TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME ................................................................................................................................. 4

1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 5
   1.1 Board of Education, Mission and Vision ........................................................................ 5
   1.2 District Contacts ............................................................................................................ 6
   1.3 Purpose ......................................................................................................................... 7
   1.4 Applicability ................................................................................................................ 7
   1.5 Terms of Employment .................................................................................................. 7
   1.6 No Harassment Policy .................................................................................................. 7
   1.7 General Conduct .......................................................................................................... 7

2. PRIVACY ISSUES ............................................................................................................... 11
   2.1 Confidentiality .............................................................................................................. 11
   2.2 FERPA ........................................................................................................................ 11
   2.3 Internet/Email Policy ................................................................................................... 11
   2.4 Privacy Policy ............................................................................................................. 11

3. PAY RELATED ISSUES ..................................................................................................... 12
   3.1 Compensation ............................................................................................................. 12
   3.2 Pay Day ......................................................................................................................... 12
   3.3 Timekeeping ............................................................................................................... 12
   3.4 Overtime ..................................................................................................................... 12
   3.5 Calamity Days and Pay .............................................................................................. 12
   3.6 Payroll Deductions .................................................................................................... 12

4. EMPLOYMENT RECORDS ............................................................................................... 13
   4.1 Personnel Files ........................................................................................................... 13
   4.2 References ................................................................................................................ 13
   4.3 Performance Evaluations ............................................................................................ 13

5. PROFESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS ........................................................................... 14
   5.1 Employment of Relatives .......................................................................................... 14
   5.2 Conflict of Interest .................................................................................................... 14
   5.3 Outside Interests, Activities, and Associations ......................................................... 14
   5.4 Solicitation and Distribution ..................................................................................... 14
   5.5 Mileage Reimbursement .......................................................................................... 14
   5.6 Child Abuse and Neglect (Mandatory Reporting) ..................................................... 15
Dear Ferndale Public Schools Employee,

We would like to welcome you as an employee of Ferndale Public Schools. We are happy and honored to have you as a member of our staff, and we are confident that you’ll find your employment with us rewarding.

In addition to working in your specific role, you will be working collaboratively with other highly qualified professionals as part of an extraordinary district that serves roughly 3,000 students. We are dedicated to providing a high-quality education for students from cradle to career.

This Employee Handbook is a standard practice guide that provides information related to staff expectations and conduct as well as District-wide policies and procedures. The most up-to-date Employee Handbook can always be referenced on the District website (www.ferndaleschools.org). You are expected to carefully read the Employee Handbook and meet all expectations outlined in this document. If at any time you have questions about the information contained herein, please do not hesitate to ask your building principal, supervisor, or the Human Resources Department.

Ferndale Public Schools values each and every employee and the important role that you play in the growth and achievement of our students. Go Eagles!

Sincerely,

Dania H. Bazzi, PhD
Superintendent of Schools

Note: All Board of Education policies referenced in this document can be accessed by visiting: neola.com/ferndale-mi/
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Board of Education, Mission and Vision

Ferndale Public Schools Board of Education

Jackie Hart, President
Jennifer LaTosch, Vice President
Jim O’Donnell, Treasurer
Mike Davisson, Secretary
Sandra N. Dukhie, Trustee
Nancy Kerr-Mueller, Trustee
Anna Ibrahim, Trustee

Our Central Focus (Mission)

Ferndale Public Schools' mission is to provide all students with an exceptional education that prepares them for college, careers and success in a diverse society.

Our Goal (Vision)

Our vision is to be among the best suburban school districts in the state. We will make sure all students are part of a supportive community and are educated to achieve their life goals, starting with success at the college of their choice.

We will provide high-quality, well-rounded education programs; offer culturally rich arts and music programs; support competitive athletic programs; engage students in contemporary science, technology and humanities; instill pride in our students, staff and families; and challenge ourselves and our students to attain the highest educational and citizenship standards. Students will learn in updated and well-maintained schools that are staffed with fully engaged teachers and professionals.

We are intent on graduating engaged global citizens who give back to their communities. We will celebrate our diversity, knowing that our students will thrive in a world that looks much like our community.
1.2 District Contacts

Contact Numbers for Effective Communication with District Offices

Superintendent’s Office
Superintendent........................................................................................................8653
Administrative Assistant........................................................................................8652

Communications / Enrollment Offices
Director of Communications ..................................................................................8672
Freedom of Information Act Requests
Anti-Harassment
Data Coordinator ....................................................................................................8675
Enrollment Secretary ..............................................................................................8676
McKinney – Vento
Schools of Choice

Curriculum and Instruction Office
Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum ......................................................................8658
Teacher Evaluations / Danielson
Professional Development
Math Coordinator ....................................................................................................8666

Facilities / Transportation Offices
Executive Director of Facilities & Transportation ..................................................8682
Custodial and Maintenance
Transportation Supervisor .....................................................................................8895

Finance Office
Asst. Superintendent of Finance ............................................................................8669
Food Services
Accounts Payable ..................................................................................................8656
General Fund Accountant .......................................................................................8668
Grant Accountant ....................................................................................................8670

Human Resources Office
Director .................................................................................................................8663
Administrative Assistant .........................................................................................8662
EDUStaff Liaison / Substitutes
Online Absence Management (Aesop)
Workers’ Compensation
Employee Health Benefits / FMLA
Payroll Specialist ....................................................................................................8667
Employee Payroll and TSA (403b)
ORS / Retirement Reporting
Verifications of Employment

Special Education Office
Director of Special Education ................................................................................8614
Secretary ................................................................................................................8659

Technology
Support Desk ..........................................................................................................(248) 209-2060
1.3 **Purpose**

The purpose of this Handbook is to acquaint new employees with the District and to provide a reference for all employees regarding employment with Ferndale Public Schools. Detailed benefit summary plan descriptions and legislation are available in the Human Resources Department upon request. Detailed Board of Education policies can be accessed by visiting FerndaleSchools.org/BoardofEducation/boe_boardpolicies.html and clicking on Neola.com/ferndale-mi/.

