EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO O'FALLON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #203

Table of Contents

Foreword 3

District Policies 3

Operational Policies and Procedures 4

Title IX Grievance Procedure 5

Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming 6

Payroll Information 6

Benefits 8

Leaves of Absence 9

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) 11

Workplace Safety and Violence Prevention 12

Emergency School Cancellation 12

Technology and Social Media 12

Employee Discipline 13

General Rules of Conduct 13

Employee Complaint and Grievance Procedure 15

Workplace Investigation Procedure 15

Other Information 16

Other District Policies 18

Foreword

Welcome to O'Fallon Township High School District 203! This handbook was created to provide employees with important information about OTHS policies, procedures, and expectations. All items in this handbook apply to all employees of O'Fallon Township High School District 203 and are considered part of your employment.

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should refer to their CBA as the primary governing document for their specific terms and conditions of employment, including wages, hours, leave, discipline, and grievance procedures. This handbook applies to CBA-covered employees where their CBA is silent on a topic. Where any provision of this handbook conflicts with a collective bargaining agreement, the collective bargaining agreement controls.

Non-union employees are governed by this handbook along with applicable Board policies and State and federal law. If you are unsure which agreement or policy governs a specific situation, contact the Human Resources Department.

Copies of all collective bargaining agreements are available on the OTHS website at www.oths.us under Public Compliance Documents.

Nothing in this handbook shall supersede Federal or State law and/or applicable collective bargaining agreements. This handbook is not a contract of employment and does not create any contractual obligations. The District reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of this handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, with or without notice, except as required by law or a collective bargaining agreement.

District Policies

All OTHS employees are responsible for understanding and complying with all Board Policies. Several sections of the Illinois School Code require the District to provide notice to employees regarding its policies. Distribution of this handbook meets the requirement of notice. OTHS policies can be found on the OTHS website in the Board Policies section.

Policy sections of notable importance are the General Personnel section (5) and Students section (7). Please ensure you are familiar with the school board policies listed throughout this handbook as well as those on the District's website.

- Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors (Board Policy 4:165)
- Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment (Board Policy 5:10)
- Workplace Harassment Prohibited (Board Policy 5:20)
- Hiring Process and Criteria (Board Policy 5:30)
- Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (Board Policy 5:35)
- Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease (Board Policy 5:40)
- Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest (Board Policy 5:120)
- Family and Medical Leave (Board Policy 5:185)
- Teacher Qualifications (Board Policy 5:190)
- Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct (Board Policy 5:125)
- Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information (Board Policy 5:130)
- Leaves of Absence (Board Policy 5:250)
- Employment At-Will, Compensation and Assignment (Board Policy 5:270)
- Duties and Qualifications (Board Policy 5:280)
- Employment Termination and Suspensions (Board Policy 5:290)
- Compensatory Time Off (Board Policy 5:310)

- Education of Homeless Children (Board Policy 6:140)
- Release During School Hours (Board Policy 7:90)
- Administering Medicines to Students (Board Policy 7:270)
- Student Records (Board Policy 7:340)
- Visitors to and Conduct on School Property (Board Policy 8:30)
- Title IX Grievance Procedure (Board Policy 2:265)
- Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition (Board Policy 5:50)
- Expenses (Board Policy 5:60)
- Religious Holidays (Board Policy 5:70)
- Court Duty (Board Policy 5:80)
- Abused and Neglected Child Reporting (Board Policy 5:90)
- Personnel Records (Board Policy 5:150)
- Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity (Board Policy 5:180)
- Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays and Leaves (Board Policy 5:330)

Operational Policies and Procedures

Equal Employment Opportunity (Board Policy 5:10)

The District provides equal employment opportunities to all persons regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, pregnancy, military status, or any other characteristic protected by State or federal law. No employee will be retaliated against for requesting a reasonable accommodation, initiating a complaint, or participating in an investigation under this policy.

Nondiscrimination & Title IX Coordinator:

Dr. Beth Shackelford | 600 S. Smiley Street, O'Fallon, IL 62269 | shackelfordb@oths.us | 618-632-3507

Complaint Managers:

Mr. Dan Howe | 600 S. Smiley Street, O'Fallon, IL 62269 | howed@oths.us | 618-632-3507

Mr. Corey Wallis | 650 Milburn School Road, O'Fallon, IL 62269 | wallisc@oths.us | 618-632-3507

Workplace Harassment Prohibited (Board Policy 5:20)

The District expects a productive, respectful workplace free of unlawful harassment. Employees shall not engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of any protected characteristic. Sexual harassment is expressly prohibited. Employees and non-employees are encouraged to report violations promptly to their immediate supervisor, Building Principal, administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, or a Complaint Manager (contacts listed above). The District will investigate all reports promptly and confidentially. Retaliation for reporting is prohibited.

