

# Ozark School District Employee Handbook



**2025-2026**

**Ozark School District  
1600 West Jackson  
Ozark, MO 65721  
(417) 582-5900  
[www.ozarktigers.org](http://www.ozarktigers.org)**

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## **From the Superintendent**

*To All Ozark District Staff Members:*

*We are delighted to welcome you to Ozark R-VI and express our sincere gratitude for your commitment to being a valued member of our educational community. As an integral part of our team, you play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our students and fostering an environment that promotes growth, learning, and success.*

*This Employee Handbook serves as a comprehensive guide, outlining the policies, procedures, and expectations that govern your employment at Ozark R-VI. It is designed to provide you with essential information to navigate your role effectively and maintain a harmonious working environment. By familiarizing yourself with this handbook, you will gain valuable insights into our shared values, professional standards, and guidelines that underpin our commitment to excellence.*

*We firmly believe in creating a nurturing and safe environment where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. As a school employee, you are expected to foster a culture of respect, understanding, and collaboration, setting an exemplary standard for our students and colleagues alike.*

*While this handbook provides general guidelines, we understand that unique situations may arise. Therefore, it is important to note that it is not intended to be a contractual agreement and is subject to change. However, any revisions or updates will be communicated promptly, ensuring that you are kept informed of any modifications to policies or procedures.*

*We encourage you to read this handbook thoroughly, and if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to your supervisor or the Human Resources Department. Your input and feedback are invaluable as we continuously strive to improve our practices and better support our employees.*

*Once again, welcome to Ozark R-VI. We are thrilled to have you on board, and we look forward to working together to provide the best educational experience for our students.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dr. Lori Wilson*

*Dr. Lori Wilson, Superintendent*

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help answer questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all of the Board policies and procedures are included.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official Board Policy Manual. It is not intended to alter the at-will status of employees in any way. It is simply a guide to help answer any questions you may have. Ozark School District board policies and procedures can change at any time. Changes in District policies/procedures may supersede, modify, or eliminate the information summarized in this booklet. For more information, employees may refer to the [District's Board Policies](#) that are posted on the Ozark School District website at [www.ozarktigers.org](http://www.ozarktigers.org).

## **Mission Statement**

To provide high-quality education for each student's future-readiness

## **Vision**

An innovative school district preparing students to use their talents for success

## **Beliefs**

We believe every student should be prepared for success in the path they choose to pursue.

We believe student achievement comes through both independence and collaboration

We believe in different methods of instruction because students learn in different ways.

We believe every student regardless of individual challenges, is able to learn in a safe and equitable learning environment.

We believe all students serve a vital role in the growth and sustainability of our Ozark community.

## **Strategic Goals**

Goal 1: Provide an environment of high quality instruction to produce applied learning.

Goal 2: Provide appropriate tiered supports that promote positive development for all students.

Goal 3: Foster a culture of respect with shared leadership for all employees through recruitment, retention and professional development.

Goal 4: Partner with stakeholders to continue our development of a strong, innovative, and progressive school district.

## **The People & Their School District**

Public education is a function of the State of Missouri as expressed in the Missouri Constitution, in the state statutes, and in federal and state court decisions. The Constitution provides for the establishment of a State Board of Education, which has general supervision of the public schools in the state. In providing for a system of free public education in the State of Missouri, the state also delegates certain responsibilities to local school districts.

Each district is governed by a Board of Education, which is elected locally and derives its power and authority from the state statutes. The Board is mindful, however, that the people of the Ozark School District are the ultimate governors of public education in the District, and that the Board is directly accountable to the people through the elective process. The Board also believes that this accountability is a shared responsibility involving District students, professional and support staff employees, the superintendent of schools, and the people themselves.

## **School District Legal Status**

The State of Missouri must establish and maintain free public schools in accordance with the Missouri Constitution and state law. The State has delegated certain responsibilities to local school districts. This school district is governed by a seven-director School Board. Directors are elected or appointed in accordance with law.

The official name of the school district shall be Ozark R-VI. In accordance with state law, the Board of Education shall keep a common seal with which to attest its official acts relative to District operations.

## **Board of Education**

Missouri law grants the Board of Education the power to govern and oversee the management of the District's schools. The board is the policy-making body within the District and has overall responsibility for curriculum, school taxes, annual budget, employment of the superintendent and other professional staff, facilities, and expansions. The Board has complete and final control over school matters within limits established by state and federal law and regulations. The Board of Education is elected by the citizens of the District to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the District's children. Board members are elected at large and serve without compensation, must be registered voters and must reside in the District.

The Board of Education usually meets the third Thursday with the closed sessions starting at 6:00 p.m. and the open session starting at 7:15 p.m. at the District Office in the Board room unless specified in advance. All open session meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Missouri law permits the Board to go into a closed session. Circumstances that may be included are personnel issues, including conferences with employees

## **District Office Administration**

**Superintendent of Schools**  
**Assistant Superintendent of Learning**  
**Executive Director of Operations**  
**Executive Director of Human Resources**  
**Executive Director of Finance**  
**Executive Director of Special Services**  
**Executive Director of Elementary Learning**  
**Executive Director of Secondary Learning**  
**Executive Director of Student Services**

**Dr. Lori Wilson**  
**Dr. Craig Carson**  
**Mr. Richard Fretwell**  
**Dr. Philip Link**  
**Dr. Landon Gray**  
**Dr. Laura Eakins**  
**Dr. Kent Sappington**  
**Mr. Gerald Chambers**  
**Dr. Anna Thurman**

**For Building Information visit the Ozark School District [website](#).**

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Ozark School District does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, military status or any other basis prohibited by law. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience and abilities.

## **Job Vacancy Announcements**

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the professional staff personnel needs of the School District and the individual schools. Principals and supervisors locate suitable candidates to recommend to the Board for employment.

The District's hiring procedures comply with all federal and state hiring practices. All candidates are considered on the basis of qualifications, training, experience and ability to fulfill the requirements of the position. The search for qualified teachers and other professional employees extends to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas.

Recruitment procedures do not overlook the talents and potential of individuals already employed by the school system. Job vacancies by position and location are posted on the [District website](#) on a regular basis to the extent possible.

## **Employment after Termination of Employment**

Once a full-time employee has retired, resigned, or terminated employment with the School District, they may not be re-employed for a period of at least 26 consecutive weeks unless special approval is granted by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

After this waiting period, individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Missouri PSRS or the Missouri PEERS system may be employed in certain positions or on a part-time basis. For those retiring on or after July 1, 2010, termination of employment means that members must end all employment with PSRS or PEERS-covered employers, not be under contract for employment with any PSRS or PEERS-covered employer, and not return to work for a PSRS or PEERS-covered employer until at least one month has lapsed since their effective retirement date. Contact PSRS/PEERS for working after retirement rules and regulations. **Policy [GBAC](#)**

## **Faculty & Staff Recruiting & Hiring**

Because an effective educational program requires quality staff members, the Board and the administration of the Ozark School District makes every effort to attract and retain the best-qualified personnel. The Board of Education employs personnel in accordance with law. The District's hiring procedures comply with all federal and state laws, including laws prohibiting discrimination. The District is an equal opportunity employer. The District hires only citizens of the United States and persons who are legally authorized to work in the United States. **Policy [GCD-1](#)**  
**[GDC-1](#)**

## **Probation & Tenure**

The superintendent and his/her designees, at the direction of the Board, shall recommend employment for the professional staff, maintain personnel records, administer leave, evaluate performance, issue or terminate contracts within the provisions established by the Teacher Tenure Act of the State of Missouri. **Policy [GCG](#)**

## **Part-Time & Substitutes**

At the beginning of each school year, the superintendent or his/her designee shall have prepared a list of properly qualified persons to serve as temporary substitute teachers. Part-time teachers and substitutes must meet background checks and screenings required of full-time teachers in the District. Substitute teachers must obtain a substitute certificate from the Missouri Department of Secondary and Elementary Education.

The Board considers part-time and substitute support employees as integral and essential to the school system. **Policy [GB-1](#)**

## **Reassignments/Reduction in Workforce**

All personnel are subject to reassignment. Reassignment is a transfer to another position, department, or facility that does not necessitate a change in the employee's contract. When reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or programs changes, the superintendent has final placement authority. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be reassigned at any time. Staff members should feel free to request transfers within the District. Staff members may need to be reassigned to another position in the District in order to meet the needs of the District. The most common needs occur when enrollment patterns change either by school attendance areas or by course offering.

The Board of Education may place as many teachers on unrequested leave of absence as may be necessary due to a decrease in pupil enrollment, school district reorganization or the financial condition of the District.

Whenever it becomes necessary, because of lack of funds, lack of work, or in the interest of economy, the Board of Education may reduce the number of non-instructional personnel.

**Policy [GCI GDI GCPA](#)**

## **Drug-Free Workplace**

Student and employee safety is of paramount concern to the Board of Education. In recognition of the threat to safety posed by employee use or possession of drugs or alcohol, the Board of Education is committed to a drug-free workplace.

The Board of Education does not tolerate the manufacture, use, possession, sale, distribution or the influence of controlled substances, alcoholic beverages or unauthorized prescription medications by District employees on any District property; in any District-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or District activities; off District property at any District-sponsored or District-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event where students are under the supervision of the District; or during any period of time such employee is supervising students on behalf of the District or is otherwise engaged in District business.

When it is evident that an employee has consumed alcoholic beverages or controlled substances off school property before or during a District activity, the staff member will not be allowed on school property or to participate in the activity and will be subject to the same disciplinary measures as for possession or consumption on District property.

Staff members will be tested for alcohol and controlled substances if the District has reasonable suspicion that the staff member has violated this policy. In addition, staff members who operate District transportation must submit to alcohol and drug testing as required by law. All testing will be conducted in accordance with Board policy, administrative procedures and law.

Any employee who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension, termination, and referral for prosecution. Employees may be required to satisfactorily participate in rehabilitation programs.

Each employee of this school district is hereby notified that, as a condition of employment, the employee must abide by the terms of this policy and notify the superintendent or his/her designee of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in or on the premises of this school district, or while engaged in regular employment. Such notification must be made by the employee to the superintendent or his/her designee in writing no later than five (5) calendar days after conviction. The superintendent or his/her designee will provide notice in writing of such violation to the United States Department of Education or other appropriate federal agency within ten (10) calendar days after the superintendent or his/her designee receives such notification if the District receives any federal grants directly from such agency, as opposed to federal grants received through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

The District will take appropriate disciplinary action within 30 days.

The District will institute a drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the dangerous and harmful nature of drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace, the drug-free workplace policy, available counseling and rehabilitation, and the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.

