



# Employee Handbook



## *Regional School District 12*

11A School Street  
Washington Depot, CT 06794

<b>SECTION I - Regional School District 12.....</b>	<b>4</b>
A NOTE TO OUR EMPLOYEES.....	4
OUR DISTRICT.....	5
MISSION STATEMENT.....	6
<b>SECTION II - Employment Practices.....</b>	<b>7</b>
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY.....	7
RECRUITMENT.....	7
HIRING PROCESS.....	8
Onboarding.....	9
Fingerprinting.....	10
Technology/Other Digital Equipment.....	10
Training for New Employees.....	10
Criminal Records Check.....	11
Probationary Period.....	11
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION.....	12
WORKING CONDITIONS.....	12
Hours of Work.....	12
Communication.....	12
Attendance and Tardiness.....	12
Frontline Absence Management System.....	13
Payroll Practices.....	13
Equipment and Supplies.....	13
Safe and Clean Work Environment.....	13
Green Cleaning Program.....	14
Asbestos Notifications.....	14
SEPARATIONS.....	14
Voluntary Resignation.....	14
Involuntary Termination -- Layoff.....	14
Involuntary Termination.....	15
<b>SECTION III - Employee Rights and Standards of Conduct.....</b>	<b>16</b>
STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.....	16
SEXUAL HARASSMENT.....	17
HARASSMENT.....	18
Corrective Action.....	18
CHEMICAL AND/OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE - ALCOHOL AND DRUGS.....	19
PUBLISHING/COPYRIGHTS AND PATENTS.....	19
ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER NETWORK USE.....	19
NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY.....	20
CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	20
SOLICITATION OF STAFF MEMBERS.....	20
DRESS CODE.....	20

USE OF TELEPHONES.....	21
ACTIVITIES.....	21
OTHER EMPLOYMENT.....	21
CIVIL AND LEGAL RIGHTS.....	21
Title IX Statement.....	21
Non-Discrimination.....	22
Freedom of Speech.....	22
EMPLOYMENT STATUS.....	22
EMPLOYMENT RECORDS.....	23
<b>SECTION IV- Compensation and Benefits.....</b>	<b>24</b>
COMPENSATION.....	24
WORKER’S COMPENSATION.....	24
LEAVE PROVISIONS.....	24
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).....	24
Jury Duty.....	24
Military Leave of Absence.....	25
RETIREMENT PROGRAMS.....	25
TAX-DEFERRED ANNUITIES.....	25
APPENDIX A.....	26
APPENDIX B.....	27
APPENDIX C.....	28

# SECTION I - Regional School District 12

## A NOTE TO OUR EMPLOYEES

Dear Region 12 Staff,

This handbook is intended for all employees of Regional School District #12. Its purpose is to outline human resources information and relevant district policies, enable access to employment documents, and share support services provided by *Solutions*, our Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The policies and practices referenced in this handbook may be changed or amended at any time as necessary.

Our district prides itself on building a positive culture and championing efforts to improve every one of our employees' experience in Region 12.. Therefore, the contents in this handbook outline human resources information and personnel-related policies that will help support you in your roles throughout the district. We want all employees to have a deep understanding of the district's vision and goals, expectations related to performance, as well as support services offered so that you can be productive and successful members of the Region 12 school community.

Most policy statements in this handbook have been paraphrased for brevity. A full copy of Regional School District 12 policies are available on the following [website page link](#). Should any question arise regarding a policy issue, please refer to the full text of the referenced policy in the Region 12 Board of Education policies, and/or consult the Office of the Superintendent.

While this handbook is meant to contain pertinent information for employees, it is not intended to take the place of employee contracts as negotiated by our union groups, nor is it meant to constitute a contract between employees and the district. It has been developed solely as an informational tool.

Thank you,

Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue  
Human Resources Administrative Coordinator  
Region 12

## **OUR DISTRICT**

Region 12 may be small, but it provides dynamic learning opportunities for our students, exemplified by innovative academic pathways for Pre-K-12 students in the towns of Bridgewater, Roxbury and Washington. Classroom environments across all grade levels are designed to support the whole child. Children begin their educational journey starting at the elementary school in their respective towns of Bridgewater (Burnham), Roxbury (Booth), and Washington (Washington Primary). Each of these schools boasts attention to students' social and emotional well being through the unique experiences they can access both within the curriculum and throughout their rural communities. The small class sizes allow Region 12 staff to provide individualized attention to learning and promote educational growth, which helps our students thrive.

In sixth grade, students come together from the three towns to begin their middle-high school journey at Shepaug Valley School, which sits on an expansive sixty-acre campus. Shepaug Valley School houses our middle and high school students. Students benefit from a focus on the whole child at the middle school level. Our 6-8 students are provided opportunities in humanities, sciences, math, and world language, as well as other opportunities through physical education, sports, and after school clubs. The educational journey for our students following 8th grade includes an introduction to college and advanced level courses across the subject areas. High school students engage in authentic, hands-on learning in classrooms, our television studio, state-of-the-art science labs, planetarium, and technologically advanced facilities. Enrichment opportunities for our students come in many forms: arts, athletics, theater, humanities, science and technology, agriscience, robotics, and leadership clubs.

