

NORTH HAVEN

Public Schools



Employee Handbook 2023-2024

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Introduction

We appreciate the service of all staff members and recognize their contributions on behalf of students.

This employee handbook is provided to highlight important information, including general

employment policies and requirements that will be useful to you as an employee of NRHEG Public Schools. It is intended to provide guidance and support to you in your position, it is not intended to be legal advice.

This employee handbook is not all-inclusive. In addition to the general information outlined in this employee handbook, all employees are expected to familiarize themselves with the information and abide by all School Board policies and procedures. All school district policies and related forms are available in their entirety on the District website.

This employee handbook does not replace your collective bargaining agreement. Please consult your collective bargaining agreement or employee work agreement, for specific information on the terms and conditions of your employment. If you have any questions related to your terms of employment, please contact your building administrator or the Superintendent.

The information in this handbook is subject to change at any time. This is not an employment contract and does not create a contractual obligation of any kind.

District Strategic Plan

The NRHEG Strategic Plan was created with input from parents, community members, business leaders, students, staff, and teachers and approved by the School Board.

NRHEG Strategic Plan

Belief Statements

The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) School District believes:

1. in challenging all students to reach their full potential as confident and responsible thinkers, problem solvers, and decision-makers;
2. that education is a collaborative partnership among students, parents, staff, and the community that results in a positive impact on the entire school community;
3. in supporting staff by providing them with the necessary resources to assist students in reaching their full potential;
4. in a system of personal accountability to include the school board, administration, staff, students, parents, and the community;
5. in providing a comprehensive educational program that will offer our students an opportunity to succeed as adults in the community, college, career, and real-world;
6. that a safe, respectful, and caring environment, coupled with a strong educational foundation, promotes self-esteem and facilitates success; and
7. that we need to operate and maintain efficient and secure facilities for students and staff.

Mission Statements

Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.

Vision Statement

To be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities.

Focus Areas

1. **Student Achievement:** Achieve the goals of the World’s Best Workforce for all students in the district; and expand how we define, measure, and report student achievement with a focus on each student’s mastery in areas that extend beyond traditional academic indicators.
2. **Student Support:** Develop and implement a sustainable and well-defined support system that enables all students and staff to achieve at high levels.
3. **Facilities:** Ensure that the facilities and infrastructure of the school district are designed to optimize staff performance and student learning in a safe, sustainable, and attractive environment.
4. **Workforce:** Recruit and retain quality educators and provide opportunities for the development of all staff.
5. **Communication & Marketing:** Foster partnerships with parents, communities, businesses, and organizations in support of the district’s mission and vision; and develop a multi-faceted public relations plan that is designed to promote the school district.
6. **Finance:** Preserve the district’s strong financial standing while maintaining programs, services, and facilities at maximum efficiency.

Employee Benefits

The District offers a broad range of benefits to employees. Actual benefits and eligibility levels will vary based on the employee group you are a part of. For detailed information about employee benefits, and the specific benefits for which you are eligible, please review

the Employment Agreement for your employee group or visit the Staff Resources pages on our school website. The insurance benefits offered by the District include

- * Medical
- * Dental
- * Term Group Life
- * VEBA/HSA Accounts
- * Supplemental Life
- * Flexible Spending Accounts
- * Long-Term Disability
- * AFLAC
- * 403(b) District Match
- * Employee Assistance Program

Open Enrollment

Open enrollment for insurance benefits takes place on an annual basis, usually in May for all benefits other than the Flexible Spending Account. FSA open enrollment is in November. During this time, you will be provided the option to make changes to your benefit elections. Any changes made outside of this enrollment period will require a qualifying “life event” such as marriage, the birth of a child, etc.

