



Learning For All...Whatever It Takes

Heritage Southwest Intermediate School District

Serving the Cassopolis, Dowagiac, Edwardsburg, and Marcellus Schools

Personnel Handbook

2023 – 2024

www.hsisd.org

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 Please sign and return to Char Vaughn 25

Knowing Your Organization

The Heritage Southwest Intermediate School District (HSISD) must be flexible enough organizationally and programmatically to respond to the needs of those they serve because of the constantly changing educational environment. HSISD must do the following: 1) Have an accurate assessment of the priority needs of customers, 2) Design programs and services which meet those identified needs, and 3) Perform continuous assessment and realignment of programs and services to assure that customer needs are being met.

The HSISD is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in relation to race, sex, age, religion, disability, and national background. The HSISD is in compliance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The HSISD employs more than 180 people. It encompasses approximately 487 square miles including most of Cass County, and a small portion of Van Buren, Berrien, and St. Joseph Counties. It has within its boundaries four K-12 school districts with a public school membership of more than 6,800 pupils. Also, within the HSISD are private and parochial schools educating some children. Cass County also boasts one school of higher education: Southwestern Michigan College.

The HSISD has an operating budget of more than \$22,000,000 funded by local, state, and federal dollars. It provides many services for local schools, among which are the following: special education, instructional services, career technical education coordination, center-based preschools, playgroups, and home visiting programs.

HSISD operates programs and provides services in the following locations:

Administrative Services Center houses offices for administrators, support staff, business office, and transportation department.

Brookside Learning Center houses programs for students who are severely multiply impaired, severely cognitively impaired, moderately cognitively impaired, emotionally impaired, early childhood special education and infants/toddlers with developmental delays. Itinerant offices are also housed at BLC as well as the Early On Program.

North Pointe Center in Dowagiac houses programs for students with moderate cognitive impairments, emotional impairments, and adult life skills programs. Most of these students are fourteen and older. Itinerant offices are also housed at NPC.

Each Local School District houses Early Childhood services for children birth-5 years of age.

Board of Education

The Board of Education is composed of five elected members. An election is held biennially on the first Monday in June by representatives of local boards of education. Members are elected for a term of six years. The Board sets the policies and procedures governing the ISD.

Regular meetings of the Board of Education are held the third Wednesday of each month with the exception of September and June, at 10:00 a.m. at the HSISD Administrative Services Center, 61682 Dailey Road, Cassopolis. An individual wishing to be included on a board meeting agenda should provide the superintendent with a written request at least seven days in advance of the meeting. The request should indicate the purpose of such appearance with supporting evidence as may be required.

The Board may release information through various media. Such information will be released through the office of the superintendent.

The Board enters into negotiations with such recognized organizations as may exist among the employees of the HSISD. The terms and stipulations of a negotiated agreement, when ratified by both parties, supersede the general policies of the Board of Education as listed in this handbook insofar as they relate to the bargaining unit members.

Superintendent

The superintendent is the chief administrative officer. The superintendent has an administrative team which advises the superintendent and assists with administrative duties.

Statement of Assurance of Compliance with Federal & State Law

The HSISD Board of Education complies with all Federal and State laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination. It is the policy of the Heritage Southwest ISD Board of Education that no person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, sex, height, weight, marital status or disability shall be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity for which it receives any financial assistance from the United States Department of Education. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Instructional Leadership & School Improvement, 61682 Dailey Road, Cassopolis, MI 49031, (269) 445-6223.

Board Policies

All employees are expected to follow and adhere to the HSISD Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Education. You can locate our Bylaws and Policies on the HSISD website.

Annual Notices

Annual Notices are posted on the HSISD website.

Public Relations

Our families, students, and local district personnel are very important to us. When dealing with anyone always be courteous, polite, and patient. Occasionally, a situation may arise that is unique. In such cases, inform the person that you will contact your supervisor and get back to them promptly.

Visitors

The Heritage Southwest ISD welcomes visitors to our facilities. We ask that all visitors report to the building administrative office before entering any of the classroom areas. If groups plan to visit, advance reservation and notification is required.

Administrative staff or teachers may conduct tours. Confidentiality guidelines must be followed during all tours or visits to any program.

Staff members are encouraged to welcome visitors but should maintain normal classroom work and procedures.

Volunteers

ICHAT **must** be completed prior to volunteering in the classroom or attendance on a field trip.

Media/News Releases

The media spokesperson will be the superintendent or designee. Media involvement will be controlled and managed **only** at the Administration Building. Staff should direct media inquiries to the Administration Building. No school pictures should be released unless the family has given its permission.

Public awareness of HSISD programs, services, and other items of public interest is desirable and encouraged. At the same time, it is imperative that the information be accurate, timely, and consistent. As such, all releases to the media must be authorized by the superintendent or designee.

