

Great Falls Public Schools

2025-2026

Handbook

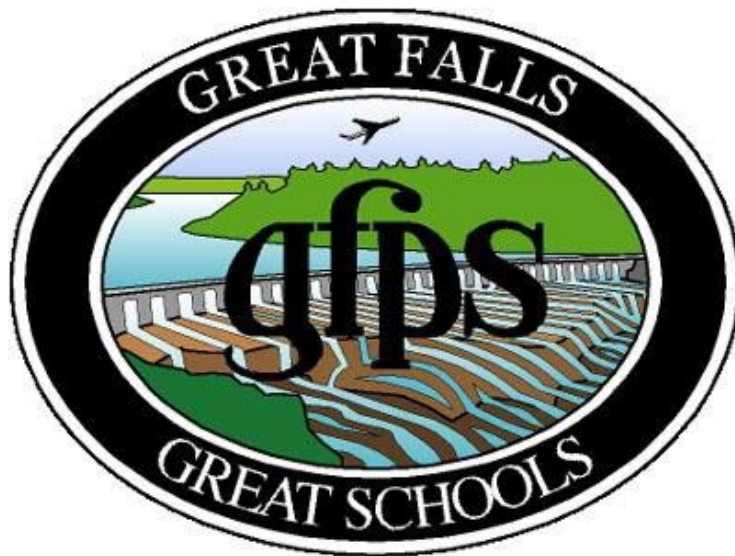


Table of Contents

VISION, MISSION AND BELIEF STATEMENTS	1
CONTACT INFORMATION	2
WELCOME.....	3
PREFACE.....	3
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.....	3
BOARD PERSONNEL GOAL	3
DISTRICT AND PERSONAL PROPERTY	4
GENERAL EXPECTATIONS.....	4
COMMUNICATION	5
COMPLAINT PROCEDURES.....	5
CHILD ABUSE AND MANDATORY REPORTING.....	5
CRIMINAL RECORDS	6
DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE.....	6
DRESS AND GROOMING	6
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE.....	6
ELECTRONIC MAIL AND ON-LINE SERVICES	7
HAZING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/BULLYING.....	7
HEALTH	8
HOURS.....	8
PERSONAL CONDUCT	8
STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS.....	8
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	9
PROHIBITED CONDUCT	9
PERSONNEL RECORDS.....	9
PHONE USE	9
IDENTIFICATION BADGES	9
TYPES OF ABSENCES	10
Family Medical Leave (FMLA).....	10
Jury/Witness Duty Leave	10
Illness Leave/Temporary Disability Leave of Absence.....	10
Military Leave	11

Leave Without Pay	11
RESIGNATIONS	11
TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT	11
VACANCIES	11
UNEMPLOYMENT	12
WORKERS' COMPENSATION	12
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	12
SAFETY	12
EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SAFETY	12
MILEAGE	13
Appendix A—Leave Request Form	14
Appendix B—Vacation Request Form.....	15
Appendix C: REPORT OF MILEAGE	15
Appendix D: MILEAGE CHART	15
Appendix E: SAFETY PROTOCOLS	17



VISION, MISSION AND BELIEF STATEMENTS

GREAT FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

VISION:

All kids are engaged in learning today ... for life tomorrow.

MISSION:

We successfully educate students to navigate their future.

WE BELIEVE:

- All students deserve teachers and staff who thrive on student success.
- Each student will have fair and equitable opportunity for quality instruction and academic success.
- All students learn when their individual needs are met through a personalized school experience.
- All students and staff learn and work best in a safe, secure, and nurturing environment.
- Highly skilled and committed personnel are our greatest asset.
- Quality education is a partnership of students, staff, family, and community engagement.
- Dedication to acknowledging, affirming, and including diversity enriches the educational experiences for all.
- District resources, programs and staff are flexible, adaptable and provide choice to meet the changing needs of all students.
- A well-educated community is the foundation of our democracy
- District resources and staff are public assets requiring responsible stewardship and community involvement.
- All Students will graduate college, career and citizenship ready.

GREAT FALLS - GREAT SCHOOLS - GREATER TOMORROWS

CONTACT INFORMATION

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PRINCIPAL</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
GRADES K-6				
Chief Joseph	5305 3rd Ave S 59405	Andrea Thares	268-6675	8:15-3:45pm
Giant Springs	520 32 nd St. N. 59401	Karla Miller	268-7045	8:15-3:45pm
Lewis and Clark	3800 1 st Ave. N 59401	Ben Jaques	268-6705	8:15-3:45pm
Lincoln	624 27th St S 59405	Steve Yates	268-6800	8:15-3:45pm
Longfellow	1101 6th Ave S 59405	Shannon Guilfoyle	268-6845	8:15-3:45pm
Loy	501 57th St N 59405	Shanda Brown	268-6885	8:15-3:45pm
Meadow Lark	2204 Fox Farm Rd 59404	Lyndsey Stulc	268-7300	8:15-3:45pm
Morningside	4119 7th Ave N 59401	Jennifer Martyn	268-6960	8:15-3:45pm
Mountain View	3420 15th Ave S 59405	Kim Marzolf	268-7305	8:15-3:45pm
Riverview	100 Smelter Ave 59404	Nicole Heitzelman	268-7015	8:15-3:45pm
Sacajawea	630 Sacajawea Dr 59404	Ty Moore	268-7080	8:15-3:45pm
Sunnyside	1800 19th St S 59405	Durbin Thomsen	268-7115	8:15-3:45pm
Valley View	900 Ave A NW 59404	Dannelle Dyke	268-7145	8:15-3:45pm
West	1205 1st Ave NW 59404	Lacee Lewis	268-7180	8:15-3:45pm
Whittier	305 8th St N 59401	Franklin Gilbert	268-7230	8:15-3:45pm
GRADES 7-8				
East Middle	4040 Central Ave 59405	Brad Barringer	268-6500	7:45-3:15pm
North Middle	2601 8th St NE 59404	Brian Miller	268-6525	7:45-3:15pm
GRADES 9-12				
C.M. R	228 17th Ave NW 59404	Jamie McGraw	268-6100	7:55-3:35pm
Great Falls High	1900 2nd Ave S 59405	Geoff Habel	268-6250	7:50-3:20pm
Paris	2400 Central Ave 59401	Yenta Jaques	268-6600	
B&G	3117 5th Ave N	Brent Cutler	268-6745	
Indian Ed	2400 Central Ave	Dugan Coburn	268-6669	
Student Services	1100 4th St S	Lance Boyd	268-6775	
GF MSU (ABLE)	2100 16th Ave S	Yenta Jaques	771-5108	
Skyline (ELF)	3300 3rd St. NE	Barbara Doughty	268-6400	8:30-3:00pm
Human Resources	1100 4th St S	Heather Spurzem	268-6010	7:30-5:00pm

