

# **Northland Community Schools**

**ISD #118**



## **Non-Licensed Handbook**

**2023-2024**

*ISD #118 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, familial status, religion, creed, gender, marital status, genetic information, or receipt of public assistance in admission, access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities.*

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# Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the applicable policies, procedures, practices, and benefits of Northland Community Schools. It is intended to provide you with information about the district that will be helpful to you in the course of your employment. Because of this, we expect you to take the time to read it and become familiar with its contents.

It has been continually updated to reflect any policy, procedure, practice or benefit changes. This latest edition is effective August 29, 2023, and supersedes all previous policies, procedures, practices, and benefits of the district, both oral and written. If there are any discrepancies in benefit information provided in this handbook and benefit plan documents, the language in the benefit plan documents shall prevail.

The handbook is simply a summary of the district's current policies, procedures, practices, and benefits for your personal education and therefore should not be construed as a legal document. This handbook is not a contract of employment.

# GENERAL

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements immediately follow the Pledge of Allegiance each morning. If you have additional announcements requests, email the office prior to 8:00am.

## ATHLETIC EVENT GUIDELINES

All workers shall be at their workstations 30 minutes before the beginning of the scheduled event. In most instances, that is 5:30.

After the 7th / 8th grade game starts, all workers shall assist in clearing the gym of students/fans that have not paid.

Floorwalkers must remain until the building is cleared of all students and fans.

Ticket seller may quit selling tickets:

- Volleyball -- beginning of the third match or game. (Varsity)
- Basketball/Football -- after the second half of the varsity game begins.

The ticket seller may be asked to stay and help supervise. The ticket seller should watch that students are not entering the building through the entrance next to the janitor's room.

Everyone, except participants, game workers and Northland/HCN Storm students and staff are required to purchase a ticket when entering the JV and Varsity games. If a student leaves the event, they are not allowed to reenter the event.

Floorwalkers are to be moving in and out of the gym area, checking all exit doors so they are locked. In the case of football, the floorwalker should be moving around the playing area and parking area as needed. Assist administrator on duty as needs may arise. Administrators are to get the microphone out and put it back after the game.

## ATTENDANCE AT WORKSHOPS OUTSIDE OF THE DISTRICT

If you are going to attend a workshop outside of I.S.D. #118:

1. You need to fill out the proper requests forms.
2. Upon approval:
  - a. Request a sub and submit sub plans to secretary and administrator.
  - b. In the event of a group, carpooling or requesting a school vehicle is recommended.
    - i. The district reimburses mileage at the federal rate. Obtain forms for requesting reimbursement from the office. Mileage should be submitted monthly.
3. Receipts must be attached to the expense reimbursement form for all meals, room charges, and other reimbursable expenses. (See Policy 446)
  - a. If is a meal is provided at the workshop, district will not reimburse for that meal.
  - b. Obtain forms for requesting reimbursement from the office.

## BASIC CLASSROOM CARE

1. Students should not be allowed to put feet on desks or furniture or to sit on tables or furniture not intended for sitting.
2. Check condition of classroom furniture daily; report any damage immediately to the principal, his/her designee, or custodian.
3. Rooms, desks, and cabinets should be locked when not in use.
4. Students should not be allowed to use rooms without supervision.
5. The room should be left at the end of the day the same way that it was found at the beginning of the day. Students should be asked to help in keeping the room clean and neat.
6. **Eating and/or drinking beverages in the classroom is forbidden except for preapproved activities.**

## CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Refer to Policy 524.1

### Purpose Statement

Northland Community Schools uses instructional technology as one way of supporting our vision to ensure that each student acquires 21st century skills to achieve his or her potential, become a productive community member and value lifelong learning. In an effort to be proactive with today's growing social and interactive technology trends, it is our hope that this new policy will increase awareness and training while putting into practice social and professional etiquette relating to electronic devices. Students in possession of a cell phone must comply with the Cell Phone Policy and the Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy.

### General Statement of Policy

- a. All students, grades PreK-12, will place all electronic devices in their school lockers each day prior to the start of the day (8:25AM). Devices must be turned to vibrate or silent mode when stored in school lockers.
- b. All students in grades 7-12 may use cell phones between class periods and during lunch.
- c. Students may not have their cell phones, headphones, or earbuds with them during instructional time. This includes students in the office, hallways, and restrooms during instructional time. Instructional time is defined as the time from the last tone of one tardy bell to the first tone of the dismissal bell.
- d. Cell phone use will not be permitted in locker rooms or restrooms. The use of cell phones in a bathroom or locker room may result in a major.
- e. Students also are prohibited from using a cell phone or other electronic communication device to engage in conduct prohibited by school district policies including, but not limited to, cheating, bullying, harassment, and malicious and sadistic conduct.
- f. A student who has a phone confiscated may not use another student's cell phone.

## CITIZENSHIP

The Board of Education feels that instruction in citizenship and democracy are essential to a basic educational program. In accordance with that belief, each class, PreK-12, will begin their school day by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.



## **COPYING MACHINES**

Secretaries know how to use the copying machines. Make certain you are trained prior to using a copying machine. **Do not** have students, including TAs, run the machines for you.

Staff should prioritize the staff workroom copiers prior to using the office copier.

If the material to be copied is for **personal use**, **10 cents per copy** is to be paid to the building secretaries.

Under no condition is any copyrighted book/work or chapter of book/work to be copied in its entirety without permission of the author or publisher.

## **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT PROHIBITED**

Refer to Policy 507 and State Statute 121A.58

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to describe limitations on use of corporal punishment or prone restraint upon a student.

### **General Statement of Policy**

No employee or agent of the school district or charter school shall inflict corporal punishment or use prone restraint upon a student.

## **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

All new employees must clear a Criminal Background Check before beginning employment with the Northland Community Schools. There is a fee for the background check, which is paid by the potential employee.

## **DISTRICT DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Refer to Policy 506

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students are aware of and comply with the school district's expectations for student conduct. Such compliance will enhance the school district's ability to maintain discipline and ensure that there is no interference with the educational process. The school district will take appropriate disciplinary action when students fail to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct established by this policy.

### **Positive Behavioral Interventions And Supports (PBIS)**

The goal of PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) is to increase academic achievement and foster the social development of all students. It is a school wide framework for helping all students achieve important social and learning goals. Rather than focusing on the response or punishment when misbehavior occurs, this approach introduces and models behavior expectations, and then recognizes students when the positive social behaviors occur. The purpose of PBIS is to establish a school climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.

As part of this initiative much work has been done to build Eagle Pride, School Wide. Expectations for behavior are clearly posted throughout the building, school grounds, buses, and at all school related activities. A common language has been developed for everyone including students, administration, teachers, support staff, bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and guests. A system has been established to recognize students for their positive behavior, academics, and attendance on a weekly, quarterly, and semester basis. The following four behavior expectations have been established for all areas of Northland Community Schools:

### **EAGLE PRIDE, SCHOOL WIDE**

**Be Responsible**

**Be Respectful**

**Be Productive**

**Be Safe**

Documents supporting PBIS are found on Google Drive.

