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved.

The principal/lead teacher will make the final decision on retention/promotion.

STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS

All money raised or collected by and/or for school-approved student groups are to be receipted and deposited into a fund administered by the business office. All student activity fund expenditures must be approved by the principal/lead teacher and person in charge of the student activities program.

All expenditures from the general account of student activity funds must also be approved by the school-recognized student government organization if such organization exists. Funds derived from the student body as a whole shall be expended to benefit the student body as a whole.

All expenditures from a specific account of student activity funds related to other school-recognized student groups must be approved by the members of that organization and their staff adviser. Funds derived from authorized clubs and organizations shall be expended to benefit the specific club or organization and, to the extent possible, to benefit those subjects currently in school who have contributed to the accumulation of the funds.

STUDENT CONDUCT

All students are to comply with district policy, written building and classroom rules, pursue the prescribed course of study, submit to the lawful authority of teachers and school officials, and conduct themselves in an orderly manner at school during the school day or during school-sponsored activities.

In addition to adopted Board policies governing student conduct, administrative regulations specifying student-conduct expectations have been established. These rules apply to actions which occur on district property, at any district-sponsored activity regardless of location; or when traveling to or from school for district-sponsored activities. Disregard of these rules constitutes grounds for suspension, expulsion, or other reasonable disciplinary action.

All teachers are expected to review the student conduct rules contained in the Student/Parent Handbook with their students during the first week of the school year.

Student conduct rules unique to individual classrooms may also be developed by teachers. All such rules must be consistent with district policy and local building administrative regulations governing student conduct and discipline. Classroom rules and consequences are to be reviewed with students, posted in classrooms, and made available to parents.

Classroom rules and consequences are to be submitted to the principal/lead teacher for review and approval.

STUDENT DETENTION

Teachers may detain a student after school hours for disciplinary reasons, provided the parent has been notified of the detention and, in the case of bus students, prior arrangements have been made for the student's transportation home.

Parents may be asked to arrange for the transportation of the detained student; however, if the parent cannot or will not provide it, an alternative disciplinary procedure must be substituted.

Students who are detained after school are not to be left unsupervised during their detention.

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

A student/parent handbook is issued to all students at the beginning of each new school year and at the time of registration for new students moving into the district at other times of the year.

All staff members are expected to familiarize themselves with the general information, administrative rules and procedures pertaining to students, as set forth in the student/parent handbook and in Board policy.

Teachers are expected to review the handbook with students during the days/times designated by the principal/lead teacher.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Upon notification by the office of a student withdrawal from school, teachers are expected to complete the student withdrawal form, including grade earned to date.

Teachers are expected to make a complete accounting of any unreturned or damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, equipment, or other district property, including replacement costs, if known. Submit the list to the office.

VISITORS

Students are not permitted to bring visitors to school without prior approval of the principal/lead teacher. Staff members are expected to report any unauthorized person on school property to the principal/lead teacher.