Gifts/Donations

HSISD Board Policy specifies the manner in which donations may be accepted. Therefore, staff members should not accept donations unless administrative approval has been obtained. When donated items are accepted, an approximate dollar value of the item donated must accompany the item. The “Gifts/Donations To The District” form which is located in Google Drive-Master Resources-Forms and Guidance-Business Office Forms” must be completed and submitted to the Business Office. This will ensure that letters of recognition and receipt of value for tax purposes have been sent out.

Open Door Policy

HSISD’s desire is 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, HSISD must be fully informed about them. Therefore, HSISD has an ‘open door’ problem-solving policy. Employees are encouraged to discuss concerns or suggestions with their supervisor. Employees who believe their supervisor has not or cannot adequately address the situation are encouraged to discuss the problem with their director, and then with the superintendent. This procedure should in no way foreclose the direct discussions we have always had on an informal basis.

Handbook Updates

Annually this handbook will be updated. Changes that occur during the school year are effective as of the date of their occurrence.

Organizational Chart

Board of Education

Superintendent – Andy Hubbard

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent – Char Vaughn

Chief Financial Officer – Jeff Jasper

Supervisor of Accounting Services – Jane Butchbaker

Special Projects Coordinator – Candy Cooper

Assistant Superintendent for Special Education Services – Tina Wimberley

Special Education Supervisor of Accountability and Program
Improvement – Robert Tarantino

Transition Coordinator – Molly High

Special Education Building Supervisors – Tracy Beatty and
Michele Derenzy

Special Education Staff

Director of Early Childhood Education – Christine Whitmire

Early Childhood Staff

Director of Instructional Leadership/School Improvement – Josh Townsley

General Education Instructional Staff

Director of CTE and Post Secondary Options – Mikki Spagnoli

CTE Support Staff

Director of Transportation & Operations – Kim Vaughn Sr

Transportation/Operations Staff

Director of Technology – Robert Sheffey

General Procedures

Equal Opportunity Employment

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral for applicants for admission and employment, and all unions and professional organizations holding collective bargaining agreements with HSISD are hereby notified that the Board of Education of the HSISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, sex, height, weight, marital status or disability shall be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity for which it receives any financial assistance from the United States Department of Education.

In order to investigate complaints, answer inquiries and guide the implementation of compliance efforts the Superintendent or his/her designee shall appoint Grievance Coordinators, whose names shall be publicized at least annually. Any person having inquiries concerning the HSISD's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, VI, Title IX, Age Discrimination Act, Section 504, Title II (ADA), and Sexual Harassment is directed to contact:

Josh Townsley
Grievance Coordinator
HSISD
61682 Dailey Road
Cassopolis, Michigan 49031
(269) 445-6223
josh.townsley@hsisd.org

Mikki Spagnoli
Grievance Coordinator
HSISD
61682 Dailey Road
Cassopolis, Michigan 49031
(269) 445-6224
mikki.spagnoli@hsisd.org

Grievance Coordinators have been designated by HSISD to coordinate the ISD's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Age Discrimination Act, Section 504, Title II (ADA), and Sexual Harassment. The Grievance Coordinators, on request, will provide a copy of the Grievance Procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with the procedure.

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance (i.e., Interpreters) or special arrangements to participate in a program or activity sponsored by HSISD, please contact Josh Townsley at (269) 445-6223 or Mikki Spagnoli at (269) 445-6224. We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.

This and other written publications of the district are available in alternative accessible format (i.e., enlarged print, braille, audio tapes). Please contact the Assistant Superintendent for Special Education Services, at (269) 445-6286 to request an accessible format.

Grievance Procedures for Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity/Access

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against or denied equal opportunity or access to programs or services may file a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, with the District's Civil Rights Coordinator:

Director of Instructional Leadership & School Improvement
Heritage Southwest Intermediate School District
61682 Dailey Road
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-6223

The individual may also, at any time, contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 600 Superior Avenue, Room 750, Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2611.

The person who believes s/he has a valid basis for grievance shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the District Civil Rights Coordinator, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer to the complainant. S/He may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

- **Step 1** A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the District Civil Rights Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. The Coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

- **Step 2** If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the District Civil Rights Coordinator, s/he may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent within five (5) business days after receipt of the Coordinator's response. The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.

- **Step 3** If the complainant remains unsatisfied, s/he may appeal through a signed written statement to the Board within five (5) business days of his/her receipt of the Superintendent's response in step two. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting.

The District Coordinator will provide a copy of the District's grievance procedure to any person who files a complaint and will investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure. A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations, on which this notice is based may be found in the Civil Rights Coordinator's office.

Staff Ethics

An effective educational program requires the services of men and women of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, the Board of Education expects all staff members to maintain high standards in their working relationships, and in the performance of their duties. Refer to Board Policy #3210 on the HSISD website for more details.