WELCOME

We welcome you as an employee of the Great Falls Public Schools. As reflected in our mission statement, we take our commitment to serving the future of our society—our children—very seriously.

The work you perform as an employee is ultimately for the purpose of serving the students of the District. You have a valuable role in making the District an effective and efficient organization that educates and serves our students. We wish you success and happiness in your position with the District.

PREFACE

This handbook is intended as a method of communicating to all Great Falls Public Schools staff regarding general District information, rules, and regulations.

Because this handbook is a general source of information, it is not intended to be, and should not be interpreted as, a contract. It is **not** an all-encompassing document and may not cover every possible situation or unusual circumstance. If a conflict exists between information in this handbook and Board policy or administrative procedures, the policies or procedures govern. It is the employee's responsibility to refer to the actual policies and/or administrative procedures for further information. Complete copies of the personnel policies can be found at: <https://gfps.k12.mt.us/school-board/policies>

Any employee is free to review official policies and procedures and is expected to be familiar with those related to his/her job responsibilities.

Although every effort will be made to update the handbook on a timely basis, the District reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to change any policies, procedures, benefits, and terms of employment without notice, consultation, or publication, except as may be required by law. The District reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to modify or change any portion of this handbook at any time. The District reserves the right to not change Handbook and carry-over provisions from year to year as allowed by law and policy.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is composed of seven elected officials who serve as the governing body for the District. They establish the broad operating policies under which the District functions, drawing on the counsel and advice of the District's chief administrator, the Superintendent of Schools.

Administration of the District's operations is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent is assisted in this task by a staff of District educational, business, and financial administrators; managers; supervisors; professionals; and others in a variety of areas.

The Board of Trustees meet the 2nd and 4th Mondays most months of the year. A listing of meetings, agendas and minutes can be found at this website: <https://gfps.k12.mt.us/school-board/agendas-minutes/agendasmeetings>

BOARD PERSONNEL GOAL

The Board believes that highly skilled and committed personnel are the District's greatest asset. Therefore, the District will provide leadership in human resource and personnel practices that make the District the employer

of choice in Montana. The Board seeks always to employ highly qualified individuals for all positions in the District.

DISTRICT AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

All Great Falls Public Schools staff are encouraged to exercise continuous and vigilant care of all district-owned property. Incidents of theft or willful destruction of district property through vandalism or malicious mischief should be reported immediately to the building principal.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your handbag, wallet, and other personal property are kept in a safe place. The District shall not assume responsibility for the maintenance, repair or replacement of any privately-owned property brought to a school or District function unless the use or presence of such property has been specifically requested in writing by the Superintendent. (See Board Policy 8320 for more information.)

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- Always be prompt both in reporting for work and in completing assigned tasks. If an emergency makes it necessary for you to be late to work or leave early from work, notify or ask your supervisor for permission as soon as possible.
- Establish a good attendance record. Only be absent from work when it is absolutely necessary or when you are on a pre-approved leave.
- Courtesy and cooperation are two basic elements of success in your job and every job in the District. Be courteous and cooperative with the public, fellow workers, prospective employees, teachers, students, and parents who are all a part of the District you serve.
- Maintain open lines of communication. If any instructions given by your supervisor are not clear, ask for further explanation to make certain that you understand exactly what is expected of you.
- Try to be as clear and concise as possible when explaining matters to the public and to your fellow employees. Use language that can be understood by everyone and avoid using slang or jargon.
- Always try to work carefully. Mistakes can be costly and at times, dangerous. If you make a mistake, be sure to find out exactly what happened and how to avoid making the same mistake again. Notify your supervisor of the mistake.
- Remember to keep all District business confidential. While many things that happen at the District are a matter of public record, releasing information about them is the responsibility of specific offices and individuals. Refer any unusual requests for information to the appropriate authority.
- Dress appropriately for your type of work. Maintain a well-groomed, modest, clean, neat, and businesslike appearance at all times. Remember, you are representing the District to students and the public.
- Great Falls Public Schools believes that employees' concerns are usually most effectively addressed at the lowest possible level within the organization. Therefore, employees are ordinarily expected to address issues and concerns with their immediate supervisor first. If the issue cannot be resolved at that level, the employee should move to the next level within that employee's chain-of-command. Board Policy 5215 further delineates the formal Complaint Procedures.

COMMUNICATION

The District seeks to communicate and collaborate with students, staff, parents and the community at large to ensure sound, trusting relationships. Internal and external communications are important to creating open, two way communication among the Board of Trustees, administration, staff, students, parents and the Great Falls Public Schools communities.

To that end, all Great Falls Public Schools staff are encouraged to access the Newsbits and the District website regularly as they serve as major means of communication for the District.

The District website is: <https://gfps.k12.mt.us/> & Newsbits can be found at: <https://gfps.k12.mt.us/staff/newsbits>

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Staff member complaints contending a violation, misinterpretation, or inappropriate application of District personnel policies and/or administrative regulations should be directed to the building principal for informal discussion and resolution.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, formal complaint procedures may be initiated by staff in accordance with Board policy and administrative regulations. (See Board Policy 5215 for more information.)