The Board of Education recognizes that employees who have a drug abuse problem should seek professional assistance. Although the District will not assume financial responsibility, an employee who requests assistance shall be referred to a treatment facility or agency in the community if such facility or agency is available. Upon the request of DESE or an agency of the United States, the District shall certify that it has adopted and implemented the drug prevention program described in this policy. The District shall conduct a biennial review of this policy to determine its effectiveness, implement necessary changes, and ensure disciplinary sanctions are consistently enforced.

This policy shall be communicated in writing to all present and future employees. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. **Policy [GBEBA](#)**

### **Employee Alcohol & Drug Testing**

The Ozark School District, which also employs operators of commercial motor vehicles, is required to implement a drug and alcohol testing program for applicable employees that fulfills federal requirements. This comprehensive program shall include conducting pre-employment drug testing and reasonable suspicion, random and post-accident testing for use of alcohol or drugs by such operators, notifying employees of the requirements and consequences of the program, maintaining appropriate records and complying with Missouri Department of Revenue's reporting requirements.

*Safety-Sensitive Function* includes such responsibilities as time on duty waiting to be dispatched, driving time, assisting or supervising loading or unloading, repairing, obtaining assistance or remaining in attendance upon a disabled vehicle. All time spent providing drug and alcohol samples, including travel time to and from the collection or testing site as needed to comply with random, reasonable suspicion, post-accident or follow-up testing will also be considered as safety-sensitive functions. **Policy [GBEBB-2](#)**

## **Workload & Work Schedules**

### **Policy [GDI](#)**

#### **Professional Employees (Exempt)**

Professional and administrative employees are exempt from overtime pay and are employed according to the work schedules set by the District. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule. Notice of work schedules, including required days of service and scheduled holidays, are designated on the Board adopted calendar.

#### **Support Staff Employees (Non-Exempt)**

Support employees are employed at-will and will be notified of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Support staff employees are not exempt from overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedules without prior approval from the supervisor.

### **[School Calendar](#)**

### **[Work/Holiday Schedule](#)**

### **[Job Descriptions](#)**

## **Tutoring & Other Services Offered**

Teachers may provide tutoring for any student with approval from the building principal. Remuneration for private student tutoring entirely between the parent/guardian and the teacher and is subject to facility usage policies and procedures. Further information on other programs can be located in the board policy under Section I: Instruction.

## **Masters' Program Partnership**

In partnership with Evangel University, Ozark School District has developed a graduate program for Ozark teachers. This program is open to Ozark teachers who have not earned a master's degree and desires a master's degree with emphasis in curriculum and instruction. Currently, the District pays tuition for enrollees in the Ozark Master's Program. Teachers will receive an email when the application period for a new cohort begins. Teachers desiring to participate in the new cohort must make application by the given deadline. After applying, participants are selected using criteria set by the District. Funding is contingent on Board approval. For more information regarding this initiative, contact Dr. Craig Carson.

## **Reimbursement Program for Advanced Training**

The District administers a reimbursement program for job-related classes and training hours for **ALL** district employees excluding substitute and seasonal/temporary employees. Please view the [guidelines](#) for details. To apply for a training or class reimbursement prior to the corresponding deadline, [please fill out the appropriate form](#). There will be deadlines through the year for each semester.

## **Performance Evaluation**

Evaluation of an employee's job performance focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned duties and other job-related criteria.

To assure high-quality professional and support staff performance and to advance the instructional programs of Ozark School District, the Board requires a program of comprehensive, performance-based evaluations for each staff member. The evaluation shall be ongoing and of sufficient specificity and frequency to provide for demonstrated

standards of competency and academic ability. **Policy [GCN](#)**

## **Staff Development**

The Board of Education is committed to providing systematic professional development for the District’s educators. The Board of Education supports a Professional Development Committee (PDC) which assists with the planning and implementation of professional development. Further guidelines for professional development may be found on the [District website](#).

### Guidelines for Professional Development

Professional development is governed by board policies [GCL](#) and [GDL](#). Professional learning opportunities for District staff are aligned to District mission, vision, pillars, and strategic goals. Professional development follows applicable state laws and support the primary goal of improving instruction by cultivating a shared focus on the school improvement process and the initiatives of the district as follows:

1. Professional Learning Communities
2. Comprehensive Literacy
3. Multi-tiered Systems of Support (Response to Intervention)
4. School-wide Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports
5. Balanced Mathematics
6. Portrait of a Graduate
7. Academies
8. Student & Staff Wellness

Each year the District provides at least fifteen (15) hours of professional development. These activities are provided through avenues such as:

1. PLC Academy
2. District developed (or directed) graduate-level courses
3. Both morning and afternoon district-level offerings during the school year
4. Summer district-level offerings
5. Approved building-level professional development activities during the school year
6. District virtual offerings

Accrual of professional development hours begins with activities occurring on or after July 1. Teachers are required annually to document at least 15 hours of professional learning through Frontline. Teachers may continue to participate in the type of activities listed above at a remuneration rate of twenty dollars per hour. The required professional development hours must be complete by June 30.

### Exceptions

The district recognizes some staff members are required to attend specific out-of-district activities for the purposes of licensure and/or specialized certification. These individuals are required to complete and submit a “Request of Out-Of-District Professional Development” form prior to the event. (This form is accessible on Frontline Professional Growth). Out-of-district professional development requests are approved on a case-by-case basis by the learning division leadership team. All hours must be approved prior to attendance.

Please contact your immediate supervisor or the office of the Assistant Superintendent of Learning regarding questions about professional learning opportunities.

## Compensation & Benefits

### Contracts and Compensation Plan

The Board recognizes attractive compensation plans include an adequate base salary, professional development incentives and employee benefits and all are necessary to recruit and retain highly-qualified staff. The Board has the final authority over the salary schedule and benefits for all employees.

Contracts, made by order of the Board, are in writing and shall be dated. All consideration and performance shall be provided after a contract is offered. In accordance with the law, individual contracts will be issued to all certified teachers and administrators.

Contracts may be terminated by mutual agreement of the parties at any time. If the contracted employee seeks to resign after the contract is signed, the Board may require the contracted employee wishing to void his or her contract to pay liquidated damages. The contracted employee and the District recognize that the District is entitled to compensation for the costs of finding a suitable replacement, training expenses and other disruptions. Because the actual damages will be difficult to ascertain, the Board and the contracted employee agree that the following damage amounts are a reasonable estimation of the damages, depending on the date the contracted employee's resignation is received by the superintendent or designee:

The date or the first signed contract of the year – June 1 \$1,000 (Probationary and Classified Contracted)

June 2 – July 15 \$2,000 (All Contracted Employees)

After July 16 \$4,000 (All Contracted Employees)

### Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

Employees are paid in accordance with the Board adopted guidelines and pay structures established for each position. All District positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal laws. Professional employees are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation.

If an employee's starting step was miscalculated for any reason during the first year of employment, the District will make correction in the next fiscal year (second year of employment) pending the receipt of employment verification.

Contracted employees who perform extracurricular duties or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the District's extra-duty pay schedule. Salary and wage inquiries should be directed to the Payroll Office. **Policy [GCBA](#)**

### Pay Checks

Exempt employees and subs are paid on a semi-monthly. Payday is on the 1st and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month unless it falls on a weekend or holiday. In the event a payday falls on a holiday or weekend, pay checks are issued on the last business day preceding. Exception is 260 day exempt employees, should July 1st fall on a holiday or weekend, then the 1st check will be the 1st business day after July 1st.

Hourly paid employees are paid on a semi-monthly basis. Paydays are the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month unless it falls on a weekend or holiday. In the event a payday falls on holiday or weekend, pay check are issued on the last business day preceding.

Paper paychecks and pay stubs are not issued. Payroll information may be viewed via the **[HR Portal](#)**. Deadlines to submit paperwork to payroll each month are listed on the payroll website.

### Underpayment/Overpayment Status

It is the District's practice that all employees receive just compensation for work performed. If the District finds an

employee has been paid in error, the District will make adjustments to ensure the employee is paid correctly. Also, if the District finds an employee has been over-paid, arrangements will be made with the employee to ensure repayment. The employee should notify the Payroll Office in a timely manner if an error is identified.

### Nonexempt Employee Supplementary Pay Plans

Nonexempt employees include all District employees not specifically identified as exempt under federal law. This generally includes non-certificated staff; however, in some circumstances, non-certificated staff members may qualify for exempt status. Hours worked means all hours during which the individual is required to be on duty — generally from the scheduled starting time to scheduled end time — and all hours an employee is permitted to work. Meal periods and break periods of 20 minutes or longer do not count as hours worked unless the individual performs work during the meal period. If a nonexempt employee has accumulated 24 or more hours of comp time, this time must be used prior to taking leave days. **Policy [GBA](#)**

## **Time Recording & Overtime Rules**

Non-Exempt: All employees in FLSA non-exempt positions must record all hours worked on each day using the electronic time and attendance system.

All hours are reported in fractions to the closest quarter-hour. Time should be recorded in decimal fractions of hours – not in hours or minutes. As an example, if the employee clocks in at 8:05 a.m., the count time begins at 8 a.m. If the employee clocks in at 8:08 a.m., the count time begins at 8:15 a.m.

### **Overtime**

The Board discourages overtime work by nonexempt employees. A nonexempt employee shall not work overtime without the express approval of his or her supervisor. Nonexempt employees who begin work earlier or work later than their assigned hours without prior authorization from their immediate supervisor are subject to discipline, including termination. A nonexempt employee will be paid one and half times his or her regular rate of pay for each hour of overtime. **Policy [GBA](#)**

Time records will only be used for record keeping purposes required by law pursuant to Section 778.415. Wages are paid on an annualized basis unless the employee’s job description identifies them as an employee working less than 20 hours per week. Such employees will be paid as an hourly employee.

