

Laurel Public Schools

Staff Handbook



Revised August 2026

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WELCOME!

At Laurel Public Schools, we believe in the infinite possibilities of human potential. We believe that every student deserves the right to dream, to discover, and to develop their unique potential. It is our responsibility and our privilege to unleash the potential inside every Locomotive we serve. Our District strives to propel student achievement, develop exceptional educators, and partner with parents who enable high-quality public schools that thrive in our community. We want all our staff members to feel this mirrors their core values and strive to accomplish this in everything they do and every interaction they have.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER

The material covered within this staff handbook is intended as a method of communicating to employees regarding general district information, rules, and regulations and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation, or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may, therefore, be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation, negotiated agreement, or changes in state or federal law.

Any information contained in this staff handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination, from time to time, without notice.

No information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, or as a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

WE BELIEVE EVERYONE IS EQUAL

The School District will provide equal employment opportunities to all persons, regardless of race, creed, religion, color, or national origin, and regardless of age, physical or mental disability, marital status, or sex, when the reasonable demands of the position do not require a distinction based on age, physical or mental disability, marital status, or sex.

The following have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements, including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and other civil rights or discrimination issues, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and may be contacted at the district office for additional information and/or compliance issues: christina_petersen@laurel.k12.mt.us or 406-628-3360,

Title IX Coordinator: Christina Petersen

Section 504 Coordinator: Christina Petersen

ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Individuals with disabilities shall be provided the opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities on an equal basis with those without disabilities and will not be subject to illegal discrimination. An individual with a disability should notify the Section 504 Coordinator if they have a disability which will require special assistance or services and what services are required as outlined in Policy 5002.

ASSOCIATIONS

The Laurel Unified Education Association is the bargaining unit for all certified and classified staff. A list of current officers is available upon request. LUEA is a part of Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE), the largest union in the state, representing the most diverse population of workers in the state. LUEA functions as one unit with the certified and classified working as one.

BOARD MEMBERS

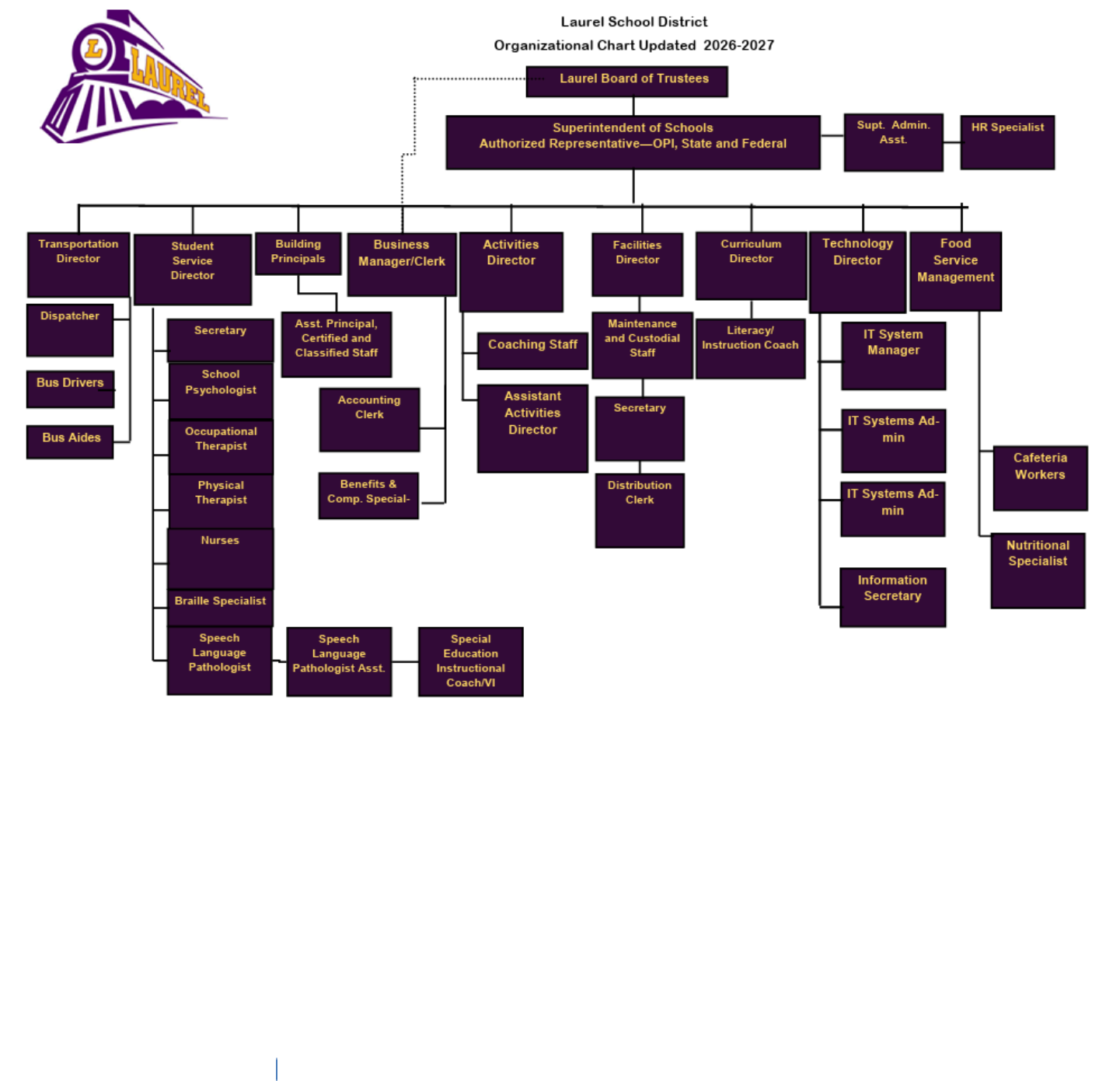
The Constitution of the State of Montana delegates to the Board responsibility for the conduct and governance of schools in the district. A list of current trustees is available at the Administration Office or on the district's website.

BOARD MEETINGS/COMMUNICATIONS

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings will take place at the District Offices. Regular meetings shall take place at 6:00 p.m. 2nd and 4th Mondays, or at other times and places determined by a majority vote. Except for an unforeseen emergency, meetings must be held in school buildings or, upon unanimous vote of the Trustees, in a publicly accessible building located within the district. If regular meetings are to be held at places other than the place stated above, or are adjourned to times other than the regular meeting time, notice of the meeting shall be made in the same manner as provided for special meetings.

When a meeting date falls on a school holiday, the meeting may take place on the next business day.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



PERSONAL CONDUCT – DISTRICT EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS – POLICY 5223-P(1)

The code of ethics is based on the premise that all education related employees within the district are expected to fulfill the district mission in serving students and school community in a professional, educationally sound, and efficient manner.

Laurel Public Schools employees will strive to improve public education, and to that end will:

1. Make the well-being of students the fundamental value in all decision making and actions.
2. Fulfill professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
3. Support the principle of due process and protect the civil and human rights of all individuals.
4. Obey local, state, and national laws and not knowingly join or support organizations that advocate directly or indirectly the overthrow of the government.
5. Implement the board of trustees' policies and administrative regulations.
6. Pursue appropriate measures to correct or enhance those laws, policies, and regulations that are not consistent with sound educational goals.
7. Avoid using positions for personal gain through political, social religious, economic, or other influence.
8. Accept academic degrees or other professional certification only from duly accredited institutions.
9. Maintain the standards and seek to improve the effectiveness of the education profession in all of its functions through research and continuing professional development.
10. Honor all contracts until fulfillment or release.
11. Maintain a high level of ethics in decisions and behaviors.
12. Acknowledge that education involves the building and maintenance of proper relationships between students, colleagues, parents, and community. It is paramount that such relationships are professional with appropriate boundaries.

Any violation of code subjects me to discipline by the district.

COMMUNITY USE OF BUILDING

School facilities are available to the community for educational, civic, cultural, and other uses consistent with the public interest when such use does not interfere with school programs or school-sponsored activities. Use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses. Persons on school premises must abide by the district's conduct rules at all times. Contact the District office for more information. Also, refer to policy 4330.

DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS

The district office is open between the hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm weekdays during the school year.

During summer months and other times during the school year when school is not in session, the office is open between the hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Thursday. The district office is closed on Fridays.

