2026-2027 ADMINISTRATIVE
HANDBOOK



Mason City Schools

211 North East Street, Mason, OH 45040

Approved by the Board of Education
August 18, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

The opportunity to build strong lasting relationships must be at the center of all that we do. We have made it our commitment to be intentional about taking a close look at our culture and designing strategies that allow us to continue to grow Mason in a direction that celebrates what really matters. Our leadership team has a deep conviction to see Mason as a beacon of hope to other public schools around the globe as a community that truly embraces innovation and inclusive excellence. Our objective is to continue working in alignment with our community leaders to be an inclusive community that is welcoming to all learners as we continue designing learning experiences that position Mason as an international destination district.



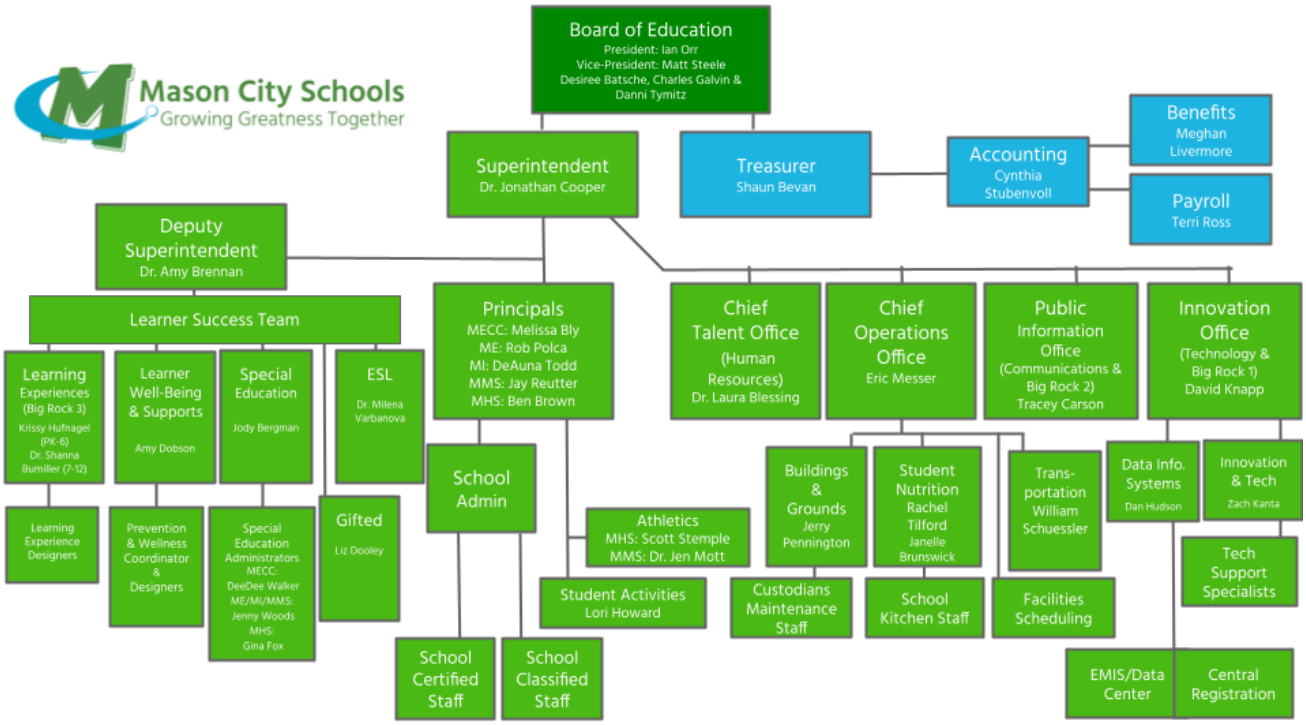
Jonathan Cooper
Superintendent

Mason City Schools Administrator Contracts

Last Name	First Name	Role Name	Contract Expiration Date
Barnett	Blake	Assistant Principal	7/31/2027
Bergman	Jody	Special Education Supervisor	7/31/2028
Blessing	Laura	Chief Talent Officer	7/31/2027
Bly	Melissa	Principal	7/31/2027
Brennan	Amy	Deputy Superintendent	7/31/2028
Brown	Ben	Principal	7/31/2028
Brunswick	Janelle	Asst. Child Nutrition Supervisor	7/31/2028
Buhrlage	Brittany	Assistant Principal	7/31/2027
Bumiller	Shanna	Learning Experience Supervisor	7/31/2027
Carson	Tracey	Public Information Officer	7/31/2027
Corattiyill	Ashwin	Assistant Principal	7/31/2028
Darling	Tina	Assistant Principal	7/31/2027
Amy	Dobson	Learner Well-Being Supports Supervisor	7/31/2027
Drake	Tina	Associate Principal	7/31/2027
Fox	Gina	Special Education Administrator	7/31/2027
Amy	Dobson	Learner Well-Being and Supports Supervisor	7/31/2027
Hufnagel	Krissy	Learning Experience Supervisor	7/31/2028
Kanta	Zach	Director of Technology and Innovation	7/31/2028
Knapp	David	Chief Innovation Officer	7/31/2028
Lee	Brandon	Assistant Principal	7/31/2028
Lichey	Kyle	Assistant Principal	7/31/2026
Livermore	Meghan	Benefits Coordinator/Supervisor	7/31/2028
Messer	James	Chief Operations Officer	7/31/2028
Mott	Jen	Assistant Principal/Athletic Director	7/31/2028

Pennington	Jerry	Bldgs & Grounds Supervisor	7/31/2028
Polca	Robert	Principal	7/31/2027
Powell	Javaris	Assistant Principal	7/31/2027
Reutter	Jay	Principal	7/31/2027
Rompies	Brandon	Assistant Principal	7/31/2028
Ross	Terri	Payroll Supervisor	7/31/2028
Schermer	Matthew	Assistant Principal	7/31/2028
Schuessler	William	Interim Transportation Director	7/31/2027
Senter	Joycelyn	Assistant Principal	7/31/2028
Smith	Soroya	Assistant Principal	7/31/2027
Spitzmueller	Laura	Assistant Principal	7/31/2027
Stemple	Scott	Athletic Director	7/31/2028
Stubenvoll	Cynthia	Assistant Treasurer	7/31/2028
Tilford	Rachel	Child Nutrition Supervisor	7/31/2027
Todd	DeAuna	Principal	7/31/2028
Varbanova	Milena	ESL Supervisor	7/31/2028
Varona	Vivian	Assistant Principal	7/31/2028