CHILD ABUSE AND MANDATORY REPORTING

By Montana law, all Great Falls Public Schools staff are MANDATORY REPORTERS. All Great Falls Public Schools staff must report to DPHHS if they know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused, neglected or abandoned. Regardless of whom the perpetrator is thought to be, school staff must report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline. If you think an act could be a crime, call the SRO or police immediately. If a Great Falls Public Schools employee is uncertain whether to report or to whom to report suspected child mistreatment, call the CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE.

In addition to reporting to DPHHS, Great Falls Public Schools employees are expected to report their concerns to their principal or supervising administrator. Reporting to the principal or supervisor, however, does not replace the duty to report to DPHHS. If the suspected perpetrator is a Great Falls Public Schools staff member, you are directed by Great Falls Public Schools to notify a Great Falls Public Schools principal, supervisor, or other administrator immediately in addition to your mandatory reporting obligations.

DPHHS Hot Line # 866-820-5437

Failure to report a suspected child abuse is a violation punishable by law and by District disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. (Refer to Policy 5232)

A staff member who, based on reasonable grounds, participates in the good-faith making of a child abuse report shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as provided by law.

CRIMINAL RECORDS

All Great Falls Public Schools staff recommended for hire shall submit to a name-based and fingerprint criminal background investigation conducted by the appropriate law enforcement agency. Employment is contingent upon results of the fingerprint criminal background check, which must be acceptable to the Board, in its sole discretion. Any requirement of an applicant to submit to a fingerprint background check shall be in compliance with the Volunteers for Children Act of 1998 and applicable federal regulations.

DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

All Great Falls Public Schools staff who fail to fulfill their job responsibilities or follow the reasonable directions of their supervisors or who conduct themselves on or off the job in ways that affect their effectiveness on the job or in other such ways that the law determines to be good cause shall be subject to discipline. Behavior, conduct or action which may institute disciplinary action or dismissal may include, but is not limited to, reasonable job related grounds based on a failure to satisfactorily perform job duties, disruption of the District's operation, or other legitimate business reason. (See Board Policy 5255 for more information.)

DRESS AND GROOMING

All Great Falls Public Schools staff are expected to be neat, clean, and to wear appropriate dress for work that is modest, in good taste and suitable for the job at hand.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

All District workplaces are drug- and alcohol-free workplaces. All employees are prohibited from:

- Unlawful manufacture, dispensing, distribution, possession, use, or being under the influence of a controlled substance while on District premises or while performing work for the District.
- Distribution, consumption, use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol while on District premises or while performing work for the District.

For purposes of this policy, a controlled substance is one which is:

- not legally obtainable;
- being used in a manner different than prescribed;
- legally obtainable, but has not been legally obtained; or
- referenced in federal or state-controlled substance acts.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall:

- abide by the terms of the District policy respecting a drug- and alcohol-free workplace; and
- notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring on the District premises or while performing work for the District, no later than five (5) days after such a conviction.

District Action Upon Violation of Policy: An employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. Alternatively, the Board may require an employee to successfully complete an appropriate drug- or alcohol-abuse, employee-assistance rehabilitation program. (See Board Policy 5227 for more information.)

ELECTRONIC MAIL AND ON-LINE SERVICES

Great Falls Public Schools computers, e-mail and Internet/network systems are intended to be used for educational or work-related purposes only. Use for informal or personal purposes is permissible within reasonable limits. All e-mail/Internet/network records are considered District records and should be transmitted only to individuals who have a need to receive them. Additionally, District records, e-mail/Internet/network records are subject to disclosure to law enforcement or government officials or to other third parties through subpoena or other process. Consequently, users should always ensure that the educational information contained in e-mail/Internet messages is accurate, appropriate and lawful. E-mail/Internet messages by users may not necessarily reflect the views of the District.

Abuse of computers, e-mail, Internet, or network systems, through excessive personal use, or use in violation of the law or District policies, will result in disciplinary action, up to or including termination of employment. Each person who uses electronic mail and/or on-line services must read and document in writing understanding and willingness to comply with the Great Falls Public Schools' "Code of Ethics for Use of Electronic Mail and On-Line Services." Failure to comply with the "Code of Ethics for Use of Electronic Mail and On-Line Services" may result in disciplinary action up to or including termination of employment.

The District may review e-mail/Internet/network records; users have no right or expectation of privacy in email, the Internet or the network. The District owns the networking system and permits users to access it in the performance of their duties for the District. E-mail messages and electronic records are to be treated like shared paper files, with the expectation that anything in them is available for review. (See Board Policy 5450 for more information.)

HAZING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/BULLYING

The Board will strive to provide a positive and productive learning and working environment. Hazing, harassment, intimidation, menacing, or bullying by students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited in the District and shall not be tolerated.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Any Classified Employee who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this policy or feels he/she has been a victim of hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or menacing in violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report his/her concerns to the building principal. Complaints against the building principal shall be filed with the appropriate Assistant Superintendent.

Staff whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry. False charges shall also be regarded as a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions. (See Board Policy 5226 for more information.)

HEALTH

All Great Falls School District staff members are expected to conduct their work in compliance with first aid and infection control procedures established by the district. Staff members are encouraged to maintain optimum health through the practice of good health habits.

An employee with a communicable disease shall not report to work during the period of time in which the employee is infectious. An employee afflicted with a communicable disease capable of being readily transmitted in the school setting (e.g., airborne transmission of tuberculosis) shall be encouraged to report the existence of the illness in case there are precautions that must be taken to protect the health of others. The District reserves the right to require a statement from the employee's primary care provider prior to the employee's return to work. In all instances, District personnel shall respect the individual's right to privacy and treat any medical diagnosis as confidential information. (See Board Policies 5130 and 5230 for more information.)

HOURS

Hours will vary depending on your building and assignment. Be aware of the hours you are scheduled to work each day. You may not exceed the number of hours you were hired to work. You should be ready to begin work at your start time.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

All Great Falls School District staff have a professional responsibility to protect a pupil's health, safety and welfare. All school staff members have the public's trust and confidence to protect the well-being of all pupils in the District. To that end, all school staff are held to the highest level of professional responsibility in their conduct. Inappropriate conduct and conduct unbecoming a school staff member will not be tolerated. A staff member's conduct will be held to the professional standards established by the Montana Board of Education.