## **EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT**

Refer to Policy 413

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability (Protected Class).

## **FACULTY COMMITTEES**

Various committees are formed during the year to study school problems, resolve issues or to perform specific tasks. Staff are encouraged to participate in those various committees.

## **FAMILY NIGHT**

By tradition (and by action of the Board of Education), no evening activities are to be scheduled by the school on Wednesday. This night has been set aside for the family to be together and to provide an evening for other community organizations to sponsor activities.

## **FUND RAISING**

Refer to Policy 511

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to address student fundraising efforts.

### **General Statement of Policy**

The school board recognizes a desire and a need by some student organizations for fundraising. The school board also recognizes a need for some constraint to prevent fundraising activities from becoming too numerous and overly demanding on employees, students and the general public.

All fundraising activities must be approved in advance by the administration. Upon approval, complete all appropriate forms and follow procedures as listed in the policy.

No money should be left in the desk of a member of the faculty. Each staff member should turn in all money received during the day to the district office. with the proper form(s).

Funds must be used “by the students for students”.

## **GENERAL SUPPLIES**

All general supplies are ordered in bulk and stored in the teacher workrooms. If there is a need for a general supply, contact the office.

## **HANDLING OF BODY FLUIDS (BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS)**

The booklet Cass County Guidelines for Handling Body Fluids is very informative about what to do in case you need to handle body fluids. Two simple guidelines:

- Glove up!
- When feasible, have the person whose bodily fluids must be handled, handle their own fluids.
- 

Each classroom has a body fluid kit consisting of: 1) the bucket, 2) 2 pair of rubber gloves, 3) bottle of disinfectant, 4) large waste bag, 5) bag of vomit absorber, 6) paper towels.

If you don't have the body fluid kit, please notify the Custodial Maintenance Supervisor.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES**

An instant alert will be sent out to all staff. All employees may listen to local radio stations or television stations for late start or school closing announcements.

If a late start is announced, staff will report at the later start time. For example, a two-hour late start is announced, teachers usually reporting at 7:30 A.M. must report by 9:30 A.M.

If school is closed for an entire day, staff will not be required to report. A make-up day may be scheduled, or staff may be asked to document hours worked.

School schedules will not be altered if school is a late start or closed.

## **INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY**

Refer to Policy 524

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the school district computer system and acceptable and safe use of the Internet, including electronic communications.

### **General Statement of Policy**

In making decisions regarding student and employee access to the school district computer

system and the Internet, including electronic communications, the school district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the school district computer system and to the Internet enables students and employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

## **KEYS/BADGES**

Each member of the staff will be issued the necessary keys/badges by the district office. The keys are regulated by the following guidelines:

- a. Only adult school employees will be issued keys/badges.
- b. No staff member is to be in possession of a school key/badge that has not been properly issued by the district office.
- c. Any staff member who unlocks the building after school hours is responsible for the students and/or adults who enter and will be certain that the building is secure when the staff member leaves. This especially pertains to "open gym" on weekends.
- d. Lost keys/badges can be replaced, and a replacement fee will be assessed. Report lost keys immediately to the building principal.
- e. Staff are not allowed to give keys/badges to students.

## **LEAVE DONATION**

Refer to Policy 450A

### **Purpose Statement**

Any Northland Community Schools employee who accrues vacation time or has personal leave may elect to donate a portion of that time to another Northland Community Schools employee. The leave donation program will only be utilized in catastrophic medical situations and only with approval of the Superintendent. Personal leave does not accrue. Therefore, only currently available personal leave may be donated to a currently identified need. It may not be donated toward future needs.

Any Northland Community Schools employee who accrues *vacation time or has personal leave* may elect to donate a portion of that time to another Northland Community Schools employee. The leave donation program will only be utilized in catastrophic medical situations and only with approval of the Superintendent. Personal leave does not accrue. Therefore, only currently available personal leave may be donated to a **currently identified need**. It may not be donated toward future needs.

### **Procedure**

- a. The Superintendent and supervisory staff will provide memorandums for posting and to advise employees of a need for donated hours.

- b. A vacation or personal leave day donation authorization form will be available from the district office and must be signed and returned to that office before a donation can be effective.

## **MAIL**

A basket for outgoing mail is in the office. Teachers will be notified when packages arrive. When possible, packages will be delivered to classrooms. Please affix the proper postage to all personal mail.

## **MAILBOXES/EMAIL**

The school district provides each teacher with a mailbox in the Staff Lounge. Mail and other material are distributed to staff through these boxes. Staff members are asked to check their mailboxes daily. Communication is also done via email. Staff are asked to check their email regularly and respond within 24 hours if a response is needed.

## **PAYROLL INFORMATION**

### **Pay Periods:**

Non-licensed staff will be paid on the 15th day of the month and on the last day of the month. When the 15th of the month or the last day of the month fall on Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday, payments will be issued on the preceding workday. For hourly employees, wages paid on the 15th will be based on hours submitted for the 16th through the last day of the previous month. Wages paid on the last day of the month will be based on hours submitted for the 1st through the 15th of the current month.

### **Direct Payroll Deposit**

Northland Community Schools uses direct deposit for payroll. Employees need to submit a direct deposit form to Payroll every time they want to change the place where their paycheck is deposited. Further information is available from Payroll.

### **Pension Plans (TRA and PERA)**

Public employees are required by state law to belong to pension plans administered by Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA). Minnesota Statutes Chapters 353 and 354 set the rates for employer and employee contributions.

If you have any questions, please call the toll-free numbers listed below:  
PERA (for Non-Licensed staff) 1-800-652-90265

### **SMARTeR – Employee Self Service**

Northland Community Schools utilizes a paperless payroll system.

**Employee Self Serve** is a program accessed online that allows employees to view/print their own pay stubs, W2's, and other information **whenever** they need it. Employees can see more detailed information regarding their leave time, as well as viewing pay information the day before payday. The District Employee Self Service (ESS) site can be accessed from the District's home page at [www.isd118.k12.mn.us](http://www.isd118.k12.mn.us). Click on "Resources" then "Staff" then "Employee Self-Serve."

To enter for payroll enter ID number then password, choose continue to eR, choose option text or email for code. Once receive code enter it, directed to payroll and/or request for leave option is available. All leave is entered through smart eR.

#### *Time Clock:*

If you are not familiar with the Employee Self-service program, please follow the directions below after you've connected to the district website address:

- 1) Enter ID number
- 2) Enter password.
- 3) Choose clock in or clock out.