Anti-Fraud

Fraud and fraudulent activity are strictly prohibited. The District will not tolerate such activities and disciplinary measures will be implemented as appropriate. Each employee or agent of the District shall be responsible for reporting any observed or suspected fraud or fraudulent activity to the Business Office, the Superintendent, or the Board President. This policy is implemented to advise employees about activities which may be fraudulent, illegal, or otherwise unethical. This Policy applies to any fraud, or suspected fraud, involving employees as well as consultants, vendors, contractors, outside agencies doing business with employees of such agencies, and any other parties with a business relationship with the District. Refer to Board Policy #8900 on the HSISD website for more details.

Confidentiality

In the course of your employment, you may have access to information about our students, families, and other employees. This information **MUST** be kept confidential. If you are uncertain about whether information is confidential, check with your supervisor before discussing it with anyone. Any violation of this policy may result in discipline and possible dismissal.

Also, please respect other employee's phone numbers. These numbers are only to be given out with permission of the employee.

FERPA

FERPA is the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and is designed to protect the privacy of education records. All employees will complete a yearly review on line through SafeSchools at <https://heritagesouthwestisd-mi.safeschools.com/login>. This course trains staff on rules regarding confidentiality and disclosure.

Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)

All individuals covered by the Heritage Southwest Intermediate School District's Health Plan: Please be advised that a copy of the HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices is available upon request by contacting the business office.

Attendance

Regularity of attendance and punctuality are essential functions of one's job responsibilities. As an employee, you are expected to observe working hours and days. Employees are expected to be at their work site during working hours. When employees must leave their work site, they will notify their supervisor. Personnel are expected to meet all appointments promptly.

A record of absences is maintained for each employee which becomes a part of the employee's personnel file. All employees are required to follow the Absence Reporting Procedure through the SKYWARD employee time off system.

Leave Use

If an employee will be absent from work, the employee is required to report the anticipated absence for the day through the SKYWARD employee absence management system. If your position requires a substitute in your absence, you need to report into the RED ROVER Sub System.

Employees desiring to use days needing prior approval shall make request as required prior to the leave except in the case of an emergency. No leave request shall be considered approved until such time as you receive final approval. Verbal requests shall not be honored for pay purposes.

It is the employee's obligation to verify absence information upon returning to work. Failure to verify within 5 days of return to work means the record remains as originally entered in SKYWARD employee time off system.

Family Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 applies to all employees and provides for UP TO twelve (12) weeks of leave time during any 12 month period provided that they have worked for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months. The HSISD has elected to use the "rolling" 12 month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave. FMLA leave is unpaid but does provide for continuation of insurance benefits. FMLA leave furthermore is not in addition to the other leave provisions contained herein but rather runs concurrently with them.

Employees are required to use accrued paid leave days (as specified in the contract or per the provisions of this handbook) as part of the FMLA leave but only to the extent of the twelve-week entitlement. It is intended for:

1. Birth of a child.
2. Adoption of a child or placement of foster child.
3. Caring for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious medical condition.
4. The employee's own serious medical condition which makes the employee unable to perform the requirement of the job.
5. Spouse/son or daughter/parent/next of kin of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness.

Please contact the business office for necessary forms.

Standards of Conduct

These rules governing personal conduct are intended to promote the orderly and efficient operation of the ISD, as well as to protect the rights of all of our employees. The following conduct is prohibited and will not be tolerated by HSISD. This list is for illustration purposes only; other types of conduct that may jeopardize the personal safety, security, or welfare of HSISD or its employees may also be prohibited.

1. Consuming, possessing, reporting to work under the influence of, or working under the influence of "controlled substances" or alcoholic beverages or other narcotics. If suspected of using/abusing drugs/alcohol, random drug testing can be instituted by your supervisor.
2. Theft, deliberate or careless damage or deliberate destruction of any property of HSISD or the property of any employee.
3. Insubordination or refusal to obey or willful failure to carry out verbal or written instructions of supervisory personnel.
4. Physical assault and sexual harassment.
5. Carrying firearms or any other dangerous weapons at any time on the premises.
6. Engaging in criminal conduct whether or not related to job performance.
7. Dress or appearance inappropriate to the business of HSISD.
8. Unlawful harassment including sexual harassment and discrimination.
9. Failure to observe working schedule.
10. Abuse of paid leave days.

Violation of the above standards may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Employee Dress

The Board of Education and administration expect all employees to maintain a professional appearance, good hygiene, and appropriate dress at all times to reflect their position within the school district. Employees showing good taste in their dress represent a positive example to our students and the community.

Family Members at School

Family members may come to work in their parent's classroom if there is an educational purpose for the visit. Prior approval from the administrator must be obtained.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and the Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination and is unacceptable to this school district. Therefore, any employee, agent (including an independent contractor or volunteer) or student, is strictly prohibited from engaging in sexual harassment.

All employees will complete a yearly review on line through SafeSchools at <https://heritagesouthwestisd-mi.safeschools.com/login>. SafeSchools Sexual Harassment course provides background information on sexual harassment; offers several scenarios for staff to staff sexual harassment; identifies indicators of inappropriate behaviors; states the legal rights, responsibilities, and liabilities of employees; and uses the Internet, pdf files, and SafeSchools documents to provide specialized reference materials.