In the fall of 2019, our Shepaug campus expanded to include The Agriscience Academy at Shepaug Valley School. As an agricultural science school, students from Region 12 and the neighboring communities of Bethel, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, and Sherman are given the opportunity to explore their future career aspirations. Through STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), our program encourages students to solve complex, real-world problems in order to build lifelong skills and competencies.

The genuine support of our students and partnership with their families make this district an exciting and productive place to work and learn. Students in Region 12 truly benefit from the education, experience, innovative ideas, and collegiality of our staff. We hope that our ability to guide and support each of our employees will help shape the positive culture of our school system in the years to come.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Region 12 community educates, challenges, and inspires all learners to become compassionate, creative, and courageous individuals who are empowered by the knowledge, character, and perseverance to achieve their greatest potential within the global society.

*What is our purpose?*

Through reflective practice, the mission of Region 12 is to:

- Optimize student achievement.
- Build a collaborative learning environment.
- Develop engaged citizens.



## **SECTION II - Employment Practices**

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

Region 12 is an equal opportunity employer. From recruitment and onboarding to our daily efforts in working with staff, our employees are treated fairly, equitably, and with respect. All personnel policies and practices of Regional School District 12 will be in accordance with equal employment opportunity practices as determined by state and federal legislation. A job description and required qualifications will be made available for each position to be filled. Equal employment opportunities will be available to all protected groups; no individual will be discriminated against because of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, or genetic information.

The district's staffing practices are continually reviewed to ensure that our school system is moving toward workplace diversity. The district's staffing efforts support the belief that students and staff benefit from an environment where employees come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

### **RECRUITMENT**

The recruitment of new employees is one of the most important tasks by leaders and supervisors in our district. We want our students and their families to have a positive experience through the highly qualified staff we hire. Region 12 prides itself on employing consistent and equitable practices for attracting, hiring, and ultimately retaining qualified individuals to serve the needs of our students and families. [Policy 4000](#) explicitly outlines the school system's long range goals regarding personnel:

1. To recruit, select, and employ the best qualified personnel to staff the district's schools.
2. To provide staff compensation and benefit programs sufficient to attract and retain qualified employees.
3. To provide an in-service training program for all employees to improve their performance.
4. To conduct an employee evaluation program that will contribute to the continuous improvement of staff performance.
5. To assign personnel to ensure that they are used as effectively as possible.

Further, [Policy 4111.1](#) in accordance with Sections 10-4a(3), 10-220(a), and 10-156ee of the Connecticut General Statutes, references a strong commitment to minority recruitment, including developing contacts with local organizations, partnering with educational institutions, as well as expanding advertising for employment in the District. Postings for new positions in the District are shared on the Region 12 website, CT Reap, CEA, and local media outlets in an effort to attract candidates from a range of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and geographical locations.



To initiate the recruitment of new employees, administrators submit a posting request through the Frontline Applitrack portal by clicking on **create new requisition** and listing the Superintendent and Assistant to the Superintendent in the approval tab. The posting should contain specific and accurate information about the position. After a request to post the position is submitted and reviewed, the posting will be shared on the Region 12 website and other platforms or media outlets. All positions are posted for a duration of no less than five (5) days in accordance with contract language and current practice. However, depending on the position, it may be necessary to post jobs for a longer period of time.

## **HIRING PROCESS**

According to [Policy 4212](#), the Board has the authority to make all hiring decisions.

Administrators and other qualified staff involved in the hiring process will review prospective candidates submitted on the portal: [Regional School District 12 - Frontline Recruitment](#). As an equal opportunity employer, [Policy 4218.11](#) references that “The Board of Education (the “Board”) will not make employment decisions (including decisions related to hiring, assignment, compensation, promotion, demotion, disciplinary action and termination) on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, or gender identity or expression, except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification.”

In the case of hiring **new teachers** in accordance with [Policy 4212](#), building level committees will be set up and chaired by an appropriate administrator. The committee will review application materials, select and interview applicants, and recommend finalists to the superintendent. Reference and background checks will be completed in a timely manner prior to a candidate being moved forward in the hiring process. All prospective teachers must meet applicable State of Connecticut certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternate routes to certification.

Once a qualified candidate has been selected for a position within the District (both certified or non-certified), corresponding application materials will be submitted and reviewed by the superintendent’s assistant. *A checklist of application documents will be used and shared with building leaders and supervisors to ensure all materials have been completed appropriately.* If unforeseen issues arise regarding a candidate or application materials, the superintendent’s assistant will work with the **Human Resources Administrative Coordinator (HRAC)** in order to resolve the concerns. In some cases, the coordinator may need to discuss issues with district administrators or prospective candidates in order to advance the candidate.

