



*Kankakee Valley School Corporation*

# **TEACHER HANDBOOK**

*Effective July 2021*

**Errors, omissions and ambiguities will be addressed individually as they are identified within this text. Past practice, common sense, and intent will take priority when conflicts occur. This document is intended to mirror KVSC practices currently in effect.**

Welcome you to Kankakee Valley School Corporation. You are an important addition to Kankakee Valley Schools and play a crucial role as we work to prepare tomorrow's future. I look forward to a long, productive working relationship.

This Teacher Handbook is presented to all teachers of the Kankakee Valley School Corporation as an employee reference. This Handbook can be used as a guide regarding management/employee relations, terms of employment and employee benefits.

This Handbook has been adopted for the purpose of identifying general guidelines for KVSC teaching staff. It is in your best interest to be familiar with the contents of the Handbook. If you have any questions about any information in the Handbook the Administration encourages you to seek clarification from your principal as soon as possible.

It is the intention for the working environment at all Kankakee Valley Schools to be productive, fair, and congenial. To maintain this environment, all employees must make a concerted effort to abide by the employment guidelines outlined in this Handbook.

I hope you will find your association with Kankakee Valley Schools rewarding. I wish you success as a member of our educational team.

Sincerely,  
Don Street  
Superintendent  
Kankakee Valley School Corporation

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## **I. THE ORGANIZATION**

### **Our Vision Statement and Mission Statement**

Kankakee Valley students are excited about learning. This excitement is sparked by engaging them in rigorous and relevant learning opportunities that interest and challenge them to think critically while preparing for college, and careers, and the military.

#### **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to guide students to become informed, engaged citizens, and curious lifelong learners.

### **KVSC District**

The KVSC is a public school corporation which provides educational services to residents in the Jasper County Townships of Keener (DeMotte), North Union (Fair Oaks), Wheatfield (Wheatfield), Kankakee (Tefft), and Walker (Kniman). The Kankakee Valley School Corporation is comprised of six schools: Kankakee Valley High School (KVHS), Kankakee Valley Middle School (KVMS), Kankakee Valley Intermediate School (KVIS), DeMotte Elementary School (DES), Wheatfield Elementary School (WES), and the Kankakee Valley Alternative School (KVAS).

### **Working at Kankakee Valley Schools**

Every employee performs an important role in maintaining KVSC as a successful organization fostering positive relations with parents, children and the community. Each of us must work proactively to maintain a positive, fair and productive work environment.

Providing quality educational services to the children of the Kankakee Valley School Corporation is our privilege and the sole purpose for this institution. Therefore, our primary focus needs to be on meeting the needs of children in a responsive, ever-changing technical environment. The Kankakee Valley School Corporation must be flexible and willing to put student needs as the highest priority. Successful organizations tend, inevitably, to be dynamic organizations. In such cases, the staff must be flexible and responsive to change. For KVSC to be successful, all of us, individually and collectively, need to be professionally, morally and ethically responsible.

### **How the Kankakee Valley School Corporation is Organized**

An elected Board of Education governs the Kankakee Valley School Corporation. The Board hires a Superintendent, who is responsible for the overall operation of the organization. That responsibility is delegated to and shared with the Assistant Superintendent, various Directors, and

Building Principals of the school corporation, who are assigned to various program, administrative, or service functions.

Should you have any questions regarding how your job relates to your school or building assignment, discuss those concerns with your immediate supervisor as soon as possible.

## **II. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

KVSC is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Kankakee Valley School Corporation does not discriminate on the basis of a person's race, religion, color, age, sex, national origin, creed, ancestry, limited English proficiency, or disability regarding considerations such as recruiting, hiring, training, on-the-job treatment, and promotion. Violations of civil rights law by any KVSC employee are considered to be a very serious matter. Depending upon the particular circumstance, it could lead to immediate termination, corrective action, recommendation for counseling, or additional awareness training. Any concern or complaints related to equal employment opportunity or violation of civil rights must be reported immediately to the Superintendent, who also serves as the Corporation's Civil Rights Coordinator.

Upon a verbal or written complaint, the Assistant Superintendent, acting as the Equal Employment Officer (EEO), will conduct an investigation following formal procedures outlined by the Kankakee Valley School Corporation. It is our intention to fully comply with all applicable Federal and State laws regarding equal opportunity for employment.

All employees engaged to work for Kankakee Valley Schools, both on and off KVSC premises, are expected to fully comply with all Federal and State laws. In addition, KVSC does not intend to condone an employee, student or parent being subjected to any violation of his/her civil rights by individuals or agents of other entities that may be on or off our premises on Kankakee Valley School Corporation related business. If there is a belief that such a violation has occurred, it should be reported to the EEO Coordinator (Assistant Superintendent).

### **Work Hours**

The teaching year shall consist of one hundred eighty (180) school days for grades K-12 when the students are in attendance, plus the following days: two (2) days for orientation, one (1) day for closing school, and two (2) days for conferences, in service or other training as determined by the Superintendent in counsel with the KVTa through discussion for a total of 185 paid days.