LEAVE

SICK LEAVE

Certified and classified employees shall be granted sick leave according to the terms of the current collective bargaining agreement.

Classified employees shall be granted sick leave benefits in accordance with § 2-18-618, MCA. For classified staff, “sick leave” means a leave of absence, with pay, for a sickness suffered by an employee or his or her immediate family. Each request will be judged by the district in accordance with Policy 5321 and the governing collective bargaining agreements.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

Eligibility

Employees are eligible if they have worked for the district for at least one (1) year, and for one thousand two hundred fifty (1,250) hours over the previous twelve (12) months, **and** if there have been at least fifty (50) District employees within seventy-five (75) miles for each working day during twenty (20) or more workweeks in the current or preceding calendar year.

Length/Purpose of Leave

In accordance with provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), 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 (as the Secretary shall, by regulation, determine) 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.

Service Member 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.

PERSONAL AND EMERGENCY LEAVE

Teachers may be granted personal and other types of leave according to the terms of the current collective bargaining agreement. Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, classified staff may be granted personal leave. For more information, contact Human Resources.

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AED'S)

The Board of Trustees of the Laurel Public School District recognizes that from time-to-time emergencies may arise that justify the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The district has one or more of these units for use by qualified personnel. The unit(s) is (are) located at:

1. Middle School - located across from the gym, near health classrooms
2. High School - located just outside of the main office doors
3. Stadium - in the locker room on the west side of the stadium
4. Admin building – hallway outside boardroom
5. Tech Ed Building @ LHS - left wall when first walking into the building
6. Weight room building @ LHS - near front entrance, inside the building
7. Elementary - on the wall near the gym
8. Intermediate – on wall near gym
9. Bus Barn/Transportation – in garage area outside of the Transportation Director's office

CARE/USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY

All staff members are encouraged to exercise continuous and vigilant care of all district-owned property. Such items as computer and video equipment, and musical instruments are priority items for theft and damage.

Incidents of theft or willful destruction of district property through vandalism or malicious mischief should be reported immediately to an Administrator.

Certain district-owned equipment may be checked out by staff. Such equipment may not be used for personal financial gain. An equipment-use form must be submitted and approved.

In the event of loss or damage, a fee will be assessed by the district according to the repair or replacement costs.

CASH IN DISTRICT BUILDINGS

Money collected by staff as a result of fundraisers or other school-related purposes is to be deposited in the building office. At no time are substantial amounts of money to be kept overnight or held during holidays or for long periods of time in classrooms.

Staff members are asked to emphasize to students the importance of promptly depositing money collected, with appropriate school officials.

Work Day Checkout

Teachers may leave the building and district grounds during lunch, as necessary. In addition, they may leave during their preparation periods as is outlined in the collective bargaining unit.

Classified staff are permitted to leave the building and district grounds during their lunch break.

We ask that staff check out/in with the building office. This will enable office staff to respond appropriately in the event of messages for a staff member and emergency situations that may arise.

Year-End Checkout

Each building principal will have procedures for year-end checkout depending on the grade level of the school. Please refer to your principal on how best to leave for the year.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

A District employee who has reasonable cause to suspect, as a result of information received in their professional or official capacity, that a child is abused or neglected by anyone, regardless of whether the person suspected of causing the abuse or neglect is a parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare, shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Public Health and Human Services or local law enforcement agency. The building administrator is also to be immediately informed. Montana State Reporting Hot Line # 866-820-5437

Written documentation of this report must be completed and submitted to the building administrator. Forms are available in the office.

Failure to report a suspected child abuse is a violation punishable by law and by district disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

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.

SAFETY FIRST!

When leaving the classroom, locker room, or other work areas between classes or at the end of the day, teachers are expected to turn out the lights and secure all doors. Windows should also be secured at day's end.

All staff are asked to refrain from keeping personal items of value in or about their desks. Purses should never be left unsecured. Students should be instructed to leave valuables at home. The district will not be responsible for the loss of, or damage to, personal property due to such causes as fire, theft, accident, or vandalism.

OVERTIME FOR CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

Non-exempt classified employees who work more than forty (40) hours in a given workweek may receive overtime pay of one and one-half (1 ½) times the normal hourly rate.

The Superintendent or their designee must approve any overtime work of a classified employee prior to the overtime being worked.

Under Montana law and the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act, a classified employee may not volunteer to work without pay in an assignment similar to the employee's regular work. In addition, a classified employee cannot work in a stipend position for the district, as it would violate Federal overtime laws.

A non-exempt employee who works overtime without authorization may be subject to disciplinary action.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE/BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS/INFECTION CONTROL PROCEDURES

The district provides reasonable protection against the risk of exposure to communicable disease to all staff while engaged in the performance of their duties. Protection is provided through immunization and exclusion in accordance with Montana Code Annotated and the Administrative Rules of Montana.

Infection control procedures, including provisions for handling and disposing of contaminated fluids, have also been established through Board policy and administrative regulations for staff and student protection.

All staff shall comply with measures adopted by the district and with all rules set by the Montana State Health Department and the county health department.

Staff members have a responsibility to report to the district when infected with a communicable disease unless otherwise stated by law. If a staff member has a communicable disease, the staff member must notify the school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board of the communicable disease which could be life threatening to an immune-compromised person. The school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board must determine, after consultation with and on the advice of public health officials, if the immune-compromised person needs appropriate accommodation to protect their health and safety.

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 shall be encouraged to report the existence of the illness so that precautions may be taken to protect the health of others. The district reserves the right to require a statement from an employee's primary care provider, before the employee may return to work. If a staff member develops symptoms of any reportable communicable or infectious illness while at school, the responsible school officials shall do the following:

- (a) isolate the staff member immediately from students or staff
- (b) consult a physician, other qualified medical professional, or the local county health authority to determine if the case should be reported.

All staff and volunteers present in any school building shall engage in hand hygiene at the following times, which include but are not limited to:

- (a) Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- (b) Before and after preparing, eating, or handling food or drinks
- (c) Before and after administering medication or screening temperature
- (d) After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- (e) After recess
- (f) After handling garbage
- (g) After assisting students with handwashing
- (h) After use of the restroom

Hand hygiene includes but is not limited to washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.

COMPLAINTS

Student/Parent Complaints

The district recognizes that complaints regarding staff performance, discipline, grades, student progress, and homework assignments will be made by students and parents from time to time. Every effort will be made to ensure that such complaints are handled and resolved informally and as close to their origin as possible.

Students, parents, and others with complaints will be encouraged to discuss the complaint directly with the staff member. All such meetings should be held in confidence and not in the presence of others.

If the complaint is not informally resolved, staff should advise the complainant that he/she may submit the matter directly to the building principal or immediate supervisor, as appropriate. The complainant will be provided with necessary formal complaint procedure guidelines in accordance with Board policy 1700 and applicable provisions of negotiated agreements.

When a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to an individual Board member, it will be referred to the Superintendent for appropriate building administrator follow-up.

All staff members should familiarize themselves with Board policy and applicable provisions of administrative regulations and negotiated agreements regarding the handling of complaints. Please refer to Policy 1700.

Staff Complaints

Staff member complaints contending a violation, misinterpretation, or inappropriate application of district personnel policies and/or administrative regulations should be directed to the Building Administrator or Department Director for informal discussion and resolution. If the staff member feels that a resolution may not be reached or the issue is with the Administrator/Director, the employee is encouraged to reach out to the Superintendent.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, formal complaint procedures may be initiated by staff in accordance with Board policy and administrative regulations (Policy 1700).

The grievance procedure in the current collective bargaining agreement must be followed when filing a complaint regarding the current collective bargaining agreement.

CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION

Contracts for administrators, administrative support, certified, and coaches will be executed for employees as soon as possible after being hired.

Salaries, including compensation for extracurricular assignments over and above the duties associated with a staff member's regularly assigned duties, will be determined in accordance with salary schedules and salary placement guidelines established by the Board and/or policies adopted by the Board which are consistent with salary schedules and salary placement provisions of negotiated agreements.

It is the staff member's responsibility to provide all information necessary for placement on the salary schedule to the office in accordance with timelines established by the district and negotiated agreements.