Ferndale Public Schools reserves the right to amend, delete or change policies at the sole discretion of the District. All policies are effective on the date noted on the top right-hand corner of each policy page.

This Handbook is for informational purposes only and has been prepared for your convenience and general guidance. It is not a contract of employment for any period of time between Ferndale Public Schools and any staff member. If any provisions of this Handbook conflict with the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the agreement will prevail.

1.4 **Applicability**

This Handbook is applicable to all employees except as modified by individual employment contracts. If the terms of a policy, procedure or benefit conflict with an employee’s collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement take precedence.

1.5 **Terms of Employment**

Terms and conditions of employment are contained in an employee’s individual contract, applicable collective bargaining agreement or conditions of employment. Unless provided otherwise in the contract, collective bargaining agreement or conditions of employment, Ferndale Public Schools has an “at-will” relationship with its employees. Ferndale Public Schools retains the right to terminate the employment of any at-will employee with or without cause and with or without notice.

1.6 **No Harassment Policy**

The Ferndale Board of Education will not tolerate harassment of staff, applicants and volunteers. Please see Board of Education Policy 3362 or 4362, Harassment of Staff or Applicants, for details of this policy.

1.7 **General Conduct**

**Customer Service**

It is the expectation of the District that every employee represents Ferndale Public Schools in a positive and helpful manner at all times. When working with students, parents, guardians, co-workers and community members, we are to always be courteous, polite and patient. Our families are our customers; happy customers are our best referrals.

**Community Relations**

Our students are our primary customers. Parents and community members are also our customers. Fellow employees are considered our internal customers. When dealing with customers, always be courteous, polite and patient. Occasionally, a situation or question may arise that you are uncomfortable responding to. In such cases, inform individuals that you will contact your supervisor and get back to them promptly. The District expectation is that phone calls will be returned within 24 hours.

**Confidentiality**

During your employment, you may gain access to private information about our students, parents, community members, other employees, or the District itself. This information must be kept strictly confidential, and should not be discussed with any individual who does not have a legitimate right to know this information. If an employee discloses any of the above-mentioned information without consent, it can violate federal law. Staff members are responsible for internal security of such information, with reasonable precautions followed to ensure information is not accidentally
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disclosed. If you’re unsure whether information is confidential, please check with your supervisor before discussing it with anyone.

Staff Ethics
Ferndale Public Schools requires the services of men and women of integrity and expects all staff members to maintain high standards in their working relationships and in the performance of their professional duties. In keeping with these ideals, employees are prohibited from establishing personal relationships with students that are unprofessional and thereby inappropriate. Staff must not engage in any romantic or sexual relationship of any kind with District students, regardless of age. Staff must not provide alcohol, drugs, cigarettes or any other contraband to a student, or accept any of the aforementioned from a student.

Corporal Punishment
Michigan law strictly prohibits the use of corporal punishment on a student, which is defined as, “the deliberate infliction of physical pain by hitting, paddling, spanking, slapping, or any other physical force used as a means of discipline” (MCL 380.1312). All instances of the use of physical force upon a student are to be fully documented within 24 hours and reports sent to the appropriate principal and the superintendent.

Social Media
Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows end users to engage in multi-directional conversations in or around the content on a website. Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, SnapChat, blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, document sharing and email. An employee’s use of Internet resources must comply with the District’s Acceptable Use Policy.

The lines between public, private/personal and professional are blurred in social media. Whether using your own device or District property, adding a disclaimer, utilizing a different screen name, or posting anonymously, you are at all times considered to be a Ferndale Public School District employee. Behavior unbecoming of a Ferndale employee, as determined by administration, is subject to disciplinary action and/or termination.

Do not post photos/videos of fellow employees without their permission. Do not use photos/videos taken at school without your supervisor’s permission. Do not post photos/videos that contain students without parent and administrator permission.

Off-duty use of social media
Employees may maintain personal websites or weblogs on their own time using their own facilities. Employees must ensure that social media activity does not interfere with their work. In general, the District considers social media activities to be personal endeavors, and employees may use them to express their thoughts or promote their ideas.

On-duty use of social media
Employees may engage in social media activity during work time provided it is directly related to their work, approved by their supervisor or administrator, and does not identify or reference District clients, customers, or vendors without express permission. The District monitors employee use of District computers and the Internet, including employee blogging and social networking activity.