#### *Information on Logging in to ESS:*

If you are not familiar with the Employee Self-service program, please follow the directions below after you've connected to the district website address:

- 1) Enter ID number.
  - a) Your User ID is your employee number. If you can't remember it, you can look on a previous pay stub. If you can't find that, please call the Executive Secretary.
- 2) Enter password.
  - a) If you can't remember your password, use the "Forgot Password" feature on the login page.
  - b) \*\*\*\*After three unsuccessful attempts, you will be locked out. If that happens you will need to contact the Executive Secretary to reset your password and unlock your access.
- 3) Choose continue to eR
- 4) Choose option for Two-Step Verification
- 5) Enter verification code.
- 6) Once you are at the Employee Self Service menu, you will have multiple tab options. Click on "My Payroll" tab. The various options you will see are:
  - a) "Pay Stub" - On pay day, the current pay information will automatically appear. To view other pay stubs, click on "View Old Pay Stubs." You can also view your Year-to-Date information and general pay information.
  - b) "Time Off" - information about your leave with automatically appear, as well as requesting time off.
  - c) "W-2 and W-2 Information Sheet" – is where you will go to print off your W2. You can also see what you are currently claiming for your tax withholding.
  - d) "Direct Deposit" – view current set up and change direct deposit
- 7) Another tab "About Me" is where you would go to change your password. It is recommended that you do this on your first visit to the site so that others cannot access your employee information. Your password can be up to 12 characters.
- 8) When you are done – be sure to Log Out from the main menu.

If you have any problems accessing this program, please contact Payroll at 218-566-2351.

#### **Insurance Deduction for Less Than Full Time Employees**

Employees who work less than 12 months and who have selected to participate in the district offered Health Insurance Plan (currently Health Partners through NJPA), their total amount of yearly premiums will be deducted evenly over their number of scheduled pay periods. (For example, if an employee works 9 months per year, the total amount of insurance premiums for the year would be evenly deducted over 18 pay periods.)

## **POLICIES OF THE SCHOOL BOARD**

Staff should familiarize themselves with the School Board policies. School board policies are available on the district website and copies may be obtained from the Executive Secretary. Changes are made periodically according to the needs of all concerned and according to state and federal regulations. If you see a need for a change, please contact the principal.

## **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

New employees shall be considered on probation for 1 calendar year of continuous service from their first date of hire.

## **RIGHT TO KNOW**

### **Annual Integrated Pest Management Pesticide Notification**

Northland Community Schools uses licensed, professional pest control firm for the prevention and control of rodents, insects, and other pests in and around the district's buildings.

Pests can sting, bite, cause contamination, damage property and spread disease; therefore, we must prevent their presence and control them as necessary. The district or outside contractors may also apply herbicides on district properties, as deemed necessary. The long-term health effects on children from the application of such pesticides may not be fully understood. All pest control materials are chosen and applied according to labeling directions per Federal law.

To limit the potential pesticide exposure, the district follows safety regulations to ensure pesticides are applied properly. All pesticide products, which are used in and around school buildings, are required to be registered with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, school employees and certified and licensed applicators are required by state and federal law to comply with all requirements of the pesticide label, including building sites, application rates, re-entry intervals, posting, use of personal protective equipment, use restrictions, and disposal on the product label. An estimated schedule of pesticide applications is available for review or copying at the district office.

To be notified about pesticide applications or the management plan, please contact Jared Johnson.

### **Environmental Monitoring - Ahera**

EPA's [asbestos regulations for schools \(the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, "AHERA"\)](#), require that an accredited inspector reinspect school buildings at least once every three years to reassess the condition of ACM.

Any questions concerning this notice or an explanation of our Asbestos Management Plan can be directed to Jared Johnson.

### **Indoor Air Quality Notice**

Northland Community Schools has an Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) management plan. The management plan outlines specific policies and procedures that will be used in the district to address indoor air quality issues. IEA, the District's health and safety consultant completes annual IAQ assessments within the school to ensure proper air quality.

Any questions concerning this notice or an explanation of our IAQ Management Plan can be

directed to Jared Johnson.

## **SCHOOL VEHICLES**

(Refer to Policy 496 - Employees and Non-Participating Dependents In School Vehicles)

School vehicles are available for district approved travel. They are available on a “first-come-first served” basis. Requests should be made several days in advance if possible. Forms for school vehicle use are in the school office.

### **Procedures For Bus or Small Vehicle Checkout**

1. Get preliminary approval from supervisor five days in advance.
2. Fill out request form.
3. You will only hear back on the request form if the request is not approved.
4. Get keys and School Vehicle Use Form from school office. Please Note: If you are leaving before 7:30 A.M., make sure you make arrangements to get keys the day prior to your leaving.
5. Upon your return, lock all of the car doors. Return the key and the completed School Vehicle Use Form to the school office.

### **School Vehicles With Students**

Type III bus is a car, van or station wagon carrying nine or less students. The driver:

- a. Shall not operate vehicle as a Type I or Type II bus.
- b. Shall not stop traffic.
- c. Shall not load or unload in a vehicular traffic lane or on the shoulder. Shall be restricted to curb, non-traffic side (normal parking lane), off street loading areas, driveways, yard service, and other areas to avoid any hazardous conditions.
- d. Shall not load or unload in the right-hand lane of the roadway, designated turn lane, or lane immediately adjacent to a designated turn lane.
- e. Shall not load or unload so that a child has to cross the road. Where not possible or impractical, the driver or aide shall personally escort the child across the road. If driver escorts, the motor must be stopped, ignition key removed, brakes set, and vehicle otherwise rendered immobile.
- f. Shall not load or unload before making a complete stop and disengaging gears by shifting into neutral or park.
- g. Shall not operate as a school bus, whether carrying pupil passengers or not, without displaying the “Vehicle Stops at RR Crossings” sign and stopping at all railroad crossings. Vehicle must be always operated with headlights on. Sign may be covered or removed when vehicle is not operating as a school bus.
- h. Shall enforce the bus riding rules and regulations.
- i. People requesting a car/van must make arrangements for picking up key and the vehicle the day before using the vehicle.
- j. People returning vehicles after school hours need to lock the vehicle and bring the keys and completed School Vehicle Use Form to the school office.

### **Driving School Vehicles**

All school personnel wishing to transport students to games and other activities will be required to complete Type III driver training, submit to a driver’s license check, and hold a Type III license.



- All training and driver’s license checks need to be completed prior to the transportation of students.
- Driver license checks need to be updated annually.
- Forms may be obtained in the district office.
- Forms must be returned to the district office for processing.
- Pre-approval needs to occur with building Principal or Superintendent.

## **SOLICITORS**

The laws of this state establish that no one is to come into the school building other than to come to the administrative offices unless they have the permission of the principal. This refers to sales personnel and others that have a business reason for calling on the school, as well as those who might want to call on individual faculty members or students to solicit personal business. Agents will not be allowed to call on staff members during a time that the faculty member is engaged in actively supervising students in some capacity. In no event, will agents be allowed to contact teachers unless it directly involves a school activity.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND PROCEDURES**

Refer to Policy 425

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a staff development program and structure to carry out planning and reporting on staff development that supports improved student learning.

