

Park Rapids Area Schools
District 309



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
2026 -2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
I. Introduction	1
Welcome	1
Mission Statement	1
II. Your Responsibility as an Employee	1
Success in the Park Rapids Area Schools	1
Attendance	1
Licensure	2
Confidentiality	2
Conflict of Interest	3
Documentation	3
Gifts and Gratuities	3
Meals and Break Periods	3
Personal Appearance	3
Name Badges	4
Personal Property	4
District Property	5
Teamwork	5
School Board Policies and Administrative Procedures	5
Contract Agreements	5
Reporting	5
Acceptable Use	5
III. Employment Laws	5
Equal Opportunity Employer	5
Federal and State Wage and Hour Standards	
At –Will Employment Status	
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Accommodations	6
Background Checks	6
Immigration Law Compliance	7
Employment of Minors	7
Harassment	7
Retaliation	8
Comparable Worth	9
Public and Private Personnel Data	10
IV. Communications	10
Website	10
Telephone and Mail	10
Other Communication	10

Guidelines for employee's personal use of social networking	10
V. Job Performance	11
Job Responsibilities	11
Corrective Action	12
Your Supervisor	12
Chain of Command	12
Initial Evaluation and Performance Review	13
Staff Development	13
VI. Job Opportunities	13
Website and Human Resource Job Posting	13
Hiring of a Relative	14
VII. Employee Pay Records	14
Personal Information Changes	14
Payday	14
Personnel Files	14
Overtime	14
Inclement Weather	14
VIII. Time Away from Work	15
Sick Leave	15
Parental Leave	16
MN Pregnancy and Parental Leave	16
Family and Medical Leave Act	16
MN Paid Family Medical Leave	17
Personal Leave	17
Military Service Leave	18
Funeral Bereavement Leave	18
Jury Duty	18
Dock Days	18
School Conference and Activity Leave	18
Other Leave	18
IX. Employee Benefits	19
Insurance	19
Health	19
Life	19
Disability	19
Vacation	19
Retirement	20

PERA/TRA	20
Deferred Annuities (403b)	20
VEBA	20
FSA	20
Employee Assistance Program	21
Worker's Compensation	21
X. Health and Safety	21
Tobacco Free Environment	21
Drug Free Workplace	22
Employee Right-To-Know- Hazardous Materials	22
Emergency Closings/Crisis Management	22
Health and Safety Protections	23
Fire Safety	23
Automated External Defibrillator (AED)	23
Weapons	24
Wellness	24
XI. Transportation	24
Seat Belt Use	24
Vehicle Insurance	24
Driver's License	24
Parking	24
Mileage	24
XII. Resignation from Employment	25
Notice of Resignation	25
Return of District Property	25
COBRA Benefits	25
Exit Interviews	25

This is the Park Rapids Area Schools Employee Handbook effective August 2025 . The Handbook contains basic information for all employees regarding employment with Park Rapids Area Schools. It has been compiled to summarize several policies, rules and regulations of the school district as well as provide useful information for employees. This handbook does not create a contract, express or implied, guaranteeing any specific term of employment, nor does it obligate continued employment for a specific period of time. The Employee Handbook should be used in conjunction with all applicable policies and procedures set forth by the School Board of Park Rapids Area Schools. For clarification or further explanation of policies, please contact your supervisor or the District Office.

Park Rapids Area Schools reserves the right to modify any of the information covered in this handbook at any time. Notification of changes may be made by email or appropriate means. However, such a notice is not required for any changes to be effective.

This handbook replaces all previous handbooks as well as written or verbal statements of policies and procedures that have been previously provided.

Board Approval: 8/24/2026

I. Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to Park Rapids Area Schools! We are pleased you have chosen to work here and become part of our organization. We are committed to offering high quality education to our students and creating a great place to work for our employees.

Your role as an employee is important for the success of our students. We appreciate the service of all staff members and recognize their contributions on behalf of students.

Mission Statement

The mission of Independent School District 309 is to work together to prepare today's learners for tomorrow's challenges through: sharing of ideas and acceptance of diversity, efficient use of resources, including staff, finances, curriculum, physical plant, technology and area wide support services, thereby providing for maximum academic and personal growth.

Information on our Mission Statement can be found by viewing [School Board Policy 104: School District Mission Statement](#).

II. Your Responsibility as an Employee

Success in the Park Rapids Area School District

Your position with Park Rapids Area Schools is an important one. Every job in this district contributes to the successful operation of the district.

Although there are various positions in the district, each position has these things in common:

1. *Customer Service*: the assistance and advice provided by a company to those people who buy or use its products or services.
2. *Job Performance*: the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform a job well.
3. *Teamwork*: combined efforts, or the actions of a group, to achieve a common purpose or goal.
4. *Personal Appearance*: the standards for the way that look and present ourselves to others.

Attendance

Providing service to the students of this district is the reason this school district exists. Any time you are late or absent it will impact the ability to deliver these services and place an added burden to your coworkers.

All scheduled employees are expected to notify their supervisors as soon as possible if they will be absent.

Teachers and Paraprofessionals are expected to report their absences in Red Rover. This system is used to record employee absences and to obtain substitutes for a certain job classification. You will receive instructions on how to access and use Red Rover. It is your responsibility to record absences in the proper category when you are going to be absent. It is most helpful to substitutes when you state where the opening is.

All employees are required to enter absences into SmartEr.