Teachers Retirement Association (TRA)

All certified employees are required to contribute to TRA through payroll deductions at the current employee rate. The district is also required to contribute to TRA, on your behalf, at the current employer rate. Amounts contributed to TRA are done on a per pay period basis. Contact information for TRA is as follows:

Teachers Retirement Association
60 Empire Dr., Suite 400
St Paul MN 55103-4000
651.296.2409 or 800.657.3669
www.tra.state.mn.us

Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA)

Non-certified employees, earning over \$425 per month in gross wages, are required to contribute to PERA at the current rate. The district is also required to contribute to PERA, on your behalf, at the current employer rate. Amounts contributed to PERA are done on a per-pay period basis. Contact information for PERA is as follows:

Public Employees Retirement Association
60 Empire Dr., Suite 200
St Paul MN 55103-2088
651.296.7460 or 800.652.9026
www.mnpera.org

District Policies

District policies and procedures are a way for the School Board to establish rules and expectations to guide acceptable behavior and ensure that the school and work

environment is safe for students and staff. As an employee, you are accountable for knowing, understanding, and complying with all School Board policies. The policies highlighted in this handbook are just a few of the policies that impact your work. You can access all current Board Policies on our webpage.

[Policy 103 Complaints](#)

[Policy 401 Equal Employment Opportunity](#)

[Policy 404 Employment Background Checks](#)

[Policy 404 FORM Employment Background Check](#)

[Policy 406 Public and Private Personal Data](#)

[Policy 410 Family and Medical Leave](#)

[Policy 414 Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect](#)

[Policy 419 Tobacco Free Environment](#)

[Policy 424 License Status](#)

[Policy 425 Staff Development and Mentoring](#)

[Policy 515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records](#)

[Policy 524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety](#)

Note: Materials prepared by employees for the purpose of teaching and presenting to students is property of ISD 2168 and the district retains rights to such materials.

Workplace Expectations

The School District recognizes each employee's right to individual respect and dignity and is committed to establishing and maintaining a professional, respectful, and productive working environment for all employees. As a result, employees are prohibited from engaging in behavior that substantially interferes with the work, including behavior that is disrespectful, obscene, inappropriate, offensive, or bullying.

The School District defines bullying as repeated conduct that is intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harmful, is objectively offensive, and is conducted by one or more persons against another or others at the place of work or during employment.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, when an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when deciding on discipline. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual(s) that is important.

The following types of behavior are considered examples of bullying and will not be tolerated:

- Verbal bullying: Slandering, ridiculing, or maligning a person or their family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting, or humiliating; using a person as the target of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- Physical bullying: Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault (physical attack), or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.
- Gesture bullying: Non-verbal threatening gestures or looks that convey threatening messages.
- Exclusion: Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.
- Social Media/Cyberbullying: Using technology or other electronic communication for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, abusing, or harming another in the workplace to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts an employee's right to a professional and respectful working environment.

Any employee who feels they have been victimized by bullying must report the matter to their supervisor, or to the Human Resources department. In addition, employees who witness prohibited conduct, or possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a staff member is a target of bullying, will report the prohibited conduct to the employee's supervisor or to the Human Resources department.

Dress

All staff are expected to dress in an appropriate manner, commensurate with the staff member's position. Attire should be neat and clean and should reflect the staff member's

role in providing a high-quality education to the learners in the District. Attire or other articles that convey obscene messages or messages that are designed to incite hostilities in other staff members, students, or visitors are prohibited while the employee is at work. Custodial and food service employees are provided with school district-issued work shirts and, in some cases shoes, and are required to wear such attire unless otherwise authorized.

Political Activities

Employees of NRHEG Public Schools are public employees and as such, may have a stake in political decisions and events. Employees are encouraged to express their political views and participate in the political process as their own interests and values guide them. However, while on active duty time, employees must not engage in any political activity that could create the impression to the public that the School District, as a public body, endorses any particular candidate, party, or position, or encourages or discourages voting in a particular fashion.