Respect
Employees must demonstrate respect for the dignity of the District, its students, its parents, its employees, and all other District stakeholders. A social media site is a public place, and employees should avoid inappropriate comments. For example, employees should not divulge Ferndale Schools confidential information. Similarly, employees should not engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior that targets other employees or individuals because of their protected class
status or make defamatory comments. Even if a message is posted anonymously, it may be possible to trace it back to the sender.

Post disclaimer

If employees identify themselves as District employees or discuss matters related to the District on a social media site, the site must include a disclaimer on the front page stating that it does not express the views of the District and that the employees are expressing only their personal views. For example: “The views expressed on this website/Weblog are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer.” Place the disclaimer in a prominent position and repeat it for each posting expressing an opinion related to the District or the District’s business. Employees must keep in mind that if they post information on a social media site that is in violation of District policy and/or federal, state, or local law, the disclaimer will not shield them from disciplinary action.

Competition

Employees should not use social media to criticize the District’s competition and should not use it to compete with the District.

Confidentiality

Do not identify or reference District students, parents, or staff members without express permission. Employees may write about their jobs in general but may not disclose any confidential or proprietary information. Please see Board Policy 8350, Confidentiality. When in doubt, ask before publishing.

New ideas

Please remember that new ideas related to work or the District’s business belong to the District. Do not post them on a social media site without the District’s permission.

Links

Employees may provide a link from a social media site to the District’s website during employment (subject to discontinuance at the District’s sole discretion). Employees should contact the Communications Department to obtain the graphic for links to the District’s site and to register the site with the District.

Trademarks and copyrights

Do not use the District’s or others’ trademarks on a social media site, or reproduce the District’s or others’ material, without first obtaining permission.

Legal

Employees are expected to comply with all applicable laws, including but not limited to copyright, trademark, and harassment laws.

District restrictions

Because the District is a public body, it may require that employees temporarily confine social media commentary to topics unrelated to the District or that employees temporarily suspend such activity. The District may also require employees to delete references to it on a website or weblog and to stop identifying themselves as employees of the District.

Discipline

Violations of this policy may result in discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Note: Nothing in this policy is meant to, nor should be interpreted to, in any way limit your rights under applicable federal, state, or local laws, including your rights under the National Labor Relations Act, to engage in protected concerted activities with other employees to improve or discuss terms and conditions of employment, such as wages, working conditions, and benefits.
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Outside Employment

Employees shall not at any time engage in any outside employment that would make demands upon themselves which could conflict or interfere with their effectiveness in performing their regularly assigned duties, compromise the school system, or adversely affect their professional standing. Employees shall not engage in any other employment or in any private business during the hours necessary to fulfill assigned District duties.

Employees shall not engage in work of any type wherein information obtained through Ferndale Public Schools is utilized or shared.

Conflict of Interest/Gifts

Employees of the District are not to use their position for private advantage or gain. Staff members shall not receive financial remuneration from suppliers, contractors, vendors, parents or other persons who would have the opportunity to influence the decisions of the employee; participate in an activity wherein their position as an employee of Ferndale Public Schools is used or could be interpreted as being used to sell or promote the sale of goods or services; or to grant favorable conditions, treatment or status to students, associates or patrons of the District.

"Financial remuneration" as used herein shall mean any money, fees, commissions, credits, gifts, gratuities, things of value, or compensation of any kind which is provided, directly or indirectly, to any employee or a family member.

Political Activities

Employees have the right to campaign for and hold elected public office. However, whether as a campaigner, candidate or political appointee, you may not campaign during school/work hours; use District supplies, equipment, facilities or media; involve the District, its personnel or students in any political campaign; or otherwise encroach on the work day. Banned activities include wearing political buttons, soliciting political contributions, displaying political signs, etc.

Solicitation/Distribution

Recognizing that both students and staff are potential audiences for collecting information or for raising money, Ferndale Public Schools shall strive to safeguard our families and employees. All outside surveys/questionnaires must be approved by the superintendent, and no public release of results shall occur without written approval of the superintendent.

Outside organizations are not permitted to advertise events within schools or use students to sell tickets, except those which are school-sponsored or approved. All information, advertising, tickets and other materials must carry the name of the sponsor.

Employees may not use their positions within the District to sell any products, goods or services on school property for their own personal gain. Employees wishing to sell products or services related to a non-profit organization must discuss with and receive permission from their supervisor prior to such sales. No undue pressure will be placed on students or staff to solicit for or contribute to any activities.

Open Door Policy

It is Ferndale Public Schools’ desire to provide good working conditions and maintain harmonious working relationships among employees, as well as between employees and management. In order to correct any work-related problems, Ferndale Public Schools must be informed about them. Therefore, Ferndale Public Schools has an “open door” policy. Employees are encouraged to discuss concerns or suggestions with their supervisor. Employees who believe that the supervisor has not or cannot adequately address the situation are encouraged to discuss the problem with the next level of management, director, on up to the superintendent. This procedure should in no way foreclose the direct discussion we have always had on an informal basis.
2. PRIVACY ISSUES

2.1 Confidentiality

The Board of Education expects all professional staff members to maintain high standards in their working relationships and in the performance of their professional duties. Please see Board Policy 3210 or 4210, Staff Ethics, and 8350, Confidentiality.

2.2 FERPA

The Board expects all staff members to abide by the terms of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). This Federal law protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Please see Board Policy 8330, Student Records, for more detail.