COPYING APPLIES TO EVERYONE

The district recognizes that federal law makes it illegal to duplicate copyrighted materials without authorization of the holder of the copyright, except for certain exempt purposes. Severe penalties may be imposed for unauthorized copying or use of audio, visual, digital, or printed materials and computer software, unless the copying or use conforms to the “fair use” doctrine.

Under the ‘fair use’ doctrine, unauthorized reproduction of printed copyrighted materials is permissible for such purposes as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, or research.

For more information, please refer to Policy 2312.

CONFERENCES

Conferences should be treated as an opportunity for constructive, mutual exchange of information and ideas for the welfare and continued academic growth of the student. Occasionally, teachers or parents may arrange for conferences outside regularly scheduled conference dates, to meet more immediate student needs. Teachers should be prepared to provide after-school or pre-school time to meet with students as necessary.

CRIMINAL

RECORDS

CHECKS/FINGERPRINTING

Any finalist recommended for hire to a paid or volunteer position with the district, involving regular unsupervised access to students in schools, as determined by the District Superintendent, shall submit to a fingerprint criminal background investigation conducted by the district prior to consideration of the recommendation for employment or appointment by the Board.

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.

The following applicants for employment or service, as a condition for employment or service, will be required, as a condition of any offer of employment or request for service, to authorize, in writing, a fingerprint criminal background investigation:

- a certified teacher seeking full- or part-time employment within the district;
- an educational support personnel employee seeking full- or part-time employment within the district;
- an employee of a person or firm holding a contract with the district, if the employee is assigned to the district;
- a volunteer assigned within the district who has REGULAR unsupervised access to students.
- Substitutes
- Student teachers

CURRICULUM

Curriculum guides are available for all courses taught in the district. Curriculum guides reflect a consistent and coherent structure for the education of district students.

The curriculum established for the courses and grade levels of this district provides the flexibility necessary to meet the individual needs of students and their divergent learning rates and styles.

Deviations from established curriculum, textbooks, and instructional materials are not permitted without Administrator approval. Teachers with questions should contact their Administrator or the Curriculum Director.

Though teaching methodology may vary, classroom instruction is expected to reflect “best practices” consistent with research on effective instruction.

DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

District employees who fail to fulfill their job responsibilities or to follow reasonable directions of their supervisors, or who conduct themselves on or off the job in ways that affect their effectiveness on the job, may be subject to discipline. Discipline and dismissal of staff will follow due process, administrative regulation, relevant provisions of negotiated agreements, and applicable law. Please refer to the discipline process in the most current collective bargaining agreement.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

No staff member engaged in work in connection with a direct federal grant or contract shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use on or in the workplace any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance or alcohol, as defined in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and as further defined by regulation at 21 CFR 1300.11 through 1300.15.

“Workplace” is defined to mean the site for the performance of work done in connection with a federal grant or contract. That includes any school building or any school premises; any school-owned vehicle, or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; off school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event, or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district where work on a federal grant is performed.

Each staff member engaged in work related to a district federal grant or contract must notify his/her supervisor of his/her conviction of any criminal drug statute based on conduct occurring in the workplace, as defined above, no later than five days after such conviction.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

In the event of extremely cold temperatures, wind chill factors, snow, wind, or other circumstances requiring a modification of the normal routine, the Superintendent or his/her designee will make the decision prior to 6:00 am and contact by email, Infinite Campus, Messenger, and Facebook.

Modification of the normal routine generally occurs in one of two ways. The first circumstance occurs when buses are unable to safely make their normal runs. In this case, bus transportation is suspended, but school is still in session. Students will still be encouraged to attend, but parents/guardians must make the judgement

relative to safety for their children to reach school and return at the end of the day.

The other rare and very unusual circumstance occurs when conditions are such to warrant closure of the schools. In this circumstance, two situations may occur:

- 1). The governor declares a state of emergency and no state funds are to be denied to the district as a result of the school closure.
- 2). A state of emergency may not exist throughout the entire state, but conditions require closure.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND DISASTER PLANS

All staff will have access to the ‘Raptor’ app that contains all of the district’s emergency procedures and detailed staff responsibilities in the event of an emergency. If you do not want to download the app on your personal device, copies of the emergency procedures plan will be available in your building office and other strategic locations throughout the building.

For directions on how to download the app, please contact the Administration Office at 406-628-3360

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

You and your household dependents have access to confidential counseling and other services through Care Solace. This program is there to assist you with personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, grief, and so much more.

Care Solace
(888) 515-0595
<https://caresolace.com/site/laurel>

EMPLOYEE USE OF ELECTRONIC MAIL, INTERNET, NETWORKS, AND DISTRICT EQUIPMENT

The district e-mail and Internet systems are intended to be used for educational purposes only, and employees have no expectation of privacy. Employees have no expectation of privacy in district-owned technology equipment, including but not limited to district-owned desktops, laptops, memory storage devices, and cell phones.

All e-mail/Internet records are considered District records and should be transmitted only to individuals who have a need to receive them.

The district reserves the right to bypass individual passwords at any time and to monitor the use of such systems by employees.

District records and e-mail/Internet records are subject to disclosure to law enforcement or government officials or to other third parties through subpoena or other process. Consequently, the District retains the right to access stored records in cases where there is reasonable cause to expect wrongdoing or misuse of the system and to

review, store, and disclose all information sent over the district e-mail systems for any legally permissible reason, including but not limited to determining whether the information is a public record, whether it contains information discoverable in litigation, and to access District information in the employee's absence.

All District employees should be aware that e-mail messages can be retrieved, even if they have been deleted, and that statements made in e-mail communications can form the basis of various legal claims against the individual author or the district.

It is important to be aware that documents saved incorrectly may not be able to be retrieved in the event of a computer loss or other unexpected event. We recommend that work be saved in your Google drive and not on your computer.

E-mail sent or received by the District or the District's employees may be considered a public record subject to public disclosure or inspection. All District e-mail and Internet communications may be monitored.

EVALUATION OF STAFF

The District's evaluation program is designed to provide an opportunity for staff to set goals and objectives, including plans for professional growth and career opportunities, and receive administrative responses to them; to have formal and informal observations of the teaching of licensed staff and the performance of assigned duties and job responsibilities of all other staff; to receive verbal and written comments and suggestions for improvement from supervisors; and to have clear opportunities to make improvement within specific timelines.

The evaluation program also provides a tool for administrators who are responsible for making decisions about promotion, retention, dismissal, and discipline. Non-tenured certified staff shall be evaluated, at a minimum, on at least an annual basis. Tenured certified staff members may be evaluated according to the terms stated in the current collective bargaining agreement if applicable.

Classified staff will be formally evaluated once during their first year of employment with the district and annually thereafter.

Copies of the district's evaluation procedures will be provided to all staff. Evaluation of all staff will be conducted in accordance with established Board policy and applicable district evaluation procedures, negotiated agreements, and Montana Code Annotated.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

Regular working hours for all classified staff will be set by the supervisor for the specific department. Classified staff are **not** to work before, beyond, or outside their established working hours and are not to work overtime without prior authorization from the supervisor.

All time sheets must be a true reflection of all time worked, whether it is more or less than regularly scheduled work hours.

Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action in accordance with applicable provisions of Board policy, administrative regulations, and negotiated agreements.

Administrators, directors, and/or supervisors shall give written notification to non-exempt employees, as

defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, of the Board's following expectations:

- What constitutes non-exempt working hours;
- What constitutes normal working hours;
- That employees are not to work before, beyond, or outside their normal working hours and are not to work overtime without prior authorization;
- That employee time sheets be a true reflection of all time worked, whether it is more or less than normally scheduled hours;
- That a written corrective statement be given to employees not complying with established procedures.

Overtime is defined as time worked over 40 hours in one week. A week is defined as seven consecutive days covering Saturday through Friday.

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

It is the policy of Laurel Public Schools to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and state law 20-5-202 (2), MCA, pertaining to students who bring a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. In accordance with 20-5-202 (3), MCA, a teacher, superintendent, or a principal shall suspend immediately for good cause a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. In accordance with Montana law, a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district must be expelled from school for a period of not less than 1 year.

For the purposes of the firearms, the term "firearm" means:

- (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon;
- (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or
- (D) any destructive device pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (4).