Administrators and supervisors may set forth specific rules and regulations governing an employee's conduct on the job within a particular building. Classified Employees are required to report to their building principal any possible violations of this policy. In the event the report alleges conduct by the building principal, the Classified Employee may report directly to the District Office Administration.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

All staff members shall assume responsibility for assigned supervision duties in a timely manner and in accordance with established school rules and procedures. Such duties may include, but are not limited to, bus, lunchroom, or playground supervision, as well as any additional responsibilities assigned by the building principal or designee.

Staff members are required to fulfill the full scope of their assigned duties and schedules. This includes the instructional day, supervision assignments, co-curricular activities, study halls, and any additional responsibilities as directed by administration. Staff shall adhere as closely as possible to their assigned daily schedules and responsibilities.

Staff members shall seek clarification from the building principal or appropriate administrator regarding any questions related to assigned duties or responsibilities. Attendance at faculty meetings may be required at the discretion of the principal or supervisor.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All staff members shall promptly report the following to the school office or an administrator:

- Personal injury involving students or staff
- Serious illness of any student
- Damage to school property
- Serious disciplinary issues or violations of school rules
- Suspected abuse and/or neglect of a student (refer to “Child Abuse and Mandatory Reporting” section)

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Staff members shall not:

- Use corporal punishment
- Access or disturb another staff member’s desk, materials, or workspace without authorization
- Publicly criticize or undermine the professional practices of colleagues
- Leave students unsupervised at any time during the school day
- Contact an absent staff member unless specifically directed to do so by administration

PERSONNEL RECORDS

The District maintains a complete personnel record for every current employee and former employee. The employees’ personnel records shall be maintained in the District’s Human Resource Office. An employee will be given access to his or her personnel records upon making an appointment with the Human Resource Office to view the records. (See Board Policy 5231 and 5231R for more information.)

PHONE USE

Personal phone calls should be made on landlines or cell phones only during breaks and lunch. Texting should also only be done when on break or at lunch. Cell phones should be in quiet mode at all times.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All Great Falls School District staff will be issued identification badges. These will be done in the Human Resources Office. These badges should be worn in a visible manner at all times while substituting.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

Family Medical Leave (FMLA)

Eligibility: An employee is eligible to take FMLA leave if the employee has been employed for at least twelve (12) months, and has worked at least one thousand two hundred fifty (1,250) hours during the twelve (12) months immediately prior to the date when the leave is requested. Employees will be required to use appropriate paid leave while on FMLA Leave. Workers Compensation absences will be designated FMLA Leave.

Length/Purpose of Leave: In accordance with the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993, a leave of absence of up to twelve (12) weeks during a twelve-(12)-month period may be granted to an eligible employee for the following reasons: 1) birth of a child; 2) placement of a child for adoption or foster care; 3) a serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform functions of the job; 4) to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; 5) because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse or a son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation. Servicemember Family Leave: Subject to Section 103 of the FMLA of 1993, as amended, an eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered servicemember shall be entitled to a total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave during a twelve-(12)-month period to care for the servicemember. The leave described in this paragraph shall only be available during a single twelve-(12)-month period. (Refer to policy 5328 & 5328P)

Jury/Witness Duty Leave

All Great Falls School District staff who is summoned to jury duty or subpoenaed to serve as a witness may elect to receive regular salary or to take annual leave. An employee who elects not to take annual leave, however, must remit to the District summons and all juror and witness fees and allowances (except for expenses and mileage). A Leave Request Form (Appendix A) must be completed for this leave with the exception of teachers. They must record their absence in Aesop.

Illness Leave/Temporary Disability Leave of Absence

Employees must use sick time for short or long-term illness and/or temporary disability. If ineligible for a Family Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA) or upon expiration of FMLA, an employee may apply for Illness Leave/Temporary Disability Leave. Medical certification of the long-term illness or temporary disability is required and must specifically state the employee cannot perform the duties for which the employee is hired. Any accrued sick, vacation, and PB leave must be used concurrently with this leave.

Upon the expiration of leave time, the Board may grant eligible employees leave without pay if requested. Leave without pay arising out of any long-term illness or temporary disability shall commence only after leave time has been exhausted.

If an employee has exhausted all accumulated leave time and is unable to perform or return to perform the duties for which the employee is hired, the Board may place the employee on Illness Leave/Temporary Disability Leave of Absence.

Upon approval of the Board, Illness Leave/Temporary Disability Leave without pay will be provided without salary or fringe benefits. The length of this leave is for a period of up to one year, and may upon request, be renewed or extended by action of the Board. The employee's request for return to duty shall be accompanied by a statement from a medical doctor attesting to the employee's ability to resume the duties of the position.

The Superintendent shall devise procedures within the intent of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as amended in 1978 by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and within the scope of applicable law and court rulings in the state of Montana.

Military Leave

Pursuant to the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and the Montana Military Service Employment Rights, the Superintendent shall grant military leave to employees for voluntary or involuntary service in the uniformed services of the United States, upon receipt of the required notice. (Refer to Board Policy 5322 for more information.)

Leave Without Pay

Leave Without Pay may not be taken in lieu of accrued sick and vacation leave. If an absence is due to a sickness suffered by an employee or a member of his or her immediate family (as defined in policy), then sick leave must be indicated on the time card. If the employee has met the conditions noted in the vacation policy, has accrued vacation leave and must be gone, then vacation must be indicated on the time card.

RESIGNATIONS

All Great Falls School District staff intending to resign should notify their supervisor and the Human Resources Office as early as possible and no less than fourteen (14) days prior to their resignation date. The Board authorizes the Superintendent and/or his/her designee to accept on its behalf resignations from any school district employee. Once the Superintendent and/or his/her designee has accepted the resignation it may not be withdrawn by the employee. The resignation and its acceptance should be reported as information to the Board at the next regular or special meeting.

TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Great Falls School District maintains tobacco free buildings and grounds. Tobacco includes, but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, nicotine, electronic cigarettes and any other tobacco/nicotine innovation.