Hiring Process and Background Checks (Board Policy 5:30)

The District hires the most qualified personnel consistent with budget, staffing requirements, and equal employment opportunity obligations. All applicants must complete a District application. Prior to employment the District conducts criminal history, sex offender database, and Employment History Review (EHR) checks. Physical fitness evidence may be required within 90 days before hire. Each employee must sign the Acknowledgment of Mandated Reporter Status form before beginning work and participate in a District orientation program.

Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace (Board Policy 5:50 and 8:30)

All District workplaces are drug- and alcohol-free. While on District premises or performing work for the District, employees are prohibited from the use, possession, or impairment by alcohol, controlled substances, or cannabis (except as permitted by Ashley's Law for school nurses and administrators). Prescription medications are permitted when taken as prescribed and not impairing work performance. Use of e-cigarettes, tobacco, and cannabis is prohibited on school property and at school events. Drug and/or alcohol testing may be required pre-employment, post-accident, or upon reasonable suspicion.

Accident Reporting and Investigation

Employees must report any accident or injury – including students and/or self – to their supervisor immediately and enter the incident in PublicSchoolWorks. Administration will investigate and report to Human Resources. See also the Workers' Compensation section of this handbook.

Solicitation By or From Staff (Board Policy 5:140)

Employees shall not solicit donations or sales, nor shall they be solicited for donations or sales, on school grounds without prior approval from the Superintendent. Employees may use the OTHS Electronic Email Bulletin Board for appropriate solicitations; contact the technology department to opt out.

Reporting Absences and Attendance

The District expects employees to be reliable and punctual. Absences should be reported no later than 6:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. Except during the lunch period, employees shall not leave the building without proper notice to administration. Poor attendance and excessive tardiness may lead to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Absence of three consecutive working days without reporting may be considered a voluntary resignation.

Emergency Contact Change

It is important that the District maintain accurate and up-to-date emergency contact information for all employees in the event of a workplace emergency or urgent situation. To update emergency contact information, employees must complete the Emergency Contact Form and submit the completed form to the main office. Employees are encouraged to review and update their emergency contact information at the beginning of each school year and any time a change occurs.

Resignations (Board Policy 5:290)

Employees are requested to provide a minimum of two weeks' written notice of resignation. A resignation notice cannot be revoked once given. Employees planning to retire should notify their supervisor at least two months before the intended retirement date, or earlier if possible. *(Board Policy 5:290)*

A teacher resigning outside of the school term should provide written notice at least 30 calendar days before the first student attendance day of the following school year. No teacher may resign during the school term to accept another teaching position without Board consent. *(Board Policy 5:210)*

Title IX Grievance Procedure (Board Policy 2:265)

Sexual harassment as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is prohibited. Title IX Sexual Harassment occurs when a person engages in conduct on the basis of sex including: unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive; or sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined under applicable federal law.

Any person who wishes to make a report may contact the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, or a Complaint Manager. School employees must promptly forward any report of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator. An employee who fails to forward a report may be disciplined up to and including discharge.

Title IX Coordinator:
Dr. Beth Shackelford | 600 S. Smiley Street, O'Fallon, IL 62269 | shackelfordb@oths.us | 618-632-3507

Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors (Board Policy 4:165) and Abused and Neglected Child Reporting (Board Policy 5:90)

Child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors harm students, their families, and the school community. The District is committed to increasing awareness and knowledge of warning signs, grooming behaviors, reporting requirements, and appropriate employee-student relationships.

Employee Training

All District employees must complete evidence-informed training on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations. This training is in addition to the mandated reporter training required under ANCRA.

Mandated Reporting

All OTHS employees are mandated reporters under the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA). Any District employee who suspects or receives knowledge that a student may be an abused or neglected child or, for a student aged 18 through 22, an abused or neglected individual with a disability, shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on its Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)(within Illinois); 1-217-524-2606 (outside of Illinois); or 1-800-358-5117 (TTY); or through the online portal at childabuse.illinois.gov and notify the Building Principal.

After reporting to DCFS, notify the appropriate attendance secretary and provide:

- Date the report was made to DCFS
- Name of the person who made the report
- DCFS Case Number
- Name of DCFS contact person

This information will be documented in Skyward. The District protects the privacy of the reporter. Failure to report may result in criminal liability.

Employees must also report any boundary violations by colleagues, contractors, or volunteers through the procedures outlined in Board Policies 2:260, 2:265, and 5:90.

Any employee who discovers child pornography on electronic or information technology equipment must immediately report it to local law enforcement and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline at 1-800-843-5678 or www.cybertipline.com, and promptly notify the Building Principal.