Possession of Weapons other than Firearms

The district does not allow weapons on school property. Any student found to have possessed, used or transferred a weapon on school property will be subject to discipline in accordance with the district's discipline policy. For purposes of this section, "weapon" means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury, including but not limited to air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; fake (facsimile) weapons; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; nunchucks (also known as nunchucks); throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace or other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon.

FUNDRAISING

Activities to raise money for a wide variety of school activities and equipment are held at various times throughout the course of the school year. All fund-raising activities must be conducted under the direct supervision of staff or other authorized individuals and approved by the Administrator or Superintendent prior to the activity being initiated. Fund-raising requests must include an explanation or justification for the proposal, consistent with building and/or district goals. Fundraising must not interfere with or disrupt school.

Fundraising request forms are available in the office. All money raised must be receipted and deposited with the district. Staff and students should take all reasonable precautions to provide for the security of any items/materials/products being sold. Staff members are directed to follow established building procedures for the depositing of funds collected. At no time should money collected be allowed to accumulate in classrooms, lockers, or other unsecured areas

Crowdfunding

All crowd funding requests and receivables are governed and supervised by board policy. Crowd funding endeavors are generally viewed as beneficial when coordinated with district goals, initiatives, and existing plans. Proposals, products, and resources generated through crowd funding must receive prior approval from the Superintendent or designee. Approvals for proposals or gifted resources may be denied based upon but not limited to: technology, curricular, and/or activities incompatibility; long term sustainability concerns regarding materials, service, and/or staffing; conflicts with district initiatives, state or federal law.

As public employees, staff members are subject to Montana public employees' ethics laws. Staff members may not solicit or accept material, cash, or equipment intended for personal use from individuals or through a crowd source effort that could be considered a gift of substantial value or that otherwise violates the ethics statutes.

GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

Staff members are to avoid accepting anything of value offered by another for the purpose of influencing his/her professional judgment. No organization may solicit funds from staff members within the schools, nor may anyone distribute flyers or other materials related to fund drives through the school without Administrator approval.

The solicitation of staff by sales people, other staff, or agents during on-duty hours is prohibited without Administrator approval. Any solicitation should be reported at once to the Administrator.

GRIEVANCES

Refer to applicable provisions of certified and/or classified negotiated agreements, or board policy 1700, as appropriate.

GUEST SPEAKERS/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

Guest speakers may be used by teachers from time to time, when such use is consistent with educational goals and with a demonstrable relation to the curricular or co-curricular activity in which the participating students are involved. Teachers are expected to inform their Administrator of the date, time, and nature of the presentation whenever such use is planned.

Prior Administrator approval is required for all guest speakers.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING/INTIMIDATION

The Board will strive to provide a positive and productive working environment. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation between employees or by third parties, are strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. This includes bullying, harassment, or intimidation via electronic communication devices ("cyberbullying").

The district encourages staff support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment and sexual discrimination in the public schools. Students and staff will discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area their Building Administrator or with Christina Petersen, District Title IX coordinator.

For purposes of this section and the grievance process, "sexual harassment" means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the district on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the district's education program or activity or;
3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 USC 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(8) or "stalking" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(30).

All staff are expected to treat each other and students with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop. A substantiated complaint against a student or staff member will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense. Supportive measures are available to parties involved in Title IX investigations.

The district will notify all parties involved in sexual harassment allegations. To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment or sexual discrimination by a staff member will result in an investigation in accordance with Policy 3225 and 3225P or Policy 5012 and 5012P. A student will not be required to present a complaint to a person who is the subject of the complaint. If the resolution of the complaint is not satisfactory, the decision may be appealed in accordance with Policy 3225P or 5012P.

For more information about the district's complaint procedure, see Policy 3225, 3225P, 3225F or Policy 5012, 5012P, 5012F.

There will be no retaliation by the district against any person who, in good faith, reports harassment.

INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES

Laurel Public Schools wants to make sure you're getting the most out of our benefits package, which is why we have put together a comprehensive benefits guide. We invest significant resources into our faculty and staff's health and wellbeing. We hope you take the opportunity to carefully review these benefits and take advantage of the services offered to you and your family. To review the latest version of the district's benefits guide, visit

the HR page on the district's website.

BADGES

Badges are issued to staff by the district office. In order to protect property, students, staff and to ensure the building is adequately secured when no authorized personnel are present, all staff are expected to follow the following key-control procedures:

1. The duplication of keys is prohibited;
2. Keys/badges are not to be left unattended. Avoid having keys on desks, tables, in mailboxes, unattended coat pockets, etc.;
3. Keys/badges may not be loaned [to students or to individuals not employed by the district]. Under no circumstance should staff provide keys to students to "run errands", "unlock/lock" doors, etc.;
4. Lost or stolen keys/badges must be reported to the Administrator within [24 hours] of discovery of the loss or theft so that measures may be taken to protect district property. Three days will be allowed for the finding or recovery of keys/badges before any charges are assessed;
5. Upon completion of a lost-or-stolen-key/badges report form, presentation of the broken or damaged key(s), and submission of assessed fees, replacement keys will be issued [within 72 hours];
6. Charges for lost or stolen keys/badges will be made to the staff member to whom the key(s) have been issued.
7. All keys are to be checked in at the end of the school year. Staff with summer duties necessitating building access may make arrangements with the Administrator to keep their keys as appropriate.

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTION

Requests of staff by individuals or groups to distribute pamphlets, booklets, flyers, brochures, and other similar materials to students for classroom use or to take home are to be referred to the Superintendent. The materials and proposed method of distribution will be reviewed and a decision made based on the educational concerns and interests of the district.

MEETINGS

Staff meetings are scheduled for the purpose of organization and communication of business that typically cannot be handled through staff bulletins, departmental or committee structure. All staff are expected to attend staff meetings unless prior arrangements have been made with the building principal. Meetings sponsored or called by recognized collective bargaining units during contract hours are subject to prior approval of the building principal. Attendance of staff members at such meetings is left to the discretion of each employee.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Every teacher under contract must bring their current, valid certificate to the Human Resources office at the time of initial employment, as well as at the time of each renewal of certification. The Human Resources office will file a copy of all certificates, noting class and endorsement of certificates, and will update permanent records as necessary. The Human Resources office also will retain a copy of each valid certificate of a contracted certified employee in that employee's personnel file.

Each new certified employee will be assigned a mentor at the time of hire. This individual is available to

assist you during your first year of employment. During your second year, they are available as you need them. A mentorship during the third year of your employment will be decided by the mentor, employee and principal of the school.

Probation and contract renewal are based upon the provisions outlined in the collective bargaining agreement.

PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Staff members may exercise their right to participate fully in affairs of public interest on a local, county, state, and national level on the same basis as any citizen in public or private employment and within the law.

Staff members may, within the limitations imposed by state and federal laws and regulations, choose any side of a particular issue and support their viewpoints as they desire, by vote, discussion, or persuading others. Such discussion and persuasion, however, may not be carried on during the performance of district duties.

On all controversial issues, staff members are expected to make clear that the viewpoints they represent are personal and are not to be interpreted as the district's official viewpoint.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

The district maintains a complete confidential and permanent personnel record for every current and former employee. The employees' personnel records will be maintained in the district's administrative office, under the supervision of the Superintendent. Employees will be given a copy of their personnel record upon request.

The district may release public information as governed by Policy 4340.

A personnel file may contain but is not limited to transcripts from colleges or universities, information allowed by statute, a record of previous employment (other than college placement papers for periods beyond active candidacy for a position), evaluations, copies of contracts, and copies of letters of recommendation requested by an employee. All material in the personnel file must be related to the employee's work, position, salary, or employment status in the district. All documents, communications, and records dealing with the processing of a grievance shall be filed separately from the personnel files of the participants.

Release of personnel records to parties other than those authorized to inspect them will be only upon receipt of a court order.

An employee can view their personnel file at any time. They only need to make an appointment with Human Resources to view the file. They may ask for copies of anything that may be in the file. Any document that is located in the personnel file may not be removed.

PREP PERIODS/INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF PLANNING TIME

Teacher preparation time shall be scheduled during the normal student school day and shall exclude the duty-free lunch.

1. Elementary teachers will be guaranteed 400 minutes of preparation time over a two-week period. The exceptions for 400 minutes would be in time periods shortened by holiday and calendar. Elementary

teachers will be excused from their classroom while district specialists are teaching their students. An exception may be made in unusual circumstances requiring additional supervision.

