

FRESHWATER



Education District 6004

*Authorized as an education district under Minnesota
statutes 123A.15*

Employee Handbook

2024-2025

FRESHWATER EDUCATION DISTRICT #6004

HANDBOOK

This document was developed by the Freshwater Education District (FED) and was approved by its Governing Board on **August 21, 2024**. All FED employees are provided the website link to this handbook, asked to read and review the contents, and are responsible for the contents therein.

Notes:

1. Salary schedules and agreements are not defined in this Handbook; they can be found on the Freshwater website: www.fed.k12.mn.us
2. A copy of the FED Policy Manual can be found on the Freshwater Web Site: www.fed.k12.mn.us
3. This Handbook is reviewed/revised at least annually

TABLE OF CONTENTS
TOPICS **PAGE**

I. ORIENTATION AND GOVERNANCE

Freshwater Education District (FED) Mission and Purpose/Beliefs	6
Who We Are?	6
What Do We Do?	7
Educational Vision	8
FED Programs	9
FED Governing Board	10
Governing Board Meetings	10
Freshwater Policies	10
Record Retention	10
Freshwater Education Foundation (FEF)	10

II. STUDENT AND STAFF ISSUES

Student Accident Form	10
Tornado Drills	11
Fire Drills	11
Lock-Down Drills	11
Bullying Prohibition Policy	11
Abuse Policy	11
FED Governing Board Policy: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence	13
Non-Discrimination Policy Statement	16
Religious and Racial Harassment	16
Hazing Prohibition	17
Weapons Policy	17
Field Trips	17
Employee-Student Relationships	17

III. STAFF ORIENTATION AND ANNUAL UPDATES

Mentorship Program for New Employees	18
Annual Employee Notifications	18
Notice to Employees: Drugs and Alcohol	20
Non-Discrimination as Related to Specific Education Programs And Activities	20
Professional Ethics	23
Conflict of Interest	23
Subpoena	23
Jury Duty	23
Employee Responsibilities	23
Employee Personal Opinions	23

IV. WORKSITE AND DAILY ISSUES

Acceptable Use of Internet/Computers/Technology Devices	23
Use of District Property – Checkout Equipment	24

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

Gifts and Donations from the Education District	24
Gifts and Donations to the Education District	24
Use of Personal Car	24
Mileage and Expense	24
Meal Expense	25
Inattentive Driving and the Use of Cellular phones and Other Equipment While Driving	25
Intentional Property Damage of Eye or Hearing Appliances	25
Applying for Grants or Donations	26
Alternate Locations for Home Visits	26
Ordering/Requisitioning	26
Inventory Control	27
Procurement Card (P-Card)	27
Staff Development Guidelines	27
Professional Local Options Research or Development (PLORD)	28
Staff Dress	28
Working Hours	28
Itinerants Affected by Member School Closings	28
FED Closing	29
Sunshine Committee	29
Care of Facilities	29
Visitors	29
Keys/Fobs	29
Smoke/Tobacco Free Environment	29
Photocopying/Lamination	30
Staff Meetings	30
Site Visits	30
Conference Room Schedules	30
Visual Aids	30
Money	30
Publicity	30
Mail	30
Voicemail	30
E-Mail	30
Identification Badges	31
Certificates/Licenses	31
Data Privacy	31
Freshwater Education District Website/Smart Web	31
Job Postings	31
Break Areas	31
Custodial/Maintenance Requests	31
Photo Opt-Out	31

V. BUSINESS OFFICE AND SERVICES

Criminal Background Checks	32
Annualization of Pay Policy	32
Pay Day	32
Health Benefit Contribution for Qualified Employees	33

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

Participation in Freshwater Group Health Insurance Plans	33
Health Reimbursement Arrangement	33
Flex Benefits	33
HIPPA Privacy Policies and Procedures Plan	33
Salary Notice Pay Day Schedule	33
Salary Notice Employee	33
ACA Electronic Payroll Entry	33
Other Hourly Based Employees	33
Combination of Benefits between Assignments	34
Tax Sheltered Investments	34
403(b)/457(b) Availability Notice	34
Personal Leave	34
Family and Medical Leave Act	34
Long Term Disability	34
Employee Assistance Program	34
Employee Absence	34
Worker's Compensation	34
<i>VI. APPENDIX</i>	35
a. First Point of Contact Memo	
b. Code of Conduct for Staff Members	
c. Freshwater Policy Index and Policy #'s: 403, 406L, 412, 413, 414, 416L, 418, 419, 450L, 514L, 524L	
d. Hepatitis B Record	
e. HIPPA Privacy Notice	
f. Employee Photo Opt-Out Form	
<i>VII. STAFF FORMS ON WEB- STAFF RESOURCES</i>	36
www.fed.k12.mn.us	
a. Teacher Relicensure Form	
b. 2022 – 2023 Service Price Sheet (Copies, etc.)	
c. Mileage Chart	
d. Summary of School Calendars	
e. FED Member Information	
f. Payroll, HRA & Mileage Reimbursement Calendar	
g. Direct Deposit Enrollment Form	
h. 403(b) Universal Availability Notice	
i. Salary Reduction Agreement for 403(b)/457(b)	
j. IRS Mileage Rate	
k. FED Mileage	
l. HRA Required Notification Letter	
m. TPA Letter from Aviben for the FED HRA claims management instructions	
n. Auditor E-Update 5/6/2011	
o. Indoor Air Quality Concern Form	
p. Freshwater Education Donation Request Form	

I. ORIENTATION AND GOVERNANCE

MISSION AND PURPOSE

The mission of the Freshwater Education District is to increase and improve educational opportunities for all learners

The purpose of the Freshwater Education District is to provide comprehensive services to member school districts by facilitating cooperation and coordination among its members, with post-secondary institutions and with other agencies and organizations

BELIEFS

We believe Freshwater Education District:

- Values honesty, integrity, excellence, and ethics.
- Provides programs and services that are driven and motivated by the desire to promote and meet customer needs.
- Provides a local, regional, state and national communication link for member districts.
- Provides information, resources, opportunities and assistance for lifelong learning.
- Develops supportive partnerships and relationships among member districts and with agencies serving children, young adults, and families.
- Strives towards being a visionary leader in education.
- Provides high quality programs and services to member districts.
- Engages in continuous improvement.
- Utilizes data-driven decision making.
- Presents a unified voice with political input to legislators.

WHO ARE WE?

Freshwater Education District is comprised of 9 Institutional Member Districts and 4 Program Districts and their communities. Like most rural areas across the state and nation, member communities are caught in the dilemma of declining enrollments, declining economic resources, and the necessity to expand opportunities. With the increase in state and federal mandates, small

communities by themselves cannot meet the imposed needs. They recognize that developing and implementing mandated and non-mandated programs through cooperation can improve the quality of education and life.

Freshwater Education District is designed to encourage and implement cooperation between its members. Working cooperatively, all communities can benefit from programs and services that are difficult to afford on their own.

Individual members have the choice to determine which programs and services are appropriate for them.

WHAT DO WE DO?