Payroll Information

Work Schedules

The District's work week begins on Saturday at 12:00 a.m. and concludes Friday at 11:59 p.m. Each employee's workday is defined by their job description, collective bargaining agreement (if applicable), or as assigned by their supervisor. All employees are classified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" under the FLSA. All full-time employees who work at least 7.5 continuous hours receive a 30-minute duty-free meal break that begins within the first five hours of the workday.

Time Recordkeeping

Recording time worked is the responsibility of every hourly employee and must be completed daily in the OTHS time management system. Time is calculated in 15-minute intervals. Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Pay

Pay is annualized. For hourly employees, the hourly rate is multiplied by the total number of paid hours in the year to determine annualized pay, divided equally across applicable pay periods. Those employed less than 12 months will have a pay schedule consistent with their work schedule.

Overtime

Non-exempt employees are entitled to 1.5 times their regular hourly rate for all hours physically worked in excess of 40 in a single work week. All overtime must be accurately recorded in the OTHS time management system and approved in advance by the employee's supervisor.

Pay Dates

Employees are paid on the 5th and 19th of each month. If either date falls on a non-business day, the pay date will be the preceding business day.

Direct Deposit

All employees are required to enroll in the District's direct deposit program. Posting timelines vary by individual financial institution.

Paid Holidays

For hourly employees not covered under a collective bargaining agreement, the following are paid holidays when they occur during the employee's contract period:

- New Year's Day
- M.L. King Day
- President's Day (or Lincoln's Birthday)
- Pulaski Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

A holiday will not cause a deduction from an employee's time or compensation. When a listed holiday falls on a weekend, the District will designate an alternate day.

Payroll Discrepancies

Employees who believe their paycheck contains an error should report the discrepancy to the Payroll Department as soon as possible after receiving their paycheck. The District will investigate all reported payroll discrepancies promptly in accordance with the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act (820 ILCS 115/). Employees should not wait until subsequent pay periods to report a discrepancy, as prompt reporting allows for timely resolution.

If an error is confirmed, the District will correct it on the next regularly scheduled paycheck. In cases where the error results in a significant underpayment, the District will make every effort to issue a correction as quickly as practicable. Employees who have been overpaid are expected to notify the District immediately; overpayments will be recovered through a repayment arrangement determined by the Business Office in compliance with State law.

Probationary Period

All new non-union employees serve a 90 working-day probationary period. The following must be completed upon employment: pre-employment physical examination, fingerprinting and criminal background check, required drug test, and Employee History Review form initiation. During the probationary period, employment may be terminated at any time with or without cause.

Benefits

Important Note:

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should refer to their applicable CBA for benefit terms. The summaries below provide a general overview. Official plan documents govern all benefits. Contact the Human Resources Department or Business Office with questions.

Medical Insurance

The District provides group medical insurance through CIGNA. Three plan options are available to eligible employees. The District contributes toward medical insurance premiums; employees are responsible for any remaining premium balance through payroll deduction. Contact the Human Resources Department for current plan options and enrollment forms.

Dental Insurance

The District provides group dental insurance through Humana for all eligible employees. Contact the Human Resources Department for enrollment information and refer to official Humana plan documents for complete coverage details.

Vision Insurance

The District provides group vision insurance through Humana for all eligible employees. Contact the Human Resources Department for enrollment information and refer to official Humana plan documents for complete coverage details.

Life Insurance

The District provides basic group life insurance through for all eligible employees at no cost. The District pays for $15,000 of basic life insurance coverage. Refer to the official Humana policy document for complete terms, including exclusions and disqualifiers. Contact the Human Resources Department for additional information.

Voluntary Life Insurance

Employees who participate in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) may purchase additional voluntary life insurance coverage through NCPERS (National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems) via payroll deduction. This coverage is entirely voluntary and premiums are paid by the employee. Contact the Human Resources Department for enrollment information and available coverage amounts.

Retirement

The District participates in two State-administered retirement systems depending on employee classification. Participation is a condition of employment for eligible employees.

Teachers' Retirement System (TRS)

Certified employees are members of TRS, a defined benefit pension plan. TRS membership provides retirement annuity, survivor, and disability benefits based on years of creditable service and final average salary. For complete information, visit www.trs.illinois.gov or call 1-800-877-7896.

Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)

Non-certified employees expected to work 600 or more hours per year are participating IMRF members. Participating employees contribute a percentage of earnings through payroll deduction. Employees expected to work fewer than 600 hours per year are non-participating members. Unused sick leave may be credited toward service at retirement. For complete information, visit www.imrf.org or contact the Business Office.

