



Los Alamos
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



EMPLOYEE

HANDBOOK 2022-2023



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SECTION I

General Information

Introduction

The Los Alamos School Board accepts the responsibility granted by the laws of the State of New Mexico and the authority to ensure that:

1. The schools are maintained for the students, the community, the state and the nation.
2. The schools are operated and conducted in accordance with the state laws on education.
3. The administration is employed to manage the effective and efficient implementation of the educational programs.
4. The development of staff and programs through the work of Central Office administrators, principals, team leaders, and teachers is a continuous process.
5. The supervisory program is maintained by principals and administrators to assist teachers in the development of quality educational programs.
6. The principals and Central Office administrators shall be responsible for the orientation of new and continuing teachers and administrators prior to the beginning of the students' school year.



Board Policies

The School Board creates policies. Regulations are created by the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent, reviewed by the Board when appropriate, and carried out by the School Administrators. All staff are responsible to read and familiarize themselves with all School Board policies and regulations. Further, all staff are responsible to ensure they are following said policies. Policy review may be done by searching the district website. For any questions or inquiries on policies, please contact your Human Resources Specialist or the Assistant Superintendent.



Nondiscrimination

Los Alamos Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, handicap, or veteran status in employment or the provision

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

--Nelson Mandela

SECTION II

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department of Los Alamos Public Schools is dedicated to supporting staff. Our team of professionals are here to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Joseph Palmer, Director of Human Resources

Leslie Gallegos, Certified Staff

Cinderella "Cindy" Herrera, Classified Staff

Ramiro "Trey" Pereyra, Substitutes, Coaches and Transportation Staff



Licensure

Certain job classifications require a license, which is the employee's responsibility to obtain and maintain. The Human Resources Department will assist you with the state-required online application process.



Resignations

Resignations shall be in writing and directed to the employee's immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Department. The employee shall give a minimum of fifteen to thirty (15 - 30) days written notice of intention to resign based on their contract. Any letter of resignation should be submitted at the earliest possible date to allow time for a qualified replacement to be hired.



Transfers

Transfers are viewed as an opportunity to provide professional growth, rejuvenation, cross-level communication, and instructional improvement. Staff members desiring a transfer must complete and submit a transfer request to their immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Department. Transfers are requests for an open position. The employee must hold the proper qualifications to be considered for the position. Transfer requests do not guarantee an interview for the open position. Please refer to the appropriate collective bargaining agreement for full guidelines regarding transfers.



Personnel Files

Each employee has on file in the Human Resources Department a folder containing all applicable and required information. An employee may have access to all the materials in the folder except for those papers/materials which were a part of the initial application; e.g. placement papers, references, interview sheet, etc. These folders are not to be taken from the Human Resources Department; however, copies of available materials from these files may be obtained. All requests to review a personnel file will be addressed within ten (10) days of the request. Please refer to the appropriate collective bargaining agreement for guidelines regarding an employee's personnel file.

SECTION II

Human Resources

Inclement Weather

The Administration can allot 260 Calendar Non-Certified, Certified and Classified Employees, at the Administration's discretion, hours to cover time missed when the Administration deems it necessary for those employees to attend work. The Administration, at the Administration's discretion, can use this for any portion of time (two-hour delay, early release, full day cancellation or any increment the Administration has requested the 260 Calendar Employee to not attend work). The Administration will allocate the distribution of time to the employee's pay.

188 Calendar Certified Employees are not entitled to the Inclement Weather Bank as the contract already provides for make-up days and these employees are not adversely impacted.

188 Calendar Classified Instructional Assistants are not entitled to the Inclement Weather Bank unless it is a partial day closure and they would not have the opportunity to make the day up on one of the assigned "Snow Days". These employees would not be entitled to the full day Inclement Weather Bank as the contract provides for full make-up days in the employee's contract.

Sexual Harassment

The Los Alamos Public Schools Board considers sexual harassment in the work and educational environment to be inappropriate and offensive. The School Board prohibits sexual harassment of school district employees, applicants for employment, or students by any employee, volunteer, or non-employee who conducts business with the school district. This policy applies to conduct during and relating to school, school-sponsored activities, and school district business.

"Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people."