To accomplish our mission and stay true to our purpose, Freshwater Education District:

- Provides quality direct and indirect services to learners.
- Provides research-based professional development for staff.
- Facilitates development of programs to meet the needs of the learner/school/community.
- Stays current with direction impacting and improving the teaching-learning process.
- Assists in meeting unique needs of individual districts, organizations, and other agencies.
- Coordinates various programs including:
 - ❖ Adult Basic Education
 - ❖ Area Learning Center/Targeted Services/Credit Recovery
 - ❖ Career and Technical Education via Carl Perkins Funding
 - ❖ Curriculum and Staff Development
 - ❖ Early Childhood Family Education
 - ❖ Early Childhood Screening
 - ❖ Interagency Collaboration

- ❖ Level IV SPED Programs
- ❖ Low Incidence Academics
- ❖ Research, Planning, and Development
- ❖ School Readiness
- ❖ Special Education
- ❖ Technology
- ❖ Other member requested programs and services that may arise

EDUCATIONAL VISION

Our vision is to continuously provide ever-changing quality educational services to all learners in a cost effective manner by working together collaboratively



FED PROGRAMS

Director/Specialist:

Eric Weber

Jamie Wothe

Lori Murdock

Shawn McAllister

Lisa Wick

Rich Murdock

Jordan Anderson

Sara Grabe

Bryan Tollefson

Jena Osberg

John Fox

Mike Kaluza

Programs:

Executive Director of Freshwater
Education District

Special Education Director

Assistant Special Education
Director

Director of Educational Programs &
Evaluations

Program Specialist - Early
Childhood Family Education
School Readiness & Early Childhood
Screening

Technology Network Specialist

Manger of Business and Finance

Todd County Collaborative

Adult Educational Services

Program Specialist - Academy
White Pine/Leaf River/Elm Tree

Program/Assessment Specialist –
Area Learning Center

Carl Perkins/CTE Specialist

**FED GOVERNING BOARD
2024-2025**

Bertha- Hewitt:
Russ VanDenheuvel

Browerville:
Jodi Hillmer

Henning:
Rod Thalmann

Long Prairie-Grey Eagle:
Chuck Wolf

Menahga:
Katie Howard

Sebeka:
Charles Funk

Staples Motley:
Lisa Anderson

Verndale:
Scott Veronen

Wadena- Deer Creek:
Barb Tumberg

GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS: The FED Governing Board holds its' regular board meetings at 5:00 p.m. The Board meetings are normally the fourth Wednesday of the month as follows; Freshwater Education District office building at 2222 Industrial Drive, Wadena, Minnesota, ***August 21, 2024, October 23, 2024, January 22, 2025, April 23, 2025 and June 25, 2025***, unless otherwise modified by the Board. Additional Board meetings and committee meetings are scheduled as needed, and outlined in the FED Bylaws.

FRESHWATER POLICIES: All [Freshwater Policies](#) that have been Board approved are on file at the Executive Director's Office in Wadena and on the FED Website. Please see in the Appendix the Policy Index of Board Approved Policies. Any questions, please contact the Executive Director's Office in Wadena.

RECORD RETENTION: All records are maintained following the School District General Records Retention Schedule. Records for real property and equipment acquired with federal funds shall be retained for three years after final disposition. UGC 2 CFR §200.333(c)

FRESHWATER EDUCATION FOUNDATION: The [Freshwater Education Foundation](#) (FEF) purpose is to provide support of Freshwater Education District students and related research and informational activities. It is intended that the corporation serve the public interest by providing assistance, funding and guidance for students and staff which will result in improvement of educational experiences and outcomes. The FEF [Donation Request Form](#) can be found on the Freshwater Education District website.

II. STUDENT AND STAFF ISSUES

STUDENT ACCIDENT FORM: In the event of a student injury, a [student accident report](#) must be completed and submitted immediately to Supervisor. Pending on the severity, (based on Superintendent Assessment), this form is automatically filed with our insurance carrier in the event of litigation and insurance claims. The student accident form can be found on the Freshwater Education District website.

TORNADO DRILLS: In the event of a Tornado warning or drill all employees will move QUICKLY to the designated area of the building. Each site is required to have 1 (one) Tornado Drill each school year.

FIRE DRILLS: There will be 5 (five) Fire Drills per year. Check the fire escape map in your building and proceed to the designated exit route. The majority of Fire Drills should be conducted in the first semester.

LOCK-DOWN/ACTIVE SHOOTER DRILLS: There will be 5 (five) Lock-Down/Active Shooter Drills per year. Please follow the procedure as listed in the Emergency Action Plan in each building.

BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY: In accordance with the Safe and Supportive Schools Act, Freshwater's [Policy #514 – Bullying Prohibition](#) can be found on the Freshwater website. All staff will comply with said policy.

ABUSE POLICY: While the FED employee is responsible to report suspected abuse and/ or neglect of a student, school staff personnel shall not contact any persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect, or to prove the abuse or neglect. Report immediately.

“Physical Abuse” means: Any physical injury inflicted by a person responsible for the child’s care, on a child other than by accidental means: any physical injury that cannot be reasonable explained by the history of the injuries provided by the person responsible for the child’s care.

“Sexual Abuse” means: The subjection of a child by a person responsible for the child’s care, to any act which constitutes a violation of the Minnesota Statutes concerning criminal sexual conduct.

“Neglect” means: Failure by a person responsible for a child’s care, to supply a child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical care when reasonably able to do so.

The State of Minnesota has, by law, mandated that professional educators who have knowledge of or reasonable cause to believe a student, up to the age of 18, is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, or has been in the preceding 3 years, shall immediately (within 24 hours) report such information to the appropriate authorities. School personnel shall immediately report it to their respective administrator and then call the appropriate County Social Services Center, Police, or County Sheriff. For students who are 18 years or older, the school may call the County Social Services Center or the Police to provide information to the student’s relative to obtaining help. An oral report made by a person must be followed as soon as possible by a report in writing (no more than 72 hours, excluding weekends and holidays) to the appropriate Police Department, County Sheriff, or local Social Service Agency. All incidents, actions taken, and contacts shall be documented, including dates. All comments shall be factual in nature. In Minnesota, any person participating in good faith and exercising due care in the making of a report is immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be imposed. Failure to report physical or sexual abuse or neglect may result in a misdemeanor charge.

SUSPECTED PHYSICAL ABUSE:

1. Child has suffered an injury which appears to be non-accidental in nature **

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

2. Substantial likelihood that the child will suffer a physical injury due to conditions within the family
3. Child has suffered a physical injury as a result of hazardous conditions not corrected by his/ her family
4. Child suffers physical injury due to inadequate supervision by parent or guardian
5. Child has suffered an injury that cannot be explained by his/ her history of injury

SUSPECTED SEXUAL ABUSE:

1. Interfamilial Sexual Abuse: Sexual contact with a child by family member (includes extended family) **
2. Criminal Sexual Contact: Sexual contact with a child by person more than three years older than victim **
3. Child is victim of sexual assault **
4. Child may be involved in prostitution **
5. Child is an alleged perpetrator of sexual abuse **
6. Child is the subject of pornographic materials **

SUSPECTED NEGLECT/ DEPENDENCY:

1. Inadequate food **
2. Inadequate clothing **
3. Inadequate shelter **
4. Inadequate medical care **
5. Inadequate education **
6. Failure to protect a child from conditions or actions which imminently or seriously endangers the child's physical or mental health when reasonable able to do so
7. Failure to thrive due to parental neglect
8. Child is abandoned, left alone, or receiving inadequate supervision
9. Parent or guardian refuse to plan for or care for child (may include refusal to have child in parental home)
10. Child is without required education
11. Child in placement or multiple placements without plan or court involvement
12. Child is in imminent danger due to parents' conditions (This could include referral prior to child's birth)
 - a. Mental illness of parent
 - b. Mental retardation of parent
 - c. Chemical dependency of parent
 - d. Parent's state of immaturity
 - e. Faults or habits of parent
13. Child is suffering emotional damage and parent or guardian is unwilling/ unable to provide or permit necessary treatment
14. Parent, guardian, or custodian desires to be relieved of child's care and custody for good cause
15. Parent(s) become deceased and child(ren) are without guardian or custodial parent in state
16. Child is in need of special and treatment required by his/ her physical or mental condition and whose parent or guardian is unable to provide (i.e., chemical dependency, eating disorders, suicidal)
17. Delinquent child due to parental neglect
18. Truancy (through grade six) due to parental neglect

** Indicates conditions specifically stated in MS 626.556 Mandated Reporting. Conditions without an ** are found in MS 260.015 (neglect and dependency or drawn from agency experience as a guide for reporting).

FRESHWATER EDUCATION DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD POLICY: SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE (For copies of rules contact the FED Executive Director):

I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination, which violates Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.X. 2000e, et. seq., and Minnesota Statute 363.01-.14, the Minnesota Human Rights Act. Sexual violence is a physical act of an aggression that includes a sexual act or sexual purpose. It is the policy of the FED #6004 to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence. The FED prohibits any form of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of FED to harass a student or an employee through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of FED to be sexually violent to a student or employee.

The organization will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual harassment or sexual violence and to discipline any student or employee who sexually harasses or is sexually violent to a student or employee of the Education District.