COBRA Continuation Coverage

Under COBRA, employees and dependents may have the right to continue group medical, dental, and/or vision coverage following a qualifying event such as resignation, termination, reduction in hours, divorce, or loss of dependent status. The employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at the group rate plus an administrative fee. The District will provide eligible employees with a written COBRA notice. Employees are responsible for notifying the Plan Administrator of qualifying events within the required timeframes.

Flexible Spending Accounts (Section 125)

The District's Section 125 FSA plan is administered by American Fidelity and allows employees to set aside pre-tax payroll deductions for qualified medical, dental, vision, and dependent care expenses. Elections may generally only be changed during annual open enrollment or upon a qualifying life event. Contact the Human Resources Office or American Fidelity for plan year dates and enrollment information.

Ancillary Insurance

The District offers access to supplemental voluntary insurance through payroll deduction:

- American Fidelity – Short-term disability, cancer, and other supplemental health products

These plans are entirely voluntary and employee-paid. Contact the Human Resources Department for enrollment information.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Employees enrolled in the District's CIGNA medical insurance plan have access to the CIGNA Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at no cost. The EAP offers confidential counseling, mental health referrals, financial consultation, and legal guidance. EAP services are confidential and are not reported to the District. Contact the Human Resources Department for access information.

Benefit Enrollment and Changes

New employees must complete benefit enrollment within 30 days of hire. Employees who do not enroll within this window must wait until the next annual open enrollment period unless a qualifying life event occurs. Changes outside of open enrollment are permitted only within 30 days of a qualifying life event. Open enrollment is held annually in late spring. Contact the Human Resources Department for current enrollment deadlines and plan comparisons.

Leaves of Absence

Note for CBA-Covered Employees:

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should refer to their applicable CBA for leave entitlements. The provisions in this section apply to non-union, non-exempt employees unless otherwise noted.

Sick Leave (Board Policy 5:330)

Sick leave is defined under State law as personal illness, mental or behavioral complications, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or acceptance of a child in need of foster care.

Tier	Years of Service (as of June 30)	Sick Days per Year
Tier 1	0–10 years	14 days
Tier 2	>10–20 years	15 days
Tier 3	>20 years	16 days

Part-time and less-than-12-month non-exempt support staff accumulate sick leave on a prorated basis. Sick leave is awarded on July 1 and prorated upon termination. Unused sick leave accumulates to the maximum IMRF will recognize for retirement credit purposes.

Medical certification may be required when absence exceeds three consecutive days, multiple individual days are used for ongoing illness, patterns of use are identified, or reasonable suspicion of abuse exists. Employees may use up to five (5) mental health days per year, deducted from sick leave. Employees are entitled to use up to 30 days of paid sick leave for the birth of a child within the 12-month period following birth, or for adoption/foster care placement. Sick leave may only be used when the employee has accrued sick leave available.

Vacation Time

Non-union full-time support staff receive vacation based on years of service (as of June 30), awarded July 1 and prorated upon termination. Vacation days earned must be used by the end of the fiscal year in which they are awarded. Employees who resign or are terminated before the end of their contractual year are entitled to the monetary equivalent of all earned, unused vacation.

Tier	Years of Service (as of June 30)	Vacation Days (12-mo/40-hr)
Tier 1	0–1.9999 years	5 days
Tier 2	2.0000–8.9999 years	10 days
Tier 3	9.0000–19.9999 years	15 days
Tier 4	20.0000+ years	20 days

12-month employees: Vacation is not included in annualized pay. Employees are expected to take vacation off, preferably on non-student-attendance days. Less-than-12-month employees hired before July 1, 2010: Vacation is prorated and included in annualized pay. Less-than-12-month employees hired July 1, 2010, or later: Not eligible for vacation.

Personal Leave

Employees may be granted personal leave for urgent personal business that cannot be scheduled outside of work hours and that does not qualify as sick leave. Guidelines:

1. The employee has no control over the date.
2. The employee’s presence is required.
3. The absence would not be covered under sick leave.
4. Maximum of 2 days per 12-month period (July 1–June 30), prorated for partial years.
5. Except in emergencies, requests must be submitted in the absence management system at least three days in advance.
6. Personal leave may not be used immediately before or after a holiday, during the first or last five days of the school year unless the Principal or Superintendent grants prior approval.
7. Personal leave may not be used in increments of less than one-half hour.
8. Unused personal leave: if no days are used, 3 days are added to cumulative sick leave at the start of the next fiscal year; if 1 day is used, 1 day is added.

Funeral/Bereavement Leave

Employees may be excused for the number of days necessary to attend the funeral of an immediate family member. The first three (3) days are charged to funeral leave. Days beyond three are charged to available sick leave (not to exceed 12 additional days). “Immediate family” means spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or the equivalent in-law or step-relationships, or any person sharing the employee’s household.