Trips, gate keepers, score keepers, etc. are considered “occasional and sporadic employment” if seasonal and performing in a different capacity than regular employment. These will not be a part of the time record keeping. *DOL 29 CFR 553.30 – Occasional or sporadic employment – section 7 (p) (2)*. Supervisors should review and approve time records. This is pursuant to section 778.415 **Policy [GBA](#)**

## **Payroll Deductions**

There are mandatory payroll deductions for the following:

- Missouri Public School Retirement System (PSRS) for certified employees hired to work 17 or more hours per week
- Public Education Employee Retirement System (PEERS) for classified staff hired to work 20 or more hours per week
- Social Security and Medicare
- Federal and state taxes unless filing “exempt”

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee’s share of premiums for health,

dental, vision, short term disability, life insurance, flexible fringe benefit programs, supplemental plans and tax deferred savings plans. Employees may also request payroll deduction for payment of membership dues to professional organizations. For other payroll deductions possibilities, contact the Benefits Office. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave. Employees can view their deductions on the [HR Portal](#). See other sections for more detailed descriptions. **Policy [DLB](#), [GDBC](#), [GCBC](#)**

## **Direct Deposit**

All employees are required to have direct deposit. You may not elect to discontinue direct deposit. Forms are available in your Frontline Central account. **DO NOT CLOSE ACCOUNTS BEFORE INFORMING THE PAYROLL OFFICE.** Please make sure the information you provide is accurate. Providing incorrect information may delay your payment.

## **Summary of Benefits**

All benefit information may be viewed on the District [website](#). Benefits are available to Full Time-Employees (those working at least an average of 30 hours per week over a 12 month look-back period):

### Health Insurance

The Board of Education offers Cox Health Plans as the health insurance provider. Please refer to the plan summaries available on the District website hyperlink for specific information regarding coverage details and costs. There is no monthly premium cost for employees who elect single coverage. Employees may purchase coverage for dependents.

### Life Insurance

The Board of Education provides, at no cost to the employee, a group life benefit of \$25,000. Please refer to the plan summary for specific information regarding coverage details. Eligible employees have the option to purchase a supplementary plan.

### Dental Insurance (Available to employees hired to work at least 20 hours per week)

The District offers voluntary group dental insurance on an employee-paid basis.

### Vision Insurance (Available to employees hired to work at least 20 hours per week)

The District offers voluntary group vision insurance on an employee-paid basis.

### Section 125 Flexible Benefits Plan

The District offers a Section 125 plan for employees to pay certain expenses with pretax dollars. Options under the plan include medical costs not covered by insurance and dependent care costs. We use a third party to administer the plan and they will provide information to employees.

### 403b/457b Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans

The District offers the opportunity for employees to defer a portion of their salary pretax into a 403b or 457b retirement savings plan of the employee's choice. Certain guidelines and restrictions must be met and are covered in the respective plan documents. A third party administers the plan and they will provide information to employees. Salary reduction agreements may be started, changed or stopped with any payroll.

### Short-Term Disability

The Board pays the premiums for eligible employees in which the benefit paid out will equal 60% of the employee's salary. The employee may choose to buy up to cover 66.67% of his/her salary.

### Open Enrollment

Open enrollment is the only time each year the employee is provided an opportunity to make any changes to benefits or to participants on the plan unless there is a qualifying event. The plan year begins on January 1 each year. Employees will be notified each year regarding open enrollment dates/times.

The employee is responsible for contacting the representative to purchase supplementary or voluntary plans.

### Retirement

All staff members who qualify shall be participants in the PSRS or PEERS of the State of Missouri. PEERS membership is required, regardless of position, for non-certificated employees employed to work at least 20 hours per week on a regular basis by an employer within the Retirement System in a position that normally requires the employee to work at least 600 hours during the school term. PSRS membership is required, regardless of position, for certificated employees employed to work by an employer within the Retirement System in a position that normally requires the employee to work the full school day, or at least the same number of hours per week as required for such a position, and also normally requires the employee to work at least 600 hours during the school term. Certificated employees/teachers employed less than full-time for at least 17 hours per week on a regular basis in a position that requires the employee to work at least 600 hours during the school term may elect membership in the Public Education Employee Retirement System (PEERS) within the first 90 days of their initial part-time employment. Some certified employees (those in positions that DESE does not require a certificate for), may be required to hold PSRS membership at 2/3 rate and have Social Security withheld at the full rate.

## **Termination of Employment**

### Retirement

Employees who plan to retire under PSRS/PEERS should notify their supervisor as soon as possible. Inquiries should be addressed to Teacher Retirement System of Missouri, P.O. Box 268, Jefferson City, MO 65102 or call (800) 392-6848 or (573) 634-5290. <http://www.psr-peers.org/>

### Professional Resignations

Tenured teachers must notify the District of their resignation no later than June 1. Resignations submitted by tenured teachers after the statutory deadline or by probationary teachers or administrative employees after their contracts are returned must be approved by the Board.

In most cases, resignations become effective at the end of the school year in which they are submitted. Earlier resignations must be approved by the Board. Letters of resignation must be submitted to the Human Resources Office.

The Board considers each resignation on an individual basis. Generally, teachers and administrative employees will not be released from a contract unless a suitable replacement is available. However, the Board will give appropriate consideration to situations involving serious illness, transfer of spouse and military service.

Contracts may be terminated by mutual agreement of the parties at any time. If the contracted employee seeks to resign after the contract is signed, the Board may require the contracted employee wishing to void his or her contract to pay liquidated damages. The contracted employee and the District recognize that the District is entitled to compensation for the costs of finding a suitable replacement, training expenses and other disruptions. Because the actual damages will be difficult to ascertain, the Board and the contracted employee agree that the following damage amounts are a reasonable estimation of the damages, depending on the date the contracted employee's resignation is received by the superintendent or designee:

The date of the first signed contract – June 1 \$1,000 (Probationary and Classified Contracted)

June 2 – July 15 \$2,000 (All Contracted Employees)

After July 16 \$4,000 (All Contracted Employees)

### Support Staff Resignation/Retirement

Employees leaving the school system may be paid for any unused, earned comp time, earned leave, and earned vacation. Comp time will be paid out at the employee's current hourly rate. Earned leave and vacation, will be paid out provided the employee is in good standing with the District. Good standing is defined as the employee giving a minimum of two weeks written notice (support staff), by May 1 (professional staff), not being on a Personal Improvement Plan, having not been terminated, and returning all property owned by the school district and having no fees or outstanding balances. All notices of resignation or retirement must be given by June 30 for the next school year. Leave will be paid out on a per day basis at a maximum of 25% of the substitute rate for their position with a maximum cap of 25% of the current substitute teacher rate. Unused, earned vacation will be paid out at 60% of the employee's daily rate. **Policy [GCPB](#), [GDPB-1](#)**

### Leave Buy-Back

Employees leaving the school system may be paid on a per day basis for any unused, earned paid leave per policies **[GDBDA-RI](#)** or **[GCBDA-R1](#)**.

### Dismissal and Suspension

The Board delegates to the superintendent the authority to suspend any staff member for violation of Board policies, for violation of state law, for any other good cause or to investigate allegations of misconduct in accordance with this policy and law. Action shall be taken when, in the judgment of the superintendent, the best interests of the school will be served by immediate suspension. **Policy [GCPD](#), [GDPD](#)**

### Termination of Benefits at Retirement/Resignation/Termination

For employees leaving the Ozark School District, discontinuation of insurance benefits and elected payroll deductions is as follows:

1. Employees who have elected to enroll in benefits and/or payroll deductions, who then retire, resign or are not re-employed by the District after fulfilling their contractual obligation or agreement, shall have their benefits and elected deductions terminated by the District on June 30 of the year they terminate employment.
2. For employees who do not fulfill their contractual obligation or agreement or are dismissed/resign prior to fulfilling their commitment/end of school year, benefits will discontinue at the end of the month that the resignation or termination become effective.
3. An employee who retires from the District has one year to elect health, dental or vision insurance coverage. All elections, changes, or terminations must be processed at open enrollment or with a qualifying event.

Upon resignation or termination, employees are eligible for continuation of health, dental and vision insurance under the provision of COBRA. Examine the section on COBRA for a more complete explanation of COBRA.

### Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholdings

The District is required to report the termination of employees who are under court order or writ (summons) of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance to the court. Notice of the following must be sent to the court:

termination of employment, employee's last known address, name and address of the employee's new employer, if known.

## **General Notification of COBRA Rights & Responsibilities**

This notice is intended to summarize your rights and obligations under the group health continuation coverage provision of COBRA. Should you qualify for COBRA coverage in the future, the COBRA Administrator will send you the appropriate notification.

Federal law requires Ozark School District to offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage (called "continuation coverage") at group rates in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end.

### **To Qualify for Cobra Coverage**

Employees — As an employee of Ozark School District covered by medical and/or dental insurance, you have the right to elect this continuation coverage if you lose your group health coverage because of a reduction in your hours of employment or the termination of your employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct on your part).

Retirees — As a retiree, spouse of a retiree, or dependent child of a retiree of Ozark School District covered by a group medical/dental plan, you have the right to elect this continuation coverage if you lose your group health coverage because Ozark School District declares Chapter 11 bankruptcy and you lose your group health care coverage within one year before or after the bankruptcy proceedings.

Spouses — As the spouse of an employee covered by a group medical/dental plan, you have the right to choose continuation coverage for yourself if you lose group health coverage for any of the following reasons:

- The death of your spouse who was an employee of Ozark School District
- A termination of your spouse's employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct)
- A reduction in your spouse's hours of employment
- Divorce or legal separation from your spouse
- Your spouse becomes entitled to Medicare

Dependent Children — In the case of a dependent child of an employee covered by Cox Health Plans, he or she has the right to continuation coverage if group health coverage is lost for any of the following reasons:

- The death of a parent who was an employee of Ozark School District
- The termination of a parent's employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct) or reduction in a parent's hours of employment with Ozark School District
- Parents' divorce or legal separation
- A parent who was an employee of Ozark School District becomes entitled to Medicare
- The dependent ceases to be a "dependent child" under Cox Health Plans

Keep Your Plan Informed of Address Changes — In order to protect your and your family's rights, you should keep the Plan Administrator informed of any changes in your address and the addresses of family members. You should also keep a copy, for your records, of any notices you send to the Plan Administrator.

## **Staff Protection**

Insurance coverage for the Ozark School District staff will be as follows:

**Liability Insurance** — All employees are provided liability insurance that covers, subject to the provisions thereof, claims arising from acts performed within the scope of their employment.

**Workers' Compensation Insurance** — All school employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance and are eligible for compensation for an injury incurred in the performance of their job. Any accident resulting in injury, no matter how minor, must be reported to the immediate supervisor and the building nurse, who will report the claim and notify the Human Resources Office. Following treatment, proper forms must be completed and submitted to Human Resources. See section on worker's compensation for further information. **Policy [GBEA](#)**

**Unemployment Compensation Insurance** — All eligible school employees are covered by unemployment compensation, and are subject to the provisions thereof. Based on an analysis of District data, the Board will annually determine if the District shall pay on the basis of reimbursement, or purchase unemployment compensation insurance.

## **Workers' Compensation**

The Ozark School District provides Worker's Compensation statutory coverage for all employees of the District for injuries occurring out of and in the course of the employee's employment with the District.