II. SEXUAL HARASSMENT/SEXUAL VIOLENCE DEFINED

- a. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests of sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual either when:
 - i. Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining employment, or of obtaining an education; or
 - ii. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or
 - iii. That conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment or educational environment.

Any sexual harassment as defined when perpetrated on any student or employee by any student or employee will be treated as sexual harassment under this policy.

- b. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:
 - i. Verbal harassment or abuse;
 - ii. Subtle pressure for sexual activity;
 - iii. Inappropriate patting or pinching;
 - iv. Intentional brushing against a student's or an employee's body;
 - v. Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status;
 - vi. Any sexually motivated unwelcome touching; or

- vii. Sexual violence, which is a physical act of aggression that includes a sexual act or sexual purpose.

III. REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment or sexual violence by a student or an employee of FED, or any third person with knowledge or belief of conduct, which may constitute sexual harassment or sexual violence, should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate organization official as designated by this policy. Reporting of a concern can be done verbally or in a written format.

- a. The FED Executive Director is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of sexual harassment or sexual violence at FED. Upon receipt of a report, the Executive Director must notify the district Title IX Coordinator immediately without screening or investigating the report. A written report will be forwarded simultaneously to the Title IX Coordinator. Failure to forward any sexual harassment or sexual violence report or complaint as provided herein will result in disciplinary action. If the complaint involves the Executive Director or immediate supervisor, the complaint shall be filed directly with the district Title IX Coordinator.
- b. The Governing Board hereby designates Lori Murdock as Title IX Coordinator to receive reports or complaints of sexual harassment and sexual violence from any individual, employee, or victim of sexual harassment or sexual violence and also from the Executive Director as outlined above. If the complaint involves the Title IX Coordinator, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Executive Director.

The FED shall conspicuously post the name of the Title IX Coordinator, including a mailing address and telephone number.

- c. Submission of a complaint or report of sexual harassment or sexual violence will not affect the individual's future employment, grades, or work assignments.
- d. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory.

FED will respect the confidentiality of the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed as much as possible, consistent with the Education District's legal obligations and the necessity to investigate allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence and take disciplinary action when the conduct has occurred.

IV. INVESTIGATION AND RECOMMENDATION

By authority of FED, the Title IX Coordinator, upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging sexual harassment or sexual violence shall immediately authorize an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by FED officials or by a third party designated by FED. The investigating party shall provide a written report of the status of the investigation within 10 working days to the Executive Director of FED and Title IX Coordinator.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, the FED should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the sexual advances, relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents

occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

In addition, FED may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, students, and employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged sexual harassment or sexual violence.

The FED Title IX Coordinator shall make a report to the Executive Director upon completion of the investigation.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

- a. Upon receipt of a recommendation that the complaint is valid, FED will take such action as appropriate based on the results of the investigation.
- b. The result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures will be reported in writing to the complainant by FED. The report will document any disciplinary action taken as a result of the complaint.

VI. REPRISAL

The FED will discipline any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged sexual harassment or sexual violence or who retaliates against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing relating to a sexual harassment or sexual violence complaint. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

VII. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse, which may include filing charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights or another state or federal agency, initiating civil action or seeking redress under state criminal statutes and/or federal laws.

VIII. SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE AS SEXUAL ABUSE

Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment or sexual violence may constitute sexual abuse under Minnesota Statute 609.341-.324; or Minnesota Statute 617.246. In such situations, school districts shall comply with Minnesota Statute Chapter.260E, Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors.

Nothing in this policy will prohibit FED from taking immediate action to protect victims of alleged sexual abuse.

IX. DISCIPLINE

Any FED action taken pursuant to this policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota Statutes and FED policies. FED will take such disciplinary action it deems necessary and appropriate, including warning, suspension, or immediate discharge to end sexual harassment and sexual violence and prevent its recurrence.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT: It is the policy of the Governing Board of FED #6004 to comply with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and all requirements issued thereto, to the end that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age, or disability, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to, discrimination under any educational program or in employment, or recruitment, consideration, or selection therefore, whether full-time or part-time, under any educational program or activity operated by the district for which it received Federal assistance. This district receives Federal financial assistance. In order to continue receiving such Federal financial assistance, this district must comply with Title IX and the regulations promulgated by it and Titles VI and VII through the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare by the Department's Office of Civil Rights interpreting Title IX, Title VI, Title VII, Minnesota Statutes 363.03 and 126.21, EDU 4 and EDU 620-639, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. If any program or activity of this district fails to comply with Title IX or the Federal administrative regulations implementing Title IX, public hearings would be held by the Federal government, which could result in termination of Federal funds to this district. In addition to the sanction of non-receipt of Federal funds, however, the Governing Board is of the general view that discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity of FED is not to be permitted except where necessary to accomplish a specific purpose that does not infringe upon essential equity of fundamental fairness in the treatment of students or employees of this organization. Accordingly, employees of FED are required by this policy to comply with the provisions of:

1. This policy as in the case of any rule or regulation adopted by the Governing Board of FED and,
2. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, as part 86, Title 45, U.S. Code, printed also in the U.S. Federal Register, Vol. 40, No. 108, Wednesday, June 4, 1975, as amended, as Title IX and as such regulations are applicable to this organization
3. Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Chapter 363.03 of the Minnesota Civil Rights Act
4. Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended
5. Americans with Disabilities Act

RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL HARASSMENT: It is the policy of the education district to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from religious and/or racial harassment and violence. The education district prohibits any form of religious or racial harassment and violence. It is a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other district staff to harass a pupil, teacher, administrator, or other district personnel through conduct or communication regarding religion and race as defined by the FED policy. It is a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other district personnel of FED to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict religious or racial violence upon an FED personnel. FED will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious or racial harassment or violence, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other district personnel who is found to have violated this policy. More information regarding harassment and violence can be found in FED Policy 413 and 522. FED Policy Manuals can be found at the Executive Director's Office in Wadena and on the FED's website.

HAZING PROHIBITION: Hazing means committing an act against a person, or coercing a person into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm, in order for the person to be initiated into or affiliated with an organization, or for any other purpose. The term hazing includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating striking, branding, shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body.
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the person to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the person.
3. Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the person to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the metal or physical health or safety of the person;
4. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the person with ostracism, that subjects a person to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, that adversely affects that person's mental health or dignity or discourages them from remaining in school.
5. Any activity that causes or requires the person to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of education district policies or regulations.

No FED employee shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in or permit hazing. Any person with knowledge or believes of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate education district official. More information regarding the hazing policy can be found in FED Policy 526. FED Policy Manuals can be found at the Executive Director's Office in Wadena.

WEAPONS POLICY: No FED staff member or visitor to FED shall possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in an education district location. The education district will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public who violates this policy. More information regarding the weapons policy can be found in FED Policy 501. FED Policy Manuals can be found at the Executive Director's Office in Wadena.

FIELD TRIPS: Field trips are events which students attend that differ from normal, routine location of students in their educational program. Field trips should be well planned and organized with definite objectives and must be pre-approved by your supervisor. Notification of such trips must be turned in to the supervising coordinator/ director/ designee as far in advance as possible so that any schedule changes can be made. If transportation is required, early notification is especially important. All students attending the field trip must return a permission slip signed by their parent or legal guardian. This permission slip should include the purpose of the trip, who is supervising the trip, the destination, and the duration of the trip.

EMPLOYEE-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS: Per the FED Policy #423, social environment relationships with individual students are unprofessional, is not compatible with employees-student relationship, and is inappropriate.

III. STAFF ORIENTATION AND ANNUAL UPDATES

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR NEW EMPLOYEES: As part of our commitment to fostering a supportive and growth-oriented work environment, Freshwater Education District has implemented a comprehensive Mentorship Program for all new employees. This program is designed to ensure that each new team member experiences a smooth transition into their role, receives guidance from experienced colleagues, and has the opportunity to develop both professionally and personally during their first year with us.