Under the Illinois Family Bereavement Leave Act, eligible employees may take up to 10 days of unpaid bereavement leave for the death of a covered family member or a Significant Event (miscarriage, unsuccessful assisted reproduction, failed adoption, or pregnancy-impacting diagnosis). Contact Human Resources for details.

Hardship/Emergency Leave

The Superintendent may grant up to ten (10) days of leave per school year for personal or family hardship. The employee must submit a written request with evidence of the hardship. If approved, the first two days are charged to available personal leave; the remaining days are charged to available sick leave. The Superintendent’s determination is final.

Employees with questions about any of these leaves should contact the Human Resources Department.

Family and Medical Leave Act (Board Policy 5:185)

The District complies with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per rolling year for qualifying reasons, or up to 26 weeks to care for a covered servicemember. School/work breaks do not count against FMLA entitlement.

Eligibility

To be eligible, an employee must: have worked for the District for at least 12 months; have worked at least 1,250 hours during the preceding 12-month period; and work at a location where the District employs 50 or more employees within 75 miles. Full-time classroom teachers are also eligible. If two spouses are both employed by the District, they share a combined 12-week entitlement for birth, adoption, or care of a parent.

Qualifying Reasons

- Birth of a child and bonding within the first year
- Placement of a child for adoption or foster care and bonding within the first year
- Caring for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition
- The employee’s own serious health condition
- Qualifying exigency related to a family member’s military service
- Care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness (up to 26 weeks)

Notice, Certification, and Paid Leave

Employees must provide at least 30 days’ advance notice when leave is foreseeable. The District may require medical certification within 15 calendar days. The District requires employees to use accrued paid leave (sick, personal, vacation, comp time) concurrently with FMLA leave. Group health insurance is maintained during FMLA leave on the same terms as if the employee continued working.

Return to Work

Upon return, employees are entitled to restoration to the same or an equivalent position. Employees returning from leave for their own serious health condition will be required to provide a medical release to return to work, and may be required to provide a fitness-for-duty certification.

Workplace Safety and Violence Prevention

General Safety Responsibilities

- Keep exterior doors closed and free from unauthorized access. Doors must never be propped open. Keys must never be given to a student or third party.
- Report any unusual activity or concerning behavior immediately (“If you see something, say something”).
- Wear ID badges during the entire school day, from arrival through departure.
- Properly supervise students in the District’s care at all times.
- Adhere to all facility safety code regulations.
- Use only properly authorized and scheduled District facilities. All facility use, including personal use by employees, must be scheduled through the Athletic Office.

Workplace Violence Prevention

Prohibited conduct includes physical assault or battery; threats of violence (direct, indirect, or implied); intimidating or hostile behavior; possession of weapons on school property except as authorized by law; and any conduct a reasonable person would perceive as threatening. Employees who experience, witness, or become aware of workplace violence or credible threats must report immediately to an administrator and/or the security team. Good-faith reports are protected from retaliation.

Emergency School Cancellation

For support staff working less than 12 months, each emergency cancellation day will be made up as outlined on the annual school calendar. Twelve-month support staff will not be docked for emergency cancellation days but are expected to work remotely as appropriate.

Technology and Social Media

Access to Electronic Networks (Board Policy 6:235)

District technology resources are provided to support the District’s educational mission. Occasional personal use is permissible provided it does not interfere with work duties or violate District policy or law. All information stored on or transmitted through District systems is the property of the District. Employees consent to monitoring of usage. Electronic communications may be treated as business records subject to FOIA.

In all electronic communications involving students, apply the TAP test: Transparent – all staff-student communications must be open and accountable; Accessible – all communications should be treated as District records; Professional – all communications must reflect OTHS standards of professionalism.

Personal Technology, Social Media, and Electronic Devices (Board Policy 5:125)

While at work, employees are expected to exercise discretion in using personal electronic devices as they would with District phones and technology. Excessive personal device use during the workday can interfere with employee productivity and is discouraged. Personal calls should be made during non-work time when possible. The District is not liable for the loss of personal electronic devices brought into the workplace. Employees using personal devices for District business should be aware that related data may constitute public records subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Employees must not disclose confidential student or personnel information on personal social media, use the District's logos without permission, or engage in conduct that interferes with the school environment. Employees must use District-provided communication methods when communicating with students and parents whenever possible and must inform their supervisor if a student initiates inappropriate contact via personal technology or social media.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Acceptable Use

O'Fallon Township High School District 203 recognizes that artificial intelligence tools are increasingly available and may be used by employees in the course of their work. The District is committed to ensuring that AI tools are used responsibly, ethically, and in compliance with applicable law and District policy.

Permitted Use

Employees may use AI tools to support their professional responsibilities, provided such use complies with this policy and all applicable District policies, including those governing technology use, copyright, confidentiality, and student records.