### **Procedures**

1. Requester will complete the yellow Staff Development form. (Found in office)
  - a. Attach the following to the yellow form:
    - i. a copy of training/workshop information
    - ii. options for hotels, if needed
2. Requester will place the yellow sheet with attachment information in Staff Development Committee Chair’s mailbox.
3. Requests will be brought to the next Staff Development Committee Meeting.
4. Requester will be notified if the request was approved or denied.
  - a. Upon approval, requester will be informed of the next steps.

## **STANDARDS RESPONSE PROTOCOL**

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is based on the response to any given situation not on individual scenarios. SRP incorporates a specific vocabulary but also allows for great flexibility. The premise is simple – these five specific actions that can be performed during an incident. When communicating these, the action is labeled with a “Term of Art” and is then followed by a “Directive.” Execution of the action is performed by active participants.



**Hold** is followed by the Directive: “**In Your Room or Area**” and is the protocol used when hallways need to be kept clear of occupants.



**Secure** is followed by the Directive: “**Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors**” and is the protocol used to safeguard people within the building.



**Lockdown** is followed by “**Locks, Lights, Out of Sight**” and is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place.



**Evacuate** and may be followed by a location and is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.



**Shelter** State the **Hazard and Safety Strategy** for group and self-protection.

## STUDENT ACTIVITY ABSENCES

Staff members who will be taking students out of classes during the school day are asked to provide the office with a list of those students that will be gone. This list should be given to the office at least one day before the scheduled event with the purpose of the activity and advisor name. This list will be shared with all teachers that have those students throughout the day.

## STUDENT HEALTH

When a student becomes ill, notify the office. In most cases, students who become ill should be escorted to the office. **NEVER** leave an ill student unsupervised.

If a student is ill, he/she will be allowed to rest in the nurse's room for up to an hour. If the illness lasts beyond that, the office /nurse will call the parents to pick up the student. (Make sure the child is checked on at least every 15 minutes while they are in the sick room.)

### Accidents

If a student is injured while under teacher supervision, the responsible teacher should report the incident immediately to the principal's office and complete an “**accident report**” form by the end of the day. Parents need to be contacted if the accident required first aid or more.

All student accidents must have the proper form filled out on it the same day as the accident.

### *Medical Assistance to Injured Students*

When a student is injured, the first adult on the scene shall give whatever first aid they are capable of giving and contact the school office if emergency medical help is needed. If the person giving assistance needs extra help, he/she will ask for it. If no assistance is requested, no other adult should interfere.

The district's responsibility is for first aid only. All other procedures must be left to the licensed medical professionals. There are multiple EMTs on staff that will be contacted for assistance.

Drugs or medication, including aspirin products, must not be dispensed by school personnel without written request from the parent. The medication must be in a pharmacy labeled container and stored in the office.

Parents of a student who needs emergency medical help must be contacted as soon as possible.

## **TOBACCO AND DRUG FREE SCHOOL**

Refer to Policy 418 – Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School

Refer to Policy 419 – Tobacco-Free Environment

### **Purpose Statements**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe and healthful environment for employees and students by prohibiting the use of alcohol, toxic substances, medical cannabis, nonintoxicating cannabinoids, edible cannabinoid products, and controlled substances without a physician's prescription.

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment that is tobacco-free.

## **USE OF CHAIRS AND STOOLS AS A STEPPING DEVICE**

Please be advised that no employee is to use a stool or a chair as a stepping device. Several options are available:

1. Get a ladder or step stool.
2. Request assistance from the custodial staff that will use a ladder.

## **USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

From time to time, teachers may request to use school equipment for personal reasons. The facility use form must be completed and turned in to administration. Upon approval, all school property must be checked out in one of administrative offices prior to its leaving the building.

## **VISITORS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDINGS AND SITES**

Northland Community Schools encourage interest on the part of parents and community members in school programs and student activities. The school welcomes visits to the school building and school property by parents and community members provided the visits are consistent with the health, education and safety of the students and employees and are conducted within the procedures and requirements by the school district.

Visitors entering Northland Community Schools must report directly to the main office. All visitors must:

- sign, date, provide location and record time they have entered the building, and
- receive and wear the visitor identification badge.

Prior to leaving the building the visitor must return the visitor identification badge and record the time they are leaving the building.

Any student guests of I.S.D. #118 students must have prior approval by the building principal or designee.

Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School administrators are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering buildings or from loitering on grounds. Please notify the office if you see someone without a visitor badge.

Visitors to the school are not allowed to interview nor interrogate students at school unless they have written permission of the student's parents and consent of the building administrator.

People who are not employees of District #118 shall not be permitted to meet with the employees and/or students at school during the workday, except as permitted by the building principal or district designated representative.

### **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:**

Parents need not sign in if they are attending Conferences, Assemblies, Athletic events, or special programs.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

(Refer to Policy 501)

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to assure a safe school environment for students, staff and the public.

### **General Statement of Policy**

No student or nonstudent, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in this policy. The school district will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public who violates this policy.

# Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals are an integral team member, assisting students with special education needs, as well as many other student support areas. In the Northland Community Schools the primary role of the paraprofessionals is to provide direct support to students. This can include students with special needs in and out of the classroom by working with students one-on-one or in small groups. Paraprofessionals may however, be called on to perform a variety of other tasks. We hope that your time at Northland will be filled with positive growth and learning for you, as well as for the students and teachers with whom you will work with every day.

## PROCEDURES/GENERAL INFORMATION

### Absences

Attendance and punctuality convey how seriously you take your job. Your supervising teacher and students you work with count on you being at work on time every day. All Leaves of Absences are addressed in the contract. Most leaves need prior approval. Please contact your building principal or payroll clerk to discuss leaves.

- All paraprofessionals are required to submit leave requests using the TimeClock Plus System.
- When the paraprofessional will be absent due to illness or special emergency, the paraprofessional must contact the school front office at **566-2351 by 6:30 AM**.
- After notifying the front office, the paraprofessional needs to enter the sick leave or special emergency leave in the TimeClock Plus system. Sick leave cannot be paid until the sick leave request is entered in the TimeClock plus system by the paraprofessional.

Often a major part of your supervision is directly related to the safety of students. Punctuality and adhering to your schedule within the day is very important. There will be times when your daily schedule changes. It is important that teachers or other persons you work with are notified of the changes you have been directed.

### Attitude

All employees convey an image of the school to other professionals, to parents, and to the community. We want this to be a favorable image. The paraprofessional is as much a part of creating this image as are the certified staff members. Therefore, your actions and speech should be always appropriate and professional. Show your support for the special education program as well as your supervising teacher verbally, enthusiastically, and actively. For example, just remembering to smile and being friendly towards others can make a difference, as well as looking to assist others. When working with students, having a sense of humor, praising their efforts, and using positive statements show students that you care about them and that you enjoy what you are doing.

### Schedules

Paraprofessionals will work with their supervising classroom or special education teacher to create a written schedule that will be submitted to the principal. These schedules are to be followed daily.

**\*\*Paraprofessionals working in a non-classroom environment will submit schedules to building**

principal.