Conduct of Employees – Disclosure

Public Act 189, effective May 8, 1996, requires every applicant seeking employment with a Michigan School District to provide written authorization for current and/or prior employers to disclose any "unprofessional conduct" while under their employment. A school district shall not hire an applicant who does not sign the statement described above. "Unprofessional conduct" means 1 or more acts of misconduct; 1 or more acts of immorality, moral turpitude, or inappropriate behavior involving a minor; or commission of a crime involving a minor. Information received under this section shall be used by the intermediate school district only for the purpose of evaluating an applicant's qualifications for employment in the position for which he or she has applied and only by those school people who would be involved in that process. School districts cannot enter into any agreement or contract that has the effect of suppressing information about unprofessional conduct of an employee or former employee or of expunging information about that unprofessional conduct from personnel records. Further information regarding this act can be obtained from the superintendent's executive assistant.

Crisis Response Plan

Staff members aware of a crisis should contact their supervisor immediately. The supervisor will notify the Administration including evenings, weekends, vacation periods, and during the summer. The Administration will determine on an individual basis whether to contact additional professional assistance.

Staff will be made aware of crisis situations. A line of communication will be kept open through memos to staff and parents. Phone usage at this time should be minimized.

The parent liaison will be the supervisor or designee.

The media spokesperson will be the superintendent or designee. Media involvement will be controlled and managed *only* at the Administration Building. Staff should direct media inquiries to the Administration Building. No school pictures should be released unless the family has given its permission.

Termination

As a matter of courtesy, employees who desire to leave the ISD are expected to give at least 14 calendar days' notice in writing. However, due to the nature of the HSISD, employees should plan their termination at natural breaks in the year.

The employer's contribution to the health insurance plan will be made through the end of the month in which termination occurs unless other provisions are provided in bargaining unit contracts.

Resignation Procedure

1. Employee should submit a written resignation to be placed in personnel file.
2. Employee must return all keys and equipment.

Employees who are enrolled in the ISD medical insurance plan at the time of their termination may be eligible to continue coverage at their own expense under the group plan for up to 18 months following the termination of their employment. See the business office for details.

Keys

Building keys will be issued to administrative personnel only, except in special cases. All employees who have been issued keys to a building are personally responsible for their use. Keys *will not* be lent to other individuals, nor duplicated. In case of separation of employment with HSISD, employee must return all keys to their supervisor.

For security reasons, employees must report any missing keys to their supervisor no later than the day after the keys appear to be missing.

Keys to cupboards, file cabinets, and all doors **must** be turned into your supervisor for the summer by school year personnel. All cupboards and file cabinets must be left unlocked for the summer except those containing student information.

Flowers

HSISD will send flowers to staff members in connection with a death in their immediate family defined as spouse/partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, and legal dependent.

Professional Development Days

Attendance at district sponsored professional development day activities is **mandatory**. Excuses from professional development day activities shall be at the discretion of the Administration.

School Closing

HSISD uses a group notification computer/smart phone application for notifying staff of days they do not have to report due to school closing. All staff members are set up within this app by using a cell phone number or email. Staff housed at LEA sites may experience differing schedules.

Change of Address or Phone Number

It is important that the District always maintains accurate information with respect to an employee's home address and phone number. It is the responsibility of each employee to keep their supervisor, superintendent's office, and business office informed of any change of address, phone number, or personal changes that might affect insurance or retirement information on file.

ISD Property

HSISD supplies equipment to employees to use on the job. The equipment remains the property of the employer and is not to be used for personal projects. The employee is responsible for the loss or damage of employer-owned property due to the employee's negligence. All property provided to the employee must be returned to the employer in the same condition as when it was received. All property **must** be returned to the ISD by school year personnel for the summer.

Supplies

For custodial supply requests, please send an email through (HSISD Supplies).

Maintenance

For maintenance requests, please send an email through (HSISD Maintenance).

Educational Media Center

Materials in the Regional Educational Media Center (REMC) (Special Education Learning materials are now part of REMC) are available for use by professional personnel. The materials are located at Berrien RESA in Berrien Springs (269-471-7725) and can be delivered via REMC van. Catalogs are now on disk.

Student Discipline

HSISD Board of Education Bylaws and Policies include the official discipline policy approved by the Board. HSISD Behavior Management Guidelines have been developed and are also available for your review. (Please see your supervisor.) It is the responsibility of all staff who work directly with students to be informed about and utilize both of these documents, as well as to comply with applicable Michigan Law.

School Safety Policy

This Emergency Operations Plan is a working document that was approved in January of 2021 by the HSISD Board of Education. It should be easily accessible to anyone who would need to know policy and procedures in a crisis while they are working in the classroom or building. Quick reference emergency procedures are located in common areas throughout all ISD buildings. The Plan is located in the Master Resource folder in Google Drive.