In order to process a claim, the employee must comply with the following:

1. Any work-related injury must be reported to the supervisor and building nurse within 24 hours or as soon as possible thereafter. If the building nurse and/or supervisor is not available, contact the Human Resource Office.
2. If it is an emergency, report to Cox Urgent care or Emergency Room.

An Employee Accident/Injury Report form must be completed and signed at the time the incident is reported. Any work-related injury must be treated by:

**Cox Health Systems Occupational Medicine, Urgent Care or Emergency Room**

Referrals can be made by any School Nurse or Human Resources employee. In case of a true emergency, the referral requirement is waived. The employee is referred to Cox Health Occupational Medicine doctor via a telemedicine conference. The teleconference will take place on the Ozark School District premises or referred to Cox Health Occupational Medicine, 1423 N Jefferson Ave, K500, Springfield, MO. If an injury occurs after hours, and it is a true emergency, the employee can be treated at Cox Urgent Care (1000 E Primrose, Springfield, MO or the Cox Hospital Emergency Room (South: 3801 S National, Springfield, MO or North: 1423 N Jefferson, Springfield, MO). Limit all visits to the Urgent Care and Emergency Room to injuries that cannot possibly wait until regular business hours.

Failure to follow these requirements may invalidate any present or future compensation claims that arise as a result of an injury. Eligibility for medical expense and/or disability income reimbursement has relatively strict guidelines and it is important not to jeopardize the claim.

Policy coverage provisions include a stipulated death benefit, blanket medical expense coverage, and weekly disability income reimbursement should the employee, upon doctor's orders, be determined unable to work. There are also statutory provisions for lump sum payment for injuries that result in permanent or partial disabilities that

might occur.

The District will provide Modified Duty when possible if prescribed by the physician. Modified Duty allows the employee to receive full wages while recovering rather than reduced Workers' Compensation disability reimbursements.

Workmen's Compensation forms are located in each building nurse's office.

## **Safety**

The Board recognizes the necessity for a planned safety program to create a safe environment for the students, professional and support staff employed by the District. The maintenance of healthy and safe conditions throughout the District is a responsibility shared by the Board, superintendent, professional and support staff.

Every attempt will be made to meet safety and health standards established by state and federal laws and regulations. Safe practices are a scheduled part of instruction in the District's facilities. Proper supervision of students and other citizens using the school facilities is required. Hazardous conditions indicated by inspectors should be reported to the Board. Each building administrator develops and implements a safety program, reports hazardous conditions to the superintendent and holds employees and students responsible for all safety rules and procedures.

The District fully utilizes federal, state and local violence prevention programs and resources available to students, teachers or staff that the District determines are necessary and cost effective for the School District. The superintendent has designated a school safety coordinator who has a thorough knowledge of such programs.

### **Policy [EB GBE](#)**

The safety of employees is of utmost importance. The safety guidelines listed below are established to provide basic guidance and direction.

## General Safe Work Practices

The objective of a safety program is to prevent injuries and to allow staff to do their jobs efficiently and safely. It takes an effort on everyone's part to support a safe working environment.

### Practices to Follow

1. If you are unsure about the safe way to complete a task, ask for training to be conducted.
2. Anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which impairs the employee's ability to safely perform assigned duties, should not be allowed on the job while in that condition. If you are taking medications prescribed by a physician or taking over-the-counter medication, be sure to tell your supervisor before you begin work. Some medications may impair your ability to work or operate equipment safely and a modified duty job will need to be found, if possible.
3. Machine guards and other protective devices must be in their proper place before machinery and equipment is used and employees must report any deficiencies or hazards to the supervisor when they are found.
4. If injured on the job, report the injury immediately. Report any injury, even if medical attention is not necessary. If treatment is required, it will be provided.
5. When lifting, use the power of your legs and not your back and wear proper footwear and attire.
6. Keep your workspace clean and free of hazards.
7. Wear personal protective equipment as necessary and follow the instructions provided on the chemical label when handling chemicals or hazardous substances. Wash your hands and skin after handling chemicals and hazardous materials.
8. Any damage to scaffolds, false work, or supporting structures shall be immediately reported to your supervisor and repaired before use.
9. All tools should be in appropriate working condition and any imperfections reported to your supervisor. Tools should also be used only for their safe and intended purposes.
10. Watch out for moving vehicles and equipment. It is your responsibility to look out for this equipment in addition to the operator.

# Back Wellness

Back injuries are a leading cause of work related injuries. It is very important that we take the proper steps to reduce the possibility of a back injury.

- Whenever possible, get a device such as a 2 wheel dolly or 4 wheel cart to help you move heavy objects.
- A great method to reduce back injuries is by stretching. It is important to stretch your muscles before lifting or doing a lot of material movement.

## Proper Lifting Techniques

- Bend your knees
- Don't jerk the load
- Don't lift and twist
- Keep the load close
- Make sure that the path you will be walking is clear

## Maintaining a Healthy Back

- Use good posture
- Eat healthy
- Control your weight
- Get quality rest

# Preventing Injuries from Slips, Trips and Falls

According to the National Safety Council slips, trips and falls are the second leading cause of accidental death in the United States, behind only vehicle accidents. More than 12,000 people die each year from these accidents and nationwide slips, trips and falls account for approximately 15%-20% of all work related injuries. Because slips, trips and falls are so common, they are often thought to be inevitable. Sometimes they are dismissed as unpredictable accidents, which happen to clumsy people. Little thought is given to prevention. Our attitude about slips, trips, and falls needs to change. Use the tips below to reduce the risk of a slip, trip, or fall.

## **Walking Surface and Environment**

Many slips or trips are caused by a change in the surface we are walking upon. It is important for us to make sure that all walking surfaces are maintained as safe and slip/trip resistant as possible. This can be accomplished through good housekeeping, cleaning up spills, sweeping and mopping the floor, and reducing clutter. Sounds pretty basic, but it is most important.

## **Footwear**

The footwear we wear makes a big difference in reducing our chances of slipping, tripping, and falling. If we know we are going to be walking or working in slippery conditions, then we must consider the most appropriate footwear. We must also take care of our shoes by cleaning and drying them as necessary. Again, things our parents have told us before, but they work.

## **Engineering Controls**

By making physical changes to known problem areas, we can drastically reduce the chance of a slip, trip, or fall. Consider the following:

- If lighting is a concern, then add additional lighting or replace the burnt out bulb.
- If a particular area is known to be hazardous, put up a warning sign or stripes the floor.
- If a particular surface is slippery, add a non-slip surface.
- If a handrail is needed, add one.

## **Human Factor**

Probably the most important element of accident prevention is the human factor. We many times know of hazards and do nothing to correct them or alter our actions. It is our responsibility to recognize a hazard and adjust our actions. If we are walking on a wet, icy, or slippery surface, then we must adjust our walking style or change our path. If we know of a hazardous area, we must correct the situation or warn others. If fall prevention equipment is available, we must use it. Most of us know the correct things to do; we must just do them.

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## Classroom Hazards

### Electrical Safety

- Make sure all electrical cords are in good condition.
- Make sure cords have ground plugs.
- Use ground fault around water.

### Poor Housekeeping

- Store items in the proper place.
- Purge unused items.
- Keep floor space free of debris.

### Slips & Falls

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Keep floor space free of debris.
- Use proper ladder, don't use a chair.

### Back Wellness

- Use proper lifting techniques
- Ask for help if needed

## Kitchen Hazards

### Electrical Safety

- Make sure all electrical cords are in good condition.
- Make sure cords have ground plugs.
- Use ground fault around water.

### Hot Grease & Steam Release

- Use personal protective equipment.
- Don't throw food into hot oil.
- Open lids away from you.

### Slips & Falls

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Wear slip resistant footwear.
- Use proper ladder.

### Back Wellness

- Use proper lifting techniques
- Ask for help if needed

## Maintenance Hazards

### Electrical Safety

- Make sure all electrical cords are in good condition.
- Make sure cords have ground plugs.
- Use ground fault around water.
- Follow Lockout/Tagout procedures

### Safe Chemical Use

- Use personal protective equipment.
- Always read labels & MSDS
- Always store properly

### Slips & Falls

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Wear slip resistant footwear.
- Use proper ladder.
- Utilize fall prevention equipment.

### Back Wellness

- Use proper lifting techniques.
- Ask for help if needed.

## Custodial Hazards

### Electrical Safety

- Make sure all electrical cords are in good condition.
- Make sure cords have ground plugs.
- Use ground fault around water.

### Safe Chemical Use

- Use personal protective equipment.
- Always read labels & MSDS
- Always store chemicals properly.

### Slips & Falls

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Wear slip resistant footwear.
- Use proper ladder.

### Back Wellness

- Use proper lifting techniques
- Ask for help if needed

## **Attendance, Leaves & Absences**

### **Attendance**

It is the goal of the Board of Education to promote excellent attendance. Absences have a serious impact on the educational mission of the District. Absences also cause inconvenience to coworkers and incur additional costs. It is the employee's responsibility to maintain an acceptable attendance record.

The Board has provided for temporary absences, long-term leaves of absences and military absences for employees in order to attract and retain faculty and staff who will continue to grow professionally and maintain their health.

**Policy [GCBDA](#) [GDBDA](#)**

### **Leave – Professional Staff**

Professional staff employees with 12 months of full-time employment receive 12 days of Paid time off (PTO). Full-time professional staff employees during the regular school term receive ten days of PTO. Unused PTO will be cumulative to 90 leave days. An absence between one to four hours shall be counted as a half-day of PTO. PTO cannot be taken on the first or last instructional day of each semester or in conjunction with winter or spring break, to extend a holiday or vacation, or during the first or last week of school. Exceptions due to extenuating circumstances which includes; illness, injury, or incapacity of the employee, immediate family member, or significant other may be granted by the supervisory and the superintendent or designee. All employees will provide at least 48 hours advance notice of expected or known PTO absences. Emergency situations, including unforeseen overnight illnesses, will be reported as soon as possible. **Policy [GCBDA](#)**

### **Leave – Support Staff**

Any full-time 12-month support staff is entitled to 12 days of Paid Time Off (PTO). Full-time support staff employed during the regular school term are entitled to 10 days of PTO. Unused PTO leave will accumulate up to 90 PTO days. Non-Exempt or timeclock employees can take PTO in one-hour increments.

**Policy [GDBDA](#) [GBA](#)**

### **Vacation Days**

12-month employees receive ten days of paid vacation plus 10 days that are pre-determined to cover Christmas Break and Spring Break. 11-month employees receive five days of paid vacation. Personnel employed in the middle of a fiscal year will receive vacation days on a pro-rated basis for the first fiscal year.