Employees' Children at Work

The presence of children in the workplace with the employee's parent during the employee's workday should be avoided except in emergencies. This practice has been established to avoid disruptions in the job duties of the employee and co-workers, reduce liability, and help maintain the District's professional work environment.

If bringing a child to work with the employee is unavoidable, the employee must contact their supervisor as soon as possible to discuss the situation and request permission. Factors the supervisor will consider are the nature of the parent's work, the age of the child, how long the child needs to be present in the workplace, etc. Consideration will not be given to allowing a child with an illness to come to work with the employee

A child brought to the workplace in an unavoidable situation and with the approval of the employee's supervisor will be the responsibility of the employee and must be accompanied and be under the direct supervision of the employee at all times.

Classroom Environment

The district strives to create a safe, inviting, and aesthetically pleasing building and classroom environment. Staff should limit the use of large items such as couches, overstuffed chairs, and other fabric or upholstered furniture, and pillows in classrooms due to the increased fire hazard and potential for allergens and indoor air quality problems.

Employee Name and Address Changes

Please report all name, address, and phone number changes to the District Office and your building's administrative office as soon as possible. Contact information will not be distributed to persons outside of the District without the employee's consent.

Storage of Personal Items on/in School District Property

School district lockers and storage areas, including locking desk drawers and/or locking cabinets, remain the property of the school district. The District reserves the right, at all times, to have authorized personnel conduct searches or inspections of employee lockers or storage areas. There is no general or specific expectation of privacy for items stored on/in school district property. If an employee uses a locker or other storage area at work, including a locking desk drawer or locking cabinet, the lock or key shall be provided by the district; no employee shall place a personal lock on the property of the district. Placing a personal lock on school district property may result in the forcible removal of the lock by whatever means necessary.

Workplace Communication

Website

The School District website, www.nrheg.k12.mn.us contains a wide variety of information about the School District, our programs, employment policies, telephone numbers, upcoming events, and community education. Employees should familiarize themselves with the School District website and refer to it in order to obtain necessary information.

Email

As an employee of the School District, you will have access to the School District email system. Email is our primary source of providing information to our employees. Employees should review their messages as frequently during the day as their schedule allows and reply in a timely manner. It's a good practice to use the "out of office" feature on the email system when you will be gone for an extended period of time. School

District-assigned email accounts are the property of the School District and are intended to be used to conduct School District business.

Voicemail

Employees with voicemail should listen to their messages during the day as their schedule allows and return messages in a timely and responsive manner. It's a good practice to use

the “extended absence” feature on the voicemail system when you will be gone for an extended period of time.

Mailboxes

An individual mailbox may be assigned to employees at their work site. Employees should check with their supervisor regarding expectations for checking their mailbox. Mailboxes assigned in the buildings are property of the School District and should be utilized for school district business.

Workplace Health, Safety, and Security

NRHEG Public Schools strive to achieve a work environment that is warm, friendly, and welcoming and, at the same time, one that is safe and secure for all who use our building.

Job Safety

The School District is committed to developing and maintaining safe working environments. Help prevent injuries by observing general safety rules, removing hazards in the workplace, and immediately reporting unsafe conditions to the appropriate person. It is very important for all employees to follow safety guidelines to avoid injuries on the job.

The following is a list of safety protocols all employees are required to follow:

- Know the locations of exits, fire extinguishers, alarms, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), and first aid materials at the worksite.
- Seek information or training from the appropriate person when required to operate any equipment or handle any type of chemical.
- Abstain from attempting to lift or carry an object that is too heavy to handle. Seek help from another employee to minimize the potential for injury.
- Report any safety hazards, and any information received from others that could impact the health and safety of others, to a supervisor.
- Be aware of the surroundings and wear appropriate apparel for current weather conditions and work environment.
- Report to a supervisor any information received regarding an individual who may be considering harming himself/herself or others.

Annual Employee Safety Training

The school district provides information and training to employees in a number of areas on an annual basis. These trainings, provided through Infinitec, are mandatory for all employees.