Upon final review and approval of a candidate’s application, reference and background checks, the assistant will initiate an interview for the candidate with the Region 12 Superintendent of Schools. The superintendent shall provide the Region 12 Board of Education the criteria and procedures used in making hiring recommendations. The superintendent will then recommend one individual to the



Region 12 Board of Education for hiring. After an offer for employment is made to a new employee, the superintendent's assistant will issue an appropriate contract within two business days from the offer.

## Onboarding

Onboarding is an important step in welcoming new employees into Region 12. New employees should feel supported at this stage of the process, and personalizing the onboarding experience assures that all new employees experience a smooth, efficient, and positive transition to the district. Following the hiring of an employee by the Superintendent of Schools, the HRAC will conduct an onboarding meeting with each candidate to orient them to each of the onboarding documents (provided digitally) that need to be completed as an important step in the hiring process. During this meeting, the HRAC will also discuss any necessary training and any deadlines for that training, as well as to answer any pertinent questions about district protocols and expectations.

The following are a list of documents included in the new employee onboarding packet:

CT   W4 Employee Withholding Certificate
CT - Educational Employer Verification
CT   Agency Privacy Requirements for Noncriminal Justice Applicants
CT   National Child Protection Act
CT   DCF-3031 Authorization Form Rev 7/2022
CT   Active/Inactive Teacher Beneficiary Form (certified staff only)
Federal   SSA-1945 (certified staff only)
Direct Deposit Enrollment (Advanced)
Employee Information / Emergency Contact (Advanced)
Federal   FMLA Employee Rights and Responsibilities
Federal   I-9 Form
Federal   W-4 Form
Hiring Acknowledgement Packet
Region 12 Technology Agreement (Revised 2022)

## **Fingerprinting**

All employees are required to be fingerprinted as a condition of employment with Region 12 Schools. Fingerprinting is required for all new hires WITHIN 30 DAYS of job offer but required before the first day of employment. **Upon digitally signing the FBI Privacy Act/NCJ Privacy Rights and the NCPA Waiver & Consent forms, instructions along with a link will be emailed to the new employee for pre-registering online for fingerprinting.** Once pre-registered, an authorization will be emailed that is required to produce to the agency of choice when fingerprinted. A list of agencies will be included in the email. Payment will be required during the online pre-registration process.

## **Technology/Other Digital Equipment**

Technology and other equipment necessary for work will be provided to new employees when they are formally hired and have completed all necessary training. A key card is provided so new employees may gain physical access to their buildings. Every key card has the employee's photo and becomes an identification badge while employed in Region 12 Schools.

If an employee assumes a position that will require the use of a laptop or other digital equipment, the district's Technology Department will ensure that all employees have access to working devices and equipment. When an employee is hired who will need access to a device or other technology, a message will be sent directly to members of the Technology Department to set up a time to meet with the employee. This dedicated time is meant to provide an overview of the technology systems in place, rights and restrictions, passwords, and other pertinent information.

## **Training for New Employees**

When hired in Region 12, all employees are expected to complete mandatory training sessions on a variety of topics. Annual training for employees is typically mandated by the State of CT and must be completed as a condition of employment for both certified and non-certified employees.

There are additional training sessions or professional development opportunities that may be developed and offered to employees in a given year, such as Safety and Security, and these will be communicated by building or district leaders in advance.

New hires are expected to complete mandated training prior to school starting (including the three days leading up to the first day with students). Employees hired mid-year are encouraged to complete the training as soon as possible but will have 30 days in which to finalize necessary training. Training is discussed during the onboarding meeting with the HRAC.

The following represents the current list of mandatory training sessions required of all certified and non-certified employees:

- Anti-Bullying - CT
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Child Abuse

- CT DCF Mandated Reporter (every 3 years)
- DCF Identification and Prevention of Adult Sexual Misconduct Against Children Training for School Employees (every 3 years)
- Sexual Harassment CT – State Mandated
- Suicide Prevention

Other training for non-classified employees are scheduled and coordinated through the employee's direct supervisor. These will be shared with employees upon hiring as part of the onboarding process.

An orientation for new teachers takes place in August, which includes information related to district mission and priorities, teaching and learning expectations, technology assistance, and business office support. New teachers will also review support offered through the district's Human Resources (HR) department, including our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by Solutions. All other employee groups receive on-the-job coaching and support as coordinated by an immediate supervisor or building leader.

### **Criminal Records Check**

Connecticut State General Statutes §10-221 requires a criminal records check of job applicants who are under final consideration for employment. Each person hired by the district shall be required to submit to state and national criminal record checks within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of employment. Any person for whom criminal records checks are required pursuant to this policy must pay all fees and costs associated with the fingerprinting process and/or the submission or processing of the requests for criminal record checks. Any offer of employment is contingent upon the satisfactory completion of the criminal background check.

Applicants and current employees of Regional School District 12 must disclose all pertinent information related to convictions for felonies and misdemeanors. Failure or refusal to disclose such information may be grounds for termination. Decisions regarding the effect of a conviction upon an applicant/employee, if disclosed by the applicant/employee, will be made on a case-by-case basis. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the falsification or omission of any information on a job application or in a job interview, including, but not limited to information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges, shall be grounds for disqualification from consideration for employment or discharge from employment in accordance with [Policy 4112](#).