Each paraprofessional must arrive at their scheduled time. If a paraprofessional is aware ahead of time they may be late, a courtesy call to the district office is required, stating the approximate time of arrival. This is so the supervising teacher can plan appropriately and account for each of the students the paraprofessional is responsible for.

Each paraprofessional must stay for their scheduled time. If a paraprofessional must leave their workday early they must first clear it with their supervising teacher. A paraprofessional who leaves early without notifying their supervising teacher to make arrangements for their absence, will be subjected to district discipline policy.

### **Breaks**

Paraprofessionals are entitled to a duty free 30 minute lunch break each day. Paraprofessionals will work with their supervising teacher to schedule two 15 minutes breaks throughout day, as the schedule and student needs allow.

### **Cell Phone Usage**

Cell phones should never be out when working with students. Cell phones may be used at your discretion when NOT with a student and when you are on a break. Keep personal cell phone use to break time only unless it's an emergency.

### **Communication**

No matter how well a program is designed, success depends on good communication between the teacher and the paraprofessional. It is key to keep communication positive among staff and students. Poor communication skills and negative statements are at the heart of most problems. The learning process is totally dependent upon the staff establishing and maintaining good lines of daily communication. However, communication with students and staff goes beyond verbal interaction and includes nonverbal interaction. Research has concluded that approximately 80% of communication is nonverbal. Your actions may speak more loudly than your words.

### **Supervision**

As a general rule, paraprofessionals will almost always have one official immediate supervisor to deal with (typically the principal). However, due to the dynamic nature of the position, paraprofessionals may find themselves in environments that they may need to report to or take direction from many people. These people may include, but are not limited to special education teachers, general education teachers, related special education staff, and administration. The classroom and special education teacher that you work with will be a primary source of information for you and may be asked to provide information for your performance evaluation.

### **Para "Chain of Command"**

Please follow this chain of command when reporting to the district supervisors:

1. Regular Education Teacher, if working in the room at the time of question or concern
2. Special Education teacher;
3. Building Administration;

## **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, REFLECTIONS, AND EVALUATION PLAN**

Northland Community Schools supports an ongoing program of professional growth, reflection and evaluation. To this end, the administration and staff of Northland Community Schools are directed to implement and maintain a systematic program of employee growth, reflection and evaluation.

### **Assumptions of the Northland Community Schools employee Professional Growth, Reflection, and Evaluation Plan:**

- A. All employees of Northland Community Schools are committed to on-going professional growth and proficiency.
- B. Professional development is supported through effective performance evaluation.
- C. Probationary employees will demonstrate a level of performance at or above the level of proficiency or have clearly demonstrated progress towards proficiency as defined by this Growth, Reflection & Evaluation Plan in order to achieve regular status.
- D. Regular Employees of the Northland Community Schools will perform at or above the level of proficiency as defined by this Growth, Reflection & Evaluation Plan.
- E. Employees who are not performing at or above the level of proficiency as defined by this Growth, Reflection & Evaluation plan will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan.

### **Purposes of the Northland Community Schools Employee Growth, Reflection and Evaluation Plan:**

- A. To improve the quality of learning experiences for students.
- B. To facilitate communication and cooperation between staff and administrators.
- C. To provide specific assistance and feedback for staff to promote professional growth.
- D. To provide a continuous written record of professional staff performance and service as an acknowledgment of effective job performance.
- E. To aid the employee in gaining insights as to strengths and weaknesses and to provide a vehicle for continued improvement in job performance.
- F. To provide a basis for the principal/supervisor to recommend “regular” status or as a basis for placement on the Performance Improvement Plan.

## **GROWTH, REFLECTION & EVALUATION PROCESS**

All new paraprofessionals are evaluated at least twice during the first year of employment. After the first year, paraprofessionals are evaluated at least once a year. More evaluations can be scheduled as needed.

### **Gathering of Input**

- A. The Principal will gather input from the Special Education Teacher and General Education Teachers that are associated with each individual paraprofessional. The Principal will send the Input Form to these staff members and will follow up to completion.
- B. The Principal will formally observe paraprofessionals throughout the school year and prior to the evaluation.
- C. If a category does not apply, the teacher offering input should acknowledge it by writing Not Applicable.

### **Growth, Reflection & Evaluation Meeting**

- A. A meeting between the employee and the Principal will take place. The meeting will be a discussion regarding the employee's Self Evaluation and the evaluation document from the Principal with the input from the associated teachers.
- B. During this meeting, growth goals will be created between the Principal and the employee. This will include the goal, expected outcome and evidence or indicators that the outcome has been met. These goals may be shared with the employee's Special Education Teacher at the employee's request.
- C. Upon completion of setting growth goals, the employee and the Principal sign the final document, which includes the growth goals and the employee's self-reflection, in order to show the required steps have been accomplished. The signatures do not mean agreement with the feedback or ratings. Also, the employee can attach to the evaluation document additional responses, comments or notes at any time.

### **Performance Improvement Plan**

- A. Should the Principal determine that there are multiple categories that need improvement, the Principal will meet with the paraprofessional's special education teacher and discuss feedback and growth opportunities. If the Principal and special education teacher determine further support is needed, they will reach out to their building administrator/Asst. Director of Special Education/Director of Human Resources, to seek support on further training, development, coaching, or, if needed, write a formal performance improvement plan for the paraprofessional.



## **Paraprofessional Duties and Responsibilities**

Paraprofessionals serve under the direction and supervision of the regular or special education teacher to assist in carrying out Individual Education Programs. You are a valued and skilled member of the educational team, and you may be asked to provide input to generate ideas to assist in the development of materials and adaptations for students.

### **Role of Paraprofessional**

The role of the paraprofessional in special education is to directly or indirectly assist and support in the provision of services to students with disabilities to help them access the general education curriculum in as independent a manner as possible. The role assignments with a paraprofessional are not defined by student, setting, or program, but rather by a student's needs as determined by the IEP.

### **Behavior Management**

Maintain consistent behavior management, as defined by the team and the IEP, with each learner and assist with supervision of all activities. Some students have Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) written into their IEP. These plans must be followed very closely. Please check with the case manager before implementing any type of behavior intervention, to be sure it is an approved procedure.

### **Individual/Group Work**

Under supervision of the teacher, carry out daily objectives and work with learners as individuals or in groups to reinforce material presented by the teacher(s).

- Assist individuals, or in small or large group instruction
- Direct learners in use of materials and understanding directions
- Provide information to learner through alternative modes when necessary
- Reinforce with practice, skills previously taught
- Assist students with self-care, feeding, eating (when appropriate).
- Assist specialists (nurses, therapists) as required
- Read information, directions, assignments, tests, stories to students as needed

### **Planning**

Assist in organizing classroom and daily lessons, grading papers, and preparing or copying materials for the learner(s).

- Assist in classroom planning as requested.
- Report classroom progress to general education teacher and special education teacher
- Report needs of child in both regular and special education settings to teacher(s)
- Assist with material preparation as directed
- Snack preparations
- Classroom cleanup
- Assist with program planning as requested
- Attend meeting and conferences as requested

### **Documentation**

Assist in recording data as trained and requested (i.e. medical, academic, behavior, incident/accident, etc.)