Building Access/Visitor Screening

Designated entrances at each site will be the only point(s) to enter and exit the building during normal operations. All school buildings shall remain locked during normal school hours. Anyone not employed by the District shall be required to check in at the building's main office or welcome desk where individuals will be screened via the district's visitor screening system and issued a visitor pass before access to the building will be allowed.

Maintaining Secured Perimeters

Perimeter doors will be secured during school hours.

Security Badges

The District issues staff identification badges which also serve as building access cards, to all staff, and other authorized personnel. These badges are issued for the purpose of ensuring the safety of district employees, students, and visitors and protecting district property and must be worn at all times when an employee is in a district building. Access cards are the property of the school district and must be returned upon termination of employment. Obsolete or unneeded access cards should be returned to the District Office or Building Office.

If an individual loses an access card or it is stolen, the individual must immediately report this to the office and also notify their immediate supervisor. There will be a \$5.00 fee assessed to individuals requesting a replacement card due to loss or theft. Faulty cards will be reissued at no cost to the employee.

Access cards are provided expressly for the purpose of conducting school district business. It is a violation of district policy for any individual to provide an access card issued by the district to someone other than the registered user. Any misconduct, misuse, or behavior deemed to be inappropriate by the Administration while the cardholder is in the facility after normal school hours will result in termination of entry access card privileges, and possible disciplinary action.

Video Surveillance

Independent School District #2168 uses internal and external video surveillance for all district facilities.

Building Keys

District keys will be distributed on an as-needed basis. Your supervisor will determine if you require keys and will take the necessary steps to get them for you. Keys are the

property of the school district and must be returned when changing work locations or upon termination of employment.

Alarms

Each building site is equipped with an alarm, which works independently from the building access security system. If staff members are accessing the building outside of regular business hours they must use the assigned door at their building site where the alarm panel is located. They must follow the building sign-in and sign-out procedures for the building and make sure to disarm the building before entering and arm the building if they are the last employee to leave the building. Entering a building without disarming the building will alert law enforcement to the building. If you do not know the building protocols for entering after hours please contact your building principal or supervisor to avoid unnecessary calls to the police.

Compensation, Work Schedules, and Leaves of Absence

Wage Theft Law

Minnesota Statutes (Minn. Stat. §§ 175,177,181,16C & 609) provides wage and hour protections for employees. Employees have a right to receive wages at the employee's rate(s) of pay or the rates required by law, whichever is greater, as well as the right to be paid at specific intervals on a regular payday. Each employee must receive written notice at the start of their employment conveying an accurate statement of pay, benefits, potential deductions, and other important information.

Work Schedule

Your supervisor determines an employee's specific work days and hours. Any time an employee is absent from work, they are required to submit a request for time off. Approval of such leave must be obtained prior to the absence, except when using sick leave for unplanned absences due to illness. All time off should be recorded in Frontline Absence Management

When all available paid leave has been exhausted, leave without pay may be granted by the district in limited situations, as provided in the applicable employee agreement or collective bargaining agreement. These situations are considered to be "once in a lifetime" occasions or are required by federal or state law.

Hourly employees must obtain supervisor approval prior to working any hours beyond their regularly scheduled work day. If the additional time is approved by your supervisor, you must include a note on your timecard providing an explanation and that approval was obtained.

Hourly Employees - Hours Worked Time Tracking

All hourly employees are required to check in and out of work each day, using Frontline Time and Attendance. This system is used for recording employees’ time worked in lieu of paper timesheets.

To access Frontline Time and Attendance, click on the “Staff Resources” tab on the District web page at www.nrheg.k12.mn.us. Once there, click on the Frontline Time and Attendance (Employee) link.