### **Probationary Period**

All classified employees or employees in a bargaining unit must complete a probationary period as defined by the bargaining unit contract and in conjunction with the State of CT. Teachers should refer to Connecticut General Statutes §10-151 for information regarding the statutory probationary period. All non-bargaining unit or non-classified employees are subject to a probationary period of ninety (90) days, unless otherwise stated in conjunction with their terms of hire.

For information regarding the probationary period for a specific job classification, refer to the most current collective bargaining agreement. Contracts for all bargaining units can be found on our website under the Human Resources tab: <https://www.region-12.org/human-resources/union-contracts>

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

The Board of Education and district administrators embrace a continuous process of evaluation for all employees, both certified and non-certified. As an employer, Region 12 sets high standards for their employees and encourages a level of professionalism and care in working with all of our stakeholders. Employees will meet annually with their principal, director, manager, or immediate supervisor to self-reflect on their performance and discuss strengths and any areas for improvement. Conversations around performance are meant to elicit self-reflection by the employee. A productive dialogue with a supervisor or administrator during the evaluation process is meant to highlight an employee's strengths, identify areas for growth, and develop goals for the future. Certified staff evaluations will be evaluated based on criteria defined and approved by the State of CT Department of Education and in accordance with the employee's bargaining unit contract.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Hours of Work**

The typical work week for most Region 12 employees begins on Monday and ends on Friday. Both the hours of work and scheduled reporting times for each building are governed by collective bargaining agreements and may be different from building to building and dependent upon the type of work being performed. Overtime pay is governed by State of CT and federal wage and hour laws, as well as by individual collective bargaining agreements. Questions about work hours or overtime can be addressed to the employee's immediate supervisor or the Office of the Superintendent.

### **Communication**

All employees are provided with a Region 12 email account. Employees are responsible to monitor their email for communication and directives from the district, as well as to be able to ensure they can provide timely responses to parents and community members. Email is often an important vehicle for communicating with parents and caregivers and offers a means of establishing an open and professional dialogue about students, as appropriate.

### **Attendance and Tardiness**

All employees are expected to be at their assigned workstation or classroom on time and ready to work every scheduled workday. While there are always extenuating circumstances that warrant time out of work, such as illness or emergencies at home, frequent or excessive tardiness can impact the quality of services in the district, including the delivery of a positive educational experience for students. Absence from one's job over time may also affect colleagues and co-workers if they have to fill in to help. For this reason, the district requests that all employees respectfully provide advance notification when they are going to be absent or late to work. Advance notice of absences is required using the

district's absence management system (Frontline). Aside from an emergency situation, if an immediate supervisor or district administrator has reason to believe procedures for notifying the district about an absence or tardiness are not being followed, discussions and possible disciplinary action may be taken.

### **Frontline Absence Management System**

All staff are required to report absences through the **Frontline Absence Management** system as soon as possible but no later than one hour prior to the beginning of their shift or working hours. Frontline may be accessed through the District's website and under the HR tab. For teachers, this advance notice allows an administrator or supervisor to secure a substitute, if needed. The appropriate school administrator or immediate supervisor must be notified the morning of the absence through the automated system. Failure to follow this procedure can result in an unauthorized absence. If assistance is needed when using the automated system, an employee can call the Business Office at 860-868-6100 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. For absences lasting five consecutive days or longer, a medical note will be needed. Employees should work with their direct supervisors to coordinate the return to work.

In addition, forms to request absences requiring approval (e.g., personal day(s), vacation time, etc.) can be obtained from the building secretary. Immediate supervisor approval is required before submitting a form to the Superintendent's office for final approval. All requests should be made in accordance with any applicable bargaining unit agreement.

### **Payroll Practices**

Currently, all employees are paid on a biweekly schedule. Any questions regarding pay schedules can be addressed by the Business Office.

Recordkeeping of attendance for pay purposes is extremely important. Accurate and timely reporting of your work hours and/or absences is required at all times in the manner designated by the Superintendent of Schools; and outlined for all employees. The Frontline Absence Management System can be accessed through the Human Resources tab on the Region 12 website: <https://www.region-12.org/human-resources>

If you have any questions, or need assistance, please contact the Business Office at 860-868-6100.

### **Equipment and Supplies**

Regional School District 12 provides the tools, equipment, and supplies, including safety equipment, that is reasonable and necessary for the performance of duties.

### **Safe and Clean Work Environment**

Protecting the safety of our employees and the environment is a core value within the Facilities Department. Our intent is to provide all who utilize our facilities with a safe and clean environment. We utilize best practices and comply with local, state and federal regulations to foster and maintain a

safe and healthy work environment. We have established policies, standards and procedures to achieve these goals, and provide ongoing trainings and support to continually improve the effectiveness of our Practices.