2.3 Internet/Email Policy

All computers, telephone systems, electronic mail systems, and voice mail systems, as well as computers, laptops and devices, are the Board's property and are to be used primarily for business purposes. The Board retains the right to access and review all electronic and voice mail, computer files, data bases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the Board's computer system, telephone system, electronic mail system, and voice mail system. Staff members should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private. For complete details, please see Board of Education Policy 7540.01, Technology Privacy.

2.4 Privacy Policy

Ferndale Public Schools reserves the right to enter and inspect all areas of School District property including, but not limited to, lockers, desks and computers. Please be aware that email, voicemail and phone extensions are not considered private and Ferndale Public Schools reserves the right to monitor email, listen to voicemail messages and use software to monitor Internet use. Monitoring or inspecting of electronic systems will follow state and federal laws.
3. PAY RELATED ISSUES

3.1 Compensation

Hours of work, level of compensation and benefit eligibility can be found in each employee’s employment contract, collective bargaining agreement or salary notice.

For employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement, annual salary adjustments, if awarded, are generally effective on July 1 or on an alternate date determined by the Board of Education. Salary adjustments will be made in accordance with the budget position of the District and may not occur on an annual basis.

3.2 Pay Day

Payroll is issued bi-weekly on Friday. The annual pay day schedule is available online and in the Human Resources Office. Paystubs are available through the online employee portal.

3.3 Timekeeping

The workweek, for purposes of computation of earnings, will start at 12:01 a.m. each Saturday and end at 12:00 a.m. the following Friday.

3.4 Overtime

Overtime pay will be administered in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Overtime must be pre-approved by the employee’s immediate supervisor in advance of the work being performed.

3.5 Calamity Days and Pay

When the District or building facilities are closed because of emergency/weather situations, employees should report to work unless otherwise directed. Employees subject to a contract or collective bargaining agreement will be compensated as provided therein.

3.6 Payroll Deductions

The Board shall provide, through its Payroll Office, payroll deductions for the purposes outlined in Board of Education Policy 6520, Payroll Deductions, as a service to District employees. The Board shall not assume any obligation, financial or otherwise, arising out of the provisions of this section. The individual employee shall indemnify and hold the Board and its payroll staff harmless for any and all claims, grievances, arbitrations, awards, suits, attachments, or other proceedings arising out of or by reason of any action with respect to any payroll deduction of funds.
4. EMPLOYMENT RECORDS

4.1 Personnel Files

The Board of Education requires that sufficient records exist to ensure an employee’s qualifications for the job held as well as absence of a disqualifying criminal event; compliance with federal, state, and local benefit programs; conformance with District rules; and evidence of completed evaluations. Such records will be kept in compliance with the laws of the State of Michigan. Separate files will be maintained for criminal background checks, health/physical examination records, and employment records.

The maintenance and disclosure of employee personnel files is governed by state law. The “Bullard-Plawecki Employee Right to Know Act,” MCL 423.501, defines what constitutes a “personnel record,” limits its use, provides for employee review, and restricts its disclosure to third parties.

You have a right to examine your personnel file. If you wish to examine your file, you may do so during normal office hours by contacting the Human Resources Department. All procedures, including payment for copies, are in accordance with the Bullard-Plawecki Right to Know Act.

Requests for disclosure of a personnel file to another party will be handled in accordance with the Bullard-Plawecki Act and other applicable laws, including but not limited to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act and Revised School Code Section 1230b (MCL 380.1230b). You will be notified of such a request.

Please see Board of Education Policy 8320, Personnel Files, for details.

4.2 References

The Board of Education recognizes that any current or former employee’s request to an administrator for a letter of reference is an opportunity to share information about the staff member’s performance with a prospective employer. Please see Board of Education Policy 8340, Letters of Reference, for details.

4.3 Performance Evaluations

The District is committed to the growth and development of its staff. Evaluations, conducted effectively, can be a means of stimulating greater performance by employees and encouraging communication and understanding between the employee and supervisor. The evaluation should let employees know how well they perform the essential functions of their job, areas where improvement is needed, and should help employees set goals for future performance.

After the evaluation has been conducted, employees will review the results with their supervisor, who will then ask the employees to sign the evaluation and acknowledge that it has been discussed with them and that they have had an opportunity to review it. All evaluations are placed in their personnel file.

Please also see Board of Education Policy 4220, Evaluation of Support Staff, or 3220, Staff Evaluation, for more details.
5. PROFESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Employment of Relatives

Relatives of staff members may be employed by the Board, provided neither relative directly supervises the other.

Relatives of Board members may be employed by the Board, in accordance with Board of Education Policy 3120, Employment of Professional Staff, or 4120, Employment of Support Staff.

5.2 Conflict of Interest

The maintenance of high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality and professional conduct on the part of District employees is essential to ensure the proper performance of school business as well as to earn and keep public confidence in the District. To accomplish this, the Board of Education has adopted guidelines to assure that conflicts of interest do not occur. These are not intended to be all-inclusive or to substitute for good judgment on the part of employees. Please see Board of Education Policy 1130, Conflict of Interest, for details.

5.3 Outside Interests, Activities, and Associations

The Board of Education expects that employees will devote their primary work efforts to Ferndale Public Schools and requires staff members to avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities, and associations conflict with the interests of the District. If such situations threaten a staff member’s effectiveness within the school system, the superintendent shall evaluate the impact of such interest, activity or association upon the staff member’s responsibilities. Please see Board of Education Policy 3231, Outside Activities of Staff, or 4231, Outside Activities of Support Staff, for details.