All teachers of the Kankakee Valley School Corporation shall be required to be at their assigned stations and/or assigned duties according to the school schedule. The teacher workday shall be

seven (7) hours and forty-five (45) minutes with start and end times determined by the Superintendent. When a teachers' meeting is called during the contract hours, extra-curricular coaches and sponsors need to be in attendance unless excused by the principal.

<u>Building</u>	<u>Teacher times</u>	<u>Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday</u>		<u>Late start Wednesday</u>		<u>Dismissal</u>	<u>Buses depart</u>
		<u>Drop-off</u>	<u>Classes start</u>	<u>Drop-off</u>	<u>Classes start</u>		
KVHS	7:00 AM - 2:45 PM	7:00 AM	7:25 AM	7:45 AM	8:00 AM	2:20 PM	2:27 PM
KVMS	7:00 AM - 2:45 AM	7:10 AM	7:25 AM	7:30 AM	7:45 AM	2:05 PM	2:12 PM
KVIS	7:50 AM - 3:35 PM	8:25 AM	8:45 AM	8:55 AM	9:15 AM	3:20 PM	3:27 PM
DES and WES	8:05 AM - 3:50 PM	8:40 AM	8:55 AM	9:10 AM	9:25 AM	3:35 PM	3:40 PM
AM		8:55 AM	9:05 AM	9:35 AM	9:40 AM	11:45* AM	
Preschool							
PM							
Preschool		12:25 AM	12:35 PM	12:50 PM	12:55 PM	3:15 PM	

\*Preschool dismissal is at 11:35 AM on late start Wednesdays

If the start of the school day for students is delayed, or if a school day for students is ended early, the time missed by the students will be credited to the Certified Employees' work day if the Indiana Department of Education allows the day to be counted as one of the mandated 180 instructional days. If the Indiana DOE does not allow the day to be counted as one of the mandated 180 instructional days, the day will not be credited as a Certified Employee's work day and must be "made-up" without additional pay.

### **Personnel Records**

A confidential personnel file is maintained for every employee. Your record will include your current home address and a telephone number where you can be reached, plus the name and telephone number (and notification procedures) of a person to contact in case of an emergency. Your file may include the following:

- job application and resume (if requested)

- INS form I-9
- criminal background check
- wage/salary information
- job responsibilities and performance reviews
- changes in employment status
- acts of commendation
- corrective or disciplinary actions
- federal and state tax information
- record of training and professional development (if provided or required by KVSC)
- termination information, including an exit interview form

Personnel files may not be removed from the office where they are regularly maintained. If you wish to review your personnel file, arrangements will be made to allow supervised perusal of your records. Please make the request by contacting either your immediate supervisor or the KVSC Superintendent. Employees may have a copy of any and all documents in his or her personnel file. The employee is responsible, however, for the cost of copying the material.

Employee records are extremely confidential and normally Kankakee Valley Schools do not knowingly respond to any inquiry about an employee's employment records for credit purposes without the employee's WRITTEN PERMISSION to do so, or by court order. If your employment with Kankakee Valley Schools ends, KVSC will only provide dates of employment, position(s) held and rate of pay, regardless of written permission.

### **Class Size**

The Board agrees to keep class sizes at reasonable levels, considering the grade and the subject matter involved. The Board agrees that class size shall be maintained at an average level for comparable grades or subject being taught throughout the system provided the physical facilities are available.

### **Discipline**

- Each teacher is responsible for enforcing student discipline consistent with Board policy and statutory provisions.
- Each teacher has the right, authority, and responsibility to provide student supervision or restrain a pupil who reasonably can be considered to be a threat to himself, other students, the teacher, another school employee, and patron or school property.
- The school employer will develop a plan to provide a safe and orderly environment in consultation with the KVTA.



### **Filling Open Positions**

Kankakee Valley Schools intend to post all teaching openings in our schools, at the Administration Office, and on the KV website. Notice of teaching, adult education and extra-curricular teaching vacancies for the following school year shall be posted in each school building the last day of the school year. During the summer when school is not in session, notice of vacancies shall be updated as needed by posting in the School Corporation Office and on the School Corporation website.

Vacancies that are to be filled for a subsequent school year shall be posted for five (5) School Corporation Office days prior to filling the vacancy. Vacancies that occur after July 1 shall be posted for three (3) School Corporation Office days prior to filling the vacancy. Vacancies that occur after July 31 shall be posted and filled as soon as possible. The posting shall include job title, qualifications, and other pertinent information concerning the position.

Any current employee desiring a transfer to another building may file a written, dated request with the Superintendent of Schools and both building principals. The request shall remain in effect for one (1) year.

No employee shall be transferred to another building or position without a conference between the employee and the principal. Reasons for the transfer are to be provided in writing

### **Summer School Vacancies**

The Board shall post a list of all known summer school positions by May 15 in each school. If additional summer school positions are established, this list shall be updated on the last day of the school year. Certified employees who are currently employed shall be given first preference to summer school positions

### **Extra-Curricular Positions**

*Extra-curricular activity is defined as a program involving the students and primarily benefiting the student.*

### **Evaluation of Extra-Curricular Positions**

1. Appointment for the extra-curricular positions shall be done annually.

If the immediate supervisor (Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director, Head Coaches not part of the bargaining unit – See Article I, or Principal) intends to non-renew the teacher for the extra-curricular athletic activity, the immediate supervisor must have a conference with the teacher within sixty days (60) days after the dates listed below. Christmas vacation, Thanksgiving break and spring break are not to be counted.