Prohibited Uses

Employees shall not use AI tools to:

- Generate, distribute, or promote content that is false, misleading, deceptive, or defamatory
- Create or distribute sexually explicit, obscene, or pornographic content
- Violate student privacy or disclose student records in violation of FERPA or the Illinois School Student Records Act
- Infringe upon any copyright, trademark, or other intellectual property rights
- Harass, discriminate against, or harm any student, employee, or member of the public
- Impersonate any person or misrepresent the source of AI-generated content
- Engage in or facilitate any activity that violates District policy or applicable law

Student Data and Confidentiality

Employees shall not input personally identifiable student information, confidential personnel information, or other sensitive District data into any external AI tool or platform. Employees are responsible for ensuring that any AI-generated content used in their work is accurate, appropriate, and reviewed before use.

Transparency

Employees who use AI tools to generate content for District purposes should be transparent about such use when appropriate, particularly in communications with students, parents, or the public.

Discipline

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination, consistent with the District's progressive discipline practices and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Employee Discipline

The District generally follows a progressive discipline approach for non-union employees, which may include: verbal counseling or warning; written warning; written reprimand (placed in personnel file); suspension with or without pay; and termination. The District reserves the right to skip steps or move directly to termination based on the severity of conduct. The Superintendent will recommend dismissal of any non-licensed employee who willfully or negligently fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Suspension policies can be found in Board Policies 5:240 and 5:290.

Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should refer to their CBA for applicable discipline and grievance procedures.

General Rules of Conduct

To assure orderly operations and the best possible work environment, the District expects employees to follow rules of conduct, performance, and attendance. The following acts are prohibited and may

result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. This list is illustrative and does not limit the District's right to discipline or discharge for reasons not specifically listed.

Safety and Security

- Possession of any dangerous weapon, firearm, ammunition, explosive device, or fireworks on District property or at any school activity.
- Reporting to work under the influence of, or introducing, possessing, or using any intoxicating or controlled substance not prescribed by a licensed physician on District property.
- Working in an unsafe manner or violating District safety policies and procedures.
- Failure to use a seatbelt while riding in or operating a District vehicle on public roads.
- Making unauthorized modifications to equipment or buildings.
- Unauthorized possession or use of District keys, keycards, or access fobs, including master keys.

Conduct Toward Others

- Fighting with, threatening, intimidating, coercing, physically abusing, or interfering with another employee or persons doing business with the District.
- Using profane or abusive language toward employees, students, or parents.
- Practicing or promoting discrimination or harassment of any employee or group of employees on the basis of any protected characteristic.
- Making unwelcome sexual advances or engaging in verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that constitutes sexual harassment.
- Engaging in any sexual or romantic relationship with any student.
- Aiding, soliciting, or engaging any student or employee in any activity that is illegal or immoral.
- Knowingly surrendering a child to a person other than the child's parent, legal guardian, or authorized individual.

Honesty and Integrity

- Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records, employment applications, reports, data, or any other District documents.
- Making false claims for insurance or any other benefit.
- Failing to be truthful to the Board of Education or administration in matters related to employment.
- Taking or receiving, without authorization, goods, materials, equipment, or property belonging to the District, employees, or others.
- Failure to promptly deposit, report, or account for any funds, gate receipts, or other money of the District, students, or others.
- Accepting unauthorized rebates, gifts, gratuities, or promotional materials from suppliers for personal use or gain.

Confidentiality and Records

District employees are responsible for maintaining the integrity and security of all internal information and the privacy of confidential records, including student school records, personnel records, and the minutes of closed School Board meetings. Violations of this responsibility include but are not limited to:

- Releasing, disclosing, or granting access to student record information in violation of FERPA or the Illinois School Student Records Act.
- Releasing confidential employee file information without advance authorization.
- Failing to maintain strict confidentiality of passwords or other security credentials.
- Violating any copyright, including software, information, or material obtained over the Internet.
- Utilizing District computers, networks, or Internet access to view, obtain, or download pornographic or sexually explicit material.

Attendance and Performance

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness, or failure to notify of absence within the required timeframe.
- Leaving District premises during working hours without notifying administration, except during the employee's lunch break.
- Negligent work performance or concealment of errors that may result in economic damage.
- Improper use of sick leave or personal leave.
- Failure to maintain any certificate, license, or other document required for the employee's position. Loss of required credentials is cause for dismissal. Employees must advise the District immediately of any loss of required credentials or driving privileges.
- Outside employment that interferes with the performance of job duties.

Child Safety and Reporting

- Failure to personally report evidence of child abuse or neglect to the DCFS Hotline. No employee shall instruct or dissuade another employee from making such a report.
- Educational support employees shall not discipline students except as authorized by job description.
- Failure to report an accident or injury to the appropriate administrator.