### **Green Cleaning Program**

In response to the State of Connecticut Public Act 09-81, our District has instituted a Green Cleaning Program in all of its facilities to comply. The intent of our Green Cleaning Program is to reduce the exposure by the occupants of our facilities to potentially harmful products, equipment, or procedures which could adversely affect them, their visitors and the surrounding environment. Staff are trained in the proper handling and safe use of these products. A detailed copy of our Green Cleaning Program Statement can be found on our website at the following link:

<https://www.region-12.org/central-office/facilities-Department>.

### **Asbestos Notifications**

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos-containing building materials. As a result of Federal Law and State of Connecticut Regulations, we have employed a safety consultant who is an accredited Asbestos Inspector and Asbestos Management Planner. A copy of a memorandum outlining the most recent asbestos inspection results can be found on our website at <https://www.region-12.org/central-office/facilities-department>.

## **SEPARATIONS**

### **Voluntary Resignation**

Employees who wish to terminate their employment with the District are requested to notify their immediate supervisor as early as possible and in accordance with their bargaining unit agreement. Such notice will expedite an orderly transfer of responsibilities and will provide time to secure a suitable replacement, if necessary.

A teacher planning to resign at the close of the current school year should give written notice to the Superintendent as early as possible in the school year. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall have the authority to accept all resignations on behalf of the Board.

All school property including Badge Access Keys must be returned to the immediate supervisor or building principal on the last day of employment, if not sooner.

### **Involuntary Termination -- Layoff**

Whenever it becomes necessary to reduce the number of employees in a job classification, employees in that classification are laid off in accordance with the respective collective bargaining agreement, if any. If a collective bargaining agreement does not exist, employees in a given classification shall be laid off at the discretion of the Superintendent. Recall procedures vary according to the collective bargaining agreement involved.

**Involuntary Termination**

Termination for cause may be based on a variety of reasons, including poor performance or behavior problems. The procedure for involuntary termination for cause varies according to the law and/or the bargaining agreement involved.

Probationary employees may be terminated at any time during the probationary period, at the supervisor's discretion.

Teacher termination and non-renewal procedures are described in Connecticut General Statutes §10-151.



# SECTION III - Employee Rights and Standards of Conduct

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The Board of Education recognizes that school children are often influenced by the conduct displayed by teachers and other members of a school's staff. The Board expects that staff will strive to set the kind of example for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and contribute toward a positive school climate for all.

Employees are expected to report for work appropriately dressed, on time and fully prepared to perform their duties. They are expected to perform their duties in a timely and efficient manner, and to refrain from inappropriate conduct. Every employee is expected to deal effectively and respectfully with students, parents and other staff members, both superior and subordinate. The personal life of an employee will be the concern and warrant the attention of the Board only as it may directly affect the employee's fitness to perform the job, his/her fitness to be placed in a position of trust with children, the property of the district, or constitute a conflict of interest.

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be applied in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and collective bargaining agreements. At any point, disciplinary action may be taken, and the Board of Education has the authority to begin disciplinary action at any level as described below:

- (a) Verbal warning
- (b) Written warning and/or probation
- (c) Suspension with pay, then without pay
- (d) Discharge or dismissal, except that demotion or transfer may be offered in lieu of discharge.

According to [Policy 4117](#), one or more of the following may satisfy just cause and be sufficient grounds for taking disciplinary action:

1. Incompetency or inefficiency in the performance of the duties of the assigned position;
2. Insubordination (including, but not limited to, refusal to perform assigned work);
3. Carelessness or negligence in the performance of duty or in the care or use of district property;
4. Discourteous or offensive or abusive language or conduct toward other employees, students or the public;
5. Dishonesty;
6. Drinking alcoholic beverages on the job, or reporting for work while intoxicated;
7. The unlawful possession, use, sale or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on school premises or as part of any of its activities;
8. Personal conduct unbecoming an employee of the district;
9. Engaging in political activities during assigned hours of employment or otherwise in violation of applicable policies or regulations of the district;
10. Conviction of any crime involving moral turpitude, including a sex offense;
11. Repeated and unexcused absences or tardiness;

12. Abuse of leave privileges;
13. Falsifying any information supplied to the school district, including but not limited to, information supplied on application forms, employment records or any other school district records;
14. Persistent violations of or refusal to obey safety rules and regulations made applicable to the public schools by the Board of Education, the Superintendent or by any appropriate state or governmental agency;
15. Offering anything of value or offering any service in exchange for special treatment in connection with the employee's job or to any member of the public;
16. Abandonment of position;
17. Other due and sufficient cause.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. §46a-60(b)(8) as any unwelcome sexual advances or request for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or,
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Although not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of the type of conduct prohibited by the policy against sexual harassment:

- unwelcome sexual advances from a co-worker or supervisor, such as unwanted hugs, touches, or kisses;
- unwelcome attention of a sexual nature, such as degrading, suggestive, or lewd remarks or noises;
- dirty jokes, derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons, or drawings; and
- the threat or suggestion that continued employment advancement or assignment of earnings depends on whether or not the employee will submit to or tolerate harassment.

Sexual harassment can happen to anyone, regardless of the gender of either the harasser or the person harassed. Employees, interns, temporary workers and visitors to places of public accommodations are all protected by sexual harassment laws. Anyone in a workplace could be a sexual harasser, from supervisors and coworkers to vendors and visitors.