The sports season closing dates are:

- Fall sports – November 1

- Winter sports – March 1
  - Spring sports – June 1.
2. A letter of intent shall be given to the teacher, no later than five (5) school days following the conference. If there are any questions on the position of the letter of intent, the teacher can request a second conference.
  3. After the second conference the teacher will have five (5) Corporation Office days to respond in writing to the letter of intent, either by accepting the decision or by filing an appeal via the grievance procedure as explained in the bargaining agreement beginning with Step 2.
  4. Failure to respond to the letter of intent by the teacher within the above time limit will automatically forfeit their rights to the position for the ensuing school year.
  5. If a situation arises prior to the beginning of said activity for the next year that would cause a change in assignment then the appointment may be re-evaluated.

### **Administrative Action**

For non-sports extra-curricular activities -

If the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Superintendent intends to non-renew a teacher for the extra-curricular activity, the administrator must have a conference with the teacher within sixty days (60) days after June 1.

Appointment of extra-curricular positions shall be done annually.

If an administrator or other than the immediate supervisor (Principal, Assistant Principal, Superintendent) intends to non-renew the teacher for any extra-curricular activity, they must follow the same procedure as outlined above in this article.

### **Secondary Department Heads**

The following subject areas will have departments:

High School:

1. Business/FACS
2. Fine Arts
3. Foreign Language
4. Guidance (Director)
5. Language Arts
6. Mathematics
7. Physical Education/Health
8. Science
9. Social Studies

Middle School:

1. Fine Arts
2. Language Arts
3. Mathematics
4. Physical Education/Health
5. Practical Arts
6. Science
7. Social Studies
8. Special Education

10. Special Education
11. CTE Technology (Practical Arts)
12. CTE Human Services

### **Selection**

- Appointments are to come from teachers who have taught at KVSC at least three (3) years unless no one in the department meets this qualification. Department should make recommendations to principal.
- The Principal will make the final selection by June 1 of each year.

### **Responsibility**

- A. Curricular development and evaluation
  - The department head will serve as chairperson of a committee responsible for the curriculum, but does not include the writing of curriculum.
- B. Textbooks
  1. During the year of textbook adoption, the department will meet and select one individual to serve as chairperson of the textbook committee.
  2. Select textbook adoption committee.
  3. Evaluate and select textbooks to be recommended for use within the department and grade level.
  4. The chairperson of the textbook committee will present the textbook selection to the board for approval.
- C. Prepare a list of teaching supplies needed with costs for budget purposes.
- D. Complete necessary reports for the department.
- E. Prepare news articles for the department.
- F. Collect and store textbooks and supplementary materials at the end of the school year.
- G. Department Heads may be called on to counsel with the principal regarding:
  1. Selection of new staff members.
  2. Assignment of new staff members.
  3. Assignment of student teachers.
  4. Teacher assignments within the department.
  5. Changes in the offering of courses within the department.
  6. Other areas as requested by the Principal.
- H. Inventory and distribute textbooks and supplementary materials prior to the start of school.

### **Unpaid Leave of Absence**

Kankakee Valley Schools do not routinely grant unpaid leave of absence. However, there may be individual circumstances when an unpaid leave may be granted. Unpaid leaves of absence are requested in writing through the immediate supervisor and are subsequently approved by the Superintendent or Board of Education after consultation with the appropriate administrators. In an emergency situation, contact your principal then follow-up with a written explanation of your reason for absence and a request for unpaid leave.

### **Travel**

Your principal or professional development may require you to travel for school related business. You may receive mileage reimbursement if:

1. Prior approval is granted by the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent.
2. The appropriate forms are properly submitted to the accounts payable office in a timely manner.
3. A KVSC vehicle is not available.

### **Evaluation**

Kankakee Valley uses a modified RISE Evaluation system to evaluate teachers that is submitted to the state on an annual basis. A committee of 5 (five) teachers appointed by the KVTa and 4 (four) representatives of the Board shall study and review teacher evaluation tools and procedures.

### **Reduction in Force Procedure**

- A. General. When, in the judgment of the Board, it is necessary to reduce the number of teachers, the following procedures will apply. Should any of the procedures prescribed herein be inconsistent with Indiana law, that procedure or rule will be superseded by law; however, the remainder of the reduction-in-force policy will remain in full force and effect.
- B. Preliminary Determination
  1. The Superintendent will, prior to making any recommendations to the Board, meet with the Kankakee Valley Teachers Association (KVTa) for the purposes of discussing any proposed reduction in the professional certified staff (a.k.a. bargaining unit), with sufficient time to review any budgetary issues, enrollment decreases, program changes, reorganizations and/or building closures. Prior to commencing action to cancel teachers' contracts under the Reduction in Force Policy, the Board of Education will attempt to make needed adjustments through:
    - a. Voluntary retirement
    - b. Voluntary resignations

- c. Voluntary transfer of existing staff
  - d. Involuntary transfer of existing staff
2. However, in the event of a reduction-in-force or recall after layoff, the following criteria will be used:
- a. Certification (Licensure).
  - b. Teacher Status (Established/Permanent, Established/Semi-Permanent, Established, Professional, Probationary).
  - c. Teacher Performance Rating/Merit (as determined by the performance evaluation in compliance with IC 20-28-11.5).
  - d. Years of Experience (Seniority).