Electric Heaters/Coffee Pots/Fans/Hot Plates/Microwaves

We have been informed by our insurance carrier that portable electric heaters/coffee pots/fans/hot plates/microwaves are not allowed in our buildings housing students. Therefore, if you have any of these personal items in our buildings, please remove them immediately.

Safety

HSISD is committed to protecting the safety and health of every employee and will comply with all federal and Michigan safety and environmental regulations. However, the responsibility for maintaining a safe and healthy working environment is not just that of the ISD. To be totally effective, every employee also has a responsibility to comply with all safety rules and programs established by the ISD.

Report of Injury

Immediately following an accident at work or upon learning of a medical condition arising out of your employment with the employer, you **must** notify your supervisor before leaving work. If no one is available – leave a message on your supervisor’s phone.

When an injury does occur, you will need to go to Ascension Borgess Lee Medical Group in Dowagiac. You should take an “Authorization for Treatment Form” with you. This form is in Google Drive – Shared Drives - Master Resources - Forms and Guidance - Accident-Injury Forms. Your supervisor is required to follow up with a “Supervisor’s Report of Injury” form which can be found in the same file folder.

Any accident or injury should be reported on the Report of Injury Form within 24 hours. The original copy must go to the business office.

The back of the Injury Report form is the Exposure Incident Investigation Form. If your accident involves someone else's blood/body fluids, fill out this side and report to the school nurse or supervisor so the appropriate steps may be taken.

*** Please Note: If a substitute or an employee of EDUStaff is injured, please follow the instructions stated above with one exception – replace the “HSISD Report of Injury Form” with the “EDUStaff Report of Injury Form” found in the same folder.*

Workers' Disability Compensation

HSISD provides workers' disability compensation insurance at no cost to you. In the event of a work-related injury or condition, worker's disability compensation insurance may provide wage loss benefits. Employee **must** use their sick leave in conjunction with Worker’s Comp.

Immediately following an accident at work or upon learning of a medical condition arising out of your employment with the employer, you **must** notify your supervisor so that an accident report may be filed with HSISD’s insurance provider.

Reporting Child/Adult Abuse

HSISD recognizes that child/adult abuse and/or child/adult neglect can impair the normal development of children. HSISD further recognizes the responsibilities concerning child/adult abuse and/or child/adult neglect mandated by the Child Protection Statute; Public Act of 1975.

Staff Responsibility: Employees are required by law to report all suspected child/adult abuse and/or child/adult neglect cases immediately to Child Protective Services (CPS) at (1-855-444-3911) for investigation by that department. After placing phone call a 3200 form must be filled out and faxed to CPS at 616-977-8900 or emailed to MDHHS-CPS-CIGroup@michigan.org.

A copy of the 3200 form should be given to your immediate supervisor on the same day. MDHHS online reporting can be used in reports that do not require an emergency response. Online reporting will create a 3200 form.

If a child/adult is at imminent risk of injury, death, or serious harm, this is an emergency situation, call 911.

Bloodborne Pathogens

An exposure control plan is in place at HSISD to comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Copies of the plan are located with the department director, supervisors, and school nurse. The federal OSHA standard can be found at www.osha.gov and the Michigan Standard at www.michigan.gov/mioshastandards, or the school nurse has an accessible copy. Clean up kits are available in each building and on every bus/van. All employees will complete a yearly review on line through SafeSchools at <https://heritagesouthwestisd-mi.safeschools.com/login>.

Communicable Control Disease Policy

The Communicable Control Disease Policy adheres to the Michigan Public Health Code (Act 368 of 1978, Part 51 & 92, as amended) for the prevention, control, and containment of communicable disease at HSISD. Copies of this plan are located in our Bylaws and Policies or in the school nurse's office.

Hazardous Chemical & Asbestos Awareness

HSISD is in compliance with the Michigan Right to Know Laws which mandates that employees will be provided information each year regarding possible exposure to hazardous chemicals and asbestos in the workplace. Please contact your supervisor if you have any questions regarding hazardous chemical materials.

Annual Asbestos Report

Under the federal mandated Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), every public school district must annually make a report to its school community on the Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) in all school buildings. The friable ACM in our buildings is located primarily in boiler rooms and pipe tunnels. Every six months conditions are checked and, when necessary, minor repairs are made. Our goal is to provide a safe environment for our school family by closely monitoring the conditions of the asbestos in our facilities.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the ACM in our buildings, please contact Kim Vaughn Sr., Director of Operations at 269-445-6255.

Pesticide

According to Public Act 451, each month the kitchens, storage areas, and lounges are sprayed. On the days of application, spraying occurs after school when students are not present.

Fire/Tornado/Lock Down Drills

Annually a predetermined number of drills: (5) fire, (2) tornado, and (3) lock down must occur in buildings that house students. Building Supervisors must keep a record of all drills. Evacuation plans are posted in classrooms, offices, and around each building. All persons are to leave the building in the case of fire. Teachers must take their attendance book and account for all students. The alarm system for a school lock down is different from the alarm system for fires and tornadoes.