Use of tobacco products in a public school building or on public school property is prohibited, unless the use of a tobacco product in a classroom or on other school property as part of a lecture, demonstration, or educational forum sanctioned by a school administrator or faculty member, concerning the risks associated with using tobacco products.

For this purpose, “public school building or public school property” means:

- Public land, fixtures, buildings, or other property owned or occupied by an institution for the teaching of minor children that is established and maintained under the laws of the state of Montana at public expense; and
- Includes playgrounds, school steps, parking lots, administration buildings, athletic facilities, gymnasiums, locker rooms, and school buses.

VACANCIES

All vacancies shall be advertised on the GFPS website.

UNEMPLOYMENT

39-51-2108(1) MCA does not allow school employees to draw unemployment benefits, based on school wages, between two academic years or on school breaks when there is reasonable assurance that the employee will continue to work for the school the following year and after the break.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

All Great Falls School District staff are covered by workers' compensation benefits. In the event of an industrial accident, an Employee should:

1. Attend to first aid and/or medical treatment during an emergency;
2. Correct or report as needing correction a hazardous situation as soon as possible after an emergency situation is stabilized;
3. Report the injury or disabling condition, whether actual or possible, to the Administrative Assistant in the Principal's office or your supervisor at your building as soon as possible.
4. The Administrative Assistant or supervisor will complete the Accident/Injury Report with you and will give you a form to take to the doctor should you decide to go. 5. Pertinent information will be forwarded to District offices and to the workers' comp insurance carrier.

GFPS supports a "Return to Work" philosophy which supports temporary transitional duty when appropriate and available.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All Great Falls Public Schools staff should consult with their supervisor regarding procedures for emergencies.

SAFETY

Great Falls School District recognizes the importance of providing a safe learning and working environment for students, staff and visitors. Safety education, accident prevention, and a formal loss control program all play a part in creating a safe environment. Attention to safety on the part of each individual employee is also an important part of a safe environment. Pro-actively devoting serious attention and effort towards safety and making it an integral part of day-to-day work is expected.

All Great Falls School District staff should be familiar with and consult the contents of the Safety Manual that is provided each employee. A building Safety Committee has been established to help implement the District's safety program and as part of an on-going effort to help ensure the safety and health of students, staff and others while on District property.

All injuries to students, employees, or guests that occur on District property must be reported to the proper authority no matter how trivial they seem. Be alert to safety hazards, the presence of strangers, and other unusual or suspicious situations and immediately report to the proper authority any incidents in which you witness an accident or are yourself injured.

EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SAFETY

The District reserves the right to request the immunizations status or records of employees in an effort to keep employees and students safe. (2019)

MILEAGE

All Great Falls School District staff who are required to use personal transportation for travel in performance of assigned duties shall be reimbursed at the rate established by Montana law (MCA 2-18-503). Changes in the rate will become effective on the first day of the month following notification by the District and will not be made retroactive. Said travel shall be previously approved by the supervisor. Individual mileage claims \$10 and over will be reimbursed via the Report of Mileage Form. The Report of Mileage Form must be turned in by the last student day of the school year in order to be paid by the end of the fiscal year. Individual mileage claims under \$10, cannot be paid by check.

Appendix A—Leave Request Form



LEAVE REQUEST FORM

This Form is Not for Teachers (Teachers: Use FRONTLINE)

Read and follow procedures on back.

Name _____ Position _____ Bldg. _____

TYPE OF REQUEST

<input type="checkbox"/> BE Bereavement (Relationship)	<input type="checkbox"/> BN Bereavement (Non-Family) (Relationship)	<input type="checkbox"/> JD Jury Duty (Verification Required)
<input type="checkbox"/> MD Military Duty (Verification Required)	<input type="checkbox"/> PB Personal Business	<input type="checkbox"/> WD Witness Duty (Verification Required)
<input type="checkbox"/> WP Leave Without Pay		

DATES AFFECTED

Work Date(s) Affected _____

_____ AM _____ PM _____ ALL DAY

Requestor's Signature _____	Date _____
Principal/Supervisor's Signature _____	Date _____
Human Resource's Signature _____	Date _____
Other Signature (determined by HR) _____	Date _____
Other Signature (determined by HR) _____	Date _____

DISPOSITION OF REQUEST

For Office Use ONLY

Approved – No Loss of Pay Approved – Deduction of Pay Approved – Non-Duty Day

Not Approved

Final Distribution: White – Human Resources | Yellow – Business Office | Pink – School/Dept. | Goldenrod – Employee

DW-202 Leave Request Form | Rev. 5/2023 |

Appendix B—Vacation Request Form



Great Falls Public Schools **VACATION REQUEST**

Form must be completed in advance.

Name _____ Position _____

Request for vacation: Work dates requested _____

Number of days: _____

Coverage: _____

Employee Signature

Date

Direct Supervisor Signature (when applicable)

Date

Approved

Not Approved

DW-201 Vacation Request | Rev. 5/2023 | Distribution: *WHITE – Direct Supervisor* *YELLOW - Employee*

Appendix C: REPORT OF MILEAGE

REPORT OF MILEAGE

All Mileage will be reported through the use of the Mileage Application that can be found at the following link.
<https://trips.gfps.k12.mt.us/>

All mileage is calculated at the current federal rate of reimbursement. That rate is found at the following link.
<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-sets-2026-business-standard-mileage-rate-at-725-cents-per-mile-up-25-cents>

Appendix D: MILEAGE CHART

City	round trip Miles		City	round trip Miles
Anaconda	344		Hysham	592
Baker	796		Jordan	470
Belgrade	356		Kalispell	452