C. Procedure and Notice

1. Procedure and notice requirements for cancellation or non-renewal of \*Established/Permanent (Permanent: hired by the school corporation during the 2005-06 school year or earlier), \*Established/Semi-Permanent (Semi-Permanent: hired by the school corporation during the 2006-07, 2007-08, or 2008-09 school year), \*Established (hired in the 2009-10 or 2010-11 school year), Professional, and Probationary teachers in accordance with Indiana law will be utilized. This provision is not intended to give any additional rights to any teacher whose contract would not have been renewed, or whose contract would have been terminated regardless of the fact that a reduction is desirable. The procedures herein will not apply to teachers employed on temporary contracts.
2. Based upon the Superintendent's recommendations, the Board will determine the positions to be eliminated and notice will be given to the Association and affected teacher(s).
3. The following procedure will first be applied only to probationary and professional teachers in the school, facility, program, or department ("area") to be reduced when the area to be reduced has both established teachers and probationary and/or professional teachers assigned to it. If the area being reduced has only established teachers assigned to it, or if all probationary and professional teachers in the area are already subject to reduction and more reductions are needed, the procedure will then be applied to established teachers in the area to be reduced. An established teacher who is licensed in another content area cannot be subject to the reduction in force if the established teacher is able to replace a probationary or professional teacher in that license area. (Elliott Decision, 7th Court).

#### D. Method of Selection

1. Teacher Status. The first step is to determine status: Established/Permanent, Established/Semi-Permanent, Established (but not Permanent or Semi-Permanent), Professional or Probationary. Due to the Madison case (*Elliot v. Madison Consolidated Schools*), it has been determined that a Permanent teacher would not be laid off before a teacher that is not permanent. The teachers teaching in the area in which a reduction in staff is to occur who have the lowest status will make the RIF pool.
  - a. For example: you are reducing-in-force two (2) elementary teachers. If there are no Probationary or Professional, then the district would look to the Established pool. If there are no teachers in that status, then you'd the district would move to the Established pool. If there are no Established teachers, the district would move to the Established/Semi-permanent pool. If there are no teachers in that status, then the district would move to the Established-Permanent pool. Established/Permanent teachers would be the last group to be riffed.
  - b. In a case of a reduction-in-force (layoff), certification must be identified. If there are only Established/Permanent teachers in the RIF pool, the school corporation can then use performance to determine who will receive the RIF pursuant to IC 20-28-7.5-1(d). However, if the teacher identified for a RIF, for example, teaches 7<sup>th</sup> grade Math but also has a license to teach K-6, that teacher must be allowed to bump someone from a K-6 position who is not in the Established/Permanent teacher category.
2. Teacher Performance Teacher performance will be considered over a time frame of the past three (3) consecutive years. If three (3) years of evaluative data is not available, two (2) years or one (1) year of data will be used. The teacher teaching in the area in which a reduction in staff is to occur who is in the lowest status pool who has the lowest average performance rating (Ineffective, Improvement Necessary, Effective, Highly Effective) within that area of certification based upon his or her then current license will be laid off. The performance rating will be determined using the Teacher Performance tool.

In the spring, when notices on possible staff reductions must be made, only partial evaluation data for the current school year will be available to use to make these decisions. Summative ratings will likely not be available until the fall of the year. Since the teacher effectiveness rubric (TER) gives the most accurate assessment of a teacher's performance when reduction-in-force decisions have to be made, it will be utilized as a representation of current school year performance. Employees on leave or who for other reasons have not yet received an evaluation will be deemed effective (3.0) unless

objective performance data exists indicating that an effective rating would be unlikely were a full evaluation completed.

School officials will use the teacher effectiveness rubric scores to place teachers in one of the four performance categories (ineffective, needs improvement, effective, or highly effective) and then, if necessary, will make further differentiation using the individual TER scores in order to determine who is a lower-performing teacher and/or whether the tie-breaker factors identified in this guideline will need to be considered.

All evaluation information and data used in determining whether or not a teacher is reduced will be the information and data collected while a teacher at School Corporation.