5.4 Solicitation and Distribution

Board of Education policies protect employees from undue solicitations. Any outside organization or staff member representing an outside organization desiring to solicit funds on school property must receive permission to do so from the superintendent. Permission to solicit funds will be granted only to those organizations or individuals who meet the permission criteria established by the District’s administrative guidelines. Solicitation must take place at such times and places and in such a manner as specified in the administrative guidelines. No District student may participate in the solicitation without the superintendent’s approval. Please see Board of Education policies 9700 (section E), Relations with Special Interest Groups, and 5830, Student Fund-Raising, for details.

5.5 Mileage Reimbursement

If you are required to drive your own vehicle while performing your job, you are eligible to be reimbursed for mileage per the terms of your collective bargaining agreement or employment contract. If you are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement or employment contract, reimbursement will be at the prevailing Internal Revenue Service maximum mileage reimbursement rate. You must complete, sign and submit your mileage reimbursement form to your immediate supervisor for approval before reimbursement will be provided.
5.6 Child Abuse and Neglect (Mandatory Reporting)

District employees are required by law and District policy to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authority.

Under the Michigan Child Protection Law, MCLA 722.621, a school administrator, school counselor, teacher, social worker, psychologist or child care provider who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect must immediately by telephone or otherwise, make an oral report of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Family Independence Agency.

Per MCLA 722.623(1), the identity of the reporting person is generally confidential. Any person acting in good faith in making such a report, cooperating in an investigation, or assisting in any other requirements of the Act, is immune from civil or criminal liability. This law reads as follows:

Act No. 238, Public Acts of 1975

Sec. 3 (1) A physician, coroner, dentist, registered dental hygienist, medical examiner, nurse, a person licensed to provide emergency medical care, audiologist, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, licensed professional counselor, certified officer, or regulated child care provider who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect shall make immediately, by telephone or otherwise, an oral report, or cause an oral report to be made, of the suspected child abuse or neglect to the department. Within 72 hours after making the oral report, the reporting person shall file a written report as required in this act. If the reporting person is a member of the staff of a hospital, agency, or school, the reporting person shall notify the person in charge of the hospital, agency, or school of his or her finding and that the report has been made, and shall make a copy of the written report available to the person in charge. One report from a hospital, agency, or school shall be considered adequate to meet the reporting requirement. A member of the staff of a hospital, agency, or school shall not be dismissed or otherwise penalized for making a report required by this act for cooperating in an investigation.

While the Child Protection Law reporting requirements apply to only school administrators, counselors, teachers, social workers, psychologists and child care workers, it is the District’s expectation that any employees, regardless of position, who have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect will immediately report it to their supervisor or other District administrator. This policy is applicable regardless of whether the person suspected of abuse or neglect is another District employee. The District also expects and requires that you will report your suspicion immediately. Your failure to do so can compromise the subsequent investigation of any incident to the possible detriment of either the student or coworker.

District Procedures For Suspected Child Abuse Or Neglect

School personnel specifically named in the Child Protection Law (nurse, psychologist, social worker, school administrator, school counselor and child care provider) are responsible for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect and must report same to the Family Independence Agency immediately. All District employees will report suspected abuse or neglect to their supervisor or building principal.

The reporting persons may notify their immediate supervisor prior to reporting to the Family Independence Agency and must notify their immediate supervisor immediately after contacting the Family Independence Agency.

a. The reporting persons must file a written report to the Family Independence Agency within 72 hours.

The immediate supervisors (or their designee) must:

a. Verify that a written report has been made to the Family Independence Agency within the 72 hour time limit.

b. Notify the superintendent as soon as possible.
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c. Allow access to the child without parental consent of access if necessary to complete
the investigation or to prevent abuse or neglect of the child.
d. Involve the social worker and other appropriate personnel to work on the case.
The State of Michigan requires reports of all cases of suspected child abuse on behalf of the children
under 18.
In order to provide continuity and a standardized approach, the following definitions and
procedures have been developed.

**Child Abuse Definition**

“Child abuse” means harm or threatened harm to a child’s health or welfare by a parent, legal
 guardian, or any other person responsible for the child’s health or welfare by a teacher or teacher’s
 aide that occurs through non-accidental physical or mental injury; sexual abuse; sexual exploitation;
or maltreatment.

**Child Neglect Definition**

“Child neglect” means harm or threatened harm to a child’s health or welfare by a parent, legal
 guardian, or any other person responsible for the child’s health or welfare that occurs through either
 of the following:

1. Negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or
medical care.
2. Placing a child at an unreasonable risk to the child’s health or welfare by failure of the parent,
legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child’s health or welfare to intervene to
eliminate that risk when that person is able to do so and has, or should have, knowledge of the
risk.