The following are key points related to entering your time worked:

- You are allowed to clock in up to five minutes prior to your scheduled work time.
- Being ready to begin work at your scheduled start time is a requirement of your position. If you clock in or out a time earlier or later than your scheduled start time, you will be required to enter a note explaining the reason.
- The system will round to the nearest quarter hour (seven minutes and less rounds back, eight minutes and more rounds forward).
- You may not, under any circumstances, punch in or out for another employee.
- At the end of each day, you should review and approve your hours for that day, making sure to enter a note if it varies from your normal work schedule.

Breaks

We have many employees who don’t work a standard eight-hour day. Although there may be exceptions, the grid below provides general information about employee rest breaks and lunch breaks for the varying schedules.

Employees should work with their supervisors to determine their schedules and the best time for breaks to take place during their work day. An employee may not skip a paid work break to use it in lieu of an unpaid lunch. With supervisor approval, an employee may combine a break with their unpaid lunch break.

Scheduled to work (Hours)	Paid Breaks (Adequate time to use the restroom – 15 min or less)	Unpaid lunch – 30 minutes
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Less than 4	-	-
4-5.5	(1)	-
5.5-6.5	(1)	(1)
7+	(2)	(1)

Leaves/Time-Off – Hourly Employees

Any time an employee is absent from work, they are required to submit a request for time off. Leave can be requested in quarter-hour increments. Approval of such leave must be obtained prior to the absence, except when using sick leave for unplanned absences due to illness. All time off should be recorded in Frontline.

When all available paid leave has been exhausted, leave without pay may be granted by the district in limited situations, as provided in the applicable Employee Agreement/Collective Bargaining Agreement. These situations are considered to be “once in a lifetime” occasions or are required by federal or state law.

[Unpaid Leave Administrative Regulation for Teachers and Paraprofessionals](#)
[Unpaid Leave Request Form](#)

Leaves/Time-Off – Teachers and Salaried Employees

Teachers must enter their absence into the Frontline Absence Management System anytime they will be absent from work. This system tracks available leave and is used to secure substitute coverage for their absence. Staff should enter their absence(s) into the system, using the correct absence code, as early as possible to increase the likelihood of obtaining a substitute. If a substitute teacher is required, the amount of leave requested by the teacher must be equal to the

amount of time a sub will be paid. (For example, if a teacher is out three hours, a half-day sub is required, thus the teacher is required to request a half day of leave.)

Approval of leave must be obtained prior to the absence, except when using sick leave for unplanned absence due to illness. For absences other than unplanned sick leave, employees must include a note for the administrator as to the reason for the request for absence.

When all available paid leave has been exhausted, leave without pay may be granted by the district in limited situations, as provided in the applicable Employee Agreement/Collective Bargaining Agreement. These situations are considered to be “once in a lifetime” occasions or are required by federal or state law.

[Unpaid Leave Administrative Regulation for Teachers and Paraprofessionals](#)
[Unpaid Leave Request Form](#)

Jury Duty

Employees that are called to serve on a jury, or subpoenaed to appear in court due to or because of their position with the school district, on a day when they are scheduled to report to work, shall remit payment received by the court to the district, excluding amounts paid for mileage, and receive their regular daily rate.

Emergency Closing

Reporting requirements in the event that school is closed by the Superintendent, due to weather conditions or other emergencies, are provided in the master agreement for each union.

Complaints – Students, Employees, Parents, and Other Persons

The NRHEG School District takes all concerns or complaints by students, employees, parents, or other persons seriously. While written reports are encouraged, a complaint may be made verbally. A person may file a complaint at any level of the school district; i.e., principal, superintendent, or school board. However, persons are encouraged to file a complaint at the building level when appropriate. It is best to discuss concerns or complaints with the person most familiar with the incident and if the concern or complaints is not satisfactorily addressed, to the principal or supervisor, superintendent, and school board.