Five days of unused vacation may be rolled over to the next fiscal year if not used by January 1 for 12-month employees. Unused vacation days will roll into leave if not used by January 1 for 11-month employees. The total number of vacation days must not exceed 15 days for staff employed on a 12-month basis unless otherwise stated in an employment contract. All other unused vacation days will roll over into PTO days. **Policy [GDBDA](#)**

**[GCBDA](#)**

### **Professional Staff – Long-Term Leaves of Absence**

The Board of Education recognizes that the personal welfare and the professional growth of its employees may require occasional extended absences; therefore, the Board may grant the following long-term leaves of absence under specified conditions: Sabbatical Leave of Absence, Military Leave of Absence, and a One-Year General Leave of Absence. Please see District policy for further explanation. **Policy [GCBDB](#)**

### **Bereavement Leave**

The board recognizes the need for leave due to the death of an employee's immediate family. "Immediate family" is defined as employee's spouse, child, parent, sibling, parent-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, stepparent, stepchild, step-sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin, or any person for whom the employee is legally responsible. A total of three to five days (dependent upon relationship) may be taken per incident a year with no deduction from leave per policy. **Policy [GCBDA](#), [GDBDA](#)**

## Family and Medical Leave

When employees are absent for more than three consecutive days or when they know they will be absent for a length of time, they or their supervisors are required to contact the Benefits department Morgan Hall at 582- 5971 or [morganhall@ozarktigers.org](mailto:morganhall@ozarktigers.org). After Benefits is notified, the FMLA procedure may be started.

Leave that qualifies for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) protection will be administered in accordance with federal law. To be eligible for FMLA benefits, the employee must have been employed in the District for at least 12 months and have been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the leave, be employed at a worksite where 50 or more employees are employed by the District within 75 miles of that worksite, and provide the District at least a 30-day notice of any expected absence, if practical. For a more detailed description, refer to the following policies: **Policy [GBBDA](#)**

### FMLA Contact

Morgan Hall – Benefits Specialist

582-5971 or [morganhall@ozarktigers.org](mailto:morganhall@ozarktigers.org)

## Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA)

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) requires school districts and other covered employers to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified employees and applicants with known limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an undue hardship. The PWFA applies only to reasonable accommodations. There are other laws stating that employers may not fire or otherwise discriminate against employees or applicants on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The PWFA does not replace federal, state, or local laws that may be more protective of job applicants or employees due to their own pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Questions regarding the PWFA may be addressed to:

Philip Link – Executive Director of HR

417-582-5900 or [philiplink@ozarktigers.org](mailto:philiplink@ozarktigers.org)

## Staff Absences and Tardiness

Consistent contact with students and coworkers is necessary for an optimal learning environment and an effective working environment. Therefore, attendance is an essential duty of any employee. While some absences are unavoidable, when an employee is routinely tardy, frequently absent or is absent for an extended period of time, the learning environment and District operations are negatively impacted. Employees may be disciplined and/or terminated for excessive absences or tardiness, which includes situations where employees come to work late, leave early or abandon their duties without permission. Unless authorized by the Board or the superintendent or otherwise authorized by law, an employee's absence or tardiness will be considered excessive or unreasonable in any of the following circumstances:

1. The absence is for a reason not granted as paid or protected leave under Board policy or law.
2. The absence results in the employee exceeding the amount of leave granted by the Board.
3. The employee has not otherwise exhausted applicable leave days, but the absence exceeds 15 days per school year or is otherwise disruptive to District operations, as determined by the District.
4. The employee fails to appropriately notify the District of an absence as soon as possible after the employee knows he or she will be absent (commonly called No-Call, No-Show).
5. The employee does not provide the District complete and accurate information about the absence, does not respond to requests for information, or does not provide documentation related to the absence as requested or required.
6. The employee does not first obtain permission to be absent from the appropriate supervisor when required to do so.
7. The absence is for any reason other than the one provided to the supervisor.

Even if the absence or tardiness is authorized by the Board or the superintendent, if the absence or tardiness occurs for a reason not granted as paid leave under Board policy or if it exceeds the number of days the employee has been granted under a designated leave, the employee's salary will be docked. Violation of this policy constitutes misconduct and may result in the loss of unemployment benefits if a claim is filed. Employees will not be disciplined or terminated for absences qualifying for protection under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Uniformed Services Employment and employment Rights Act (USERRA) or other applicable law.

A notice will be placed in the employee's personnel file for any unpaid absences unless the absence is covered under FMLA.

#### Failure to Contact the District

If an employee without an employment contract is absent from work, does not contact his or her supervisor, and does not respond to attempts by the District to contact the employee and the employee's emergency contact, the District will assume the employee has resigned his or her employment with the District and will consider the position vacant.

If an employee with an employment contract is absent from work, does not contact his or her supervisor, and does not respond to attempts by the District to contact the employee and the employee's emergency contact, the District will send a letter and any other appropriate communication to the employee stating that if the employee does not contact the District, the District will assume that the employee has voluntarily resigned from his or her position with the District. If the employee still does not contact the District, the District will assume that the employee has resigned and will consider the position vacant.

The District may share with potential employers seeking information about a former employee the fact that the employee failed to contact the District or officially resign. **Policy [GBCBC](#)**

### **Staff Complaints & Grievances**

It is the intent of the Board of Education to address staff complaints and grievances at the earliest possible time and at the lowest level of supervision. Therefore, the Board directs the superintendent or his/her designee to create a procedure detailing how employees may bring complaints and receive responses to their complaints. If a complaint has been made to the employee's immediate supervisor, building-level supervisor, and the superintendent or his/her designee and the employee has received responses from these persons, the employee may appeal to the Board of Education. The employee must submit a written request for an appeal within five workdays after receiving a decision from the superintendent. The decision of the Board will be final. Complaint processing should be viewed as a positive and constructive effort to establish the facts upon which the complaint is based and come to a fair conclusion. Employees will not be discriminated against nor will reprisal be taken against an employee because of a filed complaint.

#### I. Definition

*Complaint and/or Grievance* – An employee's assertion that he or she is adversely affected by a violation, misinterpretation or misapplication of a published District policy, procedure or regulation, or of an employee handbook, employee contract or existing law. Complaints relating to discrimination or harassment will be resolved in accordance with **Policy [AC](#)**.

#### II. Exclusions

This regulation shall not apply to complaints for which state law establishes a procedure for obtaining a Board hearing. In addition, complaints about non-renewal of a probationary teacher's contract, or about any other official Board action, shall be directed to the Board; and a hearing on the same, unless required by state law, shall be discretionary with the Board. Complaints concerning evaluations, except those which lead to a loss of pay, will be excluded. **Policy [GBM](#)**

## **Prohibition against Illegal Discrimination & Harassment-Notice of Nondiscrimination**

Applicants for admission or employment, students, parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral and applicants for employment, and all professional organizations that have entered into agreements with the Ozark School District (“District”) are hereby notified that the District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. In addition, the District provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups.

Any person having inquiries concerning the District’s compliance with the laws and regulations implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), the Age Discrimination Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) or the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, is directed to the respective Compliance Coordinator listed below, who oversees the School District’s efforts to comply with the laws and regulations implementing the laws and regulations cited above.

The District has established grievance procedures for persons unable to resolve problems arising under the statutes above. The District’s Compliance Coordinator will provide information regarding those procedures upon request. Any person who is unable to resolve a problem or grievance arising under any of the laws and regulations cited above may contact the Office for Civil Rights, Region VII, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, MO 64114; telephone (816) 268-0550.

### **Compliance Coordinator:**

Philip Link, Executive Director of Human Resources,  
1600 W Jackson, Ozark, MO 65721 Phone: (417) 582-5900 Fax: (417) 582-5950

**Policy [AC](#)**

## **Commitment to Compliance under the Americans with Disabilities Act**

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), the Ozark School District (“District”) does not discriminate on the basis of disability against qualified individuals with a disability with respect to the District’s services, programs, or activities.

**Employment:** The District does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices. The District complies with the federal regulations under Title I of the ADA (which governs the application of the ADA in the hiring and employment setting).

**Effective Communication:** The District will comply with the ADA with respect to providing auxiliary aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in District programs, services, and activities. These aids and services are designed to make information and communications accessible to people who have impairments, in areas such as speech, hearing, and vision. The District will not place a surcharge on a qualified individual with a disability, or any group of qualified individuals with disabilities, to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of policy (for example, retrieving items from locations that are open to the public but inaccessible to users of wheelchairs).

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a service, program, or activity of the District should contact the respective Compliance Coordinator, whose contact information is listed below. Such contact should be made as soon as possible, but not later than 48 hours before the scheduled event (and, preferably, at least five (5) business days before the event).

**Modifications to Policies and Procedures:** The District will make reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy its services, programs and activities.

The ADA does not require the District to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services or impose an undue financial or administrative burden.

Complaints that a District service, program, or activity is not accessible to persons with a disability may be directed to the Compliance Coordinator below. In addition, as stated in the District’s Notice of Nondiscrimination, a person who is unable to resolve a problem or grievance arising under Title II of the ADA may contact the Office for Civil Rights, Region VII, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, Missouri 64114; telephone (816) 268-0550.

### **Compliance Coordinator**

Philip Link, Executive Director of Human Resources  
1600 W Jackson, Ozark, MO 65721 Phone: (417) 582-5900 Fax: (417) 582-5950

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

All responsible public agencies are required to locate, evaluate, and identify children with disabilities who are under the jurisdiction of the agency, regardless of the severity of the disability, including children attending private schools, children who live outside the District but are attending a private school within the District, highly-mobile children, such as migrant and homeless children, children who are wards of the state and children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education even though they are advancing from grade to grade. The Ozark School District assures that it will provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21 under its jurisdiction. Disabilities include autism, deaf/blindness, emotional disorders, hearing impairment and deafness, mental retardation/intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment/blindness and young child with a developmental delay.

The Ozark School District assures that it will provide information and referral services necessary to assist the State in the implementation of early intervention services for infants and toddlers eligible for the Missouri First Steps program.