The Mentorship Program is aimed at providing new employees with a designated mentor who will act as a valuable resource, guide, an advocate throughout their first year. The program's key objectives include:

- **Accelerated Onboarding:** To facilitate a smooth and efficient onboarding process for new employees, ensuring they become productive members of the team at the earliest.
- **Skill Development:** To promote continuous learning and growth by providing guidance and support in building job-specific skills and knowledge.
- **Cultural Integration:** To help new employees assimilate into our organizational culture, values, and work environment.
- **Professional Support:** To offer a safe space for open communication, feedback, and advice related to career goals and aspirations.

The Mentorship Program will last for the first year of employment. At the conclusion of the mentorship period, both mentors and mentees will be invited to provide feedback on their experience with the program. This feedback will help us continually refine and improve the Mentorship Program to better meet the needs of future participants.

ANNUAL EMPLOYEE NOTIFICATIONS:

Indoor Air Quality Notice: Freshwater Education District is proud to be taking a leadership role in providing a safe, comfortable, and productive environment for our students and staff so that we achieve our core mission – educating students. Our school will follow the EPA guidance to improve indoor air quality by preventing as many IAQ problems as possible and quickly responding to any IAQ problems that may arise. Good air quality requires an ongoing commitment by everyone in our school because each of us daily makes decisions and performs activities that affect the quality of the air we breathe.

School staff, students, and parents can obtain checklists or self-help information so they can properly evaluate their child's home or other out-of-school situation by contacting the school. Staff and parents can also obtain information about school facility construction, maintenance and housekeeping practices, chemicals used, mold and HVAC-related information, chemical-producing academic subjects, and pesticide and herbicide applications to determine the extent to which school activities contribute to a child's symptoms by contacting the school.

The Superintendent of Freshwater Education District is the contact person for Indoor Air Quality. If you have any questions regarding the district's IAQ program, please call the Freshwater office at 218-629-60.

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

Pesticide General Notice: A Minnesota State Law went into effect in year 2000 that requires schools to inform school staff, students and parents if they apply certain pesticides on school property.

Specifically, this law requires schools that apply these pesticides to maintain an estimated schedule of pesticide applications to make the schedule available to employees and parents for review or copying at the school office.

State law also requires that you tell that the long-term health effects on children from the application of chemicals to which they belong may not be fully understood.

If there are any questions regarding the Freshwater Education District Pest Management Program or you would like more information on the pesticide application schedule, please feel free to call the district Superintendent at 218-629-6001.

2024-2025 School Year Notification: As a result of federal legislation (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act – AHERA), each primary and secondary school in the nation is required to complete a stringent inspection for asbestos and to develop a plan of management for all asbestos-containing building materials. The Freshwater Education District has a goal to be in full compliance with this law and is following the spirit, as well as the letter of the law. As a matter of policy, the district shall continue to maintain a safe and healthful environment for our community’s youth and employees.

In keeping with this legislation, all buildings (including portables and support buildings) owned by the Freshwater Education District were inspected by an EPA accredited inspector and an independent laboratory analyzed samples. Based on the inspection, the school prepared and the state approved a comprehensive management plan for handling the asbestos located within its building safely and responsibly.

Furthermore, the Freshwater Education District has completed the 3 year re-inspections required by AHERA. Our district buildings, where asbestos containing materials were found, are under repair, and removal and operations and maintenance. Effective July, 2020, Freshwater does not occupy any building containing asbestos.

This past year Freshwater Education District conducted the following with respect to its asbestos containing building materials:

Continue the Operations and Maintenance Program: Federal law requires a periodic walk-through (called “surveillance”) every six months of each area containing asbestos. Short-term workers (outside contractors – i.e. telephone repair workers, electricians and exterminators) must be provided information regarding the location of asbestos in which they may come into contact. All short term workers shall contact the lead maintenance person before commencing work to be given this information.

The Freshwater Education District has a list of the locations(s); types(s) of asbestos containing materials found in that school building and a description and a timetable for their proper management. A copy of the Asbestos Management Plan is available for review in the school office. Copies are available at 25 cents per page. Questions related to the plan should be directed to Lakes Country Service Cooperative located in Fergus Falls, MN.

Hepatitis B Immunization: If your occupation requires you to be in contact with children on a daily basis or come in contact with a potential treat of contracting Hepatitis B, you have a right to and you should consider receiving this immunization. Please refer to notice in appendix.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES: DRUGS AND ALCOHOL: YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that it is a violation of the policy of the FED for any employee to distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified wine, or other intoxicating liquor or to unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid or any other controlled substance, as defined in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. § 812) and as further defined by regulation at 21 C.R.F. 1300.11 through 1300.15, before, during, or after school hours at FED or in any other district location as defined below.

“District location” means in any FED building and on any member school premises; in any District- owned vehicle or in any other District approved vehicle used to and from FED or FED activities; off FED property at any FED or member school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or other event, or otherwise engaged in school district business.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that if you are engaged either directly or indirectly in work on a federal grant, it is a condition of your continued employment on any such federal grant that you shall abide by the terms of the FED policy on alcohol and drugs and will notify your supervisor in writing of your conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in any of the places listed above on which work on a school district federal grant is performed, no later than five (5) calendar days after such conviction. Any employee who violates the terms of this policy is subject to disciplinary action, including non-renewal, suspension, or termination as deemed appropriate by the Governing Board. In addition, any employee who violates the terms of this policy may be required to satisfactorily participate in a drug and/ or alcohol abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved by the education district. Any employee who fails to satisfactorily participate in and complete such a program is subject to non-renewal, suspension, or termination as deemed appropriate by the Governing Board. Sanctions against employees, including non-renewal, suspension, and termination, shall be pursuant to and in accordance with applicable statutory authority, collective bargaining agreements and FED policies. Each employee shall be provided a copy of this policy.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AS RELATED TO SPECIFIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES: This policy’s prohibition against action by employees or other person acting in the name and on behalf of this district which bases any exclusion from participation in, denial, of benefits from, or discrimination in, any educational program or activity because of the sex, race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age or disability, or a student or employees, applies to all education and activities conducted by this district including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Educational programs.
 - a. Course offerings. Applies to all course offerings and compliance shall be attained as expeditiously as possible but in no event later than July 21, 1976, at the elementary age level and July 21, 1978 at the secondary age level.

This policy’s prohibition does not prohibit:

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

1. Grouping of students in physical education classes and activities by ability as assessed by objective standards of individual performance developed and applied without regard to sex;
2. Separation of students by sex within physical education classes or activities during participation in wrestling, boxing, rugby, ice hockey, football, basketball, and other bodily contact sports;
3. Separation of students by sex in classes dealing exclusively with human sexuality; and
4. Separation of persons based on vocal range or quality even though such separation may result in chorus or choruses of one or predominately one sex.

Full compliance with this shall be attained as expeditiously as possible but in no later than July 21, 1976, at the elementary age level and July 21, 1978 at the secondary age level.

- a. Counseling applies to all counseling and guidance activities at the elementary and secondary age levels
- b. Textbooks. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as requiring or prohibiting or abridging in any way the use of particular textbooks or curricular materials.

2. Other Activities or Facilities.

- a. Financial assistance. Applies to offering scholarship or other aid or assisting non-school organization in the offering of scholarships or other aid to students of this district
- b. Employment assistance. Applies to all efforts to place students in employment. The FED shall, as part of any employment assistance program for students, ensure that all employment opportunities are made available without discrimination on the basis of sex and refuse participation in its student employment program to employers who would practice such discrimination.
- c. Health and insurance. Applies to all health or insurance policies offered to students but does not prohibit providing benefits or services which may be used by a different proportion of students of one sex than of the other, including family planning. If full coverage is provided, such coverage must include gynecological care.
- d. Housing. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as prohibiting the separation of students by sex in housing for field trips or other reasons. Such separate housing must be comparable in quality and availability.
- e. Toilet, locker, and shower facilities. Separate toilet, locker, and shower facilities may be provided on the basis of sex. Such facilities shall be comparable to similar facilities provided for students of the other sex. No rule on marital, family, or parental status that treats one sex different from the other sex shall be applied or enforced.