Mail

Mail travels daily between Cassopolis, Dowagiac, Edwardsburg, Marcellus, North Pointe Center, and HSISD. Check with the building secretary for the location of the mailboxes in each building. The REMC van travels weekly to the following Intermediate School Districts: Berrien, Kalamazoo, Heritage Southwest, and Van Buren. Except for Kalamazoo, the van travels to each local school district in the tri-county area. Employees are strongly encouraged to use the van for sending bulk mailing and packages to schools and offices in these areas.

Marana Group pick up mail daily by 1:15 p.m. in the Administrative Services Center. See guidelines posted in the work room for correct handling and sorting of mail.

Parking

Employees are expected to use the employee parking lots in front of Brookside or at the upper or lower level parking spaces by the Administrative Services Center. To assist maintenance in lawn care and snow plowing, please park at least one foot from the sidewalk or the grassy areas. Employees not housed at either the Administrative Services Center or Brookside, should consult with their supervisor for parking locations.

Employees must observe the no parking areas marked with white, visitor parking, as well as the blue handicapped parking spaces to assure access to the buildings.

Employees of NPC are required to park in the front main lot. No parking is allowed on Orchard Street in front of school.

Personal Valuables

HSISD does not assume responsibility for personal items and valuables which are lost, stolen, destroyed, or left on the premises.

Building Hours

Building hours for Administrative Services Center are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Building hours for Brookside Learning Center and North Pointe Center are 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you need access after 4:00 p.m. please check with your supervisor to ensure necessary arrangements for securing the building are taken care of.

Personnel Files

HSISD will not disclose to the public any evaluation information of an employee without the permission of the employee except as may be required by law or by applicable court ruling. Your file will not be disclosed to persons outside the office except as may be required by law. If we are asked to disclose a disciplinary report to a third party not employed by us (or by your collective bargaining agent), you will be given notice of that disclosure.

You have the right to examine your personnel file or to obtain a copy of your file upon a written request with 24-hour advance notice to the superintendent's office. If you wish to examine your file, you may do so during normal office hours by making an appointment provided it does not interfere with your assigned duties or we will make arrangements with you for an examination before or after work. The administration will assign a staff member to be present during a file review.

Jury Duty

In the event an employee is directed to report for jury duty or selection during working hours, the employee will be paid his/her regular pay upon providing court documentation. On days where the employee is directed to report for jury duty and then released, the employee must return to work unless excused by his/her supervisor. Any compensation from the court should be returned to the employer minus any travel expense.

Subpoenas

If you are subpoenaed to appear in court, please advise your supervisor immediately. Michigan and federal law strictly limit disclosure of confidential information by School District staff. The ISD has information available as to how to testify in court. Please obtain this information from your supervisor.

If your position requires a substitute for the time, you will be in court, please go through your immediate supervisor to obtain one.

Information Requests

Requests made by attorneys, doctors, or agencies need to have a release of information signed by the custodial parent with what information needs to be released.

Unless subpoenaed, do not become involved in custody issues either by written or verbal testimonies. If there are any questions, contact your Supervisor or Director.

Physical Examinations

Applicants selected for recommendation to the Board for regular employment in bus driver positions must be examined by a licensed physician. The physician will provide a statement that the applicant is able to perform the duties of the position and is free from the effects of pre-existing conditions which would hamper performance of duties, or which would be worsened by working in such a capacity, or which are contagious.

The cost of the examination will be borne by the district, with the evaluation conducted by a licensed physician designated by the district.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

CPR training is mandatory for all school building staff and transportation staff. The training will be at no cost to the employee.

Animals in School

From time to time, we have requests from staff members to bring pets to school. While this practice is discouraged, administrative approval must be obtained if there is an educational purpose for bringing a pet to school. The teacher is responsible for informing parents prior to the pet being brought to school.

Smoking

HSISD Board Policy prohibits the use of tobacco products in buildings and on real estate owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by HSISD.

Telephone Calls

Telephones are maintained for school business. Use of school phones for personal convenience of employees is limited to necessary calls. Employees are responsible for the cost of personal fax transmissions.

Staff at the Administrative Services Center and Brookside must dial 9+1+ area code + phone number.

Staff who do not work during the summer should change their message accordingly.

Use of Facilities

Our buildings are a resource to facilitate the education of our students. Therefore, decisions regarding building use and modification of the physical environment will be made by the building educational administrator. Consultation with the Director of Operations will be sought to ascertain the impact of changes on the physical plant.

Room facilities in all buildings may be used by employees, public institutions, and organizations under the following conditions:

- The use does not interfere with planned activities of HSISD.
- Building use forms are located in Google Drive – Shared Drives - Master Resources – Building Use Forms.
- The use is approved by the Director of Operations.

There is no cost to a nonprofit organization unless extra help is required.