Big Sky	438		Laurel	470
Billings	438		Lewistown	210
Boulder	232		Libby	630
Bozeman	354		Livingston	340
Broadus	774		Malta	406
Browning	254		Miles City	634
Butte	306		Missoula	338
Cascade	52		Phillipsburg	364
Chester	260		Plentywood	836
Chinook	272		Polson	470
Chico	464		Poplar	686
Choteau	110		Red Lodge	520
Columbus	424		Roundup	360
Conrad	126		Ryegate	312
Cooke City	558		Scobey	754
Culbertson	752		Shelby	176
Cut Bank	220		Sidney	754
Deer Lodge	290		Stanford	120
Dillon	418		Superior	452
East Glacier	280		Sweetgrass	244
Ekalaka	866		Terry	712
Eureka	544		Thompson Falls	538
FAIRMONT	340		Three Forks	310
Forsyth	562		Townsend	242
Ft Benton	88		Virginia City	418
Gardner	446		West Glacier	390
Glasgow	546		West Yellowstone	528

Glendive	702	Whitefish	440
Grass Range	272	White Sulphur	194
Hamilton	438	Wibaux	754
Hardin	530	Winnett	318
Harlowtown	256	Wolf Point	644
Havre	230	Spokane	722
Helena	178	Coeur d'Alene	658

Appendix E: SAFETY PROTOCOLS

2025-2026 SAFE SCHOOLS PROTOCOLS AT A GLANCE



IN A “REAL WORLD” EMERGENCY, ONLY LAW ENFORCEMENT OR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS WILL RELEASE THE LOCKDOWN.

LOCKDOWN-(Internal Immediate threat) lock classroom door, NOT building exit doors

1. Scan the hallway and listen for the threat (gun shots, yelling, etc.),if able to determine that threat is not near, run with students to the nearest building exit and away from the building.
2. If unable to determine if the threat is close, move everyone quickly to the nearest secure room.
3. Lock the door and barricade with furniture, etc.
4. Quietly move to a safe spot.
5. Shut off lights.
6. When settled, review the attached detailed Safe Schools Protocols or access the In Case of Crisis Manager App on phone.
7. *Adults: monitor cell phones for emails and text messages.*
8. *Should a threat attempt to enter the room, fight, using every resource available.*
9. *In case of a life-threatening medical emergency, Place one red placard in and exterior window and under the classroom door.*
10. *Wait for first responders to clear the room.*
11. *If outside, quickly move away from the building to safety.*
12. *Debrief with students after each incident / drill.*

SHELTER IN PLACE (External threat)

1. Bring students in from outside.
2. Lock building's exterior doors. No one in or out!

3. Keep students in classroom until exterior doors are secured.
4. Resume movement in building as directed.
5. Conduct class.
6. *Debrief with students after each incident.*

EVACUATION (Internal emergency requiring all to leave)

1. Exit classroom.
2. Close door.
3. Exit building by pre-determined route.

CLASS HOLD (Safety precaution requiring students kept in classrooms)

1. Close door.
2. Keep students in class until released.
3. Conduct class.

RELEASE WITH CARE (Safety precaution requiring student escort)

1. Put on your safety vest and visible badge.
2. Escort students to buses and waiting cars.
3. Walk students home, if directed to do so.
4. Confirm parent/guardian identity if applicable.

PLEASE NOTE:
AIRHORN- Leave School Campus.

**REPEATING
 BELLS/WHISTLES- OR PRE-
 RECORDED MESSAGE.**

2025-2026
SAFE and SECURE SCHOOLS
PROTOCOLS/EVACUATION/REUNIFICATION

LOCKDOWN- (Internal immediate threat)

Defined as an internal and/or immediate threat. All staff and students locate and remain in a secure location.

- **WITNESS TO THE THREAT:**
 1. Call your main office.
 2. Lockdown your room.
 3. Call 911. Try not to break contact with 911.

- **OFFICE PROCEDURES:**
 1. Give the internal alert to “LOCKDOWN” over your PA.
 2. Lockdown the office area.
 3. Call 911 to confirm witness’ call.
 4. Then call the Executive Director’s office **7777**.
 5. If the emergency is at the DOB, call CMR (6100) to activate the district phone tree.

- **EXTERIOR DOORS:** Ignore them! (DO NOT LOCK OR BAR THEM)

- **HALL SWEEPS:** As you are closing your room door, make a quick visual scan and instruct anyone close to enter your room and LOCKDOWN! This would include students, staff, parents, visitors and vendors.
- **BATHROOMS:** Students and /or staff who are caught in the bathroom when “Lockdown” is called should remain in bathroom, stand on toilet so feet cannot be seen, lock the stall door, stay quiet and wait for police.
- **CLASSROOM PROCEDURES**
 1. Classes that are meeting in the hallways, foyers, etc. are to go to the nearest lockable room.
 2. Lock your door.
 3. Quietly move students to a safe location away from windows and doors so they are not visible to anyone looking in.
 4. Turn off lights.
 5. Move to PROTECTIVE MIND-SET.
 - If the emergency escalates, be prepared to barricade and, if necessary, physically defend/protect life. (RUN/LOCK/FIGHT)
 6. Be sure all cell phones are on silent or vibrate mode.
 7. If there is a life-threatening medical emergency in your room:
 - a. Place one red placard in an exterior window and one under the classroom door.
 - b. Call 911.
- **CLASSES AT RECESS / LUNCH – OUTSIDE**
 1. Classrooms adjacent to playgrounds shall be equipped with an air horn.
 2. Once the lock down signal has been given, classrooms adjacent to playgrounds shall give air horn blasts out an open window as a signal for students and staff to vacate the school grounds and school area to a pre-determined spot, if safe.
 3. If that spot is not safe, then use your best judgment and escort students to safety away from the school.
 4. Call 911. Report location.
 5. “ALL CLEAR” indicated by repeating bell/whistle (not air horn).
- **PHONES, CELL PHONES, and COMPUTERS**
 1. Designate one person to communicate for your classroom. (Teacher or designee)
 2. Classroom phones will be left in the “call forward” mode.
 3. Discourage use of cell phones by students.
 4. All cell phones are to be on and in the SILENT MODE/Vibrate.
 5. Use cell phone only to communicate life-threatening medical emergencies.
 6. Do not make/accept personal calls.
 7. If your cell phone rings, answer and listen for law enforcement or an administrator before responding.
 8. Have computer email open.

DURING A LOCKDOWN, DO NOT RESPOND TO ANY FIRE ALARMS UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO OVER THE P.A. SYSTEM.