Employee Complaint and Grievance Procedure

The District is committed to providing a fair and respectful workplace. Employees who have a workplace complaint or concern are encouraged to address it promptly through the following process. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement can refer to their CBA for grievance procedures. Complaints alleging discrimination, harassment, or Title IX violations follow separate procedures outlined elsewhere in this handbook.

Step 1 – Informal Resolution

The employee should first attempt to resolve the concern informally by discussing it directly with their immediate supervisor. If the concern involves the immediate supervisor, or if informal discussion does not resolve the matter, the employee may proceed to Step 2.

Step 2 – Human Resources

The employee should report the complaint to the Human Resources Director, describing the nature of the concern, relevant dates and individuals involved, and the resolution sought. The Human Resources Director will provide a response.

Step 3 – Superintendent

If not satisfied with the Step 2 response, the employee may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent within 10 business days. The Superintendent or designee will provide a response. The Superintendent's decision is final.

General Provisions

- Employees who use this procedure in good faith are protected from retaliation.
- All complaints and documentation will be treated as confidential to the greatest extent practicable.

Workplace Investigation Procedure

When the District receives a complaint or becomes aware of a potential policy violation, misconduct, or workplace concern, it may conduct a workplace investigation. The following principles apply:

Initiation

Investigations may be initiated by the Human Resources Director, Superintendent, Supervisor or Building Principal based on a complaint, direct observation, or other information suggesting a potential violation of District policy, Board policy, or applicable law.

Investigator

Investigations will be conducted by the Human Resources Director or a designated administrator. The District may retain an outside investigator, such as legal counsel or an independent HR professional, if needed.

Employee Cooperation and Confidentiality

All employees are expected to cooperate fully and honestly with workplace investigations. Failure to cooperate or providing false information may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. The District will maintain confidentiality to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the need to conduct a thorough investigation and take appropriate corrective action. Employees involved in an investigation, whether as a complainant, respondent, or witness, should not discuss the matter with coworkers during the investigation period.

An allegation is a claim or assertion that a policy violation or misconduct has occurred. The existence of an allegation does not constitute a finding of wrongdoing. All allegations will be treated seriously and investigated promptly and impartially. Unsubstantiated allegations made in good faith will not result in adverse action against the reporting employee. However, allegations made knowingly and in bad faith may themselves result in disciplinary action.

The District recognizes that workplace allegations, if not handled properly, can pose significant risk to the District, its employees, and its students. All parties involved in an investigation are expected to conduct themselves professionally and to refrain from actions that could compromise the integrity of the investigation, create a hostile work environment, or expose the District to legal liability.

The District strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who makes a good-faith complaint, participates in an investigation, or reports a concern.

Outcome

Upon completing an investigation, the District will take appropriate action based on the findings, which may include no action, counseling, training, discipline, or termination. Investigation findings are confidential personnel matters and are not generally disclosed beyond those with a need to know.

Other Information

Administering Medicines to Students (Board Policy 7:270)

No District employee shall administer any prescription or non-prescription medication to a student, or supervise a student's self-administration of medication, until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form has been submitted by the student's parent/guardian. A student may possess an EpiPen® and/or prescribed asthma medication for immediate self-use. Nothing in this policy prohibits any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students.

Benefits – ADA and Reasonable Accommodation

The District complies with the ADA, ADAAA, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, and the Illinois Human Rights Act. Employees who need a workplace accommodation due to a disability or pregnancy-related condition should submit a written request to the Human Resources Director. The District will engage in an interactive process to identify effective, reasonable accommodations.

Workers' Compensation

The District provides workers' compensation coverage for all employees under the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act. All work-related injuries must be reported to your supervisor immediately and entered in PublicSchoolWorks. Contact Human Resources after reporting to coordinate with the District's workers' compensation carrier.

USERRA – Uniformed Services

Any employee whose absence is necessitated by uniformed service will be granted an unpaid leave of absence and will have the right to be reemployed, provided the District receives advance notice, the employee has five years or less of cumulative service, returns to work in a timely manner, and has not

been separated with a disqualifying discharge. Contact Human Resources with questions about USERRA rights.

Political Activity

Employees may engage in political activity in their personal capacity outside of work hours. Employees may not engage in political activity while on duty, use District resources for political purposes, use their position to influence others regarding political matters, or display political campaign materials on District property. Students shall not be used to promote a political candidate or issue.

Dress Standards

Employees are role models for students and are expected to dress professionally and appropriately for their role at all times. The District's image is reflected in employees' dress and appearance, which must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with a positive learning environment, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, or decency.