Mason City Schools
Growing Greatness Together



Board of Education Members
Desiree Batche
Charles Galvin
Ian Orr
Matt Steele
Danni Tymitz

Superintendent/CEO, Jonathan Cooper

Chief Financial Officer, Shaun Bevan
Cynthia Stubenvoll, Assistant Treasurer
Terri Ross, Payroll Supervisor
Meghan Livermore, Benefits Coordinator

Deputy Superintendent, Amy Brennan

Chief Innovation Officer, David Knapp
Director of Technology and Innovation, Zach Kanta
Data Systems and Innovation Coordinator, Dan Hudson

Chief Talent Officer, Laura Blessing

Chief Operations Officer, Eric Messer

Public Information Officer, Tracey Carson

Principals
Melissa Bly, Mason Early Childhood Center - Grades Pre-K-2
Rob Polca, Mason Elementary - Grade 3-4
DeAuna Todd, Mason Intermediate - Grades 5-6
Jacob Reutter, Mason Middle School - Grades 7-8
Ben Brown, Mason High School - Grades 9-12

Special Education Supervisor, Jody Bergman
Gina Fox, Student Support Services Administrator (MHS)
Jenny Woods (HCESC), Student Support Services Administrator (MI/MMS)
DeeDee Walker (HCESC), Student Support Services Administrator (MECC/ME)

Learner Well-Being and Supports Supervisor, Amy Dobson
Learning Experience Supervisor P-6, Krissy Hufnagel
Learning Experience Supervisor 7-12, Shanna Bumiller
ESL Supervisor, Milena Varbanova

Buildings & Grounds Supervisor, Jerry Pennington

Student Nutrition Supervisor, Rachel Tilford

Interim Transportation Director, William Schuessler

Phone Directory

DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The Board's philosophy of education gives direction to the educational program and daily operations of the District.

Periodically, the policy committee of the Board and the Superintendent evaluates the philosophy of education. Suggestions from both staff and community are considered.

The committee revises or confirms the existing philosophy or writes a new statement of philosophy. The committee presents its recommendation regarding a philosophy of education to the Board for adoption or readoption.

All building and course of study philosophies reflect and extend the Board's philosophy.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Mason City Schools strive to empower students and foster individual excellence by creating a learning culture that inspires innovation, leadership and global understanding. The Mason City School District delivers excellence every day for all students by assuring high impact learning, engaging parents and community, providing a safe and nurturing environment, and maximizing cost-effectiveness and efficiency. We work to ensure that all students develop the capacity and confidence to thrive and meet the challenges of college, career and a diverse and dynamic global society.

Mason City Schools Comet Commitment

We are committed to growing YOU as a Learner, Leader, and Citizen,
discovering your True North through innovative, rigorous, real-world learning experiences.



MASON CITY SCHOOLS

Portrait of a Comet

INTEGRITY

Comets do the right thing, especially when it's hard. They consistently adhere to a set of core values evident in choices and behaviors; earning others' trust and respect through honest, principled behaviors. They own the moment, grow from their experiences, and take responsibility for their actions.

ADAPTABILITY

Comets adjust, adapt, and prepare for the future. They demonstrate flexibility, persistence, and resilience. They respond productively when presented with an uncertain event, feedback, praise, criticism, or a setback.

EMPATHY

Comets build meaningful relationships so that everyone belongs. They invest the time to listen, care, connect, and act. With a spirit of curiosity, they grow awareness of self and respect for others' feelings, opinions, experiences, and cultures.

COMMUNICATION

Comets build skill in developing and sharing their voice. They listen, seek feedback, and collaborate with the intent to include and understand others' viewpoints. They confidently share their ideas in a variety of forms and contexts, and take responsibility for their impact.

CRITICAL THINKING

Comets engage in worthy challenges. They identify innovative and creative solutions to complex problems. They understand the bigger picture, and apply analytical thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded, and informed by evidence and multiple perspectives.

MASON CITY SCHOOLS





Culture

Big Rock 1

Objective: Collectively build an engaging, inclusive, and positive culture.



Inclusive Excellence

Big Rock 2

Objective: Deepen appreciation for diversity, and commitment to equity, inclusion, and justice.



Personalized Learning

Big Rock 3

Objective: Create Mason City Schools design for personalized learning.

SALARY SCHEDULES

Administrators

With the exception of the Superintendent and the Treasurer, who are hired by and report directly to the Board, administrators' compensation generally is determined by their position on the salary schedule and the length of their contract year. The salary schedule consists of a matrix encompassing job responsibility and experience. Administrators normally progress one step or level each year. There is a provision for increasing more than one step in a year based on a recommendation from the person's direct supervisor, with approval by the department director and the Superintendent.

Note: Individual salary information may be obtained by requesting a report from the Treasurer.

New Employees

New employees will be placed at the appropriate step on the salary schedule at the time of employment.

The Superintendent and the Chief Talent Officer will evaluate experience for salary placement.

Continuing Employees

Employees who work a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) days in any work year with satisfactory performance will be **eligible** for advancement on the salary schedule.