Conference Room Scheduling

Calendars for the conference rooms in the administration building are now online. The following staff has been designated to manage the calendars: Andi Smallbone, Candy Cooper, Char Vaughn, Crystal Smith, Madison Walker, Di Schultz, Vicki Foote, and Wendy Velez. If you would like to schedule a meeting, please send an email to any of the names listed with the following information: Event Title; Date; Start/End Time. Please include the HSISD employee name that is hosting the event in case calendars need to be adjusted.

If you need room set up, please send an email through (HSISD Maintenance).

Office Supplies, Materials and Equipment

In order to keep inventories current and to aid in purchasing, the School secretary has responsibility for all supplies necessary for the functioning of all special education programs. Proper procedures for requisitioning supplies will be discussed in individual department or building meetings.

Employees are responsible for the proper care of all office equipment. Office equipment not functioning properly should be reported to the designated person in each building.

Recycling

Please remember to recycle envelopes and paper that have been printed on one side whenever possible. We receive mail daily, so we always have a supply of envelopes. These items can be found in the work room. Use post-it notes or write staff names at the top of the document vs using envelopes. Also, please utilize our bus mail and REMC. When using REMC, please mark it so when the mail is sorted it will be placed in the correct basket. **DO NOT** use preprinted HSISD envelopes for interoffice mail.

Payroll

Employees are paid on a biweekly basis. Electronic Direct Deposit of your pay is available to the bank of your choice. *Be sure to notify business office of any bank changes at least 10 days prior to a payroll date.* Timesheets are due in the business office by **11:00 a.m.** the Monday of payroll week. Please see that your supervisor has these in time to approve and assign account number. Call the business office if you have any questions.

Garnishments

HSISD must comply with all writs of garnishment it receives. You will be notified before any deductions are taken from your paycheck if we receive a writ of garnishment requiring us to withhold and pay a portion of your wage to a court. Information about the garnishment will be held in confidence.

Vendor Relation

School personnel shall not accept any gifts or favors from vendors which might be reasonably deemed to influence their recommendations on the eventual purchase of equipment, supplies, or services.

Section 125

A Flexible Benefits Plan is in place through American Fidelity Assurance Company. Questions may be directed to customer service department at 1-855-716-3521.

Employee Elected Retirement Options

If you have specific questions regarding an employee elected Basic Plan, MIP Fixed Plan, MIP Graded Plan, MIP Plus Plan, MIP Plan, Pension Plus Plan, Pension Plus 2 Plan, and defined Contribution Plan please see the Business Office.

Annuities

Public school employees in Michigan are eligible to establish an IRS code 403(b) tax sheltered annuity program. These TSA programs provide the opportunity for an employee to create a self-directed retirement account. Contributions are pre-tax, meaning generally they are not subject to federal or state income taxes resulting in tax savings at the time of contribution. Operating very much like 401(k) programs in the private sector, annuity contributions and their subsequent earnings become taxable at the time of their subsequent withdrawal from the account. Employees may establish TSA accounts with any of the board approved vendors as listed below. The district's 403(b) program contracts with TSA Consulting Group, Inc. as its plan administrator.

Contact the business office for additional information.

Reimbursable Expenses

Each reimbursement request **must** have an original receipt containing the following information:

1. The date of the expense
2. The time of the expense
3. The name and location of the place where the expense occurred
4. The purpose and/or reason for the expense
5. The persons involved in the expense
6. For goods delivered to a client, the employee will obtain the necessary form and have the client sign the form acknowledging receipt of the goods.

Except for emergency maintenance repairs, all purchases for goods and services will be handled by a requisition and purchase order procedure, a check request, or prior arrangements approved by your supervisor. Reimbursement for expenditures can be turned in on a travel log, check request, or an invoice and should be done **minimally** once a month.

Questions relating to these procedures should be directed to your immediate supervisor.

Conferences

Attendance by employees at conferences or meetings is subject to the approval of the supervisor. Approval will be granted only for conferences pertinent to the work of the employee.

It is expected that local professional development activities will be given priority in lieu of conference attendance, when appropriate.

Request for conference attendance should be presented as far in advance as practical on the approved conference or meeting request form and submitted to your immediate supervisor. This form will be returned to you. If one finds that he/she will not be attending the particular approved conference, immediate notification of one's supervisor is necessary. If the person does not attend and the conference fees cannot be refunded, the employee is responsible for the costs.

The Conference Request Form is used to estimate expenses prior to attendance at a conference or meeting.

Eligibility - If an excessive number of staff members request the same conference, it will be necessary to limit those who may attend. The appropriate administrator will do this.

The following preplanning and accounting procedures must be submitted to one's supervisor:

1. The name of conference or meeting, date(s), and overall time necessary to attend.
2. The nature of the program. Provide a copy of the program when possible.
3. An estimate of expenses for travel, lodging, meals, registration, and fees.