**Indication of Child Abuse and Neglect**

As school personnel, the following are indications suggestive of possible abuse and neglect:

1. Facial and bodily cuts, bruises and welts
2. Repeated wearing of torn and dirty clothing
3. Lack of personal hygiene
4. Inadequate or seasonally inappropriate clothing
5. A child who always appears to be hungry
6. Frequent absences or tardiness
7. Lingering coughs, colds and untreated medical problems
8. Failure to seek appropriate care and treatment for handicaps
9. Statements made by the child
10. Statements made by friends and classmates of the child
11. Inability to concentrate on school work
12. Inappropriate classroom behavior
13. Retardation of development for other than organic reasons

It is significant to note that, although it appears corporal punishment meets neither definition of
“child neglect,” corporal punishment could equate to “child abuse” when the deliberate infliction
of physical pain, by any means, upon children results in harm to their health and welfare. Thus,
reporting requirements may be activated in observed instances of corporal punishment, which is
likewise prohibited by state law and Board policy. As with any other obligation you have as an
employee, your failure to report abuse or neglect could carry with it possible disciplinary action and other sanctions under the state law, when applicable.

Reports of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect shall be made on the Family Independence Agency Form.
6. BENEFITS

Note: the following provisions apply unless superseded by a collective bargaining agreement or employee’s employment contract:

6.1 Holidays

Ferndale Public Schools observes the following holidays when schools and district offices are closed:


When a holiday falls on Saturday, it will generally be observed on the preceding Friday; if the holiday falls on Sunday, it will generally be observed on the following Monday. Dates that holidays will be celebrated will be provided for each school year. Please note that unless provided for in your Salary and Benefit Notice or collective bargaining agreement there should be no presumption of pay.

6.2 Vacation

If you are eligible to receive paid vacation days, it is noted in your Salary and Benefit Notice or collective bargaining agreement.

6.3 Retirement Plan

All employees are covered by the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System (MPSERS). The District will pay its required share for MPSERS on behalf of the employee based upon the employee’s reportable wages and all applicable MPSERS provisions.

6.4 Tax-Sheltered Annuity

Ferndale Public Schools offers all employees the opportunity to participate in a tax-sheltered annuity program approved by the District. Please see the Human Resources Department for details.

6.5 Flexible Spending Accounts

Eligible employees may elect to set aside “pre-tax” dollars to pay for the employee portion of any insurance benefits and employee-paid medical expenses and/or employee-paid dependent care expenses.

Please see the Human Resources Department for details.

6.6 Employee Assistance Plan

A referral to this completely confidential service offers a range of services including stress management, alcoholism, drug dependency, marital, family or other emotional problems. Additional details and contact information are available in the Human Resources Department.
7. EXPECTATIONS

7.1 Attendance

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to the performance of the work of Ferndale Public Schools. Employees are expected to report to work on time and be prepared to start work at the regularly scheduled starting time. Employees are also expected to remain at work through the end of their schedule except for regularly scheduled breaks or authorized leaves.

It is important that when employees may be absent or late in arrival they enter in their absence using the online attendance system and notify their supervisor as soon as possible.

Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or not, is not acceptable. Each situation of excessive absenteeism or tardiness will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Employees failing to report to work without any notification to their supervisor for a period of 3 (three) days or more will be considered a voluntary termination of employment.

7.2 Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco & Weapons-Free Schools

In compliance with the federal government’s Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited anywhere in the District workplace.

The District will not tolerate employee use or abuse of illicit drugs or alcohol on Ferndale Schools property or while conducting school business at any time. An employee suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on the job will be notified and accompanied by a supervisor to submit to a drug/alcohol test at a Ferndale Schools designated clinic. If testing positive, the employee will be escorted home, and the appropriate disciplinary actions will follow. If an employee refuses to have a test administered, this would be considered insubordination and grounds for immediate termination.

In accordance with Michigan law, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco on or in any District property, in District vehicles, in all school buildings owned, leased or otherwise controlled by the District, and at any District-related event. “Tobacco use” shall include a cigar, pipe, e-cigarette (vaping), chewing tobacco, or any other matter or substance containing nicotine/tobacco.

Finally, Ferndale School District is a weapons-free work place. It is contrary to law and School District policy for employees to possess weapons, including, but not limited to, “open carry” or concealed pistols (regardless of CPL or CCW status) in a school building, on school property, in a student transportation vehicle or while otherwise conducting District business.

Violations of the above may result in criminal charges and/or discipline up to and including discharge from employment.

7.3 Dress Code

All employees are expected to dress appropriately for work. Please see Board of Education Policy 3216 or 4216, Staff Dress and Grooming, for details.

7.4 Cell Phone Usage

Non-District related cell phone usage is strongly discouraged during the employee’s work day with the exception of scheduled breaks, lunch breaks and planning periods. If circumstances warrant an employee’s need to be accessible by cell phone, written notification needs to be given to the supervisor with the reason stated. In this situation, the cell phone should be set to an alert/vibe mode that will not disrupt the work environment. See Policy 7530.02, Staff Use of Personal Communication Devices.
7.5 Employer Property

When Ferndale Public Schools supplies equipment and tools to employees to use on the job, the tools and equipment remain the property of Ferndale Public Schools and are not to be used for personal projects. The employee is responsible for the loss or damage of District-owned property due to negligence. All property must be returned to the District in the same condition as when it was received.

If property is worn or damaged through normal use, employees should return it to their supervisor for replacement.

When employment with Ferndale Public Schools terminates, the employee must return all District-owned property at the time of termination.