3. District employment activities. Applies to all aspects of the district's employment programs, including but not limited to, recruitment, advertising, process of application for employment, promotion, granting of tenure, termination, layoffs, wages, job assignments, leave of absence of all types, fringe benefits, training programs, employer- sponsored programs, including social or recreational programs and any other term, condition or privilege of employment. Specifically, the following personnel employment practices are prohibited:

- a. Tests. Administration of any test or other criterion which has a disproportionately adverse effect on persons on the basis of sex unless it is a valid predictor of job success and alternative tests or criterion are unavailable;

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

- b. Recruitment. Recruitment of employees from entities that furnish as applications only or predominately members of one sex, if such action has the effect of discriminating on the basis of sex;
 - c. Compensation. Establishment of rates of pay on the basis of sex;
 - d. Job Classification. Classification of jobs as being for males or females;
 - e. Fringe benefits. Provision of fringe benefits on basis of sex; all fringe benefit plans must treat males and females equally;
 - f. Marital and parental status. Any action based on marital or parental status, pregnancies are considered temporary disabilities for all job related purposes and shall be accorded the same treatment by the district as are all other temporary disabilities. No inquiry shall be made by the district in job applications as to the marriage status of an applicant, including whether such applicant is “Miss or Mrs.” But, inquiry may be made as to the sex of a job applicant for employment if made to all applicants and is not a basis for discrimination;
 - g. Employment advertising. Any expression of preference, limitation, or specification based on sex, unless sex is a bona fide occupational qualification for the particular job in question.
4. Policy enforcement. To ensure compliance with this policy, the Executive Director shall:
- a. Designate a member of the administrative staff:
 - i. To coordinate efforts of the district to comply with this policy
 - ii. To develop, and ensure the maintenance of a filing system to keep all records required under this policy
 - iii. To investigate any complaints of violations of this policy
 - iv. To administer the grievance procedure established in this policy and
 - v. Develop affirmative action programs, as appropriate;
 - b. Provide for the publication of this policy on an ongoing basis to students, parents, employees, prospective employees, and district employee unions or organizations, such publication to include the name, office address and telephone number of the compliance administrator designated pursuant to this policy in paragraph C.1., above.
5. Grievance Procedure. Any student or employee of this district who believes he or she has been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation, in any district education program or activity, on the basis of sex in violation of this policy, may file a written complaint with the compliance administrator of this policy. The compliance administrator shall cause a review of the written complaint to be conducted and a written response mailed to the complainant within ten working days after receipt of the written complaint. A copy of the written complaint and the compliance administrator’s response shall be provided to each member of the Governing Board. If the complainant is not satisfied with such response, he or she may submit a written appeal to the Governing Board indicating with particularity the nature of the disagreement with the response and his or her reasons underlying such disagreement.

The Governing Board shall consider the appeal at its next regularly scheduled Board meeting following receipt of the response. The Governing Board shall permit the complainant to address the Board in public or closed session, as appropriate and lawful, concerning his or her complaint and shall provide the complainant with its written decision in the matter as expeditiously as possible following completion of the hearing.

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS: Staff members should help to promote all programs, departments, and activities that have been accepted as part of the organization.

From time to time there will be situations and discussions taking place within FED which should not be repeated or discussed in the hallways, or common meeting areas. It is expected that a sense of professionalism will keep any criticism of FED from being aired in public. Any dissatisfaction with FED policy or problems concerning the organization should be presented to an administrator using informal discussions or the formal grievance procedure. If you have concerns regarding data privacy, the current data privacy laws are available from the Executive Director/ Designee's office.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: No FED employee, officer, or agent must participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer or agent any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties, indicated here in, has a financial or other interest in or tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the non-Federal contractors or parties to sub contracts. Violation of the above standard for a conflict of interest will result in a letter of deficiency and reprimand for the employee, officer or agent of Freshwater Education District.

SUBPOENA: Any employee who receives a subpoena for any purpose related to employment is to inform the building administrator or designated supervisor immediately. The building administrator or designated supervisor shall inform the Executive Director that the employee has received a subpoena. Data Privacy and Confidential protocol is appropriate in this matter.

JURY DUTY: Employees that are summoned to serve jury duty will continue to earn full salary and benefits provided the employee returns any jury duty compensation to the FED. The employee may keep any meal and mileage allowance paid by the court. Employees subject to jury duty must immediately report it to their Supervisor.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES: Freshwater employees shall comply with all rules, regulations and directions adopted by the Governing Board or its representatives.

EMPLOYEE PERSONAL OPINIONS: Freshwater employees have the right to express and communicate their views, complaints, and opinions on any matter, so long as the same does not interfere with the performance of the duties of the employee.

IV. WORKSITE AND DAILY ISSUES

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET/COMPUTERS/TECHNOLOGY DEVICES: In making decisions regarding employee access to the FED computer system and the Internet, the FED considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. The FED expects that staff members will be thoughtful in the use of the computer system and the Internet. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on FED computers. Staff members take responsibility for technology devices assigned to them, ensuring acceptable use and security of the device. More information regarding the acceptable use of the computer system and Internet can be found in FED Policy 524L (See Appendix). FED Policy Manuals can be found on the FED Website or in the

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

Executive Director Office in Wadena. Freshwater “owned” devices, will be collected at the end of the school year to employee’s Program Supervisor for updating and servicing of the device.

FED Staff need prior approval from their supervisor for any purchases of applications, additional features, or other like items on Freshwater devices such as cell phones, iPads and etc...

When supervising students, staff will not be allowed to be on or using personal technology devices such as cell phone, ipad, ipod, etc.

USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY- CHECKOUT EQUIPMENT: Before any employee uses the FED building, equipment, or facilities for private use, they must obtain approval from the Director/ Designee. Equipment checkout forms are available in the FED offices.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS FROM THE EDUCATION DISTRICT: Gifts by definition are unearned by the recipient and donations are contributions for which no obligation exists. Therefore, gifts and donations of FED funds to board members, employees, students, outside organizations, or individuals are illegal. Gifts and donations, no matter how commendable the cause, cannot be construed as a necessary cost.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS TO THE EDUCATION DISTRICT: Gifts and donations to FED shall be handled in accordance with State Laws with funds only being used for their intended purposes. If no purpose is stated, the Governing Board or Executive Director Designee shall determine how such a fund shall be expended. All Gifts/Donations must be recognized in the minutes of the FED Board.

USE OF PERSONAL CAR: Freshwater Employees are required to notify their personal car insurer of using their personal car for business purposes.

MILEAGE AND EXPENSE: Mileage and expense claims must be entered into SmartER and submitted monthly to claim appropriate expenses. Employee expense claims submitted for reimbursement more than 60 days after the expense is incurred, may be taxable and appropriate withholdings will be made. The FED has the right to deny mileage/expense claims that are older than 60 calendar days as well as any claims submitted later than 10 days into the new fiscal year.

Mileage and expense reimbursements will be processed monthly on the last payroll of the month. Claims must be submitted to your supervisor by the first Friday following the month being claimed. Supervisors must approve and submit claims to the business office by the second Friday following the month(s) being claimed. Use the mileage listing (in the appendix) which is the IRS rate for reimbursement. Please see FED [Policy # 412](#) in Appendix for guidelines.

When you are claiming mileage you must indicate the business purpose. If this information is not submitted, it will be denied. All mileage claims must have business purpose attachments such as meeting agendas, travel monthly calendar, and map if the business purpose is not on the standard mileage form (out of the District’s boundaries), etc.

Allowable Freshwater Employee Mileage Reimbursement is approved in the following formula:

a. Beyond Freshwater:

Business travel reimbursement for mileage to and from events/meetings outside of the Freshwater membership area will be paid, upon supervisor review and approval, with the current mileage reimbursement rate being paid per mile for the lesser of the distance from the employees' home or "Assigned Office" work site.

b. Within Freshwater from Assigned Office:

Business travel reimbursement is based from that assigned office location to the destination and back.

c. Within Freshwater from Home:

Business travel reimbursement will occur between Freshwater sites following the first stop of the day. The first stop is deemed a personal commute. Mileage will be allowed if the second and additional stops of the day are to Freshwater sites for business purposes. In cases where an employee's "first stop" causes mileage beyond their normal morning commute to their assigned office, the excess mileage may be claimed.