[NRHEG School Board Policies](#)

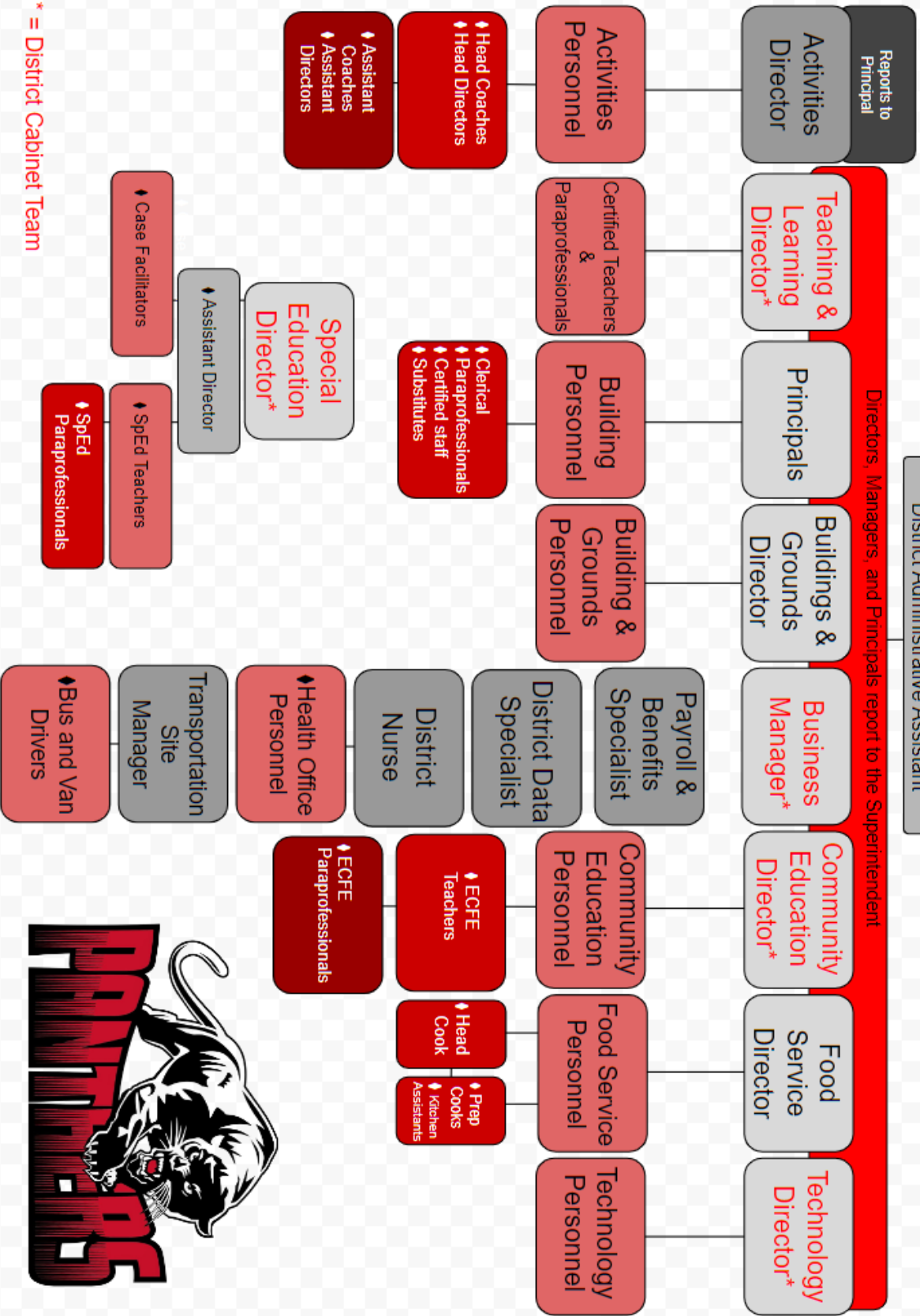
NRRHEG

School Board

Superintendent

District Administrative Assistant

Directors, Managers, and Principals report to the Superintendent



* = District Cabinet Team