- **ATTENDANCE**

1. Once safely secured, a teacher must take attendance. DO NOT relay the information until you are asked to do so by law enforcement or school officials.
- **LAMINATED RED PLACARDS – FOR USE ONLY IN A LIFE-THREATENING MEDICAL EMERGENCY.**
 1. Two red cards for each room/office.
 2. One for the door in the classroom/office.
 3. One for an exterior window.
 4. All placards should be on 8x11 inch red construction paper.
 5. All placards should be laminated.
 6. Room numbers should be very thick, large and written in bold black marker.
 7. Use a piece of Velcro to secure window placard.
 8. Use an alligator clip to prevent under-door placard from sliding into the hallway.
 - **WINDOW TREATMENT**
 1. Interior windows may be covered, but not in red paper.
 2. Exterior blinds/shades should be left up as long as children are NOT visible during the lockdown. If there is no safe place for children/staff to hide, pull blinds.
 - **MISCELLANEOUS**
 1. Do NOT open the door for any reason. Law enforcement and school officials will have the ways and means to unlock your door if necessary.
 2. Maintain a PROTECTIVE MINDSET (RUN/LOCK/FIGHT). Use good judgment and REMAIN CALM and QUIET! Encourage your students not to panic. Silence is key to your safety in this situation. Whisper only if it is necessary to communicate verbally. You may be there for a while.
 3. RED DOT DRAWER (Main Office Staff only). Contains updated staff cell phone numbers.
 - **LOCKDOWN RELEASE**
 - **DEBRIEF WITH STUDENTS**
 1. Elementary Debrief
 - Why do we drill?
 - a) We have drills so we know what to do and how to react in case there is ever an emergency. (ex. Boiler goes out, stray dog on playground, building is not safe to be in)
 - How did the drill make you feel?
 - a) You are safe.
 - b) We are here to support each other, we are a team and we are here to protect you.
 - c) Safety protocols are a time for practice for us and sometimes the police and fire department come to watch us and give feedback.
 - How do we let your parents/families/guardians know?
 - a) We notify your parents if we need to tell them any information about our drills. Adults take care of that stuff. Please talk to us (school staff) and your parents if you have questions or are worried. These are just practice to keep us all safe.
 2. Secondary Debrief
 - Why do we drill?

- a) Schools are different today than in the past. It is important to remember that when students or staff hear of a threat, the right and ONLY thing to do is to turn it in to the authorities. “When you Hear Something, Say Something”
 - o It is our responsibility to react as though it is a real threat.
 - o We want to recognize and honor the decision people make to share concerns and turn in threats.
- b) It’s the Law. Montana statute actually holds schools and districts responsible for conducting drills.
- c) If we ever have a real event, we hope to have familiar actions to help us when we move into reaction mode. If we practice or drill, the more likely we will be to react appropriately. Practice is the thing we can control and use to prepare us should a situation arise.
- How did the drill make you feel?
 - a) You are safe.
 - b) We are here to support each other and work through possible scenarios together.
 - c) Safety protocols include those of us in the room, the school, our district and first responders. Safety is the responsibility of everyone including students.
 - d) We practice with first responders so they know our buildings and our expectations – if you see them, thank them. They put their lives on the line for us.
- Let’s talk through scenarios. How would we handle _____? The way we respond is situationally determined.
 - a) If violence is far away, and an exit is close, leave the building. Run to safety.
 - b) If you hear violence or know it is close, without giving away your location block the door with everything you can– never open the door.
 - c) Be ready to fight anyone who comes through the door with whatever means we have.
 - d) Hide in an area outside of the view of the intruder.
- How do we let your parents/families/guardians know?
 - a) The district uses an emergency contact system called ParentSquare – in a true emergency, we would push out information to families who have provided their phone numbers.
 - b) The district uses social media like Facebook and Twitter to share information.
 - c) In the event of a long lockdown, we would give you messages to pass to your parents (so you would want to save your phone batteries).
 - d) It is important that parents don’t flood our schools with calls.
 - o The office staff can’t take messages if they are locked down.
 - o Too many calls will crash the system.
 - o We know it is frightening, so we work to get accurate information to parents as quickly as possible.

Teachers, please be aware of guest teachers around you and reach out, offering them assistance with questions or concerns. We are hoping that by having teachers discuss this in all of their classes, that all students will hear the message. Please remember to maintain your presence in the halls when students are passing and share with us any concerns you have. We will be making our rounds, both in the building and outside, throughout the day.

IN A “REAL WORLD” EMERGENCY, ONLY LAW ENFORCEMENT OR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS WILL RELEASE THE LOCKDOWN.

SHELTER IN PLACE- (External threat)

Defined as a safety precaution due to an external threat. No action from parents is required for routine shelters in place.

The decision to implement a Shelter in Place shall be decided by the acting Building Administrator, their superior, or Law Enforcement.

SHELTER IN PLACE PROCEDURE:

1. Lock external doors.
2. Bring students in from outside.
3. No one IN or OUT.
 - This may be modified at the discretion of the Building Administrator or (SRO) as the situation becomes clearer.
 - Staff maybe assigned to monitor doors.
4. Notify Executive Director's Office at the 7777 phone number.
5. Conduct internal class/operations as normal.
6. Do not release students from school until cleared to do so.
7. *Follow "debrief" protocol in Lockdowns*

CLASS HOLD- (Safety precaution requiring students kept in classroom)

Defined as a safety precaution implemented during an incident where students need to be kept in the classroom. No action from parents is required for routine class holds.

The decision to implement a Class Hold shall be made by the acting Building Administrator.

CLASS HOLD PROCEDURE:

1. Conduct class.
2. Do not release students from classroom until cleared by your Building Administrator.
3. Communicate with main office for assistance.

RELEASE/RECEIVE WITH CARE- (Safety precaution requiring student escort)

Defined as a possible threat in the school's neighborhood during release or arrival time. Parents should follow emergency notifications.