Staff are annually assigned a home-base school/location. All mileage is based from that location to the destination and back to your starting/ending location "whichever is the lesser"

TRAVEL MEAL EXPENSES: Same day meals do not qualify for reimbursement. If travel is occasioned with one or more overnight stays away from home, the employee may claim not more than one evening meal, either the day of travel before the stay (if afternoon travel is required), or the evening meal on the return home following the meeting, if the meeting ends after normal business hours. Qualified meal reimbursement requires an attached document substantiating the business purpose. An itemized receipt indicating the amount, date, food establishment, and method of payment, will also be required. Qualified meals will be reimbursed at a cost of up to \$10.00 for Breakfast, up to \$15.00 for Lunch, and up to \$20.00 for evening Dinner. Alcoholic beverages and gratuity are not reimbursable. **Receipts** are required for all expense reimbursement, including meals.

INATTENTIVE DRIVING AND THE USE OF CELLULAR PHONES AND OTHER EQUIPMENT WHILE DRIVING: The Freshwater Education District has provided employees with certain equipment, including cellular phones, personal digital assistant (PDA) devices, laptop and other equipment to assist employees in accomplishing their job duties.

When using Freshwater equipment, or when using the employee's own equipment for work purposes, employees are expected to exercise care and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

In particular, employees shall not use cellular phones, PDA devices and the like while operating a Freshwater motor vehicle, or other vehicles, while and including traveling to or from business meetings.

INTENTIONAL PROPERTY DAMAGE OF EYE OR HEARING APPLIANCES/HAZARD REIMBURSEMENT: Freshwater will reimburse an employee for the actual cost of repairing or replacing "like" physically required corrective lenses and/or hearing aids damaged by a student during the performance of the employees work day duties.

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

Reimbursement shall be only for the device actual damage cost. It is understood that this device reimbursement protection does not apply to eye or hearing examinations or tests.

Freshwater requires a “First Report of Injury” Accident Report to be filed immediately. Written itemized repair receipts are required and both forms must be submitted before any reimbursement is paid directly to the employee. This reimbursement applies only to actual costs to repair the current (or equivalent) eye or ear appliance. This offer does not include damage to personal cell phones, clothing and/or jewelry, etc.

Reimbursement under this provision is gratuitous payment and does not indicate that the Freshwater Education District has accepted liability for the incident.

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS: Prior to applying for a grant on behalf of Freshwater Education District, a “Pre-Approval Grant Application” is required to be pre-approved by either the Executive Director or the Special Education Director. The pre-approval grant application can be found on the FED website (www.fed.k12.mn.us) under the Staff Resources tab. All successful grant applications are to be accepted by the Freshwater Education District Board.

ALTERNATE LOCATIONS FOR HOME VISITS: There are some circumstances in which alternate plans may be arranged for the home visitation. General guidelines for these circumstances follow: Safety Concerns in the Home; If a home visitor is concerned about safety issues in the home environment, this person must contact their supervisor immediately to discuss the issue. The Supervisor will confer with the appropriate Freshwater Education District Administrator to determine the proper course of action. Together, they may determine the need for a *Special Services Plan* to conduct the home visit at a Freshwater Education District site or another safe location. A priority of the home visitor will be to provide ongoing support to assist the family toward the home becoming safe.

ORDERING/ REQUISITIONING: Minimal materials, such as paper, paper clips, staples, pens, tape, etc., might be available in each office. Supplies and equipment that are not in stock may be requested through your supervisor. **BE CERTAIN THAT COMPLETE INFORMATION FOR ORDERING IS INCLUDED ON THE REQUISITION FORM.** All purchasing of supplies and equipment must be done through these offices with approval obtained by the appropriate supervisor.

Each program area is given a budget amount. Any orders submitted will be completed unless you are notified otherwise. When ordering from an account you need to:

1. Fill out a Purchase Requisition (available at FED offices)
2. Obtain your supervisor’s approval
3. Turn in the requisition to the appropriate office

Quoting/ Bidding EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MUST BE INVOLVED and SUPERVISOR NOTIFIED/INVOLVED:

It is good business practice to find the lowest price when purchasing capital items. Items \$25,000 or less are open market with 2 quotations. Items for \$25,000 to \$175,000- sealed bids or direct negotiations, with two or more quotations. Items for \$175,000- sealed bids, publication of public notice, with procurement of two or more sealed bids followed by Governing Board approval.

INVENTORY CONTROL:

State regulations mandate a fixed asset control system. A tagging system must be used for all Freshwater Education District equipment in excess of \$5,000.00. Tagging may be used for items less than that amount as determined by each department.

PROCUREMENT CARDS (P-CARDS):

Freshwater Education District is working with BMO Financial Group with MasterCard purchasing capabilities. The P-Card as it is referred to, is a way to purchase necessary school items with companies who don't normally accept purchase orders or for other various purchasing items such as hotel reservations or conference payments without having to use a personal credit card. This card is not intended for personal use. If administration believes that your position could benefit from a P-Card or you believe there is a valid reason for one to be issued to you, please talk with your immediate supervisor.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines that supervisors use to approve requested staff development activities.

Philosophy: Freshwater Education District encourages staff to be involved in staff development activities in order to best serve the needs of their students and districts.

Guiding Principles:

- We realize that the availability of funds for staff development activities vary depending on programs.
- Freshwater strives to allow and encourage staff to attend staff development activities as they fit into program budgets.

Guidelines:

- Staff development activity must be related to work assignments.
- If the conference/workshop is 90 miles or less from your departure point, staff should drive to the location on the conference/workshop day. If there is a need for hotel the night before, an employee can request permission from his/her supervisor.
- Carpooling is encouraged as feasible.
- If available, Freshwater Employees are encouraged to use a school vehicle.
- All receipts for lodging, meals, and parking must be attached to mileage form. (Meal guidelines apply: (See Mileage and Expense) Staff will be reimbursed for meals on the day of the conference/workshop for breakfast and lunch (if they are not included in the cost of the training) and for supper if the training is a full day workshop and there is travel time to return home.
- Unless there are extenuating circumstances, staff is expected to stay for the entire conference. If there are extenuating circumstances, inform your Supervisor.

Contracted Certified/Licensed Staff:

- Limit of up to two paid staff development activities per year. Must be pre-approved by the supervisor using the "Employee School Business Time Approval Form".

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

- One of the two activities may be an overnight unless pre-approved by the employee's Supervisor.
- Employee must make their own arrangements for lodging. May request a purchase order for lodging if the motel/hotel accepts purchase orders.
- Register in time to take advantage of the early registration discount if this applies.
- Report highlights to fellow staff members at staff meetings.
- Attendance at staff development activities beyond 2 per year is at the discretion of the Supervisor.
- If available, Freshwater Employees are encouraged to use a school vehicle.

Contracted Classified Employees:

- Not to exceed two paid staff development activities per year, unless pre-approved by Supervisor.
- Must be pre-approved by Supervisor using "Employee Leave Request/Approval" form.
- Overnight conference/workshop is at the discretion of the Supervisor.
- Employee must make their own arrangements for lodging. May request a purchase order for lodging if the motel/hotel accepts purchase orders.
- If available, Freshwater Employees are encouraged to use a school vehicle.
- Register in time to take advantage of the early registration discount if this applies.
- Report highlights to fellow staff members at staff meetings.
- Attendance at more than one conference/workshop per year is at the discretion of the Supervisor.

PROFESSIONAL LOCAL OPTIONS RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT (PLORD): All Teacher – Itinerant (T-I) Staff are required to complete 8 hours of Professional Local Options Research or Development. Samples of Professional application; Professional Learning Communities, Mentoring, Curriculum Development, Learning Project Research, Curriculum Writing, Job Site Safety Training, etc. PLORD hours are to be conducted on either a Non-Student Day or before normal workday hours. T-I choice of PLORD needs to be reviewed and approved by the Administration.

STAFF DRESS: Employees are expected to dress in business attire unless the day's tasks require otherwise. Freshwater Education District's dress code is designed to help us all provide a consistent professional appearance. Our appearance reflects on ourselves and our Organization. Remember that the way you dress can have an effect on how people will react to you. Be aware of member districts' policies.

WORKING HOURS: Work hours can vary and will be determined by the district/organization /program you are working with. Anytime an employee must leave before their designated hours, their immediate supervisor(s) must be notified. In order to enable FED to comply with its reporting requirements under the ACA, all employees must electronically record their hours worked on a daily basis.