3. Identical Teacher Performance. When two (2) or more teachers have the same performance rating (Ineffective, Improvement Necessary, Effective, Highly Effective), the teacher teaching in the area in which a reduction in staff is to occur who has the least amount of seniority within that area of certification based upon his or her then current license will be laid off.
4. Seniority. Seniority will be based upon years of uninterrupted experience within the Corporation. However, a leave of absence authorized by the Board will not be seen as an interruption in the teacher's service within the Corporation.
  - a. Should the teacher hold valid certifications in other areas, the least senior teacher within any of these areas will be first laid-off?
  - b. In no instance will an Established/Permanent teacher be laid off when certified within an area, based upon the current teaching license, in which an Established/Semi-Permanent, Established, Professional, or Probationary teacher is teaching in the same area of certification.
  - c. In no instance will an Established/Semi-Permanent teacher be laid off when certified within an area, based upon the current teaching license, in which an Established, Professional, or Probationary teacher is teaching in the same area of certification.
  - d. In no instance will an Established teacher be laid off when certified within an area, based upon the current teaching license, in which a Professional or Probationary teacher is teaching in the same area of certification.
  - e. In no instance will a Professional teacher be laid off when certified within an area, based upon the current teaching license, when a Probationary teacher is teaching in the same area of certification.
  - f. A teacher on a leave of absence will be considered eligible for layoff as a result of a reduction in professional staff and the same criteria as above provided will apply.

5. Identical Seniority. When two (2) or more teachers have the same length of uninterrupted teaching experience in the Corporation, the following will apply:
  - a. The date upon which each teacher was hired by the school corporation at an open session as documented in school board minutes will be the determining factor.
  - b. If two (2) or more teachers have the same board hire date, seniority will be determined by the date upon which each teacher signed their teaching contract to begin the period of uninterrupted service.
  - c. If two (2) or more teachers have both the same board hire date and contract date, the number of advanced college hours completed in the field of education and/or subject being considered for the advanced college hours completed (by January 1 of the calendar year) in the field of education and/or subject being considered for the reduction would be used as the determining factor.
  - d. If two (2) or more teachers have the same board hire date, same contract date, and the same number of advanced college hours, seniority will be determined by a comparison of the teachers' month and day of birth. For example: The person whose month and day is earliest in the calendar year (example: March 1) will have seniority over a later date (example: August 15).
6. Seniority List. One corporation-wide seniority list based on service with the Corporation as of the end of the first semester each school year will be established. This list will contain the names and years of experience in the Corporation of each teacher and will include all areas of certification for each teacher. This list will also include teachers on official leave of absence. The initial seniority list based on service with the corporation and certification will be posted in each building annually at the end of the first semester. Teachers will have fifteen (15) days to file exceptions to their placement on the seniority list. Any dispute with regard to said seniority list will be resolved by the administration following consultation with the teacher involved and an Association representative if the teacher so requests. No exceptions will be entertained which have not been filed with the Superintendent within this time period. This list will be updated and posted annually.

E. Recall Rights

1. Order of Recall. Recall of teachers laid off will be in the order of highest status first (Established/Permanent, Established/Semi-Permanent, Established, Professional, Probationary) based on the academic needs of the students. In the case of equal status, the highest teacher evaluation rating or merit (Ineffective, Improvement Necessary, Effective, Highly Effective) will be next insofar as the teachers are qualified based upon current certification for openings. Unless otherwise terminated, a teacher released



because of a reduction in the number of teachers will be placed on a recall list for a period of two (2) years after the date of such teacher's release. After this period, the teacher will have no recall privilege.

2. Procedure. All laid off teachers will be responsible for notifying the Corporation of any changes of address, from that address maintained in the permanent records at the time of layoff, and such notices will be by certified mail, return receipt requested. A teacher to be recalled will be notified by certified mail, return receipt requested, at the address currently on file with the Corporation. An attempt to notify the teacher at said address will be presumed to be actual notice for purposes of this procedure. If the recalled teacher does not respond that he or she will be available for work in accordance with the recall letter within fourteen (14) calendar days of mailing, the recall rights will terminate. However, a teacher laid off and signing a regular contract with another school corporation will be allowed 30 days to complete his/her contractual obligation with the other school corporation, without loss of recall rights, so long as he/she indicates an intention to return to his/her duties with Kankakee Valley School Corporation within one (1) calendar day if school starts in four (4) or less calendar days or within three (3) calendar days if school starts in five (5) or more calendar days, and so notifies his/her current employer. All required notices will be by certified mail, return receipt requested.
3. Benefits during Layoff. During the period of layoff, no credit toward seniority, teaching experience, or other rights will accrue to the laid off teacher. The teacher may at his/her own expense continue insurance coverage, if said coverage is available in accordance with the then current group policy.
4. Re-instatement of Rights. Upon recall, all regular rights will be reinstated as if no interruption of service had occurred; however, no seniority rights will accrue during the layoff period, and no teaching experience will be credited to the teacher for the layoff period, except such as is required by law.

#### **Leaving Employment from Kankakee Valley Schools**

When you leave employment with Kankakee Valley Schools, the following items must be addressed:

1. Complete all required termination papers and various forms including your forwarding address for mailing IRS W-2 tax forms. U.S. Postal Service authorities will not forward annual tax information.
2. Receive information about your insurance and your rights concerning continued participation in our health insurance plan.

3. Receive information about any retirement program in which you were qualified to participate.
4. Return any Kankakee Valley Schools property such as office keys, equipment keys, or equipment issued to you or in your possession.