Sexual harassment does not have to occur in the workplace for it to be illegal. For example, it can be at an off-site office holiday party or at a happy hour. It also does not have to take place face-to-face but can occur on social media or through text messages.

Harassment of an employee by a supervisor or co-worker on the basis of sex creates a harmful working environment and is illegal under state and federal law. It is the policy of the Board to maintain a working environment free from harassment, insults, or intimidation on the basis of an employee's sex. Verbal or physical conduct by a supervisor or co-worker relating to an employee's sex, which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance, or adversely affecting the employee's employment opportunities is prohibited.

Any infraction of this policy by supervisors or co-workers should be reported immediately to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Retaliation against any employee for complaining about sexual harassment is prohibited under this policy and illegal under state and federal law. Violations of this policy will not be permitted and may result in discipline up to and including discharge from employment. Individuals who engage in acts of sexual harassment may also be subject to civil and criminal penalties.

Regional School District 12 takes this subject very seriously and will comply with the State of Connecticut mandatory sexual harassment training requirements. All employees will be required to fulfill the required two-hour training within six months of their hire date, if not immediately upon hire. Any employee who believes that he or she has been harassed in the workplace in violation of this policy may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, 450 Columbus Blvd, Ste 2, Hartford, CT 06103, telephone number (860) 541-3000; and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office, John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA, 02203 telephone number 1-(800)-669-4000. Connecticut law requires that a formal written complaint be filed with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities 180 days from the date when the alleged harassment occurred. Remedies for sexual harassment include cease and desist orders, back pay, compensatory damages, hiring, promotion, or reinstatement.

## **HARASSMENT**

Harassment will not be tolerated in this district. This policy applies to all students, staff members, Board members, parent, vendors, other employees and other visitors who are on district grounds or property or on property within the jurisdiction of the district; on buses operated by or for the district; while attending or engaged in district activities; and while away from district grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the district. Further information can be found in BOE policies.

### **Corrective Action**

It is the Administration's intention to operate Regional School District 12 as efficiently and as effectively as possible. Supervisors are expected to take action to correct situations or conduct inconsistent with that intent. The corrective action process generally follows the provisions of the various union agreements and legal requirements between the Regional School District 12 and its employees.

## **CHEMICAL AND/OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE - ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

The Board of Education is concerned with maintaining a safe and healthy working and learning environment for all staff and students. Policy #[4118.231](#) was developed in order to establish a workplace free of the effects of alcohol and second-hand smoke, and free from drug abuse. The Board also seeks to promote a safe, healthy working environment for all employees. This policy is adopted in accordance with state law and the Drug Free Workplace Act.

Each employee of Regional School District 12 is reminded that the district now has an Employee Assistance Program that may be utilized for needed or desired support related to addiction.

## **PUBLISHING/COPYRIGHTS AND PATENTS**

Professional staff members shall be encouraged to write and publish educational materials whether it be for local use, periodicals, or books.

Staff members are encouraged to contribute professional articles and news items to local, State and national agencies. As a matter of professional ethics, all professional articles should be cleared through the office of the Superintendent of Schools in the event that the school system or any of its separate departments is mentioned.

Materials created by staff at the encouragement and/or direction of superiors and/or during work time shall be considered “work made for hire” under §§201(b) and 101 of the Copyright Act and shall be solely the property of the school district.

## **ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER NETWORK USE**

The Board of Education provides computers, networks and Internet access to support the educational mission of the schools and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff. All new staff are asked to sign a **Region 12 Technology Agreement** when they are hired, which outlines the expectations of the district regarding technology use - computers and other technology devices are made available to staff for business and education-related purposes only.

The Board expects that employees learn to use the available technological resources that will assist them in the performance of their job responsibilities. As needed, employees shall receive professional development in the appropriate use of these resources.

Employees shall be responsible for the appropriate use of technology and shall use the district’s technological resources for purposes related to their employment. Computer files and electronic communications, including email and voicemail, are not private. Technological resources shall not be used to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or District operations without authority.

All visitors who choose to use the Regional School District 12 (RSD 12) network must abide by the terms of this policy in the same way that students and staff do.

## **NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY**

The district provides the network system, e-mail and Internet access as a tool for education, research, and business in support of the district's mission. The district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store, without prior notice, information about the content and usage of:

- The RSD 12 Network;
- User files and disk space utilization;
- User applications and bandwidth utilization;
- User document files, folders and electronic communications;
- Email;
- Internet access; and
- Any and all information transmitted or received in connection with network and email use.