ITINERANTS AFFECTED BY MEMBER SCHOOL CLOSINGS: In the event a member school has an unscheduled closing, late start, or early out, the Itinerant likewise, need not attend that member site under those circumstances. In the event a member school schedules an E-Learning day, the Itinerant can either use non-contract time or provide service remotely. If a make-up date at the member school is an open calendar date for the Itinerant, that make-up day

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

can simply be a “swing calendar day.” Or, if the Itinerant does not plan to attend the member school site on an alternate make-up date, the Itinerant may work, on the member day of closing, at the Itinerant assigned office. Another option is, for up to eight hours a year, with immediate approval from the Itinerant supervisor, an Itinerant may work from a remote site. If an alternate work schedule has been implemented, the revisions must be documented in the *electronic payroll system*.

FED CLOSING: In the event Minnesota schools are closed by the Governor, Commissioner of Education or other State authority, the FED office will be closed and the time lost will not be deducted from any employee’s personal leave or payroll deduction. For all other inquiries, please refer to your employment agreement for details.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE: The Sunshine Committee will serve as the committee to distribute remembrances of birthdays, deaths, weddings, births, and other special events. If you would like something shared by the Sunshine Committee, or know someone who may, please let a Sunshine Committee representative know. Permission must be received by the person involved prior to sharing any information. Please contact the FED Office in Wadena to speak to the Sunshine Committee representative(s) if you have questions regarding the Sunshine Committee.

CARE OF FACILITIES: Each employee is responsible for the neat and orderly appearance of their area. It has been said that appearance is a good indication of the type of productivity. People who share offices are especially reminded to keep the room neat and orderly. Please contact the custodial department if needed.

VISITORS: Since the administration is responsible for all persons on the premises, visitors are asked to check in at a FED office reception area upon their arrival to the building. Visitors include parents of students, interested citizens, maintenance and repair people, salespersons, representatives of news media, students not enrolled in the school, and others. A visitor, or person not employed by, or enrolled in a member school, must report to the FED office and receive permission to be on the FED premises/ grounds and display identification if required.

Any person on FED property who has not registered with the FED facilities is considered to be there illegally and may be asked to identify him or herself properly and/ or be asked to leave FED grounds. If the visitor refuses to leave the FED grounds or creates any disturbance, the FED has authority to declare trespassing and to request the aid of a law enforcement agency.

KEYS/KEY FOB: Each staff member will be provided with the necessary keys or key fob. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE SHOULD KEYS BE GIVEN TO OTHER INDIVIDUALS TO COME AND OPEN THE BUILDING OR ANY AREA.** If keys or key fob are lost or stolen, contact your supervisor immediately.

SMOKE/ TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT: FED staff is not permitted to use tobacco or tobacco related devices in the organization buildings. This prohibition extends to all facilities, whether owned, rented, or leased, and all vehicles that FED owns, leases, rents, contracts for, or controls. This prohibition includes all education district property and all off campus events sponsored by FED. More information regarding the tobacco free environment policy can be found in FED Policy 419. FED Policy Manual can be found at the Executive Directors Office in Wadena.

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

PHOTOCOPYING/LAMINATION: Photocopiers/Laminators are to be used by trained staff only. Materials to be duplicated/ mailed should be given to trained staff well in advance of when you need it. Personal copies, personal laminated materials must be reimbursed at the posted rate. (See Appendix for Price Sheet)

STAFF MEETINGS: Staff meetings shall be held at the discretion of the Directors and Coordinators/ Designee.

SITE VISITS: From time to time, your supervisor(s) may visit your work area. The purpose of these visits will be to obtain a general idea of what is being done in the various program areas, to see specific work methods, to assist with any concerns that may need attention, and to assess what is transpiring in the work place. If you would like to be visited during a planned activity, please feel free to notify your supervisor. Governing Board members are considered to be the Caretakers of the Education District, and therefore have the right to visit these areas at any time without advanced notification.

CONFERENCE ROOM SCHEDULES: The calendar in the main offices of FED buildings is considered the official calendar and schedule for activities. Assignments will be on a first-come, first-served basis or as mutually agreed by the parties affected. The Executive Director's Designee's decision on scheduling is final. When signing up to use a conference room, please include the name of the person responsible and who is to be notified when cancellations and changes occur. Please contact a Program Assistant to schedule conference rooms.

VISUAL AIDS: Staff should use FED visual aid material as much as possible. Be certain you check out the equipment properly so that everyone knows where it is to be located if it is needed. The equipment must be checked out in your name.

MONEY: If the FED office personnel collect money, contact the FED Business Office for procedures to follow. In most circumstances, cash should be deposited daily.

PUBLICITY: Making use of the local media is one of the many public relations tools we have. Each employee is encouraged to develop a sense of newsworthy happenings in their program area. If you are involved in an activity that you believe is newsworthy contact your Supervisor to determine appropriate publicity options.

MAIL: Mailboxes for most employees are provided in FED buildings. The mail you receive will be placed in your mailbox.

VOICEMAIL: Voicemail is available to staff in most FED buildings. Any verbal information you receive will be sent to your voicemail. Employees are expected to check their voicemail regularly and return messages as soon as possible.

E-MAIL: Electronic mail (e-mail) is available to all FED staff members and can be accessed through the FED website (www.fed.k12.mn.us). Upon employment, you will receive a username and password. All employees are expected to check their e-mail regularly, including during breaks such as winter breaks, summer breaks, etc. Please be aware that your work email is considered public data and may be subject to disclosure.

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

IDENTIFICATION BADGES: Picture identification badges are required for all FED staff members. To obtain your ID badge, contact the FED Administrative Assistant at the Wadena office at 1-218-629-6002. All FED employees are expected to wear their identification badges in our Freshwater District Schools.

CERTIFICATES/ LICENSES: Current teaching and professional certificates/ licenses (where applicable) **MUST** be placed on file in the Business Office. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that their certificates/ licenses are submitted to the business office in a timely manner.

DATA PRIVACY: All data on individuals collected, created, received, maintained, or disseminated by Freshwater Education District, which is classified by statute or federal law as public, shall be accessible to the public pursuant to the procedures established by FED. All other data on individuals is private or confidential. For more information on data privacy see FED Policy 406. FED Policy Manual can be found at the Executive Director's Office in Wadena.

FRESHWATER EDUCATION DISTRICT WEBSITE/ SMART WEB: The Freshwater Education District website can be accessed at www.fed.k12.mn.us. The website contains contact information for FED member school districts, information on each department within FED, contact information for other FED employees, access to FED e-mail accounts, and other information.

All FED employees can access SmartEr; it contains information regarding employee pay, education, training & licensure, and tax information. To access the SmartEr go to www.fed.k12.mn.us and click on "Staff Resources"; click on "Smart Login". You will be asked for your User ID and password. The User ID is your FED employee number; your initial password is the last four digits of your social security number. You are encouraged to change your password.

JOB POSTINGS: PROCEDURES- Job openings will normally be publically advertised as well as internally posted for a minimum of 2 weeks or until filled. TRANSFERS AND REASSIGNMENTS- The FED may transfer or reassign any employee without posting a "vacancy" notice.

BREAK AREAS: Break areas are provided in most FED buildings for your use. The upkeep of each area is everyone's responsibility. This area is used frequently to serve our clients, so there may be days when staff use will be interrupted.

CUSTODIAL/MAINTENANCE REQUESTS: In cases of emergency or minor room problems, the employee may request the assistance of the custodian. Under normal conditions, employees who notice that work needs to be done in their offices or rooms should contact their supervisor. If a need for general maintenance occurs, a [work order](#) which can be found on the Freshwater Education District website needs to be completed and sent to the Custodian.

PHOTO OPT-OUT: The FED and its Programs may take video footage and/or photographs of employees for informational and promotional purposes. Sometimes these images may/can be posted to school social media, the school website, or publications. The employee has the option to opt out of allowing the FED to publicize photographic and video images. To opt-out, employees will need to submit a "[photo opt-out form](#)" which can be found in the Staff Resources on the FED website.