### **III. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

People are our most important asset. Without good employees, Kankakee Valley Schools cannot produce the quality and quantity of educational services, which our community has come to expect. Therefore the Kankakee Valley School Corporation works very hard to employ people who care about our children and parents, the organization, and their co-workers, and who want to work as part of a team to achieve our Mission. The Kankakee Valley School Corporation intends to provide a work place environment where each employee is treated honestly and fairly.

The Kankakee Valley School Corporation operates with a chain of command system. If you have a question or concern about any of our policies or practices, or if you are having a problem with your supervisor, you may request a meeting with the next level of supervisor in the chain of command. If that problem or concern is related to your immediate supervisor, the Kankakee Valley School Corporation will work with you to get your principal involved in this process.

#### **Harassment**

It is Kankakee Valley Schools' policy for all its employees, students, parents, visitors, and vendors to have the right to work, be educated, and do business in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive.

- A. Sexual Harassment. The Kankakee Valley School Corporation believes that sexual harassment is a form of disrespect and misconduct which undermines the integrity of the individual as well as the employment relationship. No employee, child, parent, visitors, or vendor, either male or female, should be subject to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, which is personally offensive, cause's low morale, and which, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness. It includes unwanted physical contact, verbal or visual sexual advances, unwanted touching, requests for sexual favors, and other sexually oriented conduct, which is offensive or objectionable to the recipient, but not limited to; derogatory or suggestive comments, slurs or gestures; and offensive posters, cartoons,

pictures, or drawings. Such behavior may result in corrective action, up to and including dismissal.

- B. Other Forms of Harassment. Harassment is behavior that is not welcome, is personally offensive, lowers morale, and interferes with work effectiveness. No employee, child, parent, visitor, or vendor should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. KVSC will not tolerate any employee engaging in conduct or language based on race, sex, ethnic background, age, religion, or disability which could interfere with another employee's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Any employee engaging in conduct or language which could interfere with another employee's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment will not be tolerated by KVSC.

Our stated position on harassment applies to all employees while performing work for Kankakee Valley Schools, both on and off our premises. In addition, the Kankakee Valley School Corporation does not condone harassment by our employees; nor do we intend to allow employees to be subjected to harassment by individuals or agents of other entities that may be on or off our premises and on KVSC related business.

If you think you have been harassed, sexually or in any other way, you should bring that matter to the Superintendent, your supervisor, or any other member of management immediately. Following your complaint, the Superintendent will ask you to complete a complaint form. The Superintendent will initiate a CONFIDENTIAL investigation to gather all facts about your complaint. After the investigation has been completed, appropriate management will make a determination regarding the resolution of the case.

You will not be retaliated against in any way because you have complained in good faith about harassment or because you have been a witness in a harassment investigation. However, if KVSC determines that a complaint has been made in bad faith, corrective action may be taken, up to and including termination.

### **Professional Conduct and Appearance**

While you are engaged in performing work for Kankakee Valley Schools, the KVSC expects you to conduct yourself in a professional and business-like manner when interacting with fellow employees, students, and other persons who are engaged in a business or professional relationship with Kankakee Valley Schools. You are expected to dress appropriately for your work assignment. This includes wearing clothes that are clean, in good taste, and present a neat appearance.

If your supervisor believes that your attire is inappropriate, you may be sent home, without pay, to change into more appropriate attire. Failure to comply with a reasonable request will result in disciplinary action.

### **Gifts and Gratuities**

Kankakee Valley School employees may not accept gifts, gratuities, or favors, including such items as: discounts, loans, commissions, rebates, or other compensation from individuals, companies, or organizations doing business with or desiring to do business with Kankakee Valley Schools. Although the acceptance of nominal gifts is discouraged, gifts (with a face value of \$25.00 or less), such as calendars, pens, coffee mugs, etc., may be accepted only if the gift, in fact or appearance, could not be deemed to affect your professional judgement and decision making.

### **Community Relations and Public Representation**

In all community and public activities, your actions or statements may be interpreted as a reflection on Kankakee Valley Schools. It is Kankakee Valley Schools' hope that such reflection will always be positive.

There may be an occasion when Kankakee Valley Schools might receive unusual public or media attention, or you may be contacted by a member of the media for information about Kankakee Valley Schools or for an interview. In such a case, only the Superintendent or an appointed designee is authorized to discuss with any member of the media or an elected body (other than the School Board) matters related to the policies, practices, or activities of Kankakee Valley Schools, or to assume the role of official spokesperson for Kankakee Valley Schools.

### **Use of Kankakee Valley School Property and Materials**

All Kankakee Valley Schools property, including the building, equipment, vehicles, office supplies, and materials are intended for Kankakee Valley School business use only. These items include, but are not limited to, stationery, office supplies, postage and stamps, telephones, fax machines, copiers, typewriters, computers, tools, busses, and other vehicles and equipment. If you are uncertain whether a use is personal, contact your supervisor, whose advance permission is required.

Your supervisor, who is responsible for the prompt return of the equipment, must sign out equipment being taken off the premises for Kankakee Valley Schools business use (e.g., for a conference booth or a demonstration session) other than busses driven by authorized drivers.