Ferndale Public Schools is not responsible for personal property.
8. SAFETY

8.1 Employee Safety and Health

The Board of Education believes that the employees and students of the District, as well as visitors, are entitled to function in an environment as free from hazards as can reasonably be provided. In this regard and in accordance with law, the Board will provide reasonable and adequate protection to the lives, safety, and health of its employees. For additional information, please see Board of Education Policy 7430, Safety Standards, and 3362.02, Workplace Safety.

8.2 Accident/Injury

Any accident that occurs on district property that results in an injury, however slight, to a student, an employee of the Board, or a visitor to the schools must be reported promptly and in writing to the Finance Office. For complete details, please see Board of Education Policy 8442, Reporting Accidents.

8.3 Workers’ Compensation

All employees are covered by Workers’ Compensation. All on-the-job accidents as well as job-incurred injuries, however slight, must be reported promptly to the Human Resources Department.

8.4 Violence in the Workplace

It is the Board’s desire to create and maintain an environment free from disruptive, threatening, and violent behavior. The Board will not tolerate inappropriate or intimidating behavior within the workplace. Please see Board of Education Policies 8400, School Safety Information, 3362.01, Threatening Behavior Towards Staff Members, 3362.02, Workplace Safety, and 3217, Weapons, for full details.

8.5 School Safety Legislation Summary (2005 PA 129-131 and 138)

The following requirements apply to local and intermediate school districts, public school academies and nonpublic schools:

“School Safety Zone” prohibits individuals convicted of a “listed offense,’ with some exceptions, from residing, working or loitering within 1,000 feet of school property [MCL 28.733- 28.736].

The district shall not employ, in any capacity, an individual who has been convicted of a listed offense (a crime that requires registration as a sex offender).

A district may employ an individual who has been convicted of a non-listed offense felony only if the superintendent and school board each specifically approve the employment or work assignment in writing.

Any full-time or part-time employee who is assigned to regular and continuous work shall be fingerprinted for the purpose of performing a criminal history background check.

Individuals who are employed in any capacity by the district, have applied for a position, have had an initial criminal history check, or are regularly or continuously working under contract in a district, shall report to the Michigan Department of Education and the school district that they have been charged with certain crimes within 3 (three) business days after being arraigned for the crime.

If employees do not report the charge or conviction, they are guilty of an additional crime. If the non-reported charge or conviction is a felony or listed offense, the person is guilty of a felony. If the non-reported charge is a non-listed offense misdemeanor, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor.
If employees do not report the charge or conviction the District may discharge them from employment or terminate their contract following notice and the opportunity of a hearing.

The Department of Information Technology (DIT) worked with the Department of Education (MDE) and State Police to develop and implement an automated program that compares the list of Registered Educational Personnel (REP) with the conviction information database. If a person on the REP has been convicted of a crime the MDE is required to notify the district indicated on the REP as the employing district. Convictions for listed offenses will require immediate dismissal of the employee.

SUSPENSIONS/REVOCATIONS

- Upon notification, the Office of Professional Preparation Services will review the criminal conviction and initiate administrative proceedings as determined by either law or administrative rule.
- Certificate holders or those who hold State Board approval are notified of the proceedings and their right to a hearing.
- It is a criminal offense to attempt to obtain employment as a teacher using a fraudulent certificate. Upon application for employment, each certificate should be reviewed for authenticity. Any discrepancies should be reported to the MDE.

LISTED OFFENSE

- A "listed offense" is a crime that requires registration as a sex offender. "Listed offense" is defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offenders Registration Act. A "listed offense" includes any of the following:
  - Accosting, enticing, or soliciting a child for immoral purposes.
  - Involvement in child sexually abusive activity or material.
  - A third or subsequent violation of any combination of engaging in obscene or indecent conduct in public, indecent exposure, or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to either offense.
- First, second, third, or fourth degree Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC).
- Assault with intent to commit CSC.
- If the victim is less than 18 years of age, the crime of gross indecency (except for a juvenile disposition or adjudication), kidnapping, sodomy, or soliciting another for prostitution.
- Leading, enticing, or carrying away a child under 14 years of age.
- Pandering.
- Any other violation of a state law or local ordinance constituting a sexual offense against an individual less than 18 years of age.
- An offense committed by a sexually delinquent person.
- An attempt or conspiracy to commit one of the offenses listed above.
- Any offense under the laws of the United States, any other state, or any other country or tribal or military law, that is substantially similar to a listed offense.

8.6 Hazardous Materials

Ferndale Public Schools has established a program to ensure employees are made aware of the hazards of chemicals found in the workplace. Each building has posted a Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) with information concerning chemical hazards therein.

8.7 Universal Precautions & Blood Borne Pathogens

For protection, employees are encouraged to practice universal precautions to prevent the transmission of blood borne diseases. This includes the use of gloves when dealing with or handling the bodily fluids of another individual.
The Ferndale Public Schools Blood Borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan ("Plan") is available at each facility for review. The Plan contains details for complying with the federal Occupational, Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA") and Michigan Occupational, Safety and Health Administration ("MIOSHA") standards on blood borne pathogens.

Additionally, each District employee is required to complete annual online training in the handling of blood borne pathogens.