Excessive absenteeism or tardiness may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees are expected to report, ready and prepared to begin work duties, at their assigned location and areas on time each scheduled workday.

Licensure/Certifications

Each employee who requires licensure or certification by law must maintain a current license or certificate with the District Office. Individuals are expected to know the date of expiration of their license/certification and meet the qualifications for re-licensure. Please refer to [School Board Policy 424: License Status](#) for more information.

Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year all teachers must be highly qualified as a requirement under the No Child Left Behind Act. In Minnesota teachers licensed after the year 2000 were covered through the licensing process. Teachers who were licensed before the year 2000 can visit <http://education.state.mn.us/mde/edexc/licen/highqualteach/> for more information regarding highly qualified requirements.

Confidentiality

Information obtained as a result of employment with this school district is confidential. The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Chapter 13 of the Minnesota Statutes, is the state law that protects the privacy of student educational records. The Federal Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) is the federal law that protects personally identifiable information included in the student educational records. Respect for the privacy of our students requires that you discuss student issues only with those staff members with a mutual, legitimate educational interest, which is directly related to classroom instruction, teaching, student achievement and progress, discipline of a student, student health and welfare, and the ability to respond to a request for educational data. As a best practice school staff who have a legitimate educational interest in sharing private student educational data should not discuss student information in community areas such as hallways, lounges, and parking lots in order to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of private student data. Furthermore, privacy of information can often not be guaranteed when using emailing and faxing as communication. Overall, school staff should refrain from discussing personal student information in public areas and be aware of the security risks of other communication methods used when sharing private student data, such as emails or faxes. In addition to student information, confidentiality is expected in other areas including staff information or school district business information. Any breach of confidentiality is a serious violation of the integrity of the position and ultimately the school district. Sharing

of confidential data with individuals not associated with the circumstance is a violation and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The district will comply with requests for public information as they are received in accordance with state law and school district policy. Requests should be directed to the proper departments. Please refer to [School Board Policy 515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records and Policy 406: Public and Private Personnel Data](#).

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is defined as any judgement, action or relationship that may benefit you or another party because of your relationship with the Park Rapids Area School District. If you find yourself in a situation that may present a conflict of interest, please notify your supervisor.

Documentation

Integrity is a core value in the Park Rapids Area School District. Intentional inaccuracies on official school district documents such as time sheets, job applications, etc. are prohibited and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Gifts and Gratuities

As a representative of a public employer, it is essential that your work be perceived as being free from external influences. It is our policy to decline gifts from any outside organizations or individuals doing business or seeking to do business with the school district. Gifts of nominal value may be accepted. Larger gifts should be graciously declined. The school district recognizes that students, parents, and others may wish to show appreciation to school district employees. It is the policy of the school district, however, to discourage gift-giving to employees, and to encourage donors instead to write letters and notes of appreciation. See [School Board Policy 421: Gift to Employees](#) for more information.

Meal and Break Periods

The district recognizes that appropriate breaks are important to you and your effectiveness on the job. If you work 6 or more consecutive hours, you will be given a 30-minute duty-free, unpaid meal break. Generally, you may take a paid 15 minute break for every four hours worked if workload and staffing needs allow, however this is considered paid work time and does not apply to the calculation of overtime or comp time. Meal periods should not be forfeited to alter a daily schedule without the approval of a supervisor.

Break periods may vary based on contract language.

Personal Appearance

As an employee of Park Rapids Area School District, we are judged not only by our service, but also by our appearance and presentation to others. Employees are expected to project professionalism. Employees should follow a “smart casual” style of dress. Items generally accepted under this style of dress are: collared shirts, polo shirts, trousers, chinos, blazers, blouse, sweater, cardigan, jeans that are colored or dressy in nature (fitted and non-

distressed), and skirts. The formality of workplace dress is determined by the context and nature of the work performed.

Items to avoid include gym shorts, hooded and non-hooded sweatshirts, t-shirts, items that are torn, dirty, ripped, or frayed. Clothing that is too revealing, such as low-cut or midriff-baring tops or excessively low-rise pants, are not appropriate for a school.

Positions that require work with heavy equipment, hazardous materials, or positions that may require physical support of students, should avoid loose clothing, shorts, open toed shoes or sandals, and excessive jewelry.

Staff should be mindful of students and/or employees that could be allergic or sensitive to the chemical or smells of perfumes, colognes, oils, and lotions, so please wear these in moderation or refrain from wearing them if possible.

No dress code can cover all scenarios so employees must use a certain amount of judgement in their choice of clothing. If you are uncertain about acceptable casual clothing for work, it may be best to refrain from wearing it. If clothing fails to meet these standards, as determined by a supervisor, the employee will be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to work again.

Name Badges

Your name badge is an important part of your work attire. Students, parents, and the general public, identify you as an employee of our school when wearing it. It is an important part of providing a secure environment for our students, and to ensure that everyone who enters our buildings is identified. Your name badge should be worn anytime you are at work and should be worn in a visible spot on the upper portion of your body.

Persons not wearing a name badge should be questioned about their purpose within the facility to encourage safety of our students and employees. Employees who are not wearing their school district provided name badge, will be asked to wear a temporary visitor badge.

Badges should not be given to students under any circumstances. If a student needs to get through doors that are locked during the day, they should be accompanied by a staff member.

The District will provide your first badge at no charge. If a badge needs to be replaced there will be a fee of \$8.00 per replacement.