2. High School and Middle school teachers will be guaranteed a minimum of 400 minutes prep time over a two-week period. The exceptions for 400 minutes would be in time periods shortened by holiday and calendar.
3. Specialist teachers will be guaranteed a minimum of 400 minutes prep time over a two-week period. The exceptions for 400 minutes would be in time periods shortened by holiday or calendar.
For purposes of this section, district specialists include:
Elementary: Music, P.E., Librarian, Counselor, Title I, Special Education, Art, and Gifted/Talented.
Middle School/High School: Counselor, Librarian, Title I, Special Education, and Gifted/Talented.
4. Nothing herein shall be used to prohibit a teacher or specialist from using a portion of this period for personal use within the building.
5. Related Service Providers shall be exempt from this section.

REPORT CARDS

Teachers are expected to report their students' progress to the students and their parents. Report cards are issued at the midway point of the first, second, third, and fourth quarter grading periods, indicating academic and citizenship progress to date.

Such reports may be issued at other times during the course of a grading period as deemed appropriate by teachers.

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

The State of Montana has determined that perpetrators of certain sex crimes pose a continuing threat to society as a whole even after completion of their criminal sentences. Recognizing that the safety and welfare of students and staff is of paramount importance, the Laurel School District declares that, except in very limited circumstances, Laurel School District is off limits to registered sex offenders.

In the event that a registered sex offender, whose victim was a minor, has a child attending the district, the administrator of the school where the child attends shall be authorized to modify this policy's restrictions to permit the parent to drop off and pick up the child from school and to come to campus to attend parent-teacher conferences. However, the parent may not linger on or about school property before or after dropping off his or her child, and the parent is prohibited from being in any part of the school building except the main office. This policy shall apply only if an administrator becomes aware that a parent at the school is a registered sex offender.

In the event of a truly exceptional situation, such as graduation, a parent on the Sex Offender Registry may ask the Superintendent for a waiver of this policy to permit the parent to attend these special events. It is the intent of the Board, however, that these special circumstances be truly unusual and infrequent occurrences.

STAFF PRIVACY

A staff member's address and personal phone number will not be released by the district. Such information may be disclosed if a staff member authorizes the district to do so.

The district may disclose information about a former employee's job performance to a prospective employer, under the following conditions:

1. Disclosure of information is upon the request of the prospective employer; or
2. Disclosure of information is upon the request of the former staff member;
3. The information is related to job performance;
4. The disclosure is presumed to be in good faith.

The district will not disclose information that is knowingly false, deliberately misleading, rendered with malicious purpose, or is in violation of the staff member's civil rights.

RESEARCH/COPYRIGHTS AND PATENTS

Staff members engaged in a research project during the work day or who use district resources or students, either for study toward advanced work or for use in classroom instruction, may do so only with the prior approval of the Superintendent. Privacy rights of students or other individuals involved in such research projects must be maintained.

Publications, instructional materials, articles, models, and other devices prepared by staff members for district use with district time, money, and facilities, as part of the employee's job responsibilities, remain the property of the district.

In the event that a staff member produces items described above partly on his/her own time and partly on district time, the district reserves the right to claim full ownership. The employee may petition the district for assignment of copyright or patent rights. Employees may not attempt to copyright or patent such items without the knowledge and consent of the district.

RESIGNATIONS

Certified employees will generally be expected to fulfill the terms of their contract unless there are clearly compelling, mitigating circumstances which prevent the certified individual from doing so. The collective bargaining unit more clearly explains the expectations of certified resignations.

Classified employees are expected to provide a 2-week notice of their resignation.

The Board has authorized the Superintendent to accept, on its behalf, resignations from any school district employee. The Superintendent shall provide written acceptance of the resignation, including the date of acceptance, to the employee, setting forth the effective date of the resignation.

Once the Superintendent 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.

RETIREMENT

Certified employees

To assist the district in its planning efforts, staff members considering retirement are encouraged to notify the district as early as possible, preferably at the beginning of the school year in which the retirement will take place. Per the Certified Bargaining Agreement, "teachers electing to retire or resign from the District must notify the district of their intent by February 1st of that year.

Classified employees

All District employees shall participate in retirement programs under the Federal Social Security Act and the Public Employees' Retirement System in accordance with state retirement regulations.

The district will contribute to the PERS whenever a classified employee is employed for more than the equivalent of one hundred twenty (120) full days (960 hours) in any one (1) fiscal year. Part-time employees who are employed for less than 960 hours in a fiscal year may elect PERS coverage, at their option and in accordance with § 19-3-412, MCA.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

A building safety committee has been established to help implement the district's safety program and as a part of an ongoing effort to help ensure the safety and health of students, staff, and others while on district property.

The building safety committee meets monthly and conducts workplace safety inspections quarterly to locate and identify safety and health hazards, and makes recommendations for corrections as needed. All significant safety-related incidents are investigated to help prevent similar events from reoccurring.

All potential hazards are to be reported immediately to a safety committee member or to the office.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Laurel Public Schools will permit the use of service animals by an individual with a disability according to state and federal regulations. State law defines a service animal as a dog or any other animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Federal law definition of a disability includes a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

The School District will permit the use of service animals by an individual with a disability according to state and federal regulations. The School District will honor requests for service animals in accordance with the applicable Section 504 or Special Education policy adopted by the Board of Trustees. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability.

Examples of work or tasks performed by the service animal to accommodate an identified disability include, but are limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing nonviolent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition. (Refer to Policy 8425 – 8425P)

SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS

Supplementary materials from non-school sources require Principal approval prior to their use in school. This includes educational films and all video rentals secured from or through commercial sources.

Generally, materials that are of obvious educational quality, supplement and enrich instructional and reference materials for definite school courses, and are timely may be considered for approval.

STAFF CONDUCT

Employees are expected to maintain high standards of honesty, integrity and impartiality in the conduct of district business. All employees shall maintain appropriate employee-student relationship boundaries in all respects, including but not limited to personal, speech, print, and digital communications. Failure to honor the appropriate employee student relationship boundary will result in a report to the Department of Public Health and Human Services and the appropriate law enforcement agency.

In accordance with state law, an employee should not dispense or utilize any information gained from employment with the district, accept gifts or benefits, or participate in business enterprises or employment which creates a conflict of interest with the faithful and impartial discharge of the employee's district duties. A district employee may, prior to acting in a manner which may infringe on any fiduciary duty, disclose the nature of the private interest which creates a conflict. Care should be taken to avoid using, or avoid the appearance of using, official positions and confidential information for personal advantage or gain.

Employees of the District shall not injure or threaten to injure another person; damage another's property or that of the district; or possess any firearm or other non-firearm weapon on school property at any time.

Further, employees should hold confidential all information deemed to be not for public consumption as determined by state law and Board policy. Employees shall also respect the confidentiality of people served in the course of the employee's duties and use information gained in a responsible manner. Discretion should be employed even within the school system's own network of communication.

Administrators and supervisors may set forth specific rules and regulations governing staff conduct on the job within a particular building.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Board recognizes the importance of continued educational experiences and other professional growth activities as a means to improve job performance.

Professional growth experiences may include, but are not limited to, college courses, workshops, curriculum planning, individual research, travel, supervision of teacher trainees, and other such activities.

All requests for release time from regular work duties for attendance at meetings or conferences will be decided based on such factors as availability of funds, consistency with district and building goals and job assignment. Requests require prior Superintendent approval.

Meetings and conferences devoted primarily or exclusively to organizational or business affairs of staff member collective bargaining units, political workshops, training sessions for consultation committees, and like activities will not be considered as appropriate activities for the expenditure of district funds.

STAFF DRESS AND GROOMING

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

Teaching as a professional, demands setting a good example for students in every possible way. As adults and professionals, teachers are expected to be guided in their grooming habits by what is most generally acceptable in the business and professional world.

Shorts or active wear are not acceptable attire unless your position requires you to engage in exercise activities such as P.E., etc. In addition, flip flops are not permitted during school hours due to safety concerns. Exceptions to be made by the superintendent during hot weather. Open-toed shoes are permitted in areas of the district where safety is not a factor such as general classrooms.