The Ozark School District assures that personally-identifiable information collected, used, or maintained by the agency for the purposes of identification, evaluation, placement or provision of FAPE of children with disabilities may be inspected and/or reviewed by their parents/guardians. Parents/guardians may request amendment to the educational record if the parent/guardian believes the record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of their child. Parents have the right to file complaints with the U.S. Department of Education or the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning alleged failures by the District to meet the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The Ozark School District has developed a Local Compliance Plan for the implementation of State Regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This plan contains the agency's policies and procedures regarding storage, disclosure to third parties, retention and destruction of personally identifiable information and the agency's assurances that services are provided in compliance with the General Education Provision Act (GEPA). This plan may be reviewed at the District Office located at 302 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between the hours of 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Any inquiries concerning the District's compliance may be directed to:

Laura Eakins, Executive Director of Special Services  
1600 W Jackson, Ozark, MO 65721  
(417) 582-5900

Or contact the Office of Civil Rights, Region VII, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, MO 64114.

This notice will be provided in native languages as appropriate.

## **Bullying**

**Bullying** – In accordance with state law, bullying is defined as intimidation, unwanted aggressive behavior, or harassment that is repetitive or is substantially likely to be repeated and causes a reasonable student to fear for his or her physical safety or property; that substantially interferes with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of any student without exception; or that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to: Physical actions, including violence, gestures, theft, or property damage; oral, written, or electronic communication, including name-calling, put-downs, extortion, or threats; or threats of reprisal or retaliation for reporting such acts.

**Cyberbullying** – A form of bullying committed by transmission of a communication including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound or image by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer or pager. The District has jurisdiction over cyberbullying that uses the District's technology resources or that originates on District property, at a District activity or on District transportation. Even when cyberbullying does not involve District property, activities or technology resources, the District may impose consequences and discipline for those who engage in cyberbullying if there is a sufficient nexus to the educational environment, the behavior materially and substantially disrupts the educational environment, the communication involves a threat as defined by law, or the District is otherwise allowed by law to address the behavior.

School employees, substitutes or volunteers are expected to intervene to prevent student bullying, appropriately discipline the perpetrator, assist the victim and report the incident to the building principal or his/her designee for further investigation and action. Any school employee, substitute or volunteer who witnesses or has firsthand knowledge of bullying of a student must report the incident. Students who have been subjected to bullying, or who have witnessed or have knowledge of bullying, are encouraged to promptly report such incident to a school employee. Any school employee receiving such a report shall promptly transmit the report to the building principal or his/her designee. If the bullying incident involves students from more than one District building, the report should be made to the principal or designee of the building in which the incident took place or, if more appropriate, to the principal or designee of the building attended by the majority of the participants in the incident.

### **Policy [JFCF](#)**

#### **Anti-bullying Coordinator:**

Anna Thurman, Executive Director of Student Services  
1600 W Jackson, Ozark, MO 65721  
Phone: (417) 582-5900; Fax: (417) 582-5960

## **Seclusion, Isolation and Restraint**

### **Purpose: Policy [JGGA](#)**

The District will treat all students with dignity and provide a safe learning environment for students and a safe working environment for district personnel. Seclusion and restraint interventions will be used only when necessary and in accordance with this policy, and they will never be used as a form of punishment or for convenience of district personnel. The restrictions in this policy apply to the district and any other provider of educational or related services to the student on behalf of the district.

Isolation shall never be used as a form of punishment or for the convenience of district personnel.

A student in isolation must be monitored by district personnel who are in close proximity and able to see and hear the student at all times. Monitoring shall be face to face unless personal safety is significantly compromised, in which case technology-supported monitoring may be utilized. The total time in isolation is to be reasonably calculated based on the age of the student and the circumstances and is not to exceed 40 minutes without a reassessment of the situation and consultation with parents/guardians or administrative staff unless otherwise specified in an IEP, Section 504 plan or other parentally agreed-upon plan to address a student's behavior. The space in which the student is isolated should be a normal-sized meeting room or classroom commonly found in a school setting with standard lighting, ventilation, heating, cooling and ceiling height and that is free of objects that could cause harm to the student.

### **Physical Restraint**

Physical restraint shall be used only:

1. In an emergency situation, or
2. When less restrictive measures have not effectively de-escalated the situation and the school has a plan for how to respond in such situations, or
3. With parental approval as specified in a student's IEP, Section 504 plan or other agreed-upon plan to address a student's behavior.

Physical restraint will:

1. Be used only for as long as necessary to resolve the actual risk of danger or harm that warranted the use of physical restraint.
2. Be no greater than the degree of force necessary to protect the student or other persons from imminent bodily injury or to protect property.
3. Not place pressure or weight on the chest, lungs, sternum, diaphragm, back, neck or throat that restricts breathing.
4. **Be done only by district personnel trained in the proper use of physical restraint.**

District personnel who use physical restraint shall only use restraint methods in which they have received district-approved training. Further, district personnel who use physical restraint may only do so in the presence of at least one additional adult who is in the line of sight unless no other adult is immediately available due to an unforeseeable emergency situation.

Physical restraints should never be used as a form of punishment or for the convenience of district personnel.

### **Mechanical Restraint**

Mechanical restraint shall be used only as specified in a student's IEP or Section 504 plan with two exceptions:

1. Vehicle safety restraints shall be used according to state and federal regulations.

2. Mechanical restraints employed by law enforcement officers in school settings should be used in accordance with appropriate law enforcement professional standards and applicable law enforcement policies.

### **Discipline of Support Staff**

When a recommendation has been made at any level to suspend or terminate a support staff member, Board **Policy [GDPD](#)** (Nonrenewal, Suspension and Termination of Support Staff Members) will govern instead of the formal grievance procedures.

### **Discipline of Tenured Teachers, Certificated Employees who are not Eligible for Tenure & Probationary Teachers for Conduct Other Than Incompetence**

When a recommendation has been made at any level to suspend or terminate a tenured teacher, certificated employee who is not eligible for tenure, or a probationary teacher for conduct other than incompetence, Board **Policy [GCPD](#)** (Nonrenewal, Suspension and Termination of Professional Staff Members) will govern instead of the formal grievance procedures.

### **Student Discipline**

The Student Code of Conduct is designed to foster student responsibility, respect for others, and to provide for the orderly operation of district schools. No code can be expected to list each and every offense that may result in disciplinary action; however, it is the purpose of this code to list certain offenses which, if committed by a student, will result in the imposition of a certain disciplinary action. Any conduct not included herein, any aggravated circumstance of any offense, or any action involving a combination of offenses may result in disciplinary consequences that extend beyond this code of conduct as determined by the principal, superintendent and/or Board of Education. In extraordinary circumstances where the minimum consequence is judged by the superintendent or designee to be manifestly unfair or not in the interest of the district, the superintendent or designee may reduce the consequences listed in this policy, as allowed by law. This code includes, but is not necessarily limited to, acts of students on district property, including playgrounds, parking lots and district transportation, or at a district activity, whether on or off district property. The district may also discipline students for off-campus conduct that negatively impacts the educational environment, to the extent allowed by law. See **Policy [JG-R1](#)** for list of codes.

It is the goal of the Ozark School District to provide a safe and productive learning environment for all students. The district does not believe in a double standard for misbehavior and holds the welfare and safety of all persons in the district in highest regard. Students with disabilities will be disciplined in accordance with the district's discipline code applicable to all students, subject to the modifications mandated by law. All students, including those with disabilities, will be referred for law enforcement action when required by law and when their conduct constitutes a crime. **Policy [JGE](#)**

### **Staff Conduct/Ethics**

The Board of Education expects that each professional and support staff member shall put forth every effort to promote a quality instructional program in the District. In building a quality program, employees must meet certain expectations which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Become familiar with, enforce and follow all Board policies, regulations, administrative procedures, other directions given by District administrators, and state and federal laws as they affect the performance of job

duties.

2. Maintain courteous and professional relationships with pupils, parents/guardians, other employees of the District and all patrons of the District.
3. Keep current on developments affecting the employee's area of expertise or position.
4. Transact all official business with the appropriate designated authority in the District in a timely manner.
5. Transmit constructive criticism of other staff members or of any department of the District to the particular school administrator who has the administrative responsibility for improving the situation.
6. Care for, properly use and protect school property.
7. Attend all required staff meetings called by District administration, unless excused.
8. Keep all student records, medical information and other sensitive information confidential as directed by law, Board policy, District procedures and the employee's supervisor.
9. Immediately report all dangerous building conditions or situations to the building supervisor and take action to rectify the situation and protect the safety of students and others.
10. Properly supervise all students. The Board expects all students to be under assigned adult supervision at all times during school and during any school activity. Except in an emergency, no employee will leave an assigned group unsupervised.
11. Obey all safety rules, including rules protecting the safety and welfare of students.
12. Submit all required reports or paperwork at the time requested. Employees will not falsify records maintained by the District.
13. Refrain from using profanity.
14. Dress professionally and in a manner that will not interfere with the educational environment.
15. Come to work and leave work at the time specified by the employee handbook or by the employee's supervisor. Employees who are late to work or stop working before the scheduled time may be subject to discipline, including termination.
16. School employees, other than commissioned law enforcement officers, shall not strip search students, as defined in state law, except in situations where an employee reasonably believes that the student possesses a weapon, explosive or substance that poses an imminent threat of physical harm to the student or others and a commissioned law enforcement officer is not immediately available.
17. School employees shall not direct a student to remove an emblem, insignia or garment, including a religious emblem, insignia or garment, as long as such emblem, insignia or garment is worn in a manner that does not promote disruptive behavior
18. State law prohibits teachers from participating in the management of a campaign for the election or defeat of a member of the Board of Education that employs such teacher.
19. Employees will not use District funds or resources to advocate, support, or oppose any ballot measure or candidate for public office.
20. Employees will not use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes, unless allowed by law.

Policy [GBCB GBCA](#)

## **Tobacco and Vaping Use**

The Ozark School District is smoke-free in/on all District property. All persons are expected to refrain from the use of tobacco in any form while in and/or on school property. This includes all school and non-school events held on school property. Policy [AH](#)

## **Communicable Diseases**

The School Board recognizes its responsibility to protect the health of students and employees from the risks posed by infectious diseases. The Board also has the responsibility to uphold the rights of affected individuals to privacy and confidentiality, to continue their employment, and to be treated in a nondiscriminatory manner. The District requires all staff to routinely observe universal precautions to prevent exposure to disease-causing organisms, and the District should provide necessary equipment/supplies to implement universal precautions. Policy [GBE](#)

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

The Board of Education requires its staff members to comply with the state child abuse and neglect laws and the mandatory reporting of suspected neglect and/or abuse. Any school official or employee acting in his or her official capacity who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who observes the child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, shall directly and immediately make a report to the Children's Division (CD), including any report of excessive absences that may indicate educational neglect. No internal investigation shall be initiated until such a report has been made, and even then the investigation may be limited if the report involves sexual misconduct by a school employee. Employees who make such reports to the CD must notify the school principal or designee that a report has been made. The principal or designee will notify the superintendent or designee and the District liaison(s) about the report.