## **Equipment**

Operate and care for equipment used by students and staff.

- Care of books, supplies, equipment
- Reserve, set-up operate, return instructional equipment
- Operate copying equipment
- Operate equipment specific to learners needs

## **Transition**

Promote learner independence in transitioning with

- Assist students in preparing to enter and leaving building in school, as required throughout the day (may require lifting with some students)
- Assist students with bus loading/unloading

## **Student Medical Information**

### **Administering medications**

It is the policy of Northland Community Schools not to administer any medications to students unless there is a written doctor's order on file. This policy includes over the counter medications such as aspirin, cough syrups, etc. Medications must be sent to school in the original bottle from the pharmacy, with the doctor's directions. Mixed dosages in the same bottle are not acceptable. Please consult your supervisor or school nurse with questions regarding this policy.

### **Missed Medication**

If a student misses his/her medication, refuses to take it, or it is delayed in being administered, contact your supervisor or the school nurse in charge of the program.

### **Delegated Medical Procedures**

Some medical procedures can be delegated to paraprofessionals if they are properly trained and routinely supervised by the nurse. Paraprofessionals should only perform procedures for which they have been trained and demonstrated competency.

## **Professional Ethics**

To protect the rights of students and families, paraprofessionals must be aware of and practice appropriate ethical behavior. They must maintain confidentiality and protect and promote the rights of students' dignity, privacy, and respect. Paraprofessionals must also demonstrate honesty, loyalty, dependability, cooperation, accountability, and a willingness to learn. The following is a suggested code of Ethics for paraprofessionals:

- Engage only in non-instructional and instructional activities for which you are qualified and trained
- Do not communicate progress or concerns regarding students to parents, community members, or school staff not involved with the students. Discuss student progress, programming, etc., only with the supervising teacher in an appropriate setting
- Refer concerns expressed by parents, students, or others to your supervising teacher or administrator
- Recognize that the supervisor has the ultimate responsibility for instructions and management, and follow his/her prescribed directions.

- Express differences in opinion with supervisor, only when students are not present
- Discuss work-related problems only with appropriate personnel
- Do not engage in discriminatory practices based on a student's handicap, race, sex, culture, or religion
- Be a positive role model
- Follow all district and building policies set forth by administration and school board
- Accept responsibility for improving your skills
- Represent the school in a positive manner

## Tips for the Paraprofessional

1. Do not let the student become overly dependent on you. The less work you do for the learner, the better. A successful paraprofessional will guide the student to the correct answer without giving the answer to help the student develop independence and learning skills.
2. Spend time asking questions, listening, writing, and helping students to think for themselves.
3. Be sensitive to the emotional, psychological, social problems that may be affecting the performance and behavior of the student. Bring them to the attention of the case manager, school principal, social worker, or building special education coordinator. Do not be afraid to ask for help!
4. Avoid assuming the role and responsibilities of the professionals and parents. Your job is to support these people, not replace them.
5. Be patient and reinforce positively when a goal is met. Progress may be slow, but always point out the accomplishment no matter how small.
6. Be sensitive in communicating with your students. Most importantly, be a careful listener.
7. Avoid being judgmental or stereotyping students. Each student is different.
8. Be realistic in expectations. If you expect little, little will be produced. Let the learner know you have high, but realistic expectations. With encouragement the learner will come to share your expectations.
9. Teach problem-solving strategies whenever possible.
10. Encourage students to be responsible for listening to direction and encourage them to ask questions for clarification.
11. Assist and praise all students in the class, not just the student you are helping. However, keep in mind your first responsibility is to the Special Education Student(s) in the class.
12. Remember, you are a model of appropriate behavior.
13. Encourage all students to accept, support, trust and assist each other.
14. Allow students to make as many decisions for their self as possible. Give them choices.
15. Treat all students with respect.
16. Respect each other as colleagues, co-workers, and professionals. Speak positively about each other and the school. Do not share conflicts with coworkers with people other than your supervisors.
17. Maintain a professional, but supportive role with students.
18. Avoid becoming overly protective. Students may initially require intensive support, but your goal needs to be to "fade" to a coaching and/or indirect role as soon as possible.
19. Carry your share of the load in the classroom. This is particularly important in rooms that are physically demanding.
20. Confidentiality is an absolute requirement. Only share information with people in the school who have direct involvement with a child, and then only the information that the person needs to know to work with the child. Being a school employee does not entitle people to information (see confidentiality).

## Guide For Paraprofessionals

A clear delineation of roles of the teacher and the paraprofessional is an important element of a successful program. Identification of teacher and professional roles insures adherence to ethical and legal requirements and serves as a guide in supervision and evaluation. Actual delivery of instruction to the student may be carried out by the paraprofessional under supervision of the teacher.

<b>A Paraprofessional MAY:</b>	<b>A Paraprofessional May NOT:</b>
Be left alone in a classroom for brief periods of time when teacher is gone.	Be used as a substitute teacher
Work without direct supervision with individuals or groups, on concepts introduced by teachers.	Provide instruction without teacher direction.
Have specific instructional and management responsibility, under direction of certified staff.	Be assigned to attend student staffing in lieu of teacher.
Be involved in student staffing, if requested.	Supervise other staff.
Support inclusion of students in regular class assignments and tutoring.	Assign grades, write programs.
Be assigned record keeping tasks as relevant to classroom management.	Make parent contact or share information with non-school people, unless authorized.
Be reassigned within building/district by administration	Make major program decisions.
Work with a variety of disabilities.	Have access to files, unless authorized.
Assist in transportation supervision of students	Transport students in own vehicles

<b>Tasks a Paraprofessional can do while Assisting in the General Education or Special Education Classroom.</b>			
<b>Whole Group Instruction</b>	<b>Independent Work Time</b>	<b>Group Work Time</b>	<b>Testing</b>
Cue students to take notes and make sure they continue to do so throughout the instruction.	Make sure students are on task and productive.	Make sure students get in a group.	Reading test allowed in arranging for them in advance.
Take class notes in a notebook for later use or take notes on the board if this is a system that works for the teacher.	Providing help with assignment completion – offering help multiple times and with different methods.	Facilitate and model participation – okay to offer the group suggestions.	Rephrasing test items – providing scaffolding/triggers (not answers).
Facilitating spelling, organization, on task behavior, etc.	Prompt/cue skills – skimming a textbook, using bold words, index, etc.	Assist with individual tasks – offering help multiple times and with different methods.	Providing a framework or outline when answering essay questions.
Charting student on-task behavior, assignment completion, etc.			