Tattoos are permitted as long as they are not offensive, vulgar or negative. The district reserves the right to ask the employee to cover any tattoo that would be deemed offensive. Laurel Public Schools will not allow excessive tattoos like full sleeves, face tattoos, or those that may be viewed negatively by parents.

While Laurel Public Schools believe that a person's dress does not affect their ability to be effective educators for students; we ask that you represent yourself in a way that delineates who is the student and who is the teacher.

In order to support our school and students, we invite all our staff to wear their alma mater on Wednesdays and purple and gold on Fridays. If you are participating in an outside training, we ask that you dress appropriately to represent Laurel Public Schools.

STAFF HEALTH AND SAFETY

In order to assure the safety of staff and students, information and/or training, as necessary, is provided to assist all staff to recognize and to respond appropriately to the presence of hazardous materials in the workplace, including proper handling, labeling, storage, and disposal of such materials.

All staff members are expected to conduct their work in compliance with first aid and infection control procedures established by the district and the following safety rules of the district:

1. All injuries shall be reported immediately to the person in charge or other responsible representative of the district;
2. It is the duty of all employees to make full use of safeguards provided for their protection. It shall be the employee's responsibility to abide by and perform the following requirements:
 - a. An employee shall not operate a machine unless guard or method of guarding is in good condition, working order, in place and operative;
 - b. An employee shall stop the machine or moving parts and properly tag-out or lock-out the starting control before oiling, adjusting, or
 - i. repairing, except when such machine is provided with means of oiling or adjusting that will prevent possibility of hazardous contact
 - ii. with moving parts;
 - c. An employee shall not remove guards or render methods of guarding inoperative, except for the purpose of adjustment, oiling, repair, or setting up a new job;
 - d. Employees shall report to their supervisor any guard or method of guarding that is not properly adjusted or not accomplishing its intended function;
 - e. Employees shall not use their hands or any portion of their bodies to reach between moving parts or to remove jams, hang-ups, etc. (use hook, stick, tong, jig, or another accessory);
 - f. Employees shall not work under objects being supported that could accidentally fall (such as loads supported by jacks, the raised body of a dump truck, etc.), until such objects are

- properly blocked or shored;
- g. Employees shall not use defective tools or equipment. No tool or piece of equipment should be used for any purpose for which it is not suited, and none should be abused by straining beyond its safe working load;
 3. Employees shall not remove, deface, or destroy any warning, danger sign, or barricade or interfere with any other form of accident prevention device or practice provided on any machine, tool, or piece of equipment which they are using or which is being used by any other worker;
 4. Employees must not work underneath or over others, thereby exposing them to a hazard without first notifying the other employee(s) or seeing that proper safeguards or precautions have been taken;
 5. Employees shall not work in unprotected, exposed, or hazardous areas under floor openings;
 6. Long or unwieldy articles shall not be carried or moved, unless adequate means of guarding or guiding are provided to prevent injury;
 7. Hazardous conditions or practices observed at any time shall be reported as soon as practicable to the person in charge or some other responsible representative of Laurel Public Schools;
 8. Employees observed working in a manner which might cause immediate injury to either themselves or other workers shall be warned of the danger;
 9. Before leaving a job, workers shall correct or arrange to give warning of, any condition which might result in injury to others unfamiliar with existing conditions;
 10. Good housekeeping methods shall be observed in all operations. Materials shall be handled and stored as to minimize falling, tripping, or collision hazards;
 11. Working and storage areas and passageways shall be kept free of unnecessary obstructions. No loose object shall be placed in any area where its presence will necessitate employees crowding between such objects as moving machinery, steam pipes, or other objects with which contact would be dangerous;
 12. Any materials which might cause an employee to slip or fall shall be removed from floors and other treading surfaces immediately, or suitable means or methods shall be used to control the hazardous condition;
 13. All sharp, pointed, or otherwise hazardous projections in work areas shall be removed or rendered harmless.

STAFF/PARENT RELATIONS

The district encourages parents to be involved in their student's school experience. Teachers are advised that unless otherwise ordered by the courts, an order of sole custody on the part of one parent does not deprive the other parent of certain rights. It is the responsibility of the parent with sole custody to provide to the district any court order that curtails the rights of the non-custodial parent.

A non-custodial parent may receive and inspect the school records pertaining to their student and to consult with teachers concerning their student's welfare and education.

Non-custodial parents will not be granted visitation or telephone access to their student during the school day. Students may not be released to the non-custodial parent without the written permission of the parent having sole custody.

In the case of joint custody, it is the responsibility of the parents to provide the district, in writing, any special requests or clarifications in areas concerning the student and the district's relationship and responsibilities. Such information will be maintained on file in the office and provided to staff as appropriate.

Staff members with questions regarding custodial and/or non-custodial parent rights with respect to particular students should contact the office.

STAFF ROOM

A staff room is provided for staff use during break, lunch, and preparation periods as may be appropriate. All staff are expected to “pitch in”, as needed, to help keep this gathering area clean and orderly.

Personal items of value should not be left in the staff room. Staff members leaving such items in the staff room do so at their own risk.

Students or any children are not permitted in the staff room.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Staff members are responsible for the supervision of all students while in school or engaged in school-sponsored activities.

All teachers are expected to be in their classrooms prior to the arrival of students.

Under no circumstances are classrooms or other areas where students are under the supervision of assigned staff to be left unattended while students are present. Teachers who may need to temporarily leave the classroom or their assigned duties in an emergency situation while students are present are expected to contact the office to arrange for temporary coverage.

No other staff member may leave their assigned group unsupervised except as appropriate supervision arrangements have been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaged in school-sponsored activities, students may be released only into the custody of parents or other authorized persons.

TEACHING ABOUT BELIEFS OUTSIDE THE STANDARDS

Religious, political, and social education is the responsibility of the home. Public schools are obligated to maintain neutrality in all such matters.

However, as there are issues that influence many areas of education, such as literature and history, its role in civilization may be taught when consistent with curriculum and teaching assignment. In such instances, teachers may provide information and opportunity for students to study the forms of various religions, political, and social issues as long as it conforms to Montana Teaching Standards.

Teachers may not advocate, openly or covertly or by subtlety, a particular religious, political, or social beliefs.

CELLPHONES AND OTHER MOBILE DEVICES

Telephones are available throughout the building for staff convenience. Long-distance calls for district business and personal use may be placed.

Employee Use of Mobile Devices

The Board recognizes that the use of mobile devices may be appropriate to help ensure the safety and security of District property, students, staff, and others while on District property or engaged in District- sponsored activities. District employees are prohibited from using mobile devices while driving or otherwise operating District-owned motor vehicles, or while driving or otherwise operating personally-owned vehicles for school district purposes.

Emergency Use

Staff are encouraged to use any available mobile device in the event of an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.

Use of Personal Mobile Devices

Employees are prohibited from using their personal mobile devices during the instructional period for non-instructional purposes. When necessary, employees may use their personal mobile devices only during non-instructional time. In no event shall an employee's use of a mobile device interfere with the employee's job obligations and responsibilities. If such use is determined to have interfered with an employee's obligations and responsibilities, the employee may be disciplined in accordance with the terms of the collective bargaining agreement and Board policies.

TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT

The district maintains tobacco-free buildings and grounds. Tobacco includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, any nicotine delivery system, and any other tobacco 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, 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, facilities/warehouse, school buses, and all district property, which includes district vehicles.

USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES FOR DISTRICT BUSINESS

The use of private vehicles for district business, including the transportation of students, is generally discouraged. Staff members should use district-owned vehicles whenever possible, scheduling activities and other transportation far enough in advance to avoid any non-emergency use of private vehicles. No staff members may use a private vehicle for district business without written permission from the Superintendent.

VACANCIES/TRANSFERS

Vacancies in-district will be communicated by appropriate means. The district will follow the provisions as outline in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Vacancies may be advertised in-district only or they may be advertised in-district, local public advertising and, where appropriate and if time permits, through a broader regional and/or national basis.

A vacancy may be limited to in-district advertising upon the recommendation of the building principal/department director, with a final determination by the Superintendent.

A vacancy may not be advertised, as determined by the Superintendent.

Voluntary and involuntary transfer of staff members may be authorized by the Superintendent based on district personnel needs and in accordance with district procedures and negotiated agreements.