--Steve Jobs

SECTION III

Payroll and Benefits

Pay Schedules

Questions concerning salary placement on the salary schedules should be referred to the Los Alamos Public Schools Human Resources Department.

Checks will be delivered and payable on the 15th and 30th of each month. When the 15th or 30th falls during a weekend or holiday, checks will be payable on the last work day preceding the weekend or holiday.

Stipend payments are provided for some services performed outside of regular, contracted work. Stipend payments of \$2,000 or less will be paid in one payment on the payday following completion of stipend related work. Stipend payments over \$2,000 will begin on the payday after work begins and continue through the remainder of the employee's paychecks in that school year. All payments for stipend work are subject to timely approval and receipt of required paperwork by the Payroll Department.

Overtime

Overtime compensation must have prior authorization by the employee's supervisor or designee. Any required duties assigned by the supervisor or designee performed before or after the regular work day (which includes weekends or the duty-free lunch) will be compensated as overtime, to be accrued at 1.5 hours for each hour worked above 40 hours, or for each hour worked beyond 12 hours in an eight-hour day when the 40-hour work week is not exceeded. Hours worked beyond normal contract hours, but which are less than 40 hours in a normal work week, will be compensated as straight time until a 40-hour work week is reached.

If two or more jobs result in more than forty (40) hours in a week, then a weighted average calculation in lieu of overtime in accordance with the with the Fair Labor Standards Act is used.

A work week is defined as seven (7) days starting Sunday at 00:00, through the following Saturday at 23:59.

For 260 Calendar Employees, holidays will be counted towards the accumulation of the 40 hours worked. All other paid leave will not be counted towards 40 hours worked.

Employees required to work district-designated -non-work holidays will be compensated at the rate of 2.5 times the employee's hourly rate and will be compensated through payroll.



SECTION III

Payroll and Benefits

Benefits Overview

The District provides the following insurance plans for employees working the minimum qualifying number of hours per week:

Dental/Vision Insurance

Disability Insurance

Life Insurance

Medical Insurance

Workers' Compensation

The Los Alamos Public Schools Board's contribution to premium costs is based on the employee's salary. Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Employees on approved leave can continue their medical, vision and dental insurances for up to one (1) year. While on approved leave, the employee's premium share is 100%, with no contribution from the School Board. A retiree's life insurance can be continued as outlined in the Life Insurance policy. Retirees may carry medical, vision and dental insurance through the New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority.

Leave

An employee shall be responsible for requesting leave from their immediate supervisor via Time Clock Plus. Approval of such requests will be based upon the specific work needs of individual departments. All leaves are based upon the number of hours in an employee's work day. Leave is reported in number of hours taken or full day increments. An employee who has exhausted all accumulated leave will have their paycheck docked accordingly. Inappropriate use of any leave may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement for different types of leave available to Certified and Classified Employees.

"Who questions much, shall learn much, and retain much."

--Francis Bacon

SECTION IV

Health and Wellness

Los Alamos Public Schools prioritizes the well-being of our students and staff. We believe that a student's sound mental and physical health form the foundation for learning and developing healthy relationships to self, others, and the larger community. We value our LAPS staff and acknowledge the importance of well-being to work satisfaction and productivity.

Mental health is not just the absence of mental illness. It is a state of well-being where an individual realizes their own potential, can cope with normal life stresses, can work and learn productively, and is able to contribute to community. *(adapted from WHO, 2007)*

Physical well-being includes the many elements that contribute to a healthy body: regular activity, good nutrition, living substance-free, protection from illness and disease, access to medical care, sufficient rest and sleep, and a safe environment.

At LAPS, we are fortunate to have a nurse and at least one school counselor at each school site. If you have concerns regarding your student's mental and/or physical health, the school counselor and nurse are available to assist you.

Community resources include the Los Alamos JJAB Resource Specialists who are able to offer free support and guidance to families and connections to community services. Go to www.losalamosjjab.com/resource-advocates for more information.

The Los Alamos Mental Health Access Project website (<http://losalamosmentalhealth.org/>) includes information for individuals who are struggling with mental health issues and offers self-screening tools, help line contact numbers, and a list of local therapists.

More information regarding community resources may be found on the district website.

LAPS staff can access the Employee Assistance Program by contacting Joseph Palmer, Human Resources Director, at j.palmer@laschools.net.