**Talk with the teacher about your physical role in the classroom. Find out if you should be seated next to specific students, if you should walk around during the whole group, small group, or independent work time to check on on-task behavior, or offer assistance, etc.**

## Positive Behavioral Management and Strategies

Behavior management is complex and unique to each individual. In each classroom environment, staff will manage behavior in a variety of ways. Paraprofessionals, in order to reinforce consistency, need to model the classroom management systems defined by each classroom teacher. When further intervention is necessary, the regular classroom teacher and special education teacher will plan appropriate interventions for the paraprofessional to implement. It is important for paraprofessionals to define their roles with the teacher in each classroom setting.

**Attention** - It is vital to have the attention of the end individuals who are working with. It is okay to wait until the group is quiet and it's sending to you before you begin activity.

**Instruction** – It is likely that the student is displaying charging papers, because they do not know how to do it correctly. We must teach our students how to display the correct behaviors.

**Monitoring** - The key word here is to circulate. Staying in one place is not an effective way to deal with challenging behaviors.

**Modeling** – Students become confused as to what appropriate behaviors are expected if they witness inappropriate behaviors by adults in the environment.

**Non-Verbal Cueing** – Non-verbal cueing is less intrusive than verbal cueing. Especially in a whole classroom setting. Non-verbal cueing can be facial expressions, body posture, proximity, and hand signals.

**Environmental control** – Behavior problems can be remedied by changing the environment in which the behaviors occur. Providing structured activities on the playground significantly reduces the number of problem behaviors in this setting.

**Low Profile Intervention** – Intervention does not need to be a big production. Confrontation is NOT an effective form of discipline. In fact this option often escalates the behavior.

There are a number of **general management strategies and tips** that professionals will want to be familiar with no matter what setting they may be working in.

- **Build rapport** with students. Students who have a positive view of you will be more likely to cooperate. It is important to establish Rapport while still maintaining an appropriate relationship. You can have a positive relationship with a student without being a friend.
- **Praise** is immediate, specific, deserved, and related to behavior. Very professional and should praise appropriate behaviors by describing the appropriate behaviors they see students perform.
- **Positive reinforcement** involves the presentation of a reward (smiles, stickers, points, ect.) following students performing a particular charge of the payment. The reward is designed to increase the frequency of a desired response and works particularly well with elementary students.
- Do not take a student's behavior personally. Challenging behaviors are not a personal attack.
- Never force an issue with a difficult student in front of the class. The student who

displays challenging behaviors will feel more challenged when the issue is forced. Take a break and visit the subject again when all parties involved are calm and thinking clearly.

- **Consistent consequences.** Every consequence not carried out weakens the adult status. Idle threats are not considered positive practice. Students can pick these out and will challenge them.
- **Avoid sarcasm.** In the context of behavior management, sarcasm is completely inappropriate. It is not only rude and disrespectful.
- Do not label students as "bad". No student is bad. All students have positive attributes.
- **Set high standards.** Students will perform to the level of our expectations. If you expect more, the student will produce more.
- **Be consistent.** If you saw it, mean it, and treat all behaviors the same way for each student.
- **Keep Calm.** Students will adjust their behaviors to your demeanor.
- Be aware that **prevention is proactive** and **intervention is reactive**. The goal is to prevent problem behaviors before they occur.
- **Deal with problems immediately.** If you wait too long to intervene, the teachable moments are gone.

## Confidentiality/Data Privacy

Confidentiality can be extremely difficult to maintain. Often situations arise that are unexpected or appear harmless if information is shared. Your assistance in maintaining the confidentiality of all reports is extremely important. It is imperative for you not to discuss or disclose any information about a student, with anyone who does not have direct responsibility for that child.

Remember, many times breaches of confidentiality are not malicious, but still need to be avoided. A concerned relative, neighbor, or staff member may just wish to chat and show concern. You need to tell the person you cannot discuss the children you serve, and refer them to the teacher, or building principal.

When you are being asked to share information about students, there are some basic questions for you to consider:

1. Do they have the right to know?
2. Do they have the need to know?

***Remember: Oral disclosure is disclosure. What you say can carry the same responsibility as written communication.***

A very limited number of people have access to student files and data. Supervising teacher will decide and share information with you that is necessary for your work with that child. It is not necessary that every person working with a child have full access to everything in the file.

## Mandated Reporting

All public school employees have a responsibility to be mandatory reporters under the Abused and neglected Child Reporting Act. Any school employee who suspects a child is experiencing abuse of any form must report that abuse to the local social services. Once reported, the Social Services will do an investigation.

### **Minnesota Statute 626.556- Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors**

All school employees are Mandated Reporters. Child Protection Assessments are conducted in

response to reports of children being abused or neglected by caregivers. Family Services and Law Enforcement are required by law to cross report any child protection reports. The purpose of child protective services is to help protect children from physical abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse. The goal is to help families get the services needed so children do not need to continue to be abused or neglected.

**How do I Report Abuse or Neglect?** Call Cass County Social Services: 218-547-1340 or after-hours emergencies call 218-547-1424 if you believe that a child is being hurt or neglected. Doctors, school employees, and ministers, are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Other people, such as neighbors or relatives are encouraged to also report if they think a child is being abused or neglected. Please contact your supervising teacher or principal to complete a Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Report.

**What will happen when I call?** County child abuse staff will decide if your concerns fit within the statutory definitions of abuse or neglect. If so, a child protection worker will meet with the family to assess the situation. The name of the person making the report will not be shared with the family, unless the reporter agrees or the court compels it. Child protection will work with local law enforcement and individuals who know the child, such as doctors or teachers if necessary.

## Paraprofessional Websites

Websites at the state level which provide excellent resources and helpful hints for paraprofessionals are:

Minnesota Paraprofessional Consortium Website:

[www.ici.coled.umn.edu/para/](http://www.ici.coled.umn.edu/para/)

The Paraprofessional Connection Website:

[www.mw.sisna.com.paraconnect](http://www.mw.sisna.com.paraconnect)

Paraprofessional Training

<http://paraalink.org/>

ParaPro Exam Information

<http://www.resourcetraining.com/Page/ParaProExam>

## Liabilities

School districts accept the responsibility for providing the safety and welfare of all students. Certain risks are encountered by students, staff administration, and the district, in the educational process. As students access various learning environments and as a variety of human resources are used in the educational process, it becomes increasingly important to exercise prudent judgment, ensure appropriate levels of supervision, and maintain accurate record keeping. To minimize the risks associated with instruction, it becomes incumbent for each school staff to:

- Fully understand and apply safety procedures.
- Adhere to the instructional plan based on the student's IEP, IFSP, or IIP
- Maintain appropriate records and documentation relative to student performance, behavior, and medical
- Effectively communicate with appropriate staff regarding students
- Be aware of physical, behavioral, emotional, and educational needs of students affecting safety/welfare.
- Be properly trained by certified staff for procedures requiring specific skills.
- Check with supervisor regarding any procedures that could involve liability of violation of student plan

- Report accidents, problems, immediately to supervisor and/or building administrator
- Be informed and follow district/building policies

## **Disability Descriptions/Definitions**

### **Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)**

Autism Spectrum Disorders mean a range of pervasive developmental disorders that adversely affect a student's functioning and result in the need for special education instruction and related services. ASD is a disability category characterized by an uneven developmental profile and a pattern of qualitative impairments in several areas of development with onset in childhood: social interaction, communication, or restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities.