VACATION

Classified employees, Business Managers/District Clerks, Administrative Support, Related Service Providers and Superintendents will accrue annual vacation leave benefits in accordance with §§ 2-18-611, 2-18-612, 2-18-614 through 2-18-617 and 2-18-621, MCA.

Vacation is earned according to the following schedule:

RATE-EARNED SCHEDULE	
Years of Employment	Working Days Credit per
1 day – 10 years	15
10 – 15 years	18
15 - 20 years	21
20 years on	24

Employees are not entitled to any vacation leave with pay until they have been continuously employed for a period of six (6) calendar months.

HOLIDAYS

The holidays required for classified staff, by § 20-1-305, MCA, and recognized by the classified collective bargaining agreement are:

1. Independence Day
2. Summer Flex Day
3. Labor Day
4. Thanksgiving Day
5. Day after Thanksgiving
6. Christmas Eve Day
7. Christmas Day
8. New Year's Eve Day
9. New Year's Day
10. Good Friday (Friday before Easter)
11. Spring Vacation Day (Easter Monday, unless it is a work day and then it will be a flex day)
12. Memorial Day

When an employee, as defined above, is required to work any of these holidays, another day shall be granted in lieu of such holiday, unless the employee elects to be paid for the holiday in addition to the employee's regular pay for all time worked on the holiday. In addition, the employee must be on paid status for the prior work day and the following work day.

When one of the above holidays falls on Sunday, the following Monday will be a holiday. When one of the above holidays falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday will be a holiday.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The School District is equipped with video cameras on district property and on district buses. Video cameras are equipped with audio and video. The district may choose to make video recordings as part of a student's educational record or of a staff member's personnel record. The district will comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. The employees that have access to video surveillance recording will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

All employees of the district 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 of 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 immediate supervisor, within forty-eight (48) hours, on the Employer's First Report of Occupational Injury or Disease; and
4. Call or visit the administrative office after medical treatment, if needed, to complete the necessary report of accident and injury on an Occupational Injury or Disease form.

WORK DAY

The length of a work day for classified staff is governed by the number of hours for which the employee is assigned. A "full-time" employee shall be considered to be an eight-(8)-hour-per-day/forty-(40)-hour-per-week employee. The work day is exclusive of lunch but inclusive of breaks unless otherwise and specifically provided for by an individual contract. Supervisors will establish schedules.

Employee Clocking Responsibilities

It is a job requirement that non-exempt employees must "clock-in" at the beginning of their shift and "clock out" at the end of work each day. Additionally, employees are to "clock out" at the beginning of lunch breaks or when they leave the job site and "clock back in" when they return from lunch or when they return after being away from the job site.

Employees are not allowed to "clock in" more than 5 minutes to their scheduled start time. Employees are

expected to “clock in” as close to their start time as possible. This includes clocking out for the day. It is up to the employee to watch their time to ensure they are getting the correct number of hours of work time.

Missed Time Clock Punches

If an employee forgets to “clock in” or “out” for their shift; they are to contact their supervisor immediately when it is realized, to explain the circumstances and to provide actual clock in or out information. The Supervisor will follow the district procedure to ensure the employee is correctly compensated for their hours worked.

Falsification or Tampering

Any attempt to tamper with the timekeeping hardware or software will be considered a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee interfering with another’s use of the district’s time keeping software or clocking in for another employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Overtime

Overtime must always be authorized in advance by a supervisor and documented in the system. Overtime will be calculated based on the actual hours recorded and credited to the employee and approved by their supervisor. Overtime is earned on a weekly basis and is only earned after forty (40) hours of actual work hours have been accumulated during the established work week.

STUDENT OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

Students who must take prescription and/or over-the-counter medication at school, on a temporary or regular basis, must provide a written request to administer medication, signed by the parent. All medications will be kept in locked storage in the nurse’s or secretary’s office unless a student must carry medication on his/her person during the school day. Parents of students who must carry and self-administer medication must complete the Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Medication form and return it to the building office.

Teachers are expected to assist students in remembering when a medication is scheduled to be administered. If the student refuses to take medication, teachers are expected to notify the parent whenever possible. Attempts to contact parents must be documented as to date and time.

Teachers are not to administer medications to students.

ASSEMBLIES

All staff are assigned to specific supervision duties during assemblies and are expected to be in their assigned areas. Students may be removed from an assembly as deemed necessary by the staff member. Generally, all

students should be dealt with directly and/or referred to the office in accordance with established building discipline procedures. Your administrator will assign the area you are to supervise.

CLASS INTERRUPTIONS

The district is committed to protecting instructional time. Class interruptions of any kind will be kept to a minimum. Students are not to be permitted to interrupt a class in session without authorization from the school administrator. Intercom use is restricted to administrative use or administrative approved use only.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/STUDENTS WITH HIV, HBV, AIDS

Protection from communicable disease is generally provided through immunization, exclusion, or other measures provided for in Montana Code Annotated and rules of the county health department. Services generally will not be provided to students excluded unless otherwise required by law.

In those cases where a communicable disease is diagnosed and confirmed and the student would not be excluded from school, the district will inform the appropriate staff member to protect against the risk of exposure. The district shall manage common communicable diseases in accordance with DPHHS guidelines and communicable diseases control rules. If a student develops symptoms of any reportable communicable or infectious illness as defined while at school, the responsible school officials shall do the following:

- isolate the student immediately from other students or staff; and
- inform the parent or guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request him or her to pick up the student.; and
- consult with a physician, other qualified medical professional, or the local county health authority to determine if the case should be reported to the local health officer.

Students who express feelings of illness at school may be referred to a school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board and may be sent home as soon as a parent or person designated on a student's emergency medical authorization form has been notified. The district may temporarily exclude from onsite school attendance a student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease that is readily transmitted in a school setting. Offsite instruction will be provided during the period of absence in accordance with Policy 2050. The district reserves the right to require a statement from a student's primary care provider authorizing a student's return to onsite instruction.

CONTESTS FOR STUDENTS

The district cooperates with individuals, community organizations, and agencies desiring to sponsor contests for students, when such activities can be integrated into the school program without disruption or loss of instructional time for the student and without imposing an unreasonable added work load on staff. All such contests must be consistent with the purposes and educational aims of the district.

Teachers sponsoring such activities are responsible for the preparation and circulation of all informational materials and for other administrative work required in the grading, judging, or evaluation of the participants' work.

The school may not be used to promote private or commercial interests, nor may the school be used for the

direct sales promotion of individual competitive goods or services.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The use of corporal punishment in any form is strictly prohibited by the district. Corporal punishment is defined as the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain.

A staff member is authorized to employ physical force when, in his/her professional judgment, the physical force is necessary to prevent a student from harming himself/herself, others, or doing harm to district property.

DISMISSAL OF CLASSES

Teachers should never dismiss a class before the established dismissal time. Detaining the entire class after dismissal time is also discouraged. Whenever individual students are detained after class, the teacher is expected to provide the student a note for the student's next class teacher. This will help reduce unnecessary hall traffic, as students reporting to class late will need to account for their tardiness.

DISASTER DRILLS

The Board has identified local hazards which may exist within the boundaries of the District include but are not limited to fire, natural disasters, intruders, weapons, and man-made disasters.

All teachers will discuss safety drill procedures with their class at the beginning of each year and will have them posted in a conspicuous place next to the exit door. Drills must be held at different hours of the day or evening to avoid distinction between drills and actual disasters.

A map/diagram of the fire escape route to be followed should be posted near the classroom doorways and reviewed with students. Upon the sounding of a fire alarm, teachers are required to:

1. Immediately direct all students to orderly exit the building using the evacuation route posted. Students may not stop at lockers, drinking fountains, restrooms, etc., along the way;
2. Close windows, turn off lights, and leave the door unlocked for emergency personnel;
3. Take roll book;
4. Escort class at least 50 feet from the building or to the designated area assigned by your administrator. Take roll. Report any unaccounted students to the Administrator;
5. Upon "all clear" signal, escort students directly back to class. Check roll.

FEATURE FILMS/VIDEOS

Administrator approval is required prior to showing a feature film/video to students in district classrooms. Only films/videos rated [G, PG, or PG-13] may be authorized for classroom use.

Requests are to be submitted to the Administrator at least 10 days prior to the proposed showing. Forms are available in the office.