SALARY SCHEDULE PLACEMENT

Mason City Schools

FY27 Non-Administrative and Administrative Salary Schedule

Base Salary 54,377 Increase: 2.75%

		SALARIED NON-ADMINISTRATIVE				Administrative				Administrative				School Administrators								Non-School Admin
		Class I				Class II				Class III				Class IV				Class V***				
	Step	Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr		Amount	Step Incr			
Level 7	A	1.000	54,377			1.200	65,253			1.525	82,926			1.700	92,442			82,754				
	B	1.048	56,988	4.8%		1.250	67,972	4.2%		1.575	85,644	3.3%		1.750	95,160	2.9%		85,186	2.9%			
	C	1.096	59,598	4.6%		1.300	70,691	4.0%		1.625	88,363	3.2%		1.800	97,879	2.9%		87,621	2.9%			
	D	1.144	62,208	4.4%		1.350	73,409	3.8%		1.675	91,082	3.1%		1.850	100,598	2.8%		90,055	2.8%			
	E	1.192	64,818	4.2%		1.400	76,128	3.7%		1.725	93,801	3.0%		1.900	103,317	2.7%		92,489	2.7%			
	F	1.240	67,428	4.0%		1.450	78,847	3.6%		1.775	96,520	2.9%		1.950	106,036	2.6%		94,923	2.6%			
	G	1.288	70,038	3.9%		1.500	81,566	3.4%		1.825	99,239	2.8%		2.000	108,755	2.6%		97,357	2.6%			
	H	1.336	72,648	3.7%		1.550	84,285	3.3%		1.875	101,958	2.7%		2.050	111,474	2.5%		99,791	2.5%			
	I	1.384	75,258	3.6%		1.600	87,004	3.2%		1.925	104,676	2.7%		2.100	114,193	2.4%		102,225	2.4%			
Level 6	A	1.052	57,205			1.340	72,866			1.800	97,879		Supervisor**	2.100	114,193			102,225			Director of Tech	
	B	1.100	59,815	4.6%		1.388	75,476	3.6%		1.850	100,598	2.8%		2.150	116,911	2.4%		104,658	2.4%		& Innovation	
	C	1.148	62,425	4.4%		1.436	78,086	3.5%		1.900	103,317	2.7%		2.200	119,630	2.3%		107,092	2.3%			
	D	1.196	65,035	4.2%		1.484	80,696	3.3%		1.950	106,036	2.6%		2.250	122,349	2.3%		109,526	2.3%			
	E	1.244	67,645	4.0%		1.532	83,306	3.2%		2.000	108,755	2.6%		2.300	125,068	2.2%		111,960	2.2%			
	F	1.292	70,256	3.9%		1.580	85,916	3.1%		2.050	111,474	2.5%		2.350	127,787	2.2%		114,394	2.2%			
	G	1.340	72,866	3.7%		1.628	88,526	3.0%		2.100	114,193	2.4%		2.400	130,506	2.1%		116,829	2.1%			
	H	1.388	75,476	3.6%		1.676	91,136	2.9%		2.150	116,911	2.4%		2.450	133,225	2.1%		119,263	2.1%			
	I	1.436	78,086	3.5%		1.724	93,747	2.9%		2.200	119,630	2.3%		2.500	135,943	2.0%		121,696	2.0%			

		Class I				Class II				Class III				Class IV				Class V***		
	Step	Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr		Amount	Step Incr	
Level 5	A	1.100	59,815		Auditorium	1.600	87,004		Payroll	2.450	133,225		Assistant	2.300	125,068		Director	111,960		Learning
	B	1.148	62,425	4.4%	Manager	1.650	89,723	3.1%	Supervisor	2.500	135,943	2.0%	Treasurer	2.350	127,787	2.2%	of Inter	114,394	2.2%	Experience
	C	1.196	65,035	4.2%		1.700	92,442	3.0%		2.550	138,662	2.0%		2.400	130,506	2.1%	Athletics	116,829	2.1%	Supervisor
	D	1.244	67,645	4.0%		1.750	95,160	2.9%		2.600	141,381	2.0%		2.450	133,225	2.1%		119,263	2.1%	ESL
	E	1.292	70,256	3.9%		1.800	97,879	2.9%		2.650	144,100	1.9%		2.500	135,943	2.0%		121,696	2.0%	Supervisor
	F	1.340	72,866	3.7%		1.850	100,598	2.8%		2.700	146,819	1.9%		2.550	138,662	2.0%		124,130	2.0%	Learner
	G	1.388	75,476	3.6%	Prevention &	1.900	103,317	2.7%		2.750	149,538	1.9%		2.600	141,381	2.0%		126,564	2.0%	Well Being &
	H	1.436	78,086	3.5%	Wellness	1.950	106,036	2.6%	Benefits	2.800	152,257	1.8%		2.650	144,100	1.9%	Director	128,998	1.9%	Supports
	I	1.484	80,696	3.3%	Coordinator	2.000	108,755	2.6%	Coordinator	2.851	155,030	1.8%		2.700	146,819	1.9%	of Transp	131,432	1.9%	Supervisor
Level 4	A	1.148	62,425			1.850	100,598			2.611	141,979		Public	2.500	135,943					
	B	1.196	65,035	4.2%		1.900	103,317	2.7%		2.661	144,698	1.9%	Information	2.550	138,662	2.0%				
	C	1.244	67,645	4.0%		1.950	106,036	2.6%		2.711	147,423	1.9%	Officer	2.600	141,381	2.0%				
	D	1.292	70,256	3.9%		2.000	108,755	2.6%		2.761	150,142	1.8%		2.650	144,100	1.9%				
	E	1.340	72,866	3.7%		2.050	111,474	2.5%		2.811	152,861	1.8%		2.700	146,819	1.9%				
	F	1.388	75,476	3.6%		2.100	114,193	2.4%		2.861	155,580	1.8%		2.750	149,538	1.9%				
	G	1.436	78,086	3.5%		2.150	116,911	2.4%		2.911	158,299	1.7%	Chief	2.800	152,257	1.8%				
	H	1.484	80,696	3.3%		2.200	119,630	2.3%		2.961	161,017	1.7%	Operations	2.850	154,976	1.8%				
	I	1.532	83,306	3.2%		2.250	122,349	2.3%		3.011	163,736	1.7%	Officer	2.900	157,694	1.8%				
Level 3	A	1.244	67,645		Athletic	1.950	106,036			2.700	146,819			2.600	141,381					
	B	1.292	70,256	3.9%	Admin	2.000	108,755	2.6%		2.750	149,538	1.9%		2.650	144,100	1.9%				
	C	1.340	72,866	3.7%	Assistant	2.050	111,474	2.5%		2.800	152,257	1.8%		2.700	146,819	1.9%				
	D	1.388	75,476	3.6%		2.100	114,193	2.4%		2.850	154,976	1.8%		2.750	149,538	1.9%				
	E	1.436	78,086	3.5%		2.150	116,911	2.4%		2.900	157,694	1.8%		2.800	152,257	1.8%				
	F	1.484	80,696	3.3%		2.200	119,630	2.3%		2.950	160,413	1.7%		2.850	154,976	1.8%				
	G	1.532	83,306	3.2%		2.250	122,349	2.3%		3.000	163,132	1.7%		2.900	157,694	1.8%				
	H	1.580	85,916	3.1%		2.300	125,068	2.2%		3.050	165,851	1.7%		2.950	160,413	1.7%				
	I	1.628	88,526	3.0%		2.350	127,787	2.2%		3.100	168,570	1.6%		3.000	163,132	1.7%				