"When educating the minds of our youth, we must not forget to educate their hearts."

--Dalia Lama

SECTION V

Available Services

Athletic Department

The Los Alamos Public Schools Athletic Director oversees the interscholastic athletics program for grades 7 through 12. This includes middle school, freshman, junior varsity and varsity level sports. The Athletic Director is in charge of coaching personnel, budget allocated for athletic programs, equipment and supplies, supervision and scheduling, local and statewide public relations in the athletics area, attendance at district and statewide meetings, and review of all athletic facilities. For further information, contact the Athletics office at Los Alamos High School.



Those employees who wish to supervise athletic events may apply in writing to the Athletic Director.

Los Alamos Schools Credit Union

An employee Credit Union is available and payroll deductions may be requested by participating employees. The Los Alamos Schools Credit Union facilities are located at 1010 Central Avenue in Los Alamos. For more information, call (505) 662-3421 or visit www.lascu.org.



Student Services Department

The staff in the Student Services Department is available to assist and support teachers in their efforts to provide for the emotional, academic, and physical development of students. Assistance and support are available in the areas of:

- Guidance/Counseling
- Health Services
- Special Education
- Diagnostic Services
- English as a Second Language
- Social Work



"There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live."

--John Adams

SECTION VI

Safety

LAPS Safety Program Overview

Los Alamos Public Schools believes that the safety of its employees, students, and public must be one of the major considerations in all operations. LAPS will endeavor to provide a safe working and learning environment, to abide by applicable safety rules and regulations, to communicate the commitment to safety, and insist upon a commitment to safety from employees, students, and visitors to the schools.

Each principal will be responsible for the supervision of a safety program for their school. The Superintendent will have the overall responsibility for the safety program of the district. General areas of emphasis shall include but not be limited to:

- In-service training
- Plant inspection
- Fire prevention
- Accident record-keeping
- Driver and vehicle safety programs
- Emergency procedures and drills
- Traffic safety problems relevant to students, employees, and the community
- Prevention/correction activities

All personnel have the responsibility to be aware of any hazardous chemical or physical hazards that they may encounter and to take appropriate protective measures.

Standard Response Protocol

Safety in the schools must be a priority consideration in every decision, plan, and activity. Safety is everyone's responsibility. Routine school procedures may change during an emergency. Each school site is responsible for developing and maintaining a current school safety plan that meets the Public Education Department standards. The principal will be responsible for the supervision of the safety program at each school site. Various types of emergencies (earthquakes, fire, fallen aircraft, chemical spills, bomb threats, explosions, etc.) have been grouped into five main headings: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate and Shelter. This plan helps the district coordinate communication so that everyone receives the same message.

The following terms and procedures from <http://iloveugus.org> are to be used in times of emergency:

- **HOLD:** Remain in room or area.
Clear the halls. Lock the door.
- **SECURE:** Get inside.
Lock outside doors.
- **LOCKDOWN:** Locks. Lights.
Out of Sight.
- **EVACUATE:** Students, staff and visitors
will leave campus and go to a safe place.
- **SHELTER:** Depending on the hazard, a safety strategy
will be announced.



HOLD



SECURE



LOCKDOWN



EVACUATE



SHELTER

SECTION VI

Safety

Accidents and Other Medical Emergencies

1. In case of injury to a student or staff member, first aid should be administered to the level of expertise. Please be familiar with school/site procedures.
2. A sick or injured student shall not be sent home alone nor be allowed to go home at all, unless it is known that a responsible person will be there when the student arrives.
3. If the student must go to the hospital, transportation shall be by parent or guardian or by ambulance. School personnel shall not transport a student to the hospital or to the student's home.

Safety Drills

The building principal is charged with the responsibility of conducting safety drills in accordance with state law. Safety drills shall be conducted weekly during the first month of school, and monthly thereafter during the school year. The office shall maintain a time log of conducted safety drills for official inspection. Exact procedures will be discussed by the principal in staff meetings. Teachers are required to see that their room doors are closed after the students exit and are required to take attendance registers out of the classroom in order to take attendance.

"Safety isn't expensive, it's priceless."

--Jerry Smith

*Thank you for your dedication
to the students of Los Alamos Public Schools*

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