The following information should be included:

1. Title and brief description;
2. Purpose for the showing;
3. Match with course objectives;

4. Proposed date of showing;
5. When and how parents will be notified, or if necessary, grant consent;
6. Audience rating.

The showing of all feature films/videos with a G rating requires prior parent notification from the staff member. Feature films/videos with a PG or PG-13 rating must have prior parental consent.

FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The district recognizes that field trips, when used as a device for teaching and learning integral to the curriculum, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the schools. Such trips can supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment beyond the classroom.

Field trips and other student activities involving travel may be authorized by the Administrator when such trips or activities contribute to the achievement of desirable educational goals.

Requests should be submitted to the Administrator well in advance of the proposed activity. All such requests will be considered, based on such factors as availability of funds, the educational value derived, the safety and welfare of the students involved, impact on the regular school program, and availability of appropriate supervision, either from within school staff or from volunteers.

Written parental permission must be obtained for each approved trip. Teachers are expected to submit the signed forms showing parental approval and acknowledgement of the student conduct guidelines, to the office prior to departure for the scheduled activity.

Staff members should contact the office for appropriate substitute and vehicle arrangements and related field trip procedures and forms. The presence of a person with a currently valid first aid card is required during school-sponsored activities, including field trips, athletic, and other off-campus events.

GRADING

The evaluation of student progress is a primary responsibility of all teachers. The highest possible level of student achievement is a common goal of both the district and the home. As a close working relationship between the district and the home is essential to the accomplishment of this goal, regular communications with parents is essential.

Teachers should use a variety of communication devices, including telephone and personal conferences as well as written grade reports, to keep parents well informed. At the beginning of the grading period, students and parents are to be informed regarding the basis of the grades and the methods to be used in determining grades.

The District requires that all students be graded fairly and consistently by their educator. Special education students are to receive grades based on progress toward goals stated in the Individual Education Program (IEP).

HOMEWORK

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of the student. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits. As an extension of the classroom, homework must be planned and organized, must be viewed as purposeful to the students, and should be evaluated and returned to student in a timely manner.

The purposes of homework assignments, the basis for evaluating the work performed and the guidelines and/or rules should be made clear to the student at the time of the assignment.

Homework due the following day will not be assigned on Board designated family night.

MAKE-UP WORK

A student who has an excused absence from class is to be permitted to make up those assignments that they have missed. The student is expected to make arrangements with their teacher on their first day back to class, for the work missed due to the absence.

A student suspended from school may be permitted, as provided by Policy 3300, to make up school work upon their return from the suspension, according to the respective student handbook.

MOVING CLASS/HOLDING CLASS OUTDOORS

From time to time, teachers may find it necessary to temporarily move a class from their scheduled room or teaching area. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that both the office and students are informed of the change.

As holding classes outdoors often presents a distraction to students in the class, as well as to staff and students in other classrooms, teachers are expected to conduct their classes in their scheduled rooms unless otherwise assigned by the principal.

From time to time, certain class assignments may be more appropriately conducted outdoors. Prior Principal approval is required for all such activities.

RELEASE TIME FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The district will release a student, upon written request of a parent/guardian, for an offsite religious instructional program.

No such absences shall be counted against a student in determining failure or reduction of grades. Any tests and assignments a student misses because of such absences are to be given to the student upon his/her return to school or at such other times as may be deemed appropriate by the teacher.

RESUSCITATION

No staff member may comply with any directive from parents or others, written or verbal, that life- sustaining emergency care be withheld from a student in need of such care while under the control and supervision of district staff.

Life-sustaining emergency care means any procedure or intervention applied by appropriately trained district staff that may prevent a student from dying who, without such procedure or intervention, faces a risk of imminent death. Examples of life-sustaining emergency care may include: efforts to stop bleeding, unblocking airways, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

In a life-threatening situation, staff members are expected to dial 911 for paramedic assistance and provide

life-sustaining emergency care to any student requiring it in order to sustain life, until relieved by paramedics or other appropriate medical personnel.

RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The district recognizes that the rate of physical, social, emotional and academic growth will vary among individual students. Since each student grows at their own rate, these individual growth characteristics shall be recognized in classroom and school programming.

Each school within the elementary district shall implement a Must Pass Policy whereby additional intervention and support is provided to students who are struggling and meet criteria established by schools. Interventions may include additional teaching time at recess, before and after school tutoring, and/or summer school.

Grade retention is a last resort to be used only when other interventions have been unsuccessful and it is deemed beneficial to the student. In grades K-8, parents shall be notified of possible retention after 3rd quarter grades are released with confirmation of retention prior to the end of the school year.

STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS

All money raised or collected by and/or for school-approved student groups are to be receipted and deposited into an account maintained by the district. All student activity fund expenditures must be approved by the building principal and/or the Activities Director. The use of the student extra- and co-curricular funds is limited to the benefits of the students. Students will be involved in the decision-making process related to the use of these funds.

Funds derived from the student body as a whole shall be expended to benefit the student body as a whole.

All expenditures from a specific account of student activity funds related to other school-recognized student groups must be approved by the members of that organization and their staff adviser. Funds derived from authorized clubs and organizations shall be expended to benefit the specific club or organization and, to the extent possible, to benefit those subjects currently in school who have contributed to the accumulation of the funds.

STUDENT CONDUCT

All students are to comply with district policy, written building and classroom rules, pursue the prescribed course of study, submit to the lawful authority of teachers and school officials, and conduct themselves in an orderly manner at school during the school day or during school-sponsored activities.

In addition to adopted Board policies governing student conduct, administrative regulations specifying student-conduct expectations have been established. These rules apply to actions which occur on district property, at any district-sponsored activity regardless of location; or when traveling to or from school for district-sponsored activities. Disregard of these rules constitutes grounds for suspension, expulsion, or other reasonable disciplinary action.

All teachers are expected to review the student conduct rules contained in the Student/Parent Handbook with their students during the first week of the school year.

Student conduct rules unique to individual classrooms may also be developed by teachers. All such rules must be consistent with district policy and local building administrative regulations governing student conduct and

discipline. Classroom rules and consequences are to be reviewed with students, posted in classrooms, and made available to parents.

STUDENT DETENTION

Teachers may detain a student after school hours for disciplinary reasons, provided the parent has been notified of the detention and, in the case of bus students, prior arrangements have been made for the student's transportation home.

Parents may be asked to arrange for the transportation of the detained student; however, if the parent cannot or will not provide it, an alternative disciplinary procedure must be substituted.

Preceding the assessment of such punishment, the staff member shall inform the student of the nature of the offense charged and/or the specific conduct which allegedly constitutes the violation. The student shall be afforded an opportunity to explain or justify their actions to the staff member. Students who are detained after school are not to be left unsupervised during their detention.

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

A student/parent handbook is issued to all students at the beginning of each new school year and at the time of registration for new students moving into the district at other times of the year.

All staff are expected to familiarize themselves with the general information, administrative rules and procedures pertaining to students, as set forth in the student/parent handbook and in Board policy.

Teachers are expected to review the handbook with students during the days/times designated by the building principal.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

Transportation of students to and from school and to co-curricular and extracurricular activities sponsored by the district is provided by the district's transportation system in accordance with district policy.

Parents, employees, and other designated adults may be permitted to use private vehicles to transport students other than their own on field trips or other school activities only with prior Principal approval.

No student is permitted to perform district business with his/her own vehicle, a staff member's vehicle, or a district-owned vehicle.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Upon notification by the office of a student withdrawal from school, teachers are expected to complete the student withdrawal form, including grade earned to date.

Teachers are expected to make a complete accounting of any unreturned or damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, equipment, or other district property, including replacement costs, if known. Submit the list to the office.

VISITORS

The district welcomes visits by Board members, parents and citizens to all District buildings. All visitors shall report to the school office on entering any District building and comply with any other applicable school safety and security policy, procedure and protocol. School visitors shall not interfere with school operations or delivery of educational services to students.

Students are not permitted to bring visitors to school without prior approval of the principal.

Staff members are expected to report any unauthorized person on school property to the principal.

An Additional Note:

These policies are reflective of the actual policies of Laurel Public Schools' Policy Manual. To read a less abbreviated version of Laurel Public Schools, you are strongly encouraged to access the district's policy manual which can be accessed on the district's web page:

laurel.k12.mt.us