The following attire is not permitted during the school day:

1. Attire that creates a disruption to the school environment.
2. Attire that presents a safety risk or interferes with the performance of job duties.
3. Attire displaying ads, representations, or slogans related to unlawful products, alcohol, weapons, tobacco, or vaping; language or images associated with hate speech; or obscene, offensive, or violent language or images.
4. See-through, revealing, or inappropriate attire that is inconsistent with a professional work environment.
5. Hats, hoods, or head coverings unless approved by administration.

Certain employee categories may have specific dress requirements due to the nature of their role or safety considerations. The District reserves the right to determine appropriateness based upon community and professional standards. Employees who are uncertain whether their attire is appropriate should consult their supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Free Admission

Employees are admitted free of charge to athletic events sponsored by the school. Spouses and dependent children are also admitted free. Employees receive two (2) tickets to non-athletic school events, with the exception of Madrigals and O That Jazz.

Lunch and Food Service

Employees receive a 30-minute duty-free lunch break, which may be taken on or off campus. Lunch may be purchased in the school cafeteria. Any unpaid cafeteria balance will be withheld from the final paycheck of separating employees.

Parking

Parking permits are issued to all employees. Designated staff parking areas are available on campus. Employees are expected to park in designated areas only.

Protocols for Visitors to Campus

Scheduled Visits

If an employee is expecting a visitor, notify the security team in advance. Upon arrival, the visitor must remain in the lobby or waiting area until cleared to proceed. After the visit, notify security so the visitor can be directed to the exit.

Unscheduled Visits

When visitors arrive without an appointment, the security team will contact the appropriate office to confirm availability before directing the visitor.

Visitor Guidelines

- All visitors must report to the security office upon arrival and wear a visitor's pass for the duration of their visit.
- Visitors may not wander freely and must remain in designated areas.
- Suspicious behavior must be reported immediately to an administrator and the security team.

District Vehicles

Employees wishing to use a District vehicle must obtain prior authorization and contact HR to complete the Driving Record Release Form. All state and federal traffic laws must be followed. Employees are personally responsible for any traffic tickets received while operating a District vehicle. Employees must consent to pre-employment and/or periodic motor vehicle record checks and must report any misdemeanor or higher-level driving offense to the Human Resources Office.

District Tools and Equipment

All District-issued equipment and tools shall be used only for authorized District purposes and returned to their proper location at the end of each workday. Employees shall promptly report any damaged or broken District equipment to their supervisor.

Public Information and Media Relations

All contacts with media regarding school-related matters should be routed through the Building Principal and then the Superintendent. If a member of the media contacts an employee directly, the employee should refer them to the Building Principal and/or Superintendent and notify administration that the contact occurred. Employees should not make statements on behalf of the District without authorization from the Superintendent.

Public Relations

The District welcomes constructive feedback motivated by a sincere desire to improve educational quality. Complaints made directly to the Board or individual Board members will be referred to the school administration for review and possible resolution. The employee involved will be advised of the nature of any complaint and given the opportunity to respond.

Staff Information and Forms

New employees receive a new employee packet containing required forms and information. Additional information is available at www.oths.us. Staff request forms are available on the Employee Forms page of the District website.

Whistleblower Protections

The District will not retaliate against any employee who, in good faith, reports a violation or suspected violation of law, District policy, or ethical standards. Employees are protected under the Illinois Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, and the Illinois Human Rights Act. Employees who believe they have experienced retaliation should contact the Human Resources Director or the Superintendent immediately.

Board Policies

All Board Policies referenced in this handbook are available on the OTHS website at www.oths.us under Board Policies. Employees are expected to review policies relevant to their position and responsibilities.

Other District Policies

The following Board Policies govern additional aspects of employment at OTHS. All Board Policies are available on the District website at www.oths.us under Board Policies.

- 5:35 – Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act
- 5:40 – Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease
- 5:60 – Expenses
- 5:70 – Religious Holidays

- 5:80 – Court Duty
- 5:100 – Staff Development Program
- 5:110 – Recognition for Service
- 5:130 – Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information
- 5:150 – Personnel Records
- 5:180 – Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity
- 5:190 – Teacher Qualifications
- 5:200 – Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal
- 5:210 – Resignations
- 5:240 – Suspension
- 5:250 – Leaves of Absence
- 5:280 – Duties and Qualifications
- 5:285 – Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus and Commercial Vehicle Drivers
- 5:300 – Schedules and Employment Year
- 5:320 – Evaluation
- 2:260 – Uniform Grievance Procedure
- 2:265 – Title IX Grievance Procedure
- 2:270 – Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited
- 6:140 – Education of Homeless Children
- 6:235 – Access to Electronic Networks
- 7:90 – Release During School Hours
- 7:270 – Administering Medicines to Students
- 7:340 – Student Records
- 8:30 – Visitors to and Conduct on School Property