		Class I				Class II				Class III			Class IV				Class V***	
	Step	Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr		Index	Amount	Step Incr	Index	Amount	Step Incr		Amount	Step Incr
Level 2	A	1.340	72,866		Assistant	2.000	108,755		Supervisor**	3.000	163,132		2.750	149,538		Chief		
	B	1.388	75,476	3.6%	Supervisor*	2.050	111,474	2.5%		3.050	165,851	1.7%	2.800	152,257	1.8%	Talent		
	C	1.436	78,086	3.5%		2.100	114,193	2.4%		3.100	168,570	1.6%	2.850	154,976	1.8%	Officer		
	D	1.484	80,696	3.3%		2.150	116,911	2.4%		3.150	171,289	1.6%	2.900	157,694	1.8%			
	E	1.532	83,306	3.2%		2.200	119,630	2.3%		3.200	174,008	1.6%	2.950	160,413	1.7%	MHS		
	F	1.580	85,916	3.1%		2.250	122,349	2.3%		3.250	176,727	1.6%	3.000	163,132	1.7%	Principal		
	G	1.628	88,526	3.0%	Student	2.300	125,068	2.2%		3.300	179,445	1.5%	3.050	165,851	1.7%			
	H	1.676	91,136	2.9%	Activities	2.350	127,787	2.2%		3.350	182,164	1.5%	3.100	168,570	1.6%	Deputy		
	I	1.724	93,747	2.9%	Coordinator	2.400	130,506	2.1%		3.400	184,883	1.5%	3.150	171,289	1.6%	Supt		
Level 1	A	1.436	78,086		EMIS	2.200	119,630		Special	3.350	182,164		3.000	163,132				
	B	1.484	80,696	3.3%	Coordinator	2.250	122,349	2.3%	Services	3.400	184,883	1.5%	3.050	165,851	1.7%			
	C	1.532	83,306	3.2%		2.300	125,068	2.2%	Supervisor	3.450	187,602	1.5%	3.100	168,570	1.6%			
	D	1.580	85,916	3.1%		2.350	127,787	2.2%		3.500	190,321	1.4%	3.150	171,289	1.6%			
	E	1.628	88,526	3.0%		2.400	130,506	2.1%		3.550	193,040	1.4%	3.200	174,008	1.6%			
	F	1.676	91,136	2.9%		2.450	133,225	2.1%		3.600	195,759	1.4%	3.250	176,727	1.6%			
	G	1.724	93,747	2.9%		2.500	135,943	2.0%		3.650	198,477	1.4%	3.300	179,445	1.5%			
	H	1.772	96,357	2.8%		2.550	138,662	2.0%		3.700	201,196	1.4%	3.350	182,164	1.5%			
	I	1.820	98,967	2.7%		2.600	141,381	2.0%		3.750	203,915	1.4%	3.400	184,883	1.5%			
Level 0	A	1.950	106,036															
	B	2.000	108,755	2.6%														
	C	2.050	111,474	2.5%														
	D	2.100	114,193	2.4%														
	E	2.150	116,911	2.4%														
	F	2.200	119,630	2.3%														
	G	2.250	122,349	2.3%														
	H	2.300	125,068	2.2%														
	I	2.350	127,787	2.2%														

* Assistant - Student Nutrition, Building & Grounds

** Supervisor - Student Nutrition, Bldg. & Grounds, Transp

*** Work days vary as Board approves

SCHEDULE OF WORK DAYS

Each employee shall be assigned a schedule of working hours and workdays for the work year.

A calendar of the work year will be provided by the Treasurer's Office, indicating the designated work days.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

In accordance with federal, state, and local laws, applicable deductions will be made from all employees' paychecks:

Each newly hired employee shall meet with the Chief Talent Officer or designee to review the new hire packet prior to beginning his/her first day of work.

Payroll deductions may occur according to the eligibility of the employee for particular benefits and programs. Some of these include:

1. Health Insurance
2. Dental Insurance
3. Vision Insurance
4. Credit Union
5. Voluntary Insurance
6. Tax Sheltered Annuities

All necessary paperwork for withholding taxes and retirement contributions must be on file before the first paycheck can be issued.

Completed, signed withholding forms and/or enrollment paperwork must be submitted to the Treasurer's Office for review before deductions and/or coverage may begin. Forms need to be submitted in a timely manner in order to assure insurance coverage and/or no delay in receiving pay.

Sufficient enrollment among employees of the District must exist with a company for tax sheltered annuity (TSA) deductions to occur. The Treasurer's Office may provide more information regarding TSAs.

Changes in health, dental, vision, and life insurance may be made in the Treasurer's Office. Changes to coverage may be made during the district's open enrollment period each year or at the time of a qualifying event. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Treasurer's office of a qualifying event within 30 days of said event. To determine if you meet the rules as defined for a qualifying event, you should contact the Benefits Supervisor.

Report any changes relative to name, marital status, address, phone number, and/or the birth/adoption of a child.

FEDERAL WITHHOLDING

Federal income tax shall be withheld from each employee's earnings in accordance with rates established by the Department of the Treasury-Internal Revenue Service.

Payroll deductions will be based on the employee's W-4 form, which indicates status and number of exemptions claimed and must be completed at the time of employment, prior to receiving the first paycheck.

Each year on or before January 31st, the Treasurer's Office shall issue a W-2 form with earnings and withholding information for the employee's use in preparing federal, state, and local tax returns. **Changes in federal withholding must be made in writing and the form must be provided to the Treasurer's Office.**

STATE WITHHOLDING

Ohio State income tax shall be withheld from each employee's earnings in accordance with rates established by the Ohio Department of Taxation.

Payroll deductions will be based on the employee's Form IT-4, which indicates status and number of exemptions claimed and must be completed at the time of employment, prior to receiving the first paycheck.

Each year on or before January 31st, the Treasurer's Office shall issue a W-2 form with earnings and withholding information for the employee's use in preparing his/her state tax return. **Changes in state withholding must be made in writing and the form must be provided to the Treasurer's Office.**

RETIREMENT DEDUCTIONS & BENEFITS

School Employees Retirement System of Ohio (SERS) and State Teachers Retirement System (STSR)

The following information is subject to legislative changes.

All employees of the District are required to contribute to SERS or STRS at the current rate.

The Board of Education contributes fourteen percent (14%) of total salaries to the retirement system.

MEDICARE

All employees hired after April 1, 1986, are required to contribute 1.45% of their gross earnings to Medicare. This is in accordance with Section 13205 of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA).

The Board of Education is also required to contribute 1.45% on the earnings of all employees (both regular and substitute).

Should an employee who was originally hired before April 1, 1986 resign and then become re-employed by the District, or take a leave of absence during which no wages are earned, such employee would then be required to contribute to Medicare.

OTHER DEDUCTIONS

Employees of the Mason City Schools have the option of having other deductions taken from their paychecks.