### **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH)**

This disability means a diminished sensitivity to sound, or hearing loss, that is expressed in terms of standard audiological measures. The hearing loss affects the student's educational, communicative, or social functioning and results in the need for special education instruction and related services.

### **Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)**

This disability category includes students with mild to profound delays in general intellectual functioning, resulting in or associated with concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior that requires special education and related services. Developmental Cognitive Disability has two categories: a. mild to moderate mentally impaired and b. severe to profound mentally impaired.

### **Developmental Delay (DD)**

Students with Developmental Delays are served through the Early Childhood Special Education program (ECSE). Special Education and related services are provided to children birth to age 7 who have a substantial delay in development or have an identifiable sensory, physical, mental, or social/emotional condition or impairment known to hinder normal development.

### **Emotional/Behavioral Disorders (EBD)**

Students identified with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders exhibit established patterns characterized by one or more of the following behavior clusters that affect educational performance:

- A. Severely withdrawn or anxious behaviors, pervasive unhappiness, depression, or wide mood
- B. Severely disordered thought processes manifested by unusual behavior patterns, atypical communication styles or distorted interpersonal relationships
- C. Severely aggressive or impulsive behaviors

### **Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)**

A specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written. Learning disabilities may be exhibited in one or more areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, mathematical calculation and/or reasoning, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, and written expression. This disability category does not include learning problems that are primarily



the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, cognitive impairments, emotional or behavioral disturbances, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantages.

### **Other Health Disabilities (OHD)**

Other Health Disabilities include a broad range of medically diagnosed chronic or acute health conditions that may adversely affect academic functioning and result in the need for special education instruction and related services. The decision that a specific health condition qualifies as a health disability will be determined by the impact of the condition on academic functioning rather than by the diagnostic label given the health condition.

### **Physically Impaired (PI)**

Physically impaired means a medically diagnosed chronic, physical impairment, either congenital or acquired, that adversely affects physical or academic functioning and results in the need for special education and related services.

### **Speech and Language Impairments (SLP)**

A speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or voice impairment, which adversely affects a student’s educational performance. Educational Speech/Language Pathologists provide specialized therapy for students with speech and/or language impairments.

### **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

This disability category includes students with an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that may adversely affect a student’s educational performance and result in the need for special education and related services.

### **Visually Impaired (VI)**

This disability category involves a verified visual impairment accompanied by limitations in sight that interfere with acquiring information or interaction with the environment to the extent that special education and related services are needed.

## **Common Program Acronyms in Special Education**

<b>ADD:</b> Attention Deficit Disorder	<b>ADHD:</b> Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
<b>ASD:</b> Autism Spectrum Disorder	<b>BIP:</b> Behavior Intervention Plan
<b>COTA:</b> Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant	<b>CMH:</b> Children’s Mental Health
<b>CRT:</b> Crisis Response Team	<b>D/B:</b> Deaf/Blind
<b>DAPE:</b> Developmental Adaptive Physical Education	<b>DD:</b> Developmental Delay
<b>DCD:</b> Developmental Cognitive Disability (MM-Mild to Moderate Mentally Impaired) (SP- Severe to Profound Mentally Impaired)	<b>DHS:</b> Division of Human Services
<b>D/HH:</b> Deaf/Hard of Hearing	<b>DT:</b> Day Treatment
<b>EBD:</b> Emotional/Behavior Disorder	<b>ECSE:</b> Early Childhood/Special Education
<b>ESY:</b> Extended School Year	<b>FBA:</b> Functional Behavior Analysis
<b>GED:</b> General Education Diploma	<b>IDEA:</b> Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004
<b>IEP:</b> Individual Education Plan	<b>IFSP:</b> Individual Family Service Plan

<b>IIP:</b> Individual Interagency Intervention Plan	<b>LD:</b> Learning Disability
<b>LEP:</b> Limited English Proficiency	<b>LPN:</b> Licensed Practical Nurse
<b>LRE:</b> Least Restrictive Environment	<b>LSW:</b> Licensed Social Worker
<b>MDE:</b> Minnesota Department of Education	<b>OHD:</b> Other Health Disability
<b>Para:</b> Paraprofessional	<b>PBIS:</b> Positive Behavior Intervention Supports
<b>PI:</b> Physically Impaired	<b>PT:</b> Physical Therapist
<b>PTA:</b> Physical Therapist Assistant	<b>Rtl:</b> Response to Intervention
<b>SL:</b> Speech/Language Impaired	<b>SMI:</b> Severely Multiply Impaired
<b>TBI:</b> Traumatic Brain Injury	<b>VI:</b> Visually Impaired

## **Working with Certified Staff**

If the paraprofessional is in an educational setting, they may work directly or come in contact with some of the following professionals:

### **General Education Teacher**

The role of the general education teacher is largely teaching the regular class lessons, with necessary adaptations for the Special Education student. The paraprofessional may be responsible for adaption and explaining curriculum and assisting students with the regular classroom or in small groups to complete assignments.

### **Special Education Teacher**

The Special Education teachers have the background and training to set up specific plans to meet individual students' educational needs. He/she may be the paraprofessional's immediate supervisor and will determine the daily/weekly responsibilities the paraprofessional will perform within the regular classroom, special education classroom, or small group.

### **Speech/Language Pathologist**

The Speech/Language Pathologist provides assessment and intervention services to students with articulation, language, voice and fluency disorders.

### **Developmental Adaptive Physical Education Teacher (DAPE)**

The Adapted Physical Education teachers have special training in designing motor programs and exercises to meet the unique physical needs of individual students. This service is frequently provided to students with physical disabilities and a paraprofessional will often assist in delivering these services (under the direction and supervision of the DAPE teacher).

### **Occupational/Physical Therapists**

These skilled professionals collaborate with staff to design procedures that will help students become more independent.

- **Physical Therapists** work with ambulation (walking), modalities (senses) and cardio respiratory functioning.
- **Occupational Therapists** work with fine motor and perceptual skills, sensory integration, cognitive and psychosocial aspects of performance, and adaptive devices related to daily activities.

### **Licensed School Nurse**

The school nurse is responsible for dispensing medications and assisting in monitoring and

meeting a student's medical needs. The nurse may delegate some of these responsibilities to a paraprofessional, as long as the nurse provides adequate training and supervision.

### **School Social Worker**

The school social worker meets with students and parents as well as school staff to help improve any social emotional or behavior difficulties which interfere with a student's school performance. Through individual conferences, small group meeting and classroom presentations they work to improve self-esteem, friendship and personal skills for all students.

### **School Psychologist**

The school psychologist provides educational assessment for students with special needs in the areas of academic concerns, social/behavioral and cognitive functioning. In addition, the psychologist provides consultation to staff, parents and the team regarding educational program issues.