No staff user should have any expectation of privacy when using the district's network. The district reserves the right to disclose any electronic message to law enforcement officials or third parties as appropriate. As part of monitoring and reviewing, the district will retain the capacity to bypass any individual password of a student or other user. The system's security aspects, such as personal passwords and the message delete function for email, can be bypassed for these purposes. The district's ability to monitor and review is not restricted or neutralized by these devices.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The Board of Education wishes to avoid any conflict of interest on the part of its employees regarding their personal interests and the interests of the school district in dealing with suppliers, contractors, and all organizations or individuals doing or seeking to do business with the school district. For this reason, the Board of Education prohibits employees from directly or indirectly soliciting any gift, or accepting or receiving any gift having a value of fifty dollars (\$50) or more, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, promises or any other form, under circumstances in which it could be reasonably inferred that the gift was intended to influence the Board member or employee in the performance of his/her official duties, or was intended as a reward for any official action on his/her part.

## **SOLICITATION OF STAFF MEMBERS**

Outside groups shall not be permitted to solicit among the staff for any purpose.

## **DRESS CODE**

As a professional organization, Board employees must act, dress, and work in a professional manner. Teachers, as well as other Board employees, are expected to dress as professionals. If an administrator

believes that an employee is not meeting the expectation of professional dress, he/she may address the issue with the employee individually and ask that the employee conform to the professional standard of dress.

## **USE OF TELEPHONES**

Telephones are provided on Regional School District 12 properties to conduct school business. In cases of emergency, personal messages may be taken for an employee. An employee may use his or her cell phone during non-working times or free periods as appropriate.

## **ACTIVITIES**

Participation of students and employees in community-sponsored activities is encouraged, as long as such activities are non-partisan and non-sectarian, have a specific educational purpose, and do not adversely affect the educational program.

## **OTHER EMPLOYMENT**

Personnel of the schools may receive compensation for activities outside of the compensated work time as long as these activities do not interfere with the proper discharge of their assigned duties, do not constitute a conflict of interest, or do not cause poor public relations within the community. It is expected that any outside activity should be carried on in a business-like and ethical manner.

## **CIVIL AND LEGAL RIGHTS**

### **Title IX Statement**

Regional School District 12 is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. Regional School District 12 does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut State and/or Federal nondiscrimination laws.

Regional School District 12 does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding Region 12 nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

District Title IX Coordinator

11A School Street, Washington Depot, CT 06794

Allyson O'Hara, Director of Pupil Personnel

Phone: (860) 868-6100 Email: [oharaa@region-12.org](mailto:oharaa@region-12.org)

## **Non-Discrimination**

The conditions or privileges of employment in the school district, including the wages, hours, terms and benefits, shall be applied without regard to race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, mental or physical disability, veteran status or genetic information, except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification. The Board of Education seeks to extend the advantages of public education with full equality of educational opportunity to all students and personnel. The Board, any employee or any other person may not aid or compel the performance of an unfair labor practice as defined by law. For purposes of this policy, "genetic information" means the information about genes, gene products, or inherited characteristics that may derive from an individual or family members.

## **Freedom of Speech**

Employees have the same guarantees of freedom of speech as provided under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and applicable case law. In accordance with these principles, all employees of the District have the right to speak out on matters of public concern before the Regional School District 12 Board of Education or to speak out on such matters in any other forum. No employee of Regional School District 12 will be subject to disciplinary action or retaliatory action of any kind as a result of the exercise of his or her free speech rights.

## **EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

The granting of tenure is a serious decision having long-term consequences for Regional School District 12. For this reason, tenure status is not awarded to Region 12 teachers whose performance in their probationary years has been no more than adequate or less than satisfactory in meeting the District's expectations. Rather, tenure is achieved only when there is evidence of high quality in a teacher's professional performance and continued distinction following the attainment of tenure. A teacher must exhibit excellence or potential for excellence to be awarded tenure.

Renewal of limited contracts is contingent upon satisfactory performance. Continuing contracts, as the name implies, remain in force as long as the employee's performance remains satisfactory. Unless otherwise specified, teachers' contracts are for one school year or for the unexpired portion of a school year following the effective date of the appointment.

Regional School District 12 has several types of work schedules, which include: calendar year (12 months), 11-months, school year (10-months), 183 school days, a prescribed number of work days as set forth in bargaining agreements, and per diem (as needed). The duration of the appointment relates to the nature of the work involved. Questions regarding the status of employment can be addressed to the employee's immediate supervisor or the Office of the Superintendent.



## **EMPLOYMENT RECORDS**

All personnel files are maintained at the Regional School District 12 central administration office. Files are kept on all current employees and include pertinent information typically expected in personnel records. A file shall be kept for all resigned or retired employees for the term prescribed by state law, and shall include such essential information as shall seem appropriate to the administration and specified by state and federal laws.

On behalf of the Board of Education, the Superintendent will notify an employee and a collective bargaining representative, if any, in writing when a request is made for disclosure of the employee's personnel, medical or similar files if the Superintendent reasonably believes disclosure would invade the employee's privacy.

Any files that contain medical information regarding an employee will be kept separate from other personnel files. Employees are expected to inform the Office of the Superintendent of any change in status that could affect employment or benefits, such as marital status, educational attainment, certifications, or similar changes. Changes (even unlisted telephone numbers) must be recorded on a Change of Address Form (available at the Office of the Superintendent and the Principal's office) and submitted to the Office of the Superintendent. Emergency contacts must also be updated should there be a divorce, marriage, death, change in emergency contact's phone number or address, or other major change in family status.