The reporting requirements are individual, and no supervisor or administrator may impede or inhibit any reporting under this section. No employee making a report in accordance with law shall be subject to any sanction, including any adverse employment action, for making such a report. Further, the superintendent and other District administrators shall ensure that any employee mandated by law to make a report shall have immediate and unrestricted access to the communication technology necessary to make an immediate report. Employees shall also be temporarily relieved of other work duties for such time as is required to make any mandated report. Child Abuse Hotline 800-392-3738. Policy [JHG](#)

## **Confidentiality of Student Records**

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the District to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about students and families. These records must be kept confidential in accordance with law, but must also be readily available to District personnel who need the records to effectively serve District students. **Policy [JO-1](#)**

## **Association & Political Activities**

The District will not directly or indirectly discourage employees from participating in political affairs or require any employee to join any group, club, committee, organization, or association. Employees may join or refuse to join any professional association or organization.

An individual's employment will not be affected by membership or a decision not to be a member of any employee organization that exists for the purpose of dealing with employers concerning any type of grievance.

No employee shall use school system facilities, equipment, or supplies in connection with campaigning, nor will employee use any time during work day for campaigning purposes. **Policy [DCB](#)**

## **Fingerprints/Criminal Background Check**

The District may obtain the criminal background check for each applicant for employment who, in the opinion of the District, is a serious candidate and may be offered a position. The District will obtain criminal background check information that relates to all persons employed by the District. Fingerprinting required by law. The District also participates in the National Rap Back program.

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

All visitors are expected to enter any District facility through the main entrance and sign in or report to the building's main office. Authorized visitors will receive direction or be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the District premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge. Regular visits by family and friends during working hours are not appropriate.

## **Staff Use of Communication Devices**

The Ozark School District encourages District employees to use technology, including communication devices, to improve efficiency and safety. The District expects all employees to use communication devices in a responsible manner that does not interfere with the employee's duties. Employees who violate District policies and procedures governing the use of communication devices may be disciplined, up to and including termination, and may be prohibited from possessing or using communication devices while at work. Communication devices may not be used in any manner that would violate the District's policy on student-staff relations. **Policy [GBCC](#)**

## **Wellness**

The Board recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the District will provide developmentally-appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

Nutrition Guidelines: The nutrition guidelines outlined in this section do not apply to food or beverages brought from home by students for consumption solely by the student or food or beverages created or used by students as part of the district's instructional program.

It is the policy of the Ozark School District that all foods and beverages sold to students during the school day on any property under the jurisdiction of the district will meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school meal and Smart Snacks in School (Smart Snacks) nutrition standards. These nutrition standards apply to all food and beverages sold to students, including those sold in vending machines, school stores and through district-sponsored fundraisers, unless an exemption applies. In addition, established district standards apply to all food and beverages provided, but not sold, to students outside the reimbursable school meals program during the school day. For the purposes of this policy, the school day is the time period from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the official school day. [Wellness Guidelines](#)

## **Computer Use & Data Management**

The Ozark School District's technology exists for the purpose of enhancing the educational opportunities and achievement of District students. Research shows that students who have access to technology improve achievement. In addition, technology assists with the professional enrichment of the staff and increases engagement of students' families and other patrons of the District, all of which positively impact student achievement. The District will periodically conduct a technology census to ensure that instructional resources and equipment that support and extend the curriculum are readily available to teachers and students.

### User Privacy

A user does not have a legal expectation of privacy in the user's electronic communications or other activities involving the District's technology resources including, but not limited to, voice mail, telecommunications, email and access to the Internet or network drives. By using the District's network and technology resources, all users are

consenting to having their electronic communications and all other use monitored by the District. A user ID with email access will only be provided to authorized users on condition that the user consents to interception of or access to all communications accessed, sent, received or stored using District technology.

### Technology Administration

The Board directs the superintendent or designee to assign trained personnel to maintain the District's technology in a manner that will protect the District from liability and will protect confidential student and employee information retained on or accessible through District technology resources. Administrators of District technology resources may suspend access to and/or availability of the District's technology resources to diagnose and investigate network problems or potential violations of the law or District policies and procedures. All District technology resources are considered District property. The District may remove, change or exchange hardware or other technology between buildings, classrooms or users at any time without prior notice. Authorized District personnel may install or remove programs or information, install equipment, upgrade any system or enter any system at any time.

Please see **Policy [EHB](#)** for a complete listing of Ozark School District's technology usage policy.

## **Acceptable Usage Policy Agreement for Staff/Student/Parent/Guardian** **Ozark School District Technology Resources**

### Philosophy

It is the policy of the Ozark School District to maintain an environment that enhances the educational opportunities and achievement of District students. The District recognizes the educational and professional value of instructional technology, both as a means of access to enriching information and as a tool to develop skills that students need. Use of the Ozark School District Wide Area Network (OSDWAN), the internet, or campus technology is a privilege, increasingly essential to learning that offers new freedoms and demands new responsibilities. Use of instructional technology will be for or in support of education, research, and enrichment of class assignments. **Policy [EHB](#)**

Students and staff will follow good digital citizenship by utilizing instructional technology resources in a positive, appropriate, and legal manner that supports the District's mission and vision. The District expects a consistently high level of personal responsibility of all users granted access to the District's technology resources.

- Due to the ever-changing nature of technology, the District reserves the right to amend the Technology Usage Policy at any time to address the changing nature of the digital environment.
- The Ozark School District Technology Department is responsible for maintaining the District's technology resources and establishing requirements and procedures for the issuance of user accounts.
- The use of instructional technology is an integral part of daily instruction. Because students will consistently be exposed to and operate technology, they will be expected to demonstrate good digital citizenship.
- The District will take appropriate disciplinary action against any user who willfully and knowingly violates the *Acceptable Usage Policy*.
- The Ozark School District, in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), will utilize measures to block and filter internet access to visual depictions and other materials deemed to be obscene, child pornography, illegal or harmful to minors.
- No filtering system is completely effective or efficient. Students should report any inappropriate content to their teachers, and teachers need to report inappropriate behavior or sites to their administration and the Ozark School District Technology Department.
- Students are encouraged to be safe, active members of the digital world. When students use electronic communication for instructional purposes or make digital content as part of the educational process, they need to

utilize their school-issued account.

- Students are encouraged to utilize instructional technology. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the Ozark School District's system.
- Parents have the ability at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and browsing history. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's network use at any time.
- All damages incurred by the District due to the misuse of the District's technology resources, including the loss of property and staff time, will be charged to the user. District administrators have the authority to sign any criminal complaint regarding damage to District technology.

### Acceptable Use

Acceptable use of the Ozark School District Wide Area Network includes, but is not limited to, using the internet or campus technology for:

- Accessing only accounts and files for which students or staff have permission.
- Using appropriate language and being considerate of others when using digital tools and communication.
- Striving to be good digital citizens and following all copyright laws, including refraining from the illegal installation of copyrighted software and copying the work of others without permission.
- Use in a legal manner.
- Providing positive, truthful information and reporting any bullying or discriminatory language to the appropriate authorities.
- Being diligent in protecting the personal information of another person, including name, address, phone number, email address, social security number, account numbers, passwords, and other items used for identification.
- Being meticulous in actions to ensure normal network usage and service are not interrupted by avoiding the following: propagation of electronic viruses, distribution of chain letters or broadcast messages to multiple lists or individuals, violation of personal privacy, or unauthorized access to protected and private network resources.
- Using the Ozark District's network in support of education, research, public service, economic development or government purposes.
- Staying on task and refraining from extensive private or personal use.

### Restrictions for Students

- Any faculty or staff member may moderate restrictions on student use including the amount of time spent online.
- There are areas on the internet that contain sites not appropriate for student use. Any student accessing these sites will be subject to student discipline in accordance to Ozark School Board Policy [JG](#) and [JG-R](#).
- Students are not to reveal their personal home addresses or phone numbers.
- Students must notify parent(s)/guardian(s) and instructor immediately if any individual is trying to make personal contact for illicit or suspicious activities.
- Giving out personal information about another person is strictly prohibited.
- Students who accidentally access unacceptable material shall immediately notify the appropriate school personnel. This disclosure may serve as a defense against allegations that the user has intentionally violated this policy.

### Access

All staff and students (third grade and up) will be provided a username and password to gain access to computer applications, email, and the internet. The system will prompt each user to change his/her Microsoft password occasionally to provide security to each account. Staff and student Google accounts will not prompt for a password change, and students should not change their password unless directed to do so by an administrator. It is important that users keep usernames and passwords confidential.

### Equipment Use

Members of the technology staff will maintain all District equipment, and users are expected to exercise care in the use of this equipment. Misuse of equipment will result in a staff member's or student's denial of access to equipment.

## Security

In addition to regularly changing passwords and keeping usernames and passwords confidential, additional security measures should be taken. Once logged in, a user should not leave the computer unattended without locking the computer. PCs can be locked by pressing Ctrl-Alt-Delete and then clicking “Lock this computer.” Once locked, only the person currently logged in can unlock the computer by pressing Ctrl-Alt-Delete and then entering his/her password. After entering the password, the user will return to the application he/she had been using before locking the computer. For the security of data, teacher and staff computers are automatically locked after 15 consecutive minutes of non-use; the staff member will be required to enter his/her password to reactivate the computer.

## Software Licensing

It is illegal to install software without licenses; therefore, all software installed on District computers must have appropriate licenses. To standardize software across the District, all software purchases must go through the Ozark School District Technology Department. When purchasing new software, a record of all software licenses will be kept in the Ozark School District Technology Department and should also be kept at the building level.

## **General Procedures**

### Inclement Weather Closing

In case Ozark School District needs to cancel school, use late start procedures, or early release procedures due to inclement weather, we want you to be informed of the process. Student and faculty safety is the primary concern in making the call for cancelation versus late start or early release. Procedures for inclement weather closing can be found on the district's [Inclement Weather Procedures webpage](#).

### Emergencies

All employees should be familiar with the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Fire, tornado, and other emergency drills are conducted to familiarize employees and students with evacuation procedures. Fire extinguishers and AEDs are located throughout all District buildings. Employees should know the location of the extinguishers nearest their place of work and how to use them.

### Personnel Records

It is the intent of the Board of Education to maintain complete and current personnel files, including all information necessary to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act, for all District employees.