8.8 Seclusion and Restraint

Seclusion is a last resort emergency safety intervention that provides an opportunity for the student to regain self-control. Seclusion is the confinement of a student in a room or other space from which the student is physically prevented from leaving and which provides for continuous adult observation of the student. Please see Board Policy 5630.01 Student Seclusion and Restraint.
9. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

9.1 Jury Duty
Employees shall be entitled to leave without loss of pay for any time they are required to perform jury duty. The Board shall pay the employees their regular daily rate of pay. Employees shall endorse and deliver to the Finance Department their jury duty check from the Court, if said amount is less than their normal daily pay. If the fee is greater than their normal daily pay, employees shall deliver to the Finance Department the amount equal to their daily pay. Any meal, mileage, and/or parking allowance provided to employees for jury duty shall not be considered in the amount received for jury duty.

9.2 Court Leave
In cases where employees are subpoenaed or summoned to appear in any court in cases which are school related, they shall be paid their regular hourly rate of pay. Employees shall endorse and deliver to the Finance Department their witness fee check from the Court, if said amount is less than their normal daily pay. If the fee is greater than their normal daily pay, employees shall deliver to the Finance Department the amount equal to their daily pay.

In cases where an employee is subpoenaed or summoned to appear in court for a case which is not school related, the employee will be given time off work without pay, unless the time off is charged to personal leave or vacation time.

9.3 Military Duty Leave
The Board of Education provides military leave, reemployment, and other rights as established by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Please see Board of Education Policy 3437.01 or 4437.01, Military Leave, for complete details.
10. NON-DISCRIMINATION

10.1 Equal Opportunity Employer

The Ferndale Board of Education is an equal opportunity employer. Please see Board of Education Policy 3122 or 4122, Non Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity, for details.

Equal Opportunity Employer

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

In compliance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, it is the policy of the Ferndale School District that no person shall on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), age, disability, height, genetic discrimination, weight, marital or family status, military status, or any other legally protected category be illegally excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any program, activity, or service or in employment. In accordance with Federal regulations, Ferndale School District has appointed a Title VII, Title IX, Section 504/ADA, and Age Discrimination Act Coordinator. Any questions, suggestions or complaints can be submitted in writing by contacting the District Compliance Officer, Director of Human Resources, at:

Ferndale Public Schools
871 Pinecrest Drive
Ferndale, Michigan 48220
248-586-8662

10.2 Section 504

Individuals with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 705 (20) of the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 shall not, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

The law requires that the District provide a reasonable accommodation to a qualified employee with a disability so that the employee may perform the essential functions of a job, or may enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment equal to those enjoyed by employees without disabilities, unless doing so would cause a significant difficulty or expense ("undue hardship") for the District. An employee with a disability who believes that a job accommodation is necessary must notify the Superintendent in writing of the requested accommodation.

Under Section 504, schools may not discriminate against any students having a disability, a record of disability, or regarded as having a disability. The District is required to provide free, appropriate public education ("FAPE") to each eligible student who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity. The FAPE obligation extends to all students described in this paragraph, regardless of the nature or severity of their disability.

Employees who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability may file a complaint through the District’s grievance procedure. A complaint may also be filed with:

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
U.S. Department of Education
600 Superior Ave East, Suite 750
Cleveland, OH 44114
Employees may file a complaint with OCR at any time. Filing a complaint with the School District is not a prerequisite to filing with OCR.

10.3 Title VII/ADA

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII) prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

10.4 Title IX

Title IX protects students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and other persons from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity, sexual harassment, or sex violence. All persons at Ferndale Public Schools are protected by Title IX regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, part- or full-time status, disability, race, or national origin in all aspects of a recipient’s educational programs and activities.
11. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Some examples of the most common circumstances under which employment may be terminated:

- **Resignation**: employment termination initiated by an employee who chooses to leave the District voluntarily. It is customary to submit a letter of resignation at least two weeks in advance of the termination date.

- **Discharge**: employment termination initiated by the District. Employment may be terminated for reasons including, but not limited to, poor performance, misconduct, excessive absences, tardiness, discrimination, harassment, or other violations of Board policies.

- **Job Abandonment**: employees who fail to report to work for 3 (three) consecutive days without reporting to their supervisor may be terminated due to abandonment of the job.

- **At-Will Employment**: employees not employed under a collective bargaining agreement or written individual contract may be terminated for any reason at any time.

Upon termination of their employment, employees must return all District property: keys, ID cards, equipment, manuals, etc. Please see Board of Education Policy 3140 or 4140, Termination and Resignation, for additional information.
12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, ________________________________, hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of Ferndale Public Schools' employee Handbook, which provides guidelines on the policies, procedures, and programs affecting my employment with this organization. I understand that Ferndale Public Schools can, at its sole discretion, modify, eliminate, revise, or deviate from the guidelines and information in this Handbook as circumstances or situations warrant.

I also understand that any changes made by Ferndale Public Schools with respect to its policies, procedures, or programs can supersede, modify, or eliminate any of the policies, procedures, or programs outlined in this Handbook. I accept responsibility for familiarizing myself with the information in this Handbook and will seek verification or clarification of its terms or guidance where necessary.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this Handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document and nothing in the Handbook creates an expressed or implied contract of employment. I understand that I should consult my supervisor or another District representative if I have any questions that are not answered in this Handbook.

Signed: ________________________________ Date: ________________________________

IMPORTANT:
Please sign, detach, and deliver this acknowledgment to the Human Resources Department within five days of receipt.