### **Cell Phone Use**

KVSC discourages the use of cellular telephones for personal use during the duty day, and insists that personal calls be for emergency purposes only. Excessive use of personal communication devices may be deemed detrimental to the mission of the corporation and disciplinary action may be taken to correct any abuse.

### **Social Media Communication**

An employee's personal or private use of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, blogs, etc., may have unintended consequences. While the School Board respects its employees' First Amendment rights, those rights do not include permission to post inflammatory comments that could compromise the Corporation's mission, undermine staff relationships, or cause a substantial disruption to the school environment. This warning includes staff members' online conduct that occurs off school property including from the employee's private computer. Postings to social media should be done in a manner sensitive to the staff member's professional responsibilities. In addition, Federal and State confidentiality laws forbid schools and their employees from using or disclosing student education records without parent consent (see Board Policy 8330). Education records include a wide variety of information, and posting personally identifiable information about students is not permitted. Staff members who violate State and Federal confidentiality laws or privacy laws related to the disclosure of confidential student or employee information may be disciplined. Staff members retain rights of communication for collective bargaining purposes and union organizational activities.

### **Student Supervision and Welfare**

Professional staff members shall maintain a standard of care for the supervision, control, and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities and are expected to establish and maintain professional staff-student boundaries that are consistent with their legal, professional and ethical duty of care for students.

The Superintendent shall maintain and enforce the following standards:

- A professional staff member shall immediately report to a building administrator any accident, safety hazard, or other potentially harmful condition or situation s/he detects.
- A professional staff member shall provide proper instruction in safety matters as presented in assigned course guides.
- Each professional staff member shall immediately report to a building administrator knowledge of threats of violence by students.
- A professional staff member shall not send students on any personal errands.
- A professional staff member shall not associate or fraternize with students at any time in a manner that may give the appearance of impropriety, including, but not limited to, the creation or participation in any situation or activity that could be considered abusive or sexually suggestive or involve harmful substances such as illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco. Any sexual or other inappropriate conduct with a student by any staff member will subject the offender to potential criminal prosecution and disciplinary actions by the Board up to and including termination of employment.

- If a student approaches a staff member to seek advice or to ask questions regarding a personal problem related to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health, and/or family relationship, etc., the staff member may attempt to assist the student by facilitating contact with certified or licensed individuals in the Corporation or community who specialize in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of the student's stated problem. Any staff member who determines that a student is in need of services shall report the matter to appropriate authorities. However, under no circumstances should a staff member attempt, unless properly licensed and authorized to do so, to counsel, assess, diagnose, or treat the student's problem or behavior, nor should any such staff member inappropriately disclose personally identifiable information concerning the student to third persons not specifically authorized by law.
- A professional staff member shall not transport students in a private vehicle without the approval of the principal.
- A student shall not be required to perform work or services that may be detrimental to his/her health.
- Staff members shall only engage in electronic communication with students via email, texting, social media and/or online networking media, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, MySpace, Skype, blogs, etc., when such communication is directly related to curricular matters or co-curricular/extra-curricular events or activities with prior approval of the principal.

Since most information concerning a child in school, other than directory information described in Policy 8330, is confidential under Federal and State laws, any staff member who shares confidential information with another person not authorized to receive the information may be subject to discipline and/or civil liability. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, grades, behavior, family background, alleged child abuse, and any other record information.

Pursuant to the laws of the State and Board Policy 8462, each professional staff member shall report to the proper legal authorities immediately, any sign of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Exceptions to the above:

- A. a professional staff member who is the student's parent, blood relative, or legal guardian; and
- B. emergency situations where the transportation of the student is needed and where school-provided or emergency transportation is not available. A professional staff member providing emergency transportation must comply with the internal reporting requirements as explained in the Administrative Guidelines.
- C. to the extent the staff member has a social or family relationship with a student. For

example, professional staff member may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the staff member's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. The staff member should obtain parental/guardian permission and comply with the regular transportation procedures all parents follow in requesting to transport a student that is not their own child.

### **Personal Items on Kankakee Valley Schools Property and Grounds**

Kankakee Valley Schools' policy is that offices are also part of Kankakee Valley Schools' public space and must comply with the intent of civil rights law and not offend anyone by virtue of his/her race, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, etc. Personal items should not demonstrate a particular political persuasion or party. KVSC will request that inappropriate items be removed from the premises. Air Quality Standards do not allow an employee to bring personal products or chemicals for cleaning into the building for use. Only corporation provided products are to be used.

Kankakee Valley Schools does not accept responsibility for loss or damage to personal property. The Kankakee Valley School Corporation properties are considered to be a 'smoke free' environment and, as such, all smoking or use of smokeless tobacco products is forbidden. Failure to comply with the policy may result in disciplinary action.

### **Students, Parents, Vendors, and Guests**

The Kankakee Valley School Corporation expects students, parents, vendors, and guests to be treated courteously and with the same respect given to your co-workers. If you have any concerns or problems with any person or persons, please discuss that concern or problem with your supervisor immediately.