The file of an individual employee is considered confidential information and a closed record, to the extent allowed by the law, and is only available to authorized administrative personnel and to the employee. Individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings or records pertaining to employees or applicants for employment are closed records under the Missouri Sunshine Law to the extent allowed by law. Pursuant to state law, the names, positions, salaries and lengths of service of all employees are public information and must be released upon request. In accordance with federal law, the District shall release to parents, upon request, information regarding the professional qualifications and degrees of teachers and the qualifications of paraprofessionals who are employed by a school receiving Title I funds and who provide instruction to their child at that school.

Files containing immigration records and files containing medical information regarding an employee are kept separate from other personnel files.

Upon request to and in the presence of the appropriate administrative official, any employee may inspect his or her own personnel file during regular working hours, with the exception of the ratings, reports and records obtained prior to the employment of the individual, including confidential placement papers. **Policy [GBL](#)**

### Change of Personal Information

It is important that personal information such as address and phone number are kept current. Information may be updated via the [HR PORTAL](#). Name changes, however, must go through the Human Resources Department. Instructions are listed on the [website](#). The name on the Social Security Card must match the name in the District's records.

### Staff Lunch Charges

Lunch balances can be checked through the [MySchoolBucks webpage](#). All staff balances must be paid by check or cash in the cafeteria or via [MySchoolBucks](#). Charges will be limited to a \$10 negative balance. Contact Cheryl Johnson at (417) 582-5925 with questions.

### Employee Use of Facilities

Employees may use school equipment after school hours at their own risk. Employees may bring family members to use equipment after school hours at their own risk. However, the employee must be present and supervising them the entire time the family members use the equipment. At no time should any non-employee be given access to the school building without an employee present. This includes family members of all ages. **DO NOT GIVE KEYS TO CHILDREN OR ANYONE ELSE AND SEND THEM TO SCHOOL TO WORK OUT OR GIVE LESSONS.** Non-employees should be asked why they are in the building and who is supervising them, no matter the age. If they do not have an employee supervising them, they should leave the building. Exceptions to the rule above would be a group who follows school policy to rent a facility. The District has an agreement with the city police to enter and use the facilities overnight.

### Business Office Procedures

#### Purchasing Procedures

The Board recognizes the importance of a sound fiscal management program and expects the District to maintain an efficient and consistent procedure for purchasing materials and services for the School District. No contract will be made and no bill will be paid without the proper documentation and without an affirmative vote from a majority of the whole Board.

All purchases, charges, or commitments to purchase goods or services **must be made with a District purchase order for proper authorization**. Please see the following guidelines for procedures to be followed in making purchases and initiating purchase orders for approval. If you have any questions, please contact Accounts Payable. **Policy [DJF-1](#)**

It is necessary to enter a purchase order for everything purchased, including P-Card purchases – prior to making the actual purchase. The vendor must be set up in our system and have a W-9 on file with the Business Office.

**Meals:** You must list the purpose or reason for the purchase, the date and all individuals involved. The only exception to listing all names would be in the case of the entire staff (staff meeting) or the entire athletic team, etc.

Please be sure to fill in all pertinent information. We must have **receipts/invoicing** and packing slips for all purchases. If tickets are lost, you must contact company to get a copy of the receipt or invoice.

For any unauthorized purchases or p-card charges, the District may withhold from the employee's pay check an amount equal to the charge.

#### Vendor Payments and Reimbursements

Payments and reimbursements will only be paid once a month. All paperwork (purchase orders, invoices and

reimbursement requests) have to be in the business office by the Thursday of the week prior to the Board meeting in order for the vendor or reimbursement to be paid. **Note: Gift cards and gift certificates may only be purchased with activity account funds.**

Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within 3 months of date of occurrence.

#### Travel Expense Reimbursement

The District shall reimburse employees and officials for travel and related expense incurred in connection with District business. The employee will not suffer, nor gain financially as a result of such travel or expense. Meetings and out-of-town conventions and meetings for the purpose of conducting school business shall be approved in advance by the appropriate department or school administrator.

The Travel and Expense Reimbursement Form is available on the District [website](#) and should be completed, signed and returned immediately upon return. The form must be completed fully explaining the purpose of the travel including the destination and travel dates. Reimbursement will only be approved and paid for requests submitted within three months of travel dates. Mileage should be calculated from the District site in which the employee works to their destination. Mileage should not be calculated from the employee's home or any other destination with the exception of homebound instruction services being provided on the weekends or holidays. Mileage should not be turned in when using a District vehicle.

Employees must possess a valid driver's license in order to drive a District vehicle or utilize a personal vehicle for school business travel. Employees using their personal vehicle for business will be required to maintain liability insurance consistent with state law. Employees transporting students must seek approval from the District Transportation Department. Mileage will be paid in accordance with the mileage chart found on the [Travel Reimbursement form](#). If travel destination is not listed, mileage will be based on the most direct and safest route using a recognized mapping service.

#### Meal Reimbursement

Reimbursement is allowed for meal expenses at workshops, conferences and/or meetings, not to exceed \$35 per day for three meals (excluding any alcoholic beverages), including tips. Tips should not exceed 20% of the meal. ***Detailed receipts are required for all meal or other expense reimbursements.*** Full reimbursement in excess of maximum per meal is allowed under special circumstances with advance permission from District office due to location of the event.

Meals are reimbursable only when they are a part of a meeting or activity where District business is discussed and individuals from outside the District are present. If the meal is a part of a group meal or organized banquet where each participant pays individually, the meal is reimbursable under the above guidelines as long as employee submits a detailed receipt, time and place, and the business purpose for each meal as well as the business relationship for outsiders present.

#### Cash in School Buildings

All moneys collected within the District's schools shall be handled in a proper fiscal manner and prudently safeguarded.

Money collected for any purpose will be submitted to the school principal or designee who will provide for its proper deposit. Money should **never** be left in a desk or classroom or a common access area of an office. When a teacher or other school employee collects money from pupils for any purpose, that employee shall be responsible for that money until the employee turns it over to a person responsible for receiving and depositing money. There should not be any "petty cash" in the buildings. Startup funds are issued to the athletic/activity department for sporting events and school sponsored events.

## Deposit Procedures

### Money Collected for District Purposes

- A receipt should be written for all cash received.
- Receipt books will be given to teachers or coaches who the principal has designated in charge of collecting and counting money.
- When collecting cash, a receipt must be filled out. The original receipt is for the business office, the middle receipt is for the person giving the cash, and the last receipt remains in the receipt book for record keeping.
- Receipts are not required when receiving a check.
- Two people need to count the money before it is turned into the office.
- The two people who have counted the money need to sign the amount they recorded on a cash form provided by the office.
- Money needs to come to the office with all original receipts for one final count. The third signature come from the person filling out and/or making the deposit.
- When taking a deposit to the bank, the original receipts should be sent to the Business Office via school mail in an envelope, clearly marked what the receipts are for. The deposit slip needs to be clearly marked so that the two can be matched and reconciled.
- When sending the money and deposit slip to District Office to be deposited, the original receipts must be put in the money bag with the money and bank deposit slip.
- Deposits are to remain intact; funds are not to be held back other than for the “startup” cash.
- All funds collected by District personnel should be deposited in the District’s bank account. Money should **NOT** be held back from deposits for expenditures of the event. All expenditures of the event should run through the District’s purchasing procedures.
- All checks received must be for the correct amount only.
- All checks must be endorsed with the “Envision” stamp.
- Please be sure the bank deposit slip and receipts are clearly marked.
- The business office will reconcile the deposit with receipts (cash) and check amounts.
- No money should be left in classrooms overnight.

### Money Collected for Outside Organizations

- Receipts do not have to be written for money collected for outside organizations (ex. PTA, Booster Club, or Chamber).
- Organization representatives are responsible for picking up the money once students have turned in the money.

### Bank Deposits

- There should be a code on all bank deposits along with a description of the deposit Examples: name tags, communication folders, etc.

### Night Depository

- If an event is to take place that will necessitate a night deposit, a night depository bag can be checked out from the Business Office.
- All deposit paperwork is forwarded to the Business Office the next business day.

## General Rules for Purchasing Card Usage

District staff authorized by the superintendent or his/her designee may make purchases with the District's purchasing cards.

Any employee using the District card shall sign a card usage agreement.

All purchases made with a District card must follow all appropriate purchasing procedures and must conform to the Board adopted budget.

Since the School District is tax exempt, the employee must ensure sales tax is not charged to the District. The tax-exempt notice is located on the card.

Loss or theft of the card must be reported to the Business Office immediately.

## Returned Checks Procedure

Ozark Schools has contracted with Envision Payment Solutions to assist the District with a check recovery plan. Check writers with returned checks may contact Envision Payment Solutions at (877) 290-5460. Please note returned checks are presented to the bank electronically; additional fees are applied for returned checks. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Business Office.

## Board Policies

### Start & Dismissal Times

	Start	Dismissal	Teacher Arrival	Student Arrival
<b>K-4 Elementary Buildings:</b>	8:40 a.m.	3:55 p.m.	<b>8:10 a.m.</b>	8:15 a.m.
<b>Middle School (5-6):</b>	8:25 a.m.	3:35 p.m.	<b>7:55 a.m.</b>	7:55 a.m.
<b>Junior High School</b>	7:25 a.m.	2:40 p.m.	<b>6:55 a.m.</b>	7:00 a.m.
<b>High School</b>	7:35 a.m.	2:50 p.m.	<b>7:05 a.m.</b>	7:00 a.m.
<b>Finley River</b>	7:35 a.m.	2:50 p.m.	<b>7:05 a.m.</b>	7:00 a.m.
<b>Tiger Paw</b>				
<b>Preschool (Monday – Thursday)</b>				
Session 1	8:30 a.m.	11:40 a.m.		<b>8:00 a.m.</b> 8:20 a.m.
Session 2	12:30 p.m.	3:40 p.m.		12:20 p.m.
<b>ADA Kindergarten</b>	8:15 a.m.	3:30 p.m.		

## Animals on District Property

Animals are not allowed on District property, including District transportation, except in accordance with law and policy. Further details can be found in Policy [ECG](#) and in the District Guidelines for therapy dogs.

## **Changes to Policies & Procedures**

**The information in this handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in District policies may supersede, modify, or eliminate the information summarized in this booklet. As the District provides updated policy information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes. I understand that no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will employment relationships are intended by this handbook. I understand that I have an obligation to inform my supervisor or department head of any changes in personal information, such as phone number, address, etc. I also accept responsibility for contacting my supervisor or the Human Resource Office, if I have questions or concerns or need further explanation.**

**Note: In the event of a discrepancy between any information contained in our Employee Handbook or in the online Employee Handbook and Board Policies, Board Policy will govern.**