Reasonable approved expenses directly resulting from conference attendance will be reimbursed according to the following guidelines:

1. ***If approved***, please include a copy of the registration form so the original can be sent, and the copy kept for documentation in the business office. Checks are written each Thursday if timelines necessitate this. Please indicate on the form that it is a PREPAID. Early registration, to take advantage of a lower rate, is encouraged. Generally, organizational dues and fees will not be reimbursed.
2. Reimbursement for transportation via a private vehicle will be at the Board approved rate.
3. The Administration may limit the number of vehicles to be reimbursed for a particular conference.
4. If more than one employee attends the same conference or meeting and sharing a room is appropriate, the Administration may reimburse at ½ double room rate unless other advance arrangements have been made.
5. Food costs will be reimbursed at 100% of reasonable costs as determined by the supervisor.
6. Original receipts must be submitted for all lodging, registration, food, and approved fees and attached to the travel log.
7. Miscellaneous expenses expected to be incurred as a result of attendance at conferences are subject to the approval of your supervisor.

Criminal Records Check

Public Act 138 of 2005 requires the intermediate school district to request a criminal history check on any individual to be hired as a full-time, part-time, contracted or substitute employee. Volunteers must also be included in this check. This check is processed through the Central Records Division of the Michigan Department of State Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.). In order to employ a person prior to a criminal records check being received by the intermediate school district, the district must:

- have requested the criminal records check from the Michigan State Police and the F.B.I. It is the prospective employee's responsibility to be finger printed and pay the required fee.
- have obtained a signed statement from the prospective employee indicating whether or not they have been convicted of a criminal offense.

A criminal records check includes misdemeanors, felony arrests and convictions. Civil infractions such as minor traffic violations do not have to be reported.

Until the report is received and reviewed by the school, the individual is considered a "conditional employee." If the report received from the Michigan Department of State Police or the F.B.I. is not the same as represented on the signed statement respecting either the absence of any conviction(s) or any crimes of which the individual has been convicted, the individual's contract is voidable at the option of the ISD superintendent.

The ISD will adhere to all the subsections of the laws, copies of which are available in the personnel office.

School Employee Fingerprinting

By law, all school staff employed by the school or district prior to January 1, 2006, and afterwards, are required to have a criminal history record check conducted by the Michigan State Police (MSP) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Once the criminal history check has been conducted by the MSP, a report will be sent to the Michigan Department of Education identifying all school employees with a recorded criminal conviction. The Department will in turn provide the names of individuals convicted of a crime to the district superintendent and school board of the employing district. The report will include convictions for any crime, misdemeanor, or felony. If you have been convicted of a non-listed felony, the district superintendent and the school board are required, by law, to agree in writing to continue your employment with the district/school. If you have been convicted of an offense that requires you to register your name on the sex offenders registry, your employment will be terminated and you will not be allowed employment (in any capacity) in a Michigan K-12 School, public or non-public.

The new law also requires you, as an employee of the district/school to self-report to your employer and the Michigan Department of Education when you have been arraigned/charged with certain identified crimes. You must do so within three business days of arraignment or you will be guilty of an additional crime. The crimes are listed in MCL 380.1535a. These forms are located in Google Drive – Shared Drives – Master Resources – HR Folder.

If you have further questions or concerns, you may wish to view additional information available at the following website: www.michigan.gov/teachercert. Or you can contact Coordinating Specialist, Office of Professional Preparation Services, at (517) 335-1167.

Staff Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Agreement

To access and use District Information and Technology Resources (as defined in Bylaw 0100) collectively, “IT Resources”), including a school-assigned email account and/or the Internet at school, staff members must sign and return this form.

Use of District IT Resources is a privilege, not a right. The Board of Education’s IT Resources, including its computer network, Internet connection, and online apps/services, are provided for business, professional, and educational purposes only. Unauthorized or inappropriate use may result in loss of this privilege and/or other disciplinary action. Staff members who sign this Agreement are affirming that they will not use District IT Resources for illegal, unethical, or harassing purposes or to access online content that may be considered obscene, pornographic, or unsuitable for children.

The Board has implemented technology protection measures that protect against (e.g., block/filter) Internet access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, or are harmful to minors. The Board also monitors online activity of staff members in an effort to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. The Superintendent may disable the technology protection measures to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Staff members using District IT Resources are personally responsible and liable, both civilly and criminally, for unauthorized or inappropriate use of such resources.

The Board reserves the right, at any time, to access, monitor, review, and inspect any directories, files and/or messages received by, residing on, or sent using District IT Resources. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

2023 - 2024
HSISD Personnel Handbook
Acknowledgment

I _____ hereby acknowledge that I have read and
Name (Please Print)

understand the 2023-2024 HSISD Personnel Handbook on the HSISD website
www.hsisd.org. I also agree to abide by the rules and regulations outlined
within.

I also understand that by law I am required within three (3) business days to
self-report to my employer and the Michigan Department of Education if I
have been arraigned/charged with certain identified crimes.

Employee Signature

Date

Please sign and return to Char Vaughn
within one week of receiving this form