### **Breaks and Break Areas**

All of our buildings contain some type of 'break' area for employee use. Everyone is expected to pitch in to keep such rooms clean, including the refrigerator and tables. Please follow these rules, or any posted rules, for maintaining this common convenience area.

Lunch periods, which are unpaid, may vary in length, depending on the job function or work area. Your supervisor will advise you of the length of your regular lunch break. Lunch, or any other meal, is to be eaten in a common area or a break room (if one is provided) for health purposes. The lunch period may not be shortened in order to shorten length of the workday, unless special arrangements have been made with your supervisor to address a specific situation.

### **Solicitation and Distribution**

Kankakee Valley Schools' employees may not distribute literature to, or solicit information or resources from co-workers at any time that Kankakee Valley Schools are compensating either person.

## **IV. YOUR COMPENSATION WITH KANKAKEE VALLEY SCHOOLS**

### **Frequency**

Kankakee Valley School employees are paid every other Friday unless otherwise notified due to special circumstances. However, there may be situations that result in our inability to meet the normal pay schedule.

Paychecks will be issued according to the Board approved School Calendar with the following exceptions:

1. If the pay date falls on the last Friday in December and results in a 27<sup>th</sup> check for that calendar year, the check will be issued on the first Friday of the New Year.
2. If New Year's Day falls on a Friday and a payday, that check will be issued on Monday, January 4 of the New Year, unless otherwise approved.
3. If a Friday payday is on Good Friday, Independence Day, or Christmas, the paycheck will be issued on the Thursday preceding the aforementioned holidays.

Kankakee Valley Schools work week is from 10:00 PM Sunday through 9:59 PM the following Sunday. Your earnings will not be distributed to any other person unless the Kankakee Valley School Corporation has your permission to do so. Kankakee Valley Schools provides payroll payment through electronic direct deposit of your earnings into your account, if requested through the payroll department.

Be it furthermore understood that banking holidays and school holidays are not necessarily synonymous. If a banking holiday occurs on a school business day, deposits may or may not be credited to the designated accounts on the banking holiday and in fact, may be deposited on the next banking day.

### **Holidays**

Kankakee Valley Schools observes nine (9) holidays a year as listed below:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4<sup>th</sup>)



- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Full-time 12 month employees receive all nine (9) paid holidays.

### **Section 125**

Section 125 of the IRS Code allows employees to pay for the costs related to the monthly premiums of the employer's group health and dental insurance plans on a pre-tax dollar on a voluntary basis. If you participate in this plan, costs for premiums will be handled through the normal payroll deductions from your pay. A Section 125 agreement form must be completed each year. Contact the Assistant Treasurer for information

In Indiana, these costs are exempt from federal, state, and FICA taxes. Because these monies do not have any FICA liability, they also are not credited toward an employee's eventual Social Security retirement benefit.

### **Worker's Compensation**

KVSC purchases insurance on all employees, which provides for medical treatment and income assistance if it is determined that you have become injured or disabled because of a job-related injury or illness. The guidelines for medical treatment and income assistance are determined by regulations established by the Indiana General Assembly. Employees should immediately report any job-related accident or job-related injury to your supervisor. KVSC can require drug testing for any employee injured on the job, or suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **403(b) Tax Deferred Annuities**

Any KVSC employee is eligible to participate in a voluntary 403(b) tax deferred annuity plan administered by the School Corporation. The employee may request payroll deduction be remitted to one of the authorized 403(b) vendors as an employee contribution. No matching employer contribution is committed to this program. It is purely voluntary and open to any KVSC employee drawing a salary with the exemption of KVSC students.

### **Change of Marital Status, Dependent Status or Beneficiary**

Please notify the HR/Benefits Coordinator when you have a change of address so your tax forms and other required documents can be updated. In addition, if there are other changes, such as marital status or the number of dependents which may affect your tax status or your benefit plans,

the HR/Benefits Coordinator can assist you in this matter. New dependents cannot be added to dependent health coverage if you do not notify us of the change.

### **Perfect Attendance**

Perfect Attendance is awarded to an employee who has not used any sick, personal business or bereavement days during the current school year.

### **New Teacher Benefit Start Dates**

New teachers are eligible for Health Benefits (health, dental and vision insurance) with an effective date of the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of the month after thirty (30) days of employment. Insurance premiums are payroll deducted a month in advance. Health benefits will terminate on September 30<sup>th</sup> of the termination year if the teacher has completed the school year. A \$50,000 Life Insurance policy and Long Term Disability is employer provided with an effective date of the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of the month following the hire date.

## **V. CHANGES TO THIS HANDBOOK**

This handbook is not a contract. It has been prepared to provide you with an outline of our policies, rules, and current employee benefits. Flexibility is important in the area of personnel policies and benefits to allow for growth and change. For that reason, the policies and benefits described in this Handbook may be discontinued or revised by Kankakee Valley Schools, at any time, in light of experience or changing conditions.

Changes will be communicated to all employees by various means including, but not limited to, emails, paycheck attachments, bulletin board postings, notices, and announcements. If you have questions about provisions of this handbook, first contact your immediate supervisor. If he or she is unable to answer your questions to your satisfaction, please call the office of the Superintendent for clarification.