Personal Property

The Park Rapids Area School District does not assume any responsibility for loss, theft or damages to personal property. In order to minimize risk, we advise you to not carry unnecessary amounts of cash or other valuables. If you bring personal items to work, you are expected to exercise reasonable care to safeguard them. Personal appliances such as refrigerators, coffee makers, lamps, etc. may be used if the appliance meets applicable safety codes.

District Property

The school district may supply you with equipment or supplies to assist you in performing your job duties. You are expected to show reasonable care for any equipment issued and to take precautions for theft as well. Any equipment, keys and key fobs issued must be returned prior to your last day of employment. Lost equipment, keys, and key fobs must be reported to a supervisor immediately.

Teamwork

Providing a quality education for students and a quality work experience for employees involves teamwork between each employee in the district. You can do this by creating a pleasant, respectful, caring and enjoyable work atmosphere and working together towards achieving the mission of the Park Rapids Area School District.

School Board Policies and Administrative Procedures

It is the responsibility of each employee to read and become familiar with School Board Policies and Administrative Procedures of the district. These policies and procedures are found on the district website. Some policies are mentioned in this handbook; however, all need to be reviewed on a regular basis by all employees.

Contract Agreements

Most employees of the District have a particular bargaining unit that District employees have voted to have represent them in the negotiation process.

Our labor unions and management periodically negotiate collective bargaining agreements which govern salary, benefits, work hours and terms and conditions of employment. It is important that you review and understand your contract agreement.

If you are a non-union employee, your terms and conditions of employment will be governed by federal and state law and District policies and procedures.

Reporting

A mandated reporter must immediately report abuse, which he or she knows or has reason to believe is happening or has happened, within the preceding three years to the local welfare agency, police department, county sheriff, or agency responsible for assisting or investigating maltreatment. Please refer to [School Board Policies 414: Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse](#) and [415: Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults](#) for more information about mandated reporting required by state statute for the protection of students.

Employees are also required to report incidents of bullying as defined by state statute. Please refer to [School Board Policy 514: Bullying Prohibition Policy](#) for more information.

You are required to comply with these statutes to maintain a safe and civil environment for students.

Acceptable Use

Please Refer to [School Board Policy 524: Internet Acceptable Use and Safety](#). You are expected to read and follow the direction of this policy at all times.

III. EMPLOYMENT LAWS

Equal Opportunity Employment

The Park Rapids Area Public School District prohibits discrimination in any form on the basis of race, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, familial status, or status with regard to public assistance. This policy includes but is not limited to the following: employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, recall, corrective actions, termination, rate of pay, other compensation, and the application of policies and training.

Please refer to [School Board Policy 401: Equal Employment Opportunity](#) and [402: Disability Nondiscrimination](#), both of which reference equal employment opportunity.

Employees who engage in discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If you feel you have been the victim of discrimination, please refer to [School Board Policy 402: Disability Nondiscrimination](#).

Federal and State Wage and Hour Standards

To the extent that terms and conditions of a district employee's employment is not governed by an existing individual or collective bargaining agreement, he or she is an hourly, non-exempt employee under Federal and State wage and hour standards, based on verification of hours worked.

At-Will Employment Status

All non-contract employees are employed at the will and discretion of the district. As such, there shall be no individual continuing contract status, in fact or implied. Non-contract employees may be employed, promoted, demoted, or terminated at the will of the district so long as the requirements of cause, procedures, and the rights of the individual as mandated under law have not been violated.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Park Rapids Area Public Schools is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act ("ADA"). It is our policy not to discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms or conditions of employment because of such an individual's disability or perceived disability so long as the employee can perform the essential functions of the job. Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, Park Rapids Area Schools will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who has made Park Rapids Area Schools aware of his or her disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on the district.

Employees with a disability who believe they need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should contact the Superintendent or the District Office. Park Rapids Area Schools encourage individuals with disabilities to come forward and request reasonable accommodation.

The ADA does not require employers to make the best possible accommodation, to reallocate essential job functions, or to provide person use items. (i.e., eyeglasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs, etc.).

An employee or job applicant who has questions regarding this policy or believes that he or she has been discriminated against based on a disability should notify the Superintendent or Human Resources Department. All such inquiries or complaints will be treated as confidential to the extent permissible by law. For further information, please see [School Board Policy 402: Disability Nondiscrimination](#).

Employee Background Checks

The school district requires a criminal history background check on all individuals employed by the school district, including athletic coaches, according to MN Statute 123B.03. A person is employed after they successfully complete a criminal background check and the background check is reviewed by the school district.

Employees have the right to request and obtain a copy of the background check report from the district, which may be provided to the employee at a cost not exceeding the actual cost of the report. Employees have the right to challenge the accuracy and completeness of information contained in a background check report. Additional information can be found by viewing [School Board Policy 404: Employment Background Checks](#).

Immigration Law Compliance

Park Rapids Area Public Schools is committed to employing only United States Citizens and Aliens who are authorized to work in the United States, and to comply with the Immigration and Nationality Act. As a condition of employment, you must properly complete, sign and date the first section of the Immigration and Naturalization Service Form I-9 on your date of hire, or upon acceptance of an employment offer, and provide documentation of information requested within 3 business days of the date employment begins. Newly re-hired employees must also complete the Form I-9 prior to beginning work if: they have not previously filed an I-9

with the district; if their previous I-9 is more than 3 years old; or if their previous I-9 is no longer valid.

Employers cannot specify which documents an employee can use for Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification. A list of acceptable documents can be found by going to <https://www.uscis.gov>. You may also request the list from the District Office.

Employment of Minors

No one under 18 years of age will be employed without providing proper proof of age in an age certificate, birth certificate, or driver's license. Minors will be employed only in accordance with the state child labor laws and the school district policies. No one under 14 years of age will be employed in any capacity.

This policy is in accordance with both state and federal laws that regulate hiring of minors. In the Fair Labor Standards Act the minimum age of 14 was set for general employment, but for those occupations that the Secretary of Labor determined to be hazardous, the minimum age is 18.

A high school student under the age of 16 may not work before 7:00 a.m. or after 9 p.m. or for more than 40 hours in a week or more than 8 hours in a 24 hour period.

A high school student under the age of 18 will not be permitted to work after 11 p.m. on an evening before a school day or before 5 a.m. on a school day. (MN Statutes 181A.05)

Harassment

The purpose of the school district policy on harassment is to maintain learning and working environments that are free from religious, racial, national origin or sexual harassment and violence. Park Rapids Area Schools prohibits any form of religious, racial, sexual orientation, national origin or sexual harassment and violence. Please refer to [School Board Policy 413: Harassment and Violence](#).

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The policy of the school district is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

A violation of this policy occurs when any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of the school district harasses a pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or group of pupils, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel through conduct or communication based on a person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability, as defined by this policy. (For purposes of this policy, school personnel include school

board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.)

A violation of this policy occurs when any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel of the school district inflicts, threatens to inflict, or attempts to inflict violence upon any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel or group of pupils, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel based on a person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. The school district will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment or violence based on a person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

Park Rapids Area Schools will investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial, sexual orientation, national origin or sexual harassment or violence, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

School Board Form 413, Harassment and Violence Report Form can be found with the school board policies on the school website. The form is also available from the administrator of each building as well as from the school district office. Oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.

The Human Rights Officer (Superintendent) will investigate or authorize investigation upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment or violence that is prohibited by this policy. The school district will take appropriate action based on the findings of the investigation.

Retaliation

The law forbids retaliation when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment in response to filing a charge of discrimination; making a complaint to an employer or other covered entity about discrimination; or because of participation in a discrimination proceeding.

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged harassment, violence, or discrimination in accordance with school board policy or any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment or violence. Retaliation includes but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

Comparable Worth/Pay Equity

It is the policy of Park Rapids Area School District to comply with the Minnesota State Law on comparable worth/pay equity. Park Rapids Area Schools has established procedures to evaluate all new job descriptions and all existing job descriptions which experience a substantial change in order to pass all tests outlined by the State of Minnesota.

Public and Private Personnel Data

Private and public personnel data is defined by Federal law, state statute and School Board Policy. The district will follow these laws, and you as an employee should understand what information the district maintains about you is private and what information is public. Please refer to [School Board Policy 406: Public and Private Personnel Data](#).

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

Website

The school district maintains a website at www.parkrapids.k12.mn.us. It contains a wide variety of information about the district, our schools, programs, employment, policies, upcoming events, community education, etc. Employees who need access will receive a username and password so that they are able to change information on the page(s) they have access to.

The website also contains commonly used forms and also many tip sheets such as how to make an online order request, Timetracker, rSchool request guide, etc. This section also contains the mileage chart, information on how to view your electronic pay stub, and current Summary of Benefits and Coverage information sheets on each of our health plans.

Please take some time as a new staff member to familiarize yourself with the website and the guides mentioned.

Telephone and Mail

You are encouraged to use district telephones, computers, fax machines, and other communication devices for school district business purposes only. Employees may use personal cell phones to make personal telephone calls/text messages or other electronic correspondence during their breaks, meal periods or prep periods, but should not use them during scheduled work time.

Personal correspondence should be written on your own time. The district is not to be used as a personal mailing address.

Other Communication

Voicemail- Voicemail is assigned to designated employees. Employees with voicemail should listen to their messages frequently during the day and return messages in a timely manner.

Mailboxes-Mailboxes may be assigned to employees in the building they work in.

Email and Internet Use- Email and Internet use are for school business purposes only. All emails received by, sent through, or generated by computers using the district network are subject to review by the district. Please review [School Board Policy 524: Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy](#).

Social Media- Employees should refrain from using personal social media while on work time or using equipment that is provided by the School District.

Personal Devices- Employees are highly discouraged from using personal devices for work related correspondence. All work-related documents and correspondence on a personal device could be subject to litigation.

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING

The decision to use online social networking for personal use is at the employee's discretion. The district does not affirmatively monitor employee use of non-district, online social networking tools if the employee is not using district electronic technologies; however, the district may take appropriate action when it becomes aware of, or suspects, conduct or communication on an online social media site that adversely affects the workplace or violates applicable professional codes of ethics. These guidelines are for employees engaging in social networking for personal use.

1. When using your personal social networking sites, refrain from fraternization with student
2. Ensure that social networking postings are appropriate for the public.
3. Weigh whether a posting will put your effectiveness as an employee at risk.
4. Use caution with regard to exaggeration, profanity, guesswork, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions and derogatory comments.
5. Ensure compliance with data privacy laws and district policies. Employees will be held responsible for inappropriate disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent.
6. Respect your coworkers and students. Do not discuss students, their families or coworkers.
7. Student images obtained from your employment with the district should not be included on personal social networking sites.
8. Set privacy settings carefully to ensure that you know who has access to the content on your social networking sites.
9. If the public may consider your statements to be made in your capacity as a district employee, you may want to include "this posting is my own and does not represent the view of Park Rapids Area Schools." An employee in a leadership role in the district, by virtue of his or her position, must consider whether personal thoughts he or she publishes will be attributed to this district.
10. Social media identifications, login identifications, and usernames must not contain the district's name or logo without prior written permission from District Administration

V. JOB PERFORMANCE

Job Responsibilities

Each position within the district has specific responsibilities which you are expected to perform. It is important that you fully understand the responsibilities related to your position. If you have questions about the functions you are expected to perform please talk to your supervisor. Most jobs will require that employees be flexible and willing to take on new assignments as a result of their responsibilities changing over time. It is important that you clearly understand what your supervisor expects of you. Check with your supervisor if you have any questions regarding your job description duties.

All students are entitled to learn and develop in a positive setting, making proactive student supervision an important part of ensuring the safety of students, and when an incident happens, helping to minimize negative outcomes. All school district personnel are responsible for contributing to the supervision and monitoring of students and ensuring a safe environment for all people in the school district buildings, grounds and transportation.

Corrective Action

Corrective action may be taken by supervisors in an effort to address the behavior and performance of employees, whose conduct is unprofessional and disrupts the activities and goals of the district. The forms of corrective action may include oral warnings, written warnings, suspension, demotion, or termination. Please refer to School Board Policy 403: Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees.

Your Supervisor

We encourage open communication. Your supervisor should be the first person you talk to regarding most questions or concerns you may have. He/She can explain operations, protocols, and procedures and refer you to written materials or other resources for additional information.

Chain of Command

Being able to communicate effectively and efficiently in all structured organizations is vital to ensure that potential problems are resolved early in the process. In schools, by doing so the educational and operational progression are not interrupted for students, staff and constituents.

At times, frustration may form for individuals if the proper process is not followed. To avoid this happening, individuals need to be informed and reminded of the problem-solving matrix of chain of command and going to the source.

The following matrix is a recognized and accepted process of problem solving and resolution. At all times, the process starts with addressing the concern or issue directly to the person with whom the matter exists. In most instances, the question, concern or issue is easily

resolved by communicating directly, going to the source, with the educator in charge of the classroom or program or supervisor of the department.

Classroom Academic/Behavior/Discipline/Instruction:

1. Teacher
2. Principal
3. Superintendent
4. School Board

Athletics/Extra Curricular Activities/Programs:

1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Superintendent
5. School Board

Personnel Issues:

1. Teacher or Source
2. Principal
3. Superintendent
4. School Board

Observing this problem-solving matrix will allow all individuals a way of preventing potential issues and assist in resolving others that may arise.

Please review [School Board Policy 103: Complaints-Students, Employees, Parents, Other Persons.](#)

Initial Evaluation and Performance Review

The initial performance and evaluation and periodic performance review period varies by certified and non-certified staff. Please talk with your supervisor if you have questions on the evaluation timeline and process.

Please refer to [School Board Policy 490: Evaluation of Support Staff.](#)

Staff Development

The district has an established Staff Development program to help you remain current and up to date in your job duties. Staff Development time is scheduled on the school calendar each year for staff development. You are encouraged to use this time to advance your knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform your job. Offsite staff development is also available by supervisor approval. Please refer to [School Board Policy 425: Staff Development.](#)

VI. JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Website and Human Resources Job Postings

All open positions are advertised on the district website under the Human Resources section. If you are interested in being considered for one of the jobs, you are asked to apply for the job in the district assigned application system. All qualified applicants who apply, are considered for job openings.

Hiring of Relatives

The district may employ an immediate family of employees provided they are not placed in positions with direct supervision of one another.

VII. EMPLOYEE PAY AND RECORDS

Personal Information Changes

For a variety of reasons, it is important that your records are current. If there are any changes to your name, address, telephone, number of dependents, insurance beneficiaries, etc., it is your responsibility to notify Human Resources and/or Payroll.

Payday

Payday is bi-weekly on Friday. Employees are required to have their check direct deposited to the bank account of their choice. There are limited exceptions to this requirement. Employees are limited to two(2) direct deposit accounts for deposit of their paycheck. Direct deposit may only be changed if an employee changes banks.

Payroll and leave information are available via SMARTeR and may be printed by employees.

Personnel Files

During your employment with the school district, information about you must be kept on file. Your personnel file will include basic information as well as employment related information-performance reviews, applications, disciplines, etc. A separate medical file is maintained for each employee, which has limited access. You may review your personnel file by contacting Human Resources or Payroll for an appointment.

Overtime

Employees are designated as either exempt or nonexempt according to federal and state wage and hour laws. Non-Exempt or hourly employees are entitled to overtime pay under specific provisions. Exempt employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws.

Overtime is paid at the rate of one- and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay. Overtime must be authorized by your supervisor in advance.

Park Rapids Area Schools workweek begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday.

Inclement Weather

Should inclement weather occur, Park Rapids Area Schools may either close, start two hours late or be dismissed early. When possible, decisions to close or delay the start of school will be made the night before or prior to 6 a.m. In all of these situations, you can expect the following communications from Park Rapids Area School District:

The district will utilize the mass notification system, Blackboard to call and text staff regarding any change to the school schedule. Please make sure that your emergency contact information is current and on file with the District Office. The district will also post closings, delay or early dismissal information on local radio and television stations.

When Park Rapids Area Schools close, all school activities will be cancelled or rescheduled. These include extracurricular, school clubs, community education, early childhood programs, and typically events scheduled by non-district groups.

VII. TIME AWAY FROM WORK

There are multiple reasons employees may need to be absent. When you are going to miss work you need to make sure that you notify your supervisor and that you put your absence into SmartEr and Red Rover (teachers/paras/secretaries/nurses). Planned absences should be recorded into the system as far in advance as possible. Please follow instructions and timelines to ensure the best functioning of the system.

Sick Leave

Eligible employees have available sick leave to use for personal and family illnesses. The district will comply with MN Statute to allow employees to use certain specified family members in the same manner as they use leave for themselves. In some situations, a physician's certification may be required for personal or family illness. All leaves will run concurrently.

An employee is responsible for the appropriate use of sick leave. Sick leave abuse occurs when an employee uses sick leave for an unauthorized purpose or misrepresents the actual reason for using an absence as sick leave. Abuse may also occur when an employee establishes a pattern of sick leave usage over a period of time such as the day before or after a holiday, on Mondays and Fridays, after payday, etc. Abuse of sick leave by an employee may result in discipline, including and/or up to termination from employment.

Please review contract language for further information.

Parental Leave

Each contract has provisions for employees to take time off for the birth or adoption of a child. Minnesota Parental leave allows up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for employees for prenatal care, or incapacity due to pregnancy, childbirth or related health conditions. Eligible employees are those who have worked at least 12 months and worked an average number of hours per week equal to one-half the full time equivalent of their job classification during the 12 months preceding the leave.

The Family Medical Leave Act is a federal law that also allows up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave and is further defined later in this section.

Employees need to request the leave in writing to their supervisor and then it should be forwarded to Human Resources for processing 30 days in advance of the beginning of the leave when possible.

MN Pregnancy and Parental Leave Act (MN PPL)

Employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during or following pregnancy. Employees are eligible for this leave regardless of the size of their employer and the amount of time for which they have worked for their employer.

- The leave must be taken within 12 months of the birth or adoption.

If you have paid leave, including sick leave or paid vacation, pregnancy and parental leave can be reduced so the total leave (pregnancy and parental plus paid leave) is not more than 12 weeks. Leave taken for prenatal care may not count against pregnancy and parental leave. If you qualify for both federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and pregnancy or parental leave, you only have a right to 12 weeks of leave in total for childbirth or adoption of a child and any other pregnancy-related leave. Pregnancy and parental leave will run concurrently with FMLA and other leaves an employee qualifies for.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

To be eligible for leave under this policy an employee must have been employed at the district for at least 12 months and must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12- month period preceding the beginning of the leave.

Leave may be taken for:

1. the birth of an employee's child
2. the placement of a child for adoption or foster care with an employee
3. to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition
4. the employee's serious health condition makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's job, and/or

5. any qualifying exigency arising from the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent being on covered active duty, or notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty in the Armed Forces.

In relation to this policy, Park Rapids Area Schools defines a "year" as a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee's leave is to commence.

FMLA may be taken on an intermittent or reduced-leave schedule.

In the event two spouses are both employed by the district, they are entitled to a joint total of 12 weeks of leave for the birth or placement for adoption or foster care of a child. For any other qualifying FMLA reason, each eligible spouse will be entitled to the full 12 weeks, or any portion of that leave remaining in the relevant 12-month period.

Please refer to [School Board Policy 410: Family and Medical Leave Policy](#).

Minnesota Paid Family Medical Leave (MN PFML)

Minnesota Paid Family Medical Leave will run concurrently with FMLA. Employees are responsible for 50% of the premium payment through payroll withholdings. Employees may opt to use their own accrued leave to supplement qualifying PFML leave, but not receive more than 100% of their normal salary or wages.

You can take leave for the following qualifying events:

Medical Leave:

- To care for your own serious health condition, including care related to pregnancy, childbirth, and recovery

Family Leave:

- Bonding Leave – to care for and bond with a child welcomed through birth, adoption, or foster placement
- Caring Leave – to care for a family member with a serious health condition
- Military Family Leave – to support a family member called to active duty
- Safety Leave – to respond to issues related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking for yourself or a family member
- www.mnlpaidleave.com

Personal Leave

Under contracts/agreements, school district employees may qualify for personal leave. Please refer to your contract for additional information. All absences for personal leave must also be entered into Frontline.

Military Service Leave

Park Rapids Area Schools provide time off for employees who are members of the military. The district will follow federal and state laws for this type of leave.

Funeral/Bereavement Leave

Time off with pay is granted in various ways in different contracts/agreements to allow an employee time to attend the funeral or assist with final arrangements. The list of relatives can be found in your contract, as well as the allowed provisions of paid time off.

Jury Duty

Employees are given paid time off to serve on a jury. An employee called to serve on a jury must notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible after receiving notice.

Dock Day

Dock days are days taken voluntarily by an employee without pay and require the approval of a supervisor and Superintendent. These days are to be arranged as far in advance as possible in order to provide as little disruption to students and coworkers as possible.

School Conference and Activity Leave

Employees are able to take a total of up to 16 hours during a 12-month period to attend school conferences or school-related activities related to the employee's child, provided the conference or school-related activities cannot be scheduled during nonwork hours. This leave is unpaid, but an employee may substitute paid vacation or personal leave for this.

Other Leaves of Absence

Certain contracts/agreements have provisions for other leaves of absence. These leaves are normally without pay and may vary in length from a few hours to five years. Please check your contract for leave provisions.

IX. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Insurance

Health

Park Rapids Area Schools provides the choice of several health insurance plans, which offer both employee and/or family coverage. The choices include different plan designs and premium cost for each choice. Detailed information can be found in the Summary of Benefits and other relevant plan documents located on the website under the Human Resources tab/District Forms.

Eligibility and district contribution towards the cost of health insurance coverage will be identified in each master agreement. Costs in excess of the provided premium will be the employee's responsibility and will be deducted through payroll. Employees will be eligible for participation in the district group insurance starting with their hire date, provided forms have been filled out. The opportunity for enrollment is within the first 30 days of initial employment or within 30 days of a change in employment status or life changing event, such as a birth or adoption of a child, death, marriage, divorce or loss of coverage.

Employees who are not covered by a master agreement or contract and who meet the minimum threshold of hours to be considered full time under the Affordable Care Act, will be notified of eligibility to enroll in district health insurance benefits. Premiums will be at the cost of the employee.

Life

In most contracts/agreements the school district pays the premium for a basic life insurance policy for eligible employees. This insurance currently has an accidental death and dismemberment provision. To be eligible for life insurance a minimum of 15 hours per week is required.

Disability Insurance

The school district pays the premium for a long-term disability insurance policy for eligible employees. The policy pays 66 ⅔% of an employee's normal wage, up to age 65 if necessary, for continuing disability.

Vacation

Vacation is paid time off earned by eligible employees to take off for any reason. The amount earned varies by contract/agreement.

Vacation may not be available until after a probationary period, depending on the contract/agreement. Advance requests are always required and should be submitted to your supervisor for approval.

Vacation Days must be entered into SmartEr and/or Red Rover.

Leave requested after a resignation is submitted may be approved based on the discretion of the supervisor and/or relevant contract language.

Retirement

PERA and TRA

All employees in the Park Rapids Area School District who meet minimum state plan requirements are covered under either the Public Employee's Retirement Association or the Teacher's Retirement Association. The school district and the employee both contribute to the mandated state retirement plans in an amount set by law. Further information is available on the PERA website at www.mnpera.org or the TRA website at www.tra.state.mn.us

Deferred Annuities-403(b)

The school district sponsors district approved companies who provide 403(b) deferred annuities/mutual funds. Employees may contribute to these annuities with pre-tax dollars up to the maximum allowed by law. In some contracts/agreements, the employer will match a portion of the employee contribution up to the maximum specified in the contract/agreement. Please refer to your contract/agreement to confirm if you are eligible for this benefit. Please contact Payroll if you are interested in signing up to participate in the 403(b) program or if you have further questions.

VEBA

The school district contributes into a VEBA account on your behalf. This money can be used to help meet your health insurance deductible or to pay health related expenses. This money is yours even when you are no longer employed with the district. Money in this account may be used to help pay medical related expenses for medically dependent children and spouses.

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)

The school district maintains a flexible spending plan to which eligible employees may contribute pre-tax dollars from their pay to cover any or all of the following areas:

1. Unreimbursed Medical Expenses
2. Child Care Expenses

The plan year for flexible benefits runs from July 1-June 30. Employees hired during that time may participate for the remainder of the plan year. Please contact Payroll to enroll.

Employee Assistance Program

Park Rapids Area Schools are eligible to participate in an Employee Assistance Program through our current life insurance provider. Employees covered by our life insurance are the only ones eligible to participate. The EAP is for use by the covered employee only. The program provides help to employees for a wide variety of needs and concerns such as:

- Depression
- Stress Management
- Anxiety
- Marital Difficulties
- Relationship Problems
- Family Conflict
- Alcohol or Drug Addictions
- Financial or Legal Concerns
- Parenting Concerns
- Eating Disorders
- Childcare and Eldercare

All information shared with the EAP is held in a confidential manner and may not be disclosed to anyone without a signed release from the employee. Participation is voluntary. EAP programs can be obtained by phone at 866-451-5465 or online at www.niseap.com.

Worker's Compensation

All employees are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance. There are strict timelines to fill out the form in order to be covered and failure to report or file the form on a timely basis could result in the rejection of a claim.

X.HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our district is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for all employees and students. It is our belief that employees at every level have a responsibility for maintaining safety and occupational health within the district, and are expected to cooperate fully with the district's health and safety policies. Violations of health and safety policies should be reported to the Facilities Manager. Please review [School Board Policy 807: Health and Safety Policy](#).

Tobacco Free Environment

Smoking and/or the use of tobacco products are prohibited on all school district property, including district owned and contracted vehicles.

Enforcement

Signs will be placed at the entrance of each school district building stating that it is a tobacco free environment.

Violations should be reported to the appropriate supervisor. Please refer to [School Board Policy 419: Tobacco Free Environment](#).

Drug Free Workplace/Drug Free School

Park Rapids Area Schools prohibit the use of controlled substances, toxic substances, and alcohol before, during or after school hours, at a school or in any other school location. Paraphernalia associated with controlled substances is also prohibited. Please refer to [School Board Policy 418: Drug Free Workplace Drug Free School](#), [School Board Policy 417: Chemical Use and Abuse](#), and [School Board Policy 416: Drug and Alcohol Testing](#).

Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary action including nonrenewal, suspension, termination, or discharge as deemed appropriate by the school board.

Employee Right to Know

The school district has identified hazardous substances, harmful physical agents or infectious agents in the school district and provides training and information for employee protection. Please refer to School Board Policy 407: Employee Right to Know Exposure to Hazardous Substances.

Emergency Closings/Crisis Management

When conditions at the school are determined to be of an emergency nature or hazardous to staff and students, the administrator will notify the superintendent of the circumstances.

Building administrators will follow individual building action plans as outlined in [School Board Policy 803: Warning Systems and Emergency Plans](#), [School Board Policy 804: Bomb Threats](#), and [School Board Policy 806: Crisis Management Policy](#). The Superintendent may determine an alternate plan of action. Once the plan is determined the responsible school district staff will contact any organizations and individuals which may be necessary to notify.

The automated notification system may be used in these situations. Each school within the district has specific guidelines to follow. Please locate the Park Rapids Area Schools Emergency Crisis Plan booklet located in each classroom and office. This plan is reviewed annually and by the district administration as well as the safety committee in each building, and local law enforcement.

Health and Safety Protection

The Park Rapids Area School district considers health and safety protection an important part of every operation. The district will establish, provide and maintain safe and healthful working conditions and insist upon safe work methods and practices at all times. Please refer to [School Board Policy 807: Health and Safety, School Board Policy 420: Students and Employees with Communicable Diseases and Infectious Conditions.](#)

The health, welfare, and safety of students and staff while on school district property and the protection of the school district property are important functions of the school district. The district recognizes the value of video/audio/electronic surveillance systems in monitoring activity on school property. Please refer to [School Board Policy 712: Safety and Security Technology Policy 711: Videotaping on School Buses.](#)

All employees and students shall follow safe working practices, obey rules and regulations, and work in a manner that maintains the high safety and health standards developed by the district.

Fire Safety

The school district seeks to provide a safe environment for employees and students. Fire safety is an essential element of this environment.

Employees should know:

1. Location of fire alarms.
2. Location of fire extinguishers.
3. Evacuation routes.
4. Who to notify in case of fire.

Employees need to remain calm in situations involving danger to self and others, and to take precautions to prevent fires from occurring. In the event of a fire, the most important task is to sound the alarm and clear the building. Employees should not risk their safety in fighting fires.

Please refer to [School Board Policy 806: Crisis Management Policy.](#)

Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

The Park Rapids Area School District maintains AEDs in all buildings. Contact your School Nurse or Building Administrator to find out exact locations. Supervisor will notify staff of any training as they become available.

Weapons

All district employees are expected to follow the provisions of [School Board Policy 501: School Weapons Policy](#). It is essential that a safe environment be maintained in order to meet the mission of the district.

Wellness

[School Board Policy 433: Wellness Program Policy](#) relates to the school district and the values it holds for the health and wellbeing of each staff member. The school district encourages the involvement of administrators, School Board, students, parents, teachers, food and nutrition personnel and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring and reviewing school district nutrition and physical activity policies.

XI. TRANSPORTATION

Seat Belt Use

All employees are required to use seat belts when operating or riding in a motor vehicle on school district business.

Vehicle Insurance

All employees who use a vehicle for work related purposes must carry insurance on their vehicle as required by the State of Minnesota. You may be required to show proof of current vehicle insurance.

Driver's License

All employees who use a vehicle for work related purposes are required to have a valid driver's license.

Parking

Please contact your supervisor for the specific policy on parking issues.

Mileage

Employees who use their own car for district business will be reimbursed at the rate determined by the school district. Employees who choose to drive their own vehicle instead of a school vehicle for training, etc. will only be reimbursed for mileage one way. Please refer to School Board Policy 412: Expense Reimbursement.

XII. RESIGNATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

Notice of Resignation

The school district requires notice if you are resigning from employment. The district requests as much advance notice as possible in order to have some time to advertise and hire your replacement. This notice should be in writing. Failure to give notice may jeopardize future employment with the district.

Return of District Property

At the time of resignation or retirement, and prior to leaving the district you will need to return all district property to your supervisor. Keys, ID badges and all other district property is to be given to your supervisor, who will ensure that all property is returned to the department where it originated.

COBRA Benefits

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 requires that most employers sponsoring group health plans offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage at group rates in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end.

If you are covered by the district's group health insurance plan and lose your coverage because of a reduction in your hours of employment or the termination of your employment, you have the right to choose continuation coverage. If you choose continuation coverage, you will be provided with coverage that is identical to the coverage being provided to similarly situated employees. If you do not choose continuation coverage, your group health insurance coverage under the plan will end.

Please refer to MN Statute 471.61 for more information.

If you or your family member elects to continue coverage, you must pay the district the cost of the continued coverage monthly. Once your continuation coverage terminates for any reason, it cannot be reinstated.

Exit Interviews

Upon resignation the District Office will provide you with an exit interview form. This form will give you the opportunity to tell us how we can improve our working conditions, policies, supervisory techniques, and other areas. It also gives you the opportunity to tell us what is good about the district. Exit interviews will be provided electronically, however paper copies will be available upon request. If you would prefer to make an appointment to discuss your experience as an employee of Park Rapids Schools, please contact the District Office.