All employees may choose:

- Credit Union Deductions
- Voluntary Insurance
- Tax Sheltered Annuities (dependent upon participating, eligible companies)
- Eligible, participating employees will have the following deducted from their paychecks:
- Health insurance, if applicable, and HSA deposits and/or premiums
- Dental Insurance Premiums, if applicable
- Vision Insurance Premiums, if applicable
- Voluntary Insurance Premiums, if applicable

Court-ordered or Internal Revenue Service deductions will occur.

Questions or concerns about payroll deductions should be addressed to the Treasurer's Office.

PAY PERIODS

District employees are paid every other Tuesday. Salary changes occur August 1st of each work year.

DIRECT DEPOSIT & PAYCHECKS

Employees will receive their payroll via direct deposit with electronic pay stubs sent to the employee via the employee's selected email account. If an employee is to receive a hard paycheck, it will be available for pick up in the Treasurer's Office.

An employee's earnings may be directly deposited into the employee's checking or savings account at any qualified bank or financial institution each pay period. Any change to an employee's direct deposit will result in the employee receiving a paycheck for the next pay period, with the direct deposit beginning with the pay period following that check.

A direct deposit form is included in each packet of information given to new employees. The completed direct deposit form should be returned with withholding forms prior to the first paycheck.

BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY

Those employees who are **scheduled to work throughout the *calendar* year** qualify for:

1. Sick Days (1.25 days per month; 12 months per year)
2. Personal Days (3 days per year; unused days are converted to accumulated sick leave)
3. Severance Pay (based upon accumulated unused sick days at the time of retirement)
4. Retirement Benefits through School Employees Retirement System (SERS) or State Teacher's Retirement System (STRS)
5. Holiday Pay (depends on the actual number days in contract)
6. Life Insurance
7. Health Insurance
8. Dental Insurance
9. Vision Insurance
10. Paid Vacation Days (261 day contracts only)
11. Voluntary Insurance

VACATIONS & SCHEDULING OF VACATIONS

Administrators on year-round contracts who are requesting vacation time must submit a completed Vacation Request Form as early in the calendar year as possible to their direct supervisor.

It is the immediate supervisor's responsibility to ensure that vacations are scheduled to least interfere with the operation of schools. Requests of two (2) or more consecutive weeks may be denied.

Every attempt shall be made to meet the needs of the employee; however, it is necessary for all preparations to be completed before the opening or closing of school.

Administrators reserve the right to postpone vacations when the time scheduled interferes with the welfare of the district.

Employees who have been employed by another agency in the State of Ohio *immediately prior to their employment* in the Mason City Schools shall receive credit for that service time towards eligibility for vacation days (in accordance with Ohio law).

Upon separation from employment an administrative school employee shall be entitled to compensation at his current rate of pay for all lawfully accrued and unused vacation leave to his/her credit at the time of separation. In case of the death of an administrative school employee such accrued and unused vacation leave shall be paid in accordance with applicable laws, or to his/her estate.

HOLIDAYS

The following holidays are recognized by the District:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
Presidents' Day
Good Friday *
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
4th of July *
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
The Day After Thanksgiving Day*
Christmas Eve*
Christmas Day

SEVERANCE PAY

This payment shall be based upon the employee's rate of pay at retirement and shall eliminate all accrued and unused sick leave credit.

An employee retiring from active service with the Board after ten (10) or more full years of service with the Board shall be paid thirty percent (30%) of the value of his/her accrued, but unused, sick leave credit, at the time of retirement through the School Employees' Retirement System or State Teacher's Retirement System (STRS), to a maximum of 85 days.

An employee retiring from active service with the Board with less than ten (10) years of service with the Board shall be paid the following percentage of the formula set forth above.

- Five Years - 70%
- Six Years - 70%
- Seven Years - 70%
- Eight Years - 90%
- Nine Years - 90%

State Teacher's Retirements System (STRS)
If Administrator retires from the District and meets the requirements listed in the MEA Collective Bargaining Agreement, Administrator will receive the same severance pay benefits as those contained in the negotiated agreement in effect at that time.

School Employees Retirement System (SERS)
If the Administrator retires from the District and meets the requirements listed in the Non-Union Classified & Unclassified Employee Handbook, Administrator will receive the same severance pay benefits as those contained in the handbook in effect at that time.

Beneficiary

Separation pay shall be paid, according to the calculation above, to the beneficiary of an administrator who dies while actively employed with the Mason Board of Education.

An employee retiring from active service with the Board with less than ten (10) years of service with the Board shall be paid the following percentage of the formula set forth above:

- Five Years - 70%
- Six Years - 70%
- Seven Years - 70%
- Eight Years - 90%
- Nine Years - 90%

HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance shall be available to all employees working 30 hours or more per week.

If the employee enrolls in health insurance, coverage will begin with the first day of the plan year for new school year hires and those experienced employees enrolling during the open enrollment period. For an employee hired between September 1st and May 31st, coverage will begin on the first work day.
The coverage will continue until one of the following conditions occur:

(A) If an employee resigns during the contract year, his/her coverage will terminate on the last day of the month in which the employee worked at 12:00 midnight.

(B) If the employee works a full contract year and resigns, his/her coverage will terminate on the last day of the contract year at 12:00 midnight.

(C) If the employee retires, his/her coverage will terminate the night before his/her effective date of retirement at 12:00 midnight.

An employee must notify the Treasurer's Office when any of the following things happen:

A. Marital status change;

B. Death of spouse or dependent child;

C. Double coverage, for any reason.

Health insurance Coverage

HEALTH INSURANCE (Concluded)

Each employee's medical premium shall be processed through an Internal Revenue Code, Section 125A Plan. Additionally, employees shall have the option to participate in a full or limited flexible benefit plan under IRC, Section 125. Full or limited plans are offered according to the employee's eligibility.

Employees who do not enroll in insurance coverage at the time of the initial employment must wait for the annual open enrollment period. The only other opportunity to re-enroll is that of a qualifying event. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Treasurer's Office of a qualifying event and complete the necessary form(s) to add dependents, either through marriage, birth, loss of coverage, or adoption within 30 days of said event.

SPOUSAL COVERAGE

A. When both the husband and wife are employees, either one family plan or two single plans shall be available. The type of policy shall be decided by the employees.

B. An employee's spouse who is eligible to receive health insurance coverage through his/her employer must enroll in such a plan on at least a single enrollment basis.

A spouse is considered to be eligible for his/her employer's health insurance plan if:

- The access is continuous (i.e., non-seasonal) and reasonable group coverage is available, and
- The spouse is not required to pay more than 45% of the premiums.