The Regional School District 12 will abide by the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. Employees may make an appointment to review their personnel file and may obtain copies of any material entered into the file. Employees may be charged \$.50 a page for photocopying.

## **SECTION IV- Compensation and Benefits**

### **COMPENSATION**

Salaries and wages paid by Regional School District 12 are highly competitive with other similarly populated areas for teachers, administrators, and other staff members. Salary schedules for all employees are carefully reviewed to ensure that the system can attract and maintain the kind of talent required to achieve its educational objectives, within the constraints of the budget and other funding sources.

### **WORKER'S COMPENSATION**

All employees of Regional School District 12 are protected under the State Workers' Compensation Act of Connecticut in cases of injury or death incurred in the course of and arising out of their employment. If an employee sustains an injury in the course of pursuing his/her job duties, he/she should immediately notify his/her supervisor.

Work-related injuries must be reported to the Office of the Director of Finance via the *Report Workers' Compensation Injuries* within 24 hours from date of injury.

Any concerns regarding a claim should be addressed to the Office of the Director of Finance, (860) 868-6107.

### **LEAVE PROVISIONS**

The Administration recognizes that certain absences are necessary because of illness or personal emergencies. Further, it recognizes that some absences in the pursuit of personal development and growth can be beneficial to the system. Employees are eligible for leaves only as specified by their collective bargaining agreements, or upon approval issued in response to a written request to an employee's supervisor.

#### **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act provides that employees that meet the eligibility requirements may take up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave within a twelve-month period. This leave can be for personal or family medical reasons and for birth or adoption reasons. For further information regarding the application requirements of the leave, please contact the Region 12 Business Office.

#### **Jury Duty**

Employees selected for jury duty must immediately submit the *Jury Duty Summons* and *Confidential Leave Request Form* to their Principal/Supervisor. Employees on jury duty, who receive full pay pursuant to the applicable collective bargaining agreement, must submit checks and the certificate of Jury Duty directly to Payroll. Unless the contract states otherwise, employees shall only receive pay

for the first five days. Thereafter, jury duty shall be without pay from the district.

### **Military Leave of Absence**

Employees may request a Military Leave of Absence for extended tours of military service. A copy of the military orders must be provided to the supervisor as well as the Personal Leave Request form. Regional School District 12 will follow all applicable laws regarding military leaves of absence. Employees should contact the Office of the Superintendent for more information.

### **RETIREMENT PROGRAMS**

Employees should review their applicable collective bargaining agreement, contact the Office of the Superintendent, or review applicable law for information regarding retirement programs.

Any employee who is planning to retire should refer to pension rules or applicable laws for retirement eligibility and limitations. The “Retirement” section is also located in the Human Resources tab on the district website: [Retirement](#).

Employees who are retiring must notify the Office of the Superintendent at (860) 868-6100 to complete all necessary paperwork. In addition, employees are encouraged to meet with the Human Resources Administrative Coordinator to resolve any questions related to retirement, including pension and health insurance.

Please note that resignations and notices of intent to retire, once submitted in writing, may not be rescinded.

### **TAX-DEFERRED ANNUITIES**

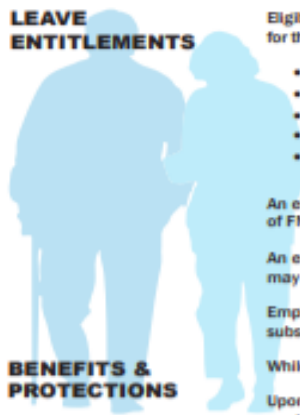
Employees may choose to defer portions of their current income for retirement purposes through the purchase of tax-deferred annuities. Such deferrals may reduce current income taxes.

The Payroll Department maintains a list of companies authorized to sell annuities to employees. Interested employees may inquire at the Payroll Department. This opportunity is purely voluntary, and the Board assumes no responsibility for the outcome of any investment.

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION

## LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS



Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within one year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered servicemember's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

An employer may not interfere with an individual's FMLA rights or retaliate against someone for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave;\* and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

\*Special "hours of service" requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

## REQUESTING LEAVE

Generally, employees must give 30-days' advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days' notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally, follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

## EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

## ENFORCEMENT

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.



For additional information or to file a complaint:

**1-866-4-USWAGE**

(1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627

**www.dol.gov/whd**

U.S. Department of Labor | Wage and Hour Division



WH1420 REV 04/16



REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 12  
Washington Depot, Connecticut

HARASSMENT FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM

Name of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged harasser: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location where incident occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of misconduct: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of witnesses (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Has the incident been reported before? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

To whom was it reported? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the resolution? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for dissatisfaction: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 12

Washington Depot, Connecticut

HARASSMENT COMPLAINT - APPEAL FORM

Name of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of original complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Have there been any prior appeals? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

To whom were they submitted? \_\_\_\_\_

Description of decision being appealed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Why is the decision being appealed? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_