V. BUSINESS OFFICE AND SERVICES

CRIMINAL HISTORY and PREDATORY OFFENDER REGISTRATION

BACKGROUND CHECKS: Minnesota State Statute 120.1045 requires that the Freshwater Education District obtain a state criminal history background check from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension on all employees hired after January 1, 1996. The background check must be obtained by completing the online process through **Trusted Employee**. It is the employee's responsibility to pay for their background check via the online process. The statute allows FED to obtain only state records. The organization may require an updated CBC at any time.

If the FED wishes to obtain a federal criminal history background check, FED may do so in accordance with Minnesota State Statute 299C.62, the Child Protection Background Check Act. The FED must submit a copy of the Child Protection Background Check Act consent form if applicable, and a fully rolled set of fingerprints on an appropriate FBI applicant card.

Fingerprint cards are obtained from the BCA office in person, by mail, or by phone. The name and address of FED will be printed in the "Employer name and address" box. The Child Protection Statute, 299C.62, must be printed in the "Reason Fingerprinted" box. BCA will notify FED whether or not the individual completely and accurately answered the Child Protection Background Check Act consent form.

ANNUALIZATION OF PAY POLICY:

"School Year Employees": Employees employed in positions that require services to be performed only during the school year ("School Year Employees") shall be paid their salaries over a twelve (12) month period beginning in September 1st and ending by August 30th. School Year Employees are not provided the option of receiving their entire salaries during the school year.

The annual salary of a School Year Employee will be divided equally into twenty-four (24) payments, which shall be paid on the 15th (or previous business day if the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday and last business day of the month during the twelve (12) month period described above.

Except as provided below or as specifically allowed by Section 409A of the Internal Revenue Code, payment of a School Year Employee's salary will not be accelerated (i.e., paid over a shorter time period than the twelve (12) month period described above). If a School Year Employee's employment with the FED terminates prior to the close of a school year, any salary earned but not yet paid for that school year shall be paid upon termination of the School Year Employee's employment with the FED within the time periods required under Minnesota law. However, if a School Year Employee works the entire school year, but his/her contract with the FED will not be renewed for the subsequent school year, his/her salary for the school year worked will be paid over the twelve (12) month period described above and the employee **will not** be entitled to an accelerated payment of the salary to be paid following the close of the school year.

PAYDAY: Pay Day is in accordance with the appropriate policy guidelines. (Direct Deposit is mandatory for all employees. Status of Direct Deposits and Direct Deposit receipts are available on the FED website (www.fed.k12.mn.us). Please see the information and form under Staff Resource. [Direct Deposit Enrollment Authorization Form](#)

HEALTH BENEFIT CONTRIBUTION FOR QUALIFIED EMPLOYEES: Beginning On July 1, 2014, the FED, upon recommendation of the Health Benefits Committee, the FED adopted an employer-sponsored health plan in accordance with the ACA. The FED reserves the right to modify policies and procedures in response to ACA reporting and compliance issues.

PARTICIPATION IN FRESHWATER GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS: Except as provided in any applicable collective bargaining agreement, no part-time Freshwater employee may participate in Freshwater's group health insurance program unless the employee is employed an average of at least 30 hours of service per week. An employee's average hours of service per week will be determined in accordance with the Affordable Care Act and Freshwater's policies adopted thereunder.

HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENT (HRA): In order to obtain reimbursement for medical expenses qualified participating employees must submit online, the claim to Aviben Benefits Administrator, Elevated Solutions a Third Party Administrator.

FLEX BENEFITS: Freshwater Education District sponsors a flexible benefits plan, as allowed for pretax qualified medical reimbursement. Participants must annually submit the flex election form to the business office prior to January 1st plan year. Questions about the plan should be directed to Payroll Clerk in the Freshwater business office (218-629-6035). These claims will also be admitted by Aviben Benefits Administrator, Elevated Solutions, a Third Party Administrator.

HIPPA PRIVACY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES: HIPAA requires covered entities to have policies and procedures reflecting HIPAA's privacy and security mandates. The Health Plan, as a covered entity, has developed administrative policies and procedures reflecting the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) privacy and security regulations. The Freshwater Education District HIPPA Privacy Policies and Procedures Plan has been Board approved and is on file at the Executive Director's Office in Wadena and on the FED Website.

SALARY NOTICE PAY DAY SCHEDULE: The Freshwater Education District Payroll Policy will define the payroll frequency as being twenty-four (24) (semimonthly) payments per year.

Salary Notice Employees: The Business office will issue direct deposits semi-monthly on the dates indicated on the payroll calendar. New staff members need to make sure they have visited the business office and have filled out all necessary forms.

ACA Electronic Payroll Entry: All employees, full-time, part-time, and extended contract employees who have a salary notice or are prorated over 9-12 months need to enter hours worked electronically on a daily/weekly basis for an approval from the appropriate Supervisor. A day is defined as 8 hours or less. Partial hours worked will be calculated in 15 minute increments.

OTHER HOURLY BASED EMPLOYEES: Hourly employees are required to enter hours worked on a daily basis for approval from the appropriate Supervisor. There is a two week payroll lag for hourly employees. Partial hours will be calculated in 15 minute increments.

Freshwater Education District Employee Handbook

COMBINATION OF BENEFITS BETWEEN ASSIGNMENTS: Freshwater employees' assigned duties in more than one contract unit may combine benefits per this policy and/or separate employee Agreements.

TAX SHELTERED INVESTMENTS: Various companies are available on a payroll deduction plan. For a current list, contact the Business Office.

403(b)/457(UNIVERSAL) AVAILABILITY NOTICE: *Please refer to notice in the appendix section.* Freshwater invites all employees to participate in the 403(b) Plan.

PERSONAL LEAVE: For any planned time off requests, prior verbal approval from the employee's supervisor is required. Once the leave time has been verbally approved, the employee must enter requested time in the electronic tracking system. In the case of an emergency, contact your Supervisor directly.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT: The purpose of this policy is to provide for family and medical leave to Freshwater Education District employees in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) and also with parenting leave under state law. Please refer to FED Policy #410 or see the U.S. Department of Labor Fact Sheet available in the FED business office.

LONG TERM DISABILITY: Freshwater does provide Long Term Disability Insurance (after 120 day elimination period). If you feel you may be eligible to claim disability, please contact the Freshwater Business Office for specific information and forms.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: The employee assistance program (EAP) is normally available to employees covered by these personnel policies. For more information, refer to the summary plan description.

Employee Assistance Program Offered:

The Village

Health Partners Employee Assistance for those on the Employee Sponsored Health Insurance: Health Partners (September – December)

Blue Cross Blue Shield (effective January)

EMPLOYEE ABSENCE: The Supervisor should be notified of an emergency/illness absence no later than 7:15 a.m. on the day of absence. When an employee has been absent from work because of an emergency or illness they must, upon return from their absence, an employee must request leave time in Timetracker. All other absences (personal leave, workshops, etc...) must be pre-approved.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION: All staff members are protected under the Worker's Compensation Act. In order to secure these benefits EMPLOYEES MUST IMMEDIATELY REPORT, to the Business office payroll department, all accidents/ injuries when they occur within the building or while on FED business. Forms are available on the FED website. Supervisors must immediately report and monitor any employee work-related injury.

**APPENDIX
FRESHWATER FORMS**

[Code of Conduct for Staff Members](#)

[Freshwater Policy Index](#) and Policy #'s:

403, 406L, 412, 413, 414, 416L, 418, 419, 450L, 514, 524L

[Hepatitis B Record](#)

**FRESHWATER FORMS
ON WEBSITE
(Located under Staff Resource tab)**

Teacher Relicensure Form

[Summary of School Calendars](#)

[Mileage Chart](#)

FED Member Information

Payroll, HRA & Mileage Reimbursement Calendar

[Direct Deposit Enrollment Form](#)

403(b)/457(b) “*Universal Availability Notice*”

Salary Reduction Agreement for 403(b)/457(b)

IRS Mileage Rate

FED Mileage and Expense Form

HRA Required Notification Letter

TPA Letter from EBC for the Freshwater HRA claims management instructions

Auditor E-Update 5-6-11

Indoor Air Quality Concern Form

[Freshwater Education Donation Request Form](#)