RELEASE WITH CARE PROCEDURE:

1. Staff should wear safety vests or other identifying clothing for ease in identification, if applicable.
2. To ensure safety, the Building Administrator may ask staff to escort students to/from buses or waiting cars.
3. Staff may also be asked to accompany students home.

In the event that the situation warrants direct release to parents:

1. Students will gather in the gym or other central location so that students can be released to parents in an orderly manner.
2. Staff should wear safety vests or other identifying clothing for ease in identification.
3. With the aid of a class list, teachers should document to whom students were released.
4. Check ID's for adults you are unfamiliar with.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION- (Internal emergency requiring all to leave)

Defined as an internal emergency that requires students and staff to leave the building for their safety. Parents should follow emergency notifications.

ADMINISTRATOR OR DESIGNEE *NO CELL PHONES OR RADIOS IF EXPLOSIVE DEVICE*

1. (Check Perimeter) Start Evacuation Process.
2. Get to a safe place. Call 911.
3. Call (406) 268-7777.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES:

1. At the sound of the fire alarm or announcement, assist students in clearing your area calmly and quietly.
2. Classroom teacher will wear safety vest and get emergency folder with current “rolodex” PowerSchool report. (Print at least quarterly)
3. Close your door, if warranted (fire).
4. Exit the building by the predetermined route to designated outdoor location.
5. Keep students away from the building until given the “ALL CLEAR” bell/whistle and directive to return, or move to alternative site as directed.
6. If evacuated to an alternative site, follow reunification protocols.

OTHER STAFF PROCEDURES:

- Office: Gather medication/necessary health items, student demographics sheets and guest sign in sheets.
- Kitchen: Shut off ovens.
- Engineers

EVACUATION TO ALTERNATIVE SITE AND REUNIFICATION PROTOCOLS

Defined as an emergency that requires students and staff to leave the building for their safety. Parents should follow emergency notifications.

EVACUATION WILL BE ORDERED BY BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR OR SRO:

******No Cell Phone or radio use during a bomb threat******

- Check perimeter of building prior to evacuation.
 - Wait for further instructions.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES:

- Classroom teacher will wear safety vest and bring emergency folder with **current “rolodex” PowerSchool report.**
- If individual student health items are kept in classroom, bring them.
- Students and staff will exit the building by the predetermined route.
- Immediately proceed to alternative site. Follow assigned route if possible.
- Keep doors and windows open.
- Shut down equipment (Science/Shops/FCS)

STUDENT PROCEDURES:

K-12

- Follow all directives from school and law enforcement officials.
- For safety of self and others, all cell phone use is prohibited until otherwise directed.

OFFICE PROCEDURE:

- All office staff will wear safety vest.
- Administrative Assistant or designee will gather all medications/necessary health items, student demographics sheet and special guest sign in/out sheet and stop signs.
- Principal and designees will gather Emergency Response Binder, personal phone, radios and building keys.
- Bring laptops.

ENGINEER(s) on Duty:

- Once evacuated, be available to assist the police and/or Emergency Services. Make yourself known to Police and /or Emergency Services.
- Bring building keys, radio and cell phone to meet with Administration and/or First Responders.
- Wear safety vest.

SITE REUNIFICATION TASKS: (Site Director and staff)

- Direct parent traffic to appropriate entrance(s).
- Lock and secure all other entrances. Assign a staff member to monitor these doors and direct traffic.
- All parents are required to sign out their child at the re-unification table. (Parent ID may be required).
- Staff will get the student and deliver to the parent at the re-unification table.
- HS Staff may be asked to contact students/parents to assure that they arrived home safely.

TK-8 PARENT/STUDENT REUNIFICATION PROCESS:

- Once at alternative site, classrooms will be organized by teacher/grade level.
- Teachers will stay with students until all have been released.
- All staff members will stay on site until released by the administrator in charge.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to sign the class list in order to document to whom the student was released.
- Specialist and unassigned staff will be designated a classroom or post to assist with the reunification process.
- Once all students have been released, the building administrator will contact Command Center (406-268-7777) to indicate an “ALL CLEAR”.

EVACUATION /REUNIFICATION PROTOCOLS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS 9-12

1. Evacuate to PODS/Rally Points at a safe location or near campus – teachers take attendance.
2. If a building evacuation to another site is necessary and the student **parking lot is not safe** - ALL students must go to the alternative evacuation site, by either bus or walking. (Students and staff needing assistance will be accommodated.)
 - a. Attendance will again be taken at evacuation site – Staff notifies parents of kids who went AWOL in walk.

- b. If at some point the student parking lot is deemed safe, buses may bring student drivers and siblings back to student parking lot (must have ID and keys to get on bus) – Mass notification message sent to parents.
 - c. Buses may take students to a different reunification site. Mass notification message sent to parents.
 - d. Walkers released upon parental permission only, by teachers at reunification site – document –Mass notification message sent to parents.
 - e. Students notify parents by text or phone the names of the teachers they are with at reunification site so they can be found quickly – Mass notification message sent to parents.
3. If a building evacuation to another site is necessary and the **parking lot is safe** prior to moving to the alternative site -
- a. Student drivers with ID/ keys, and siblings only – released after attendance taken in the PODS/Rally Points. (Student drivers and siblings only who are released must be in contact with parents within 30 minutes) Mass notification message sent to parents.
 - b. Remaining students walked or bused to alternative site – Mass notification message sent to parents.
 - c. Walkers released upon parental permission only, by teachers at reunification site – document. Mass notification message sent to parents.
 - d. Students notify parents by text or phone the names of the teachers they are with at reunification site so they can be found quickly.

9-12 PARENT/STUDENT REUNIFICATION PROCESS:

- Once at alternative site, students will be organized by the class period they were in when evacuation took place (if during lunch, they will be assigned a teacher on site).
- Teachers will stay with students until all have been released.
- All staff members will stay on site until released by the administrator in charge.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to sign the class list in order to document to whom the student was released.
- Specialist and unassigned staff will be designated a post to assist with the reunification process.
- Once all students have been released, the building administrator will contact Command Center to indicate an “all clear”. At (406) 268-7777

Revised July, 2025