A spouse shall not be required to enroll in his/her employer provided health insurance plan if the only plan available is a High Deductible Health Plan with a Health Savings Account (HDHP with HSA).

When the spouse has enrolled in a health insurance plan maintained by his/her employer, the spouse is eligible for secondary coverage with Mason City Schools' health insurance when the member carries a family plan.

The classified employee shall provide all information required to administer this provision through the enrollment form/process and completion of the coordination of benefits questionnaire distributed during Open Enrollment of each year. Failure to provide accurate information may result in the classified employee having to repay any claims paid to the Board's health insurance account.

C. An eligible classified employee shall be reimbursed up to $2,000 annually for the difference in net premium payments from that required of his/her spouse's employer and the premium amount required by the Board's plan. This provision applies only to employees hired prior to July 1, 2016.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Dental insurance is available to each eligible employee working 30 hours or more per week.

Coverage offered by the District to qualified employees will be provided, if requested.

The coverage will continue until an employee resigns during the work year. His/her coverage will terminate on the last day of the month following the resignation at 12 midnight.

An employee must notify the Treasurer's Office when any of the following things happen:

1. Change in Marital Status

2. Death of Spouse or Dependent Child

3. Double Coverage for Any Reason

One hundred percent (100%) of the cost of single or family coverage for dental insurance will be paid by the Board of Education for all classified employees scheduled to work 30 hours or more per week.

LIFE INSURANCE

The District shall provide a life insurance policy in the amount of $50,000 face value to each qualified classified employee who is working 30 hours or more per week at no charge to the classified employee.

VISION INSURANCE

Vision insurance is available to each eligible employee who is working 30 hours or more per week. Coverage offered by the District to qualified employees will be provided upon request.

The coverage will continue until one of the following conditions occur:

A. If an employee resigns during the contract year, his/her coverage will terminate on the last day of the month in which the employee worked at 12:00 midnight.

B. If the employee works a full contract year and resigns, his/her coverage will terminate on the last day of the contract year at 12:00 midnight.

C. If the employee retires, his/her coverage will terminate the night before his/her effective date of retirement at 12:00 midnight.

An employee must notify the Treasurer's Office within 30 days of the event when any of the following occurs:

1. Change in Marital Status

2. Death of Spouse or Dependent Child

3. Double Coverage for Any Reason

One hundred percent (100%) of the cost of single or family coverage for the base vision insurance plan will be paid by the District for all classified employees scheduled to work 30 or more hours/week.

When both the husband and wife are employed, either one family plan or two single plans shall be available.

In the event a change is made in the vision insurance carrier, employees shall be notified.

STUDENT TUITION CHARGE

Any administrator hired on or before September 5, 2006, who resides outside of the Mason City School District, may choose to enroll his/her children in the Mason City Schools. Attendance of an employee's child(ren) shall be free of tuition charges. He/she shall pay the difference of the tuition cost (established by the Department of Education) and the state funding for the individual child. There is an "in-state" versus "out-of-state" amount. The district will advise the employee of the cost when applicable.

The child of the employee must be enrolled prior to the start of the school year. Mason City Schools does not permit employees who reside outside of the Mason City School District to enroll their children in the district's preschool program.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

100% Tuition Reimbursement
(available for the following positions only):

Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and Building Principal positions

Instructional Education Reimbursement: Above mentioned Administrators may request reimbursement of tuition at 100% for completion of coursework that is toward a degree program from an accredited university and is related to Instructional Leadership in the area the Administrator works, provided the Administrator receives previous approval from the Superintendent as well as a passing grade. The courses may be taken in-person or online.

50% Tuition Reimbursement

Administrators may request reimbursement of tuition at 50% for completion of coursework related to the administrator's current role that is toward a degree program from an accredited university The courses may be taken in-person or online. Administrators must receive pre-approval for the courses from the Superintendent as well as a passing grade.

In order to be eligible for tuition reimbursement, the administrator must complete the Request for Approval of Tuition Reimbursement Form prior to beginning coursework and he/she completes the Administrative Tuition Reimbursement Request Form once coursework has been completed. The administrator must attach a college grade card or transcript showing the grade received as well as proof of payment for the course he/she is requesting reimbursement for. These forms are available in the HR Office.

VALIDATION OF ABSENCE

No salary payment for days of absence shall be made to any employee except upon presentation to the Treasurer's Office of a completed Absence from Duty form, indicating the number of days and reason for the absence.

After five (5) consecutive days of absence due to illness or injury, the employee may be required to provide a doctor's certificate explaining the absence.

In the case of absence because of injury, surgery, or illness on the part of the employee of more than five (5) consecutive days, a signed statement of the attending physician or surgeon may be required covering the entire period of absence. If the employee is absent for ten (10) or more consecutive days, the attending physician or surgeon must certify the employee's ability to return to work.

The Superintendent may require a doctor's certificate for any absence.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

All employees have the responsibility to be on the job at the appointed time or to make the necessary arrangements for their absence.

Employees who are ill should follow the outlined procedures for notifying their building principal or direct supervisor of their absence.

Approval of all leave shall be granted by the superintendent or his/her designee.

USE OF SICK LEAVE

Employees may use sick leave for absence due to illness, injury, exposure to contagious disease, or illness due to pregnancy. Sick days may be used in half day and full day increments. After delivery, a maximum of six (6) weeks of sick leave may be used. A birth mother may use a maximum of six (6) calendar weeks of sick leave and such weeks must be taken within the first six (6) consecutive calendar weeks immediately following the day of birth. If the birth is caesarian, the maximum shall be eight (8) calendar weeks and such weeks must be taken within the first eight (8) consecutive calendar weeks immediately following the day of birth. If additional time is needed, a doctor must provide a written statement indicating that additional sick leave is necessary.

A father may use sick leave for absence to aid in the recovery of his spouse due to the delivery of his baby or for the purpose of initial care of their newly adopted child. He may use sick leave during any of the two (2) calendar weeks immediately following the day of the birth or the first day of custody of the child. Additional days may be granted by the HR Talent Management Officer due to unusual circumstances.

Sick leave may be used for illness or death in the immediate family. Immediate family is defined as meaning: spouse, children, stepchildren, parents, parents-in-law, stepparents, or any person living in the same household as the employee.

Employees may use three (3) days of sick leave for absence due to serious illness or death of brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandparents-in-law, grandchildren, brothers-in-law, and sisters-in-law. Under extenuating circumstances, the Superintendent may grant additional days.

Employees may also use three (3) days of sick leave for absence due to the death of an aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew. Under extenuating circumstances, the Superintendent may grant additional days.

Rules covering advancement of sick days are located in Section CCA of this Handbook.

The use of sick leave for reasons other than those listed above is not permitted; and falsification of sick leave is grounds for suspension or termination of employment.

SICK LEAVE - SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Any employee who is on sick leave when schools are closed due to severe weather or other emergency conditions shall receive the same pay as the employee would have received if school had been in session on such days. No deduction from days of accumulated sick leave shall be made for such day.

SCHOOL DELAYS AND CLOSINGS

In the event of severe weather conditions that cause schools to be closed, employees will be notified at the earliest possible time.

The following procedure will be followed:

1 HOUR DELAY

All schools are delayed one hour.

- All administrators, building administrative assistants and receptionists, and central office personnel are required to report to work. They are expected to be at work within at least one hour of the normal start time.
- Essential personnel report to work at their regularly scheduled time or as directed by their supervisor.

2 HOUR DELAY

All schools are delayed two hours.

- All administrators, building administrative assistants and receptionists, and central office personnel are required to report to work. They are expected to be at work within at least two hours of the normal start time.
- Essential personnel report to work at their regularly scheduled time or as directed by their supervisor.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

All schools closed.

- All administrators, building administrative assistants and receptionists, and central office personnel are required to report to work. They are expected to be at work within at least two hours of the normal start time. If a staff member cannot make it into work, he or she must use a vacation or personal day to be paid for that day's absence.

- Essential personnel report to work at their regularly scheduled time or as directed by their supervisor.

LEVEL 3 EMERGENCY

- All employees who are not able to come to work because there is a level 3 emergency in Mason City Schools, or the community they live in or travel through, will be compensated for a snow day.

- Essential personnel report to work at their regularly scheduled time or as directed by their supervisor.

GRANTING DEFICIT SICK DAYS

A new employee who has not transferred any sick leave balances from another public employer and/or any employee who has used all of his/her accrued sick leave days may apply for and be advanced up to five days of sick leave annually.

Should an employee leave the employment of the Board while owing deficit sick leave days, the Board shall have the right to retain from the employee's last paycheck(s) the value of such paid sick leave days. In the event that the remaining paychecks are insufficient to permit the Board a full recovery, the employee shall be responsible for full reimbursement to the Board.

REPORTING ACCUMULATED SICK LEAVE

The Treasurer's Office shall include a report of the employee's sick leave accumulation on each payroll check stub (or direct deposit notification), with the accumulative one and one quarter (1¼) days being reflected on the first paycheck of each month. Unused personal days converted to sick days shall be reflected by the second paycheck in July of each year.

SICK LEAVE ACCUMULATION

Sick Leave Accumulation. All classified employees shall be entitled to fifteen (15) days of sick leave annually to be credited at the rate of 1¼ days per month.

ADOPTION LEAVE

Employees anticipating an adoption during the upcoming school year may reserve up to two (2) days of unused personal leave for the purpose of adoption. In order to reserve the unused personal leave days, an employee (if possible) shall submit a request in writing to the Chief Talent Officer by May 1st of the school year preceding the school year when the adoption is to occur. The request is only valid for one year.

At the time of adoption, an employee may use sick leave for the purpose of initial care of their newly adopted child during any of the two (2) calendar weeks immediately following the first day of custody of the child.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Up to three (3) days of personal leave shall be granted within each work year (July 1st - June 30th). Personal days may only be used for personal business that cannot be conducted at a time other than on a regular workday and during regular work hours. These days may be taken as full or as half days.

Personal leave days do not accrue. Employees who end the work year with unused personal leave days shall have those days converted to sick leave on an equal basis. Employees can rollover personal days for the

following school year, to a maximum of five (5) days in which the five days can be used together no more than once every five (5) years.

An application for such leave shall be made to the immediate supervisor at least two (2) days in advance of the leave day or days. Emergency conditions may prevent the possibility of advance notice; in such instances appropriate forms will be completed upon return to duty.

Under extreme extenuating circumstances, and/or for religious observance, the Superintendent or designee may grant additional days of personal leave.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

Training and development are essential to the efficient and economical operation of the schools.

Therefore, all employees shall be encouraged to grow in job skills and to take additional training that will improve their skills on the job.

Absences to attend meetings, conventions, conferences, or workshops of local, state, or national associations which serve to advance the welfare of the district through the upgrading and strengthening of the classified service may be granted by the Superintendent.

When an employee attends a professional workshop or meeting that was pre-approved by his/her supervisor or by an administrator, the employee's approved expenses will be reimbursed in full upon presentation of detailed itemized receipts and documentation to the Treasurer.

This Professional Leave Policy does not apply to sessions required for an employee's job-specific recertification.

CHILD REARING LEAVE

Child rearing leave for a newly born or newly adopted child shall be granted for up to twelve (12) consecutive months without pay. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of the Board. The twelve (12) months shall commence immediately following the expiration of sick leave, in accordance with the statutory law of Ohio.

Pregnant employees shall submit written notice to the Chief Talent Officer on the approved Leave Request form no later than thirty (30) days prior to the anticipated date of the employee's last work day. The form may be obtained directly from the Human Resources Office.

The thirty (30) day notification will be waived in the case of adoption. However, the employee will provide a written notice, advising of the anticipated date of return.

Upon the return of the employee from an approved leave of absence, the employee shall return to a position for which the employee is qualified *within the same job classification.*

The Board recognizes that the granting of unpaid child rearing leave does not preclude an employee from also exercising his/her statutory rights to sick leave for maternity leave in accordance with the statutory law of Ohio.

The Board and the employee shall continue paying his/her shares of any insurance premiums in which the Board participates for the first twelve (12) weeks of child rearing leave per the Family and Medical Leave Act. If the employee's leave extends beyond twelve (12) weeks, he/she shall assume full premium payment for the remainder of the leave.

Maternity leave, child rearing leave, and leave taken under the Family and Medical Leave Act shall run concurrently.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

The FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to twelve (12) weeks job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons in a year.

The District's FMLA Plan Year is based on the school (fiscal) year (July 1st through June 30th). All FMLA time will be used concurrently with accrued leave (sick, personal and vacation).

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for a minimum of 1,250 hours over the previous twelve months, and if there are at least fifty (50) employees within seventy-five (75) mile radius.

The following reasons are qualified examples of reasons staff may request FMLA leave:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or childbirth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- Under the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), an eligible employee is allowed time off to care for their child due to a serious health condition. The Board may allow an employee to use sick leave, if available, to aid in the recovery of his/her child due to the birth of his/her grandchild should he/she meet the minimum qualifications of FMLA. The paid time allotted for said leave would be as follows: Up to seven (7) calendar days immediately following the day of birth if the birth is natural and up to ten (10) calendar days immediately following the day of birth if the birth is "C-section" assuming you have available paid leave.
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job; or
- Because of any qualifying exigency (as the US Department of Labor shall, by regulation, determine) arising out of the fact that the spouse, or a son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on active duty (or

has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation; or

- To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the covered service member.

Employees who wish to request FMLA must first fill out a Leave Request form (MCS-502) and return it to the Treasurer's Office. Upon receipt of this form the employee's supervisor will be notified and FMLA Rights and Responsibilities form will be sent to the employee.

For additional information on the Family Medical Leave Act, call or visit: 1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) WWW.dol.gov/whd

ASSAULT LEAVE

The District may grant up to a maximum of ten (10) days assault leave to any employee who is absent due to physical disability from an assault which occurs in the course of District employment. Such employees will be maintained on full pay status during the period of such absence and such leave shall not be charged against the employee's earned or earnable sick leave.

The District shall require an employee to furnish a signed statement provided by the District to justify the use of assault leave. A certificate from a licensed physician, stating the nature of the disability and its duration, shall be submitted to the Chief Talent Officer before assault leave can be approved.

Under extremely unusual circumstances involving serious injury, the ten (10) day limitation may be extended with approval from the Chief Talent Officer.

Any employee applying for assault leave shall cooperate with the law enforcement agencies as requested. The District shall provide the employee with release time necessary to cooperate with said agencies.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Normally, granting of a leave of absence will be considered only for the following reasons:

- Major Illness or Disability
- Service in the Armed Forces

Except for service in the Armed Forces, a leave of absence will be granted for only one year upon recommendation of the Chief Talent Officer to the Superintendent and approval by the Board of Education. It may not be renewed unless, in the judgment of the Superintendent or HR Talent Management Officer, there are compelling reasons for such renewal and evidence that the interests of the school district will not suffer. Such renewal must be approved by the Board of Education.

When an employee has been absent due to serious personal illness or injury for a continuous period and sick leave is exhausted, the Superintendent shall investigate the case and make a recommendation to the Board of Education as to whether or not that employee should be given an unrequested leave of absence.

In such circumstances, the employee is entitled to a hearing before the Board of Education (ORC 3319.081).

If an employee has exhausted all paid leave and has a need to be out for an unpaid leave due to illness or disability of a person listed in "Use of Sick Leave" Section CC of this Handbook, up to an additional 5 days of unpaid leave will be made available. The following guidelines apply:

- The employee must be out of all available paid leave
- The requested additional time must align with Section CC of this Handbook
- The days requested must be approved by the Chief Talent Officer
- Up to 5 days are available per school year, which runs from July through June
- Days must be used continuously and cannot be used sporadically

JURY DUTY/COURT APPEARANCES

When an employee is called for jury duty, he/she must provide proper notice to the building principal or supervisor.

If an employee is subpoenaed as a witness as a result of his/her employment with the district, or is involved in court action as a result of his/her employment with the district (other than as a plaintiff), he/she must provide proper notice to the building principal or supervisor.

Should a continued absence for jury duty be required, the employee shall notify their direct supervisor of their status on a daily basis.

The District will pay the employee his/her regular per diem pay and will not charge his/her any type of leave.

The employee shall surrender to the Treasurer's Office any payment received as a result of such duty. It is the responsibility of the employee to collect for his/her court services.

Court responsibilities not a result of an employee's employment with the district or as a result of jury duty, will require the use of personal days or unpaid leave if no personal days are available.

RESIGNATIONS

Resignations must be submitted, *in writing,* to the Chief Talent Officer.

The resignation of any employee whose appointment was confirmed by the District shall be referred to the Board of Education for action.

In the event the employee is on spread pay, he/she will be advised of any salary adjustments, as well as vacation and sick leave balances. Upon separation from employment an administrative school employee shall be entitled to compensation at his current rate of pay for all lawfully accrued and unused vacation leave to his credit at the time of separation. In case of the death of an administrative school employee such accrued and unused vacation leave shall be paid in accordance with applicable laws, or to his estate.

If the employee is in possession of any Mason City Schools property, this property must be returned before final pay will be released.

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & APPOINTMENT

Employment practices are established to give equal opportunity to any person with respect to hiring, tenure, terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. No inquiry in regard to sex, race, handicap, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry shall be made of any person proposed for or seeking employment in any capacity in the District, except as required or permitted by law.

Applications for positions will be completed online at masonohioschools.com.

Falsification of any statement in an application shall be considered dishonesty and sufficient cause for disqualification or removal from service.

The Superintendent/designee(s) shall recommend to the Board persons for:

- Initial Employment
- Reinstatements
- Suspensions
- Removals
- Layoffs
- Reductions in Force

Those recommendations shall be in accordance with the Policy Manual of the Mason Board of Education.

Whenever a vacancy occurs, the building principal or department supervisor shall make a request to the Chief Talent Officer for either a replacement of an existing position or for a new position. The request must include the proposed job title and other data describing the duties and responsibilities of the position, location, immediate supervisor, qualifications as required to perform the job, and whether the position is to be filled permanently or temporarily on a full-time or part-time basis.

Appointments to positions will be filled with the most qualified applicants.

Temporary appointments are made to fill vacancies when regular employees are ill for a prolonged period of time or off duty on an approved leave of absence. Appointments of temporary staff need to hold an administrative license, and the selection process will be conducted with the superintendent.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

The Superintendent determines the personnel needs and recommends suitable candidates for employment to the Board. Through recruiting and evaluation procedures, the Superintendent recruits and recommends to the Board the employment and retention of personnel.

It is the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons nominated for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the Board for the type of position for which the nomination is made.

The following guidelines are used in the selection of personnel.

1. There is no unlawful discrimination in the hiring process.

2. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with widely varied backgrounds, educational preparation and previous experience. Concerted efforts are made to maintain a variation in the staff.

3. Interviewing and selection procedures ensure that the administrator who is directly responsible for the work of a staff member has an opportunity to aid in the selection process. The final recommendation to the Board is made by the Superintendent.

4. No candidate is hired without an interview and a criminal record check.

5. All candidates are considered on the basis of their merits, qualifications and the needs of the District. In each instance, the Superintendent, Chief Talent Officer and Building Principals have a role in the selection process and seek to recommend the best qualified applicant for the job.

While the Board may accept or reject a nomination, an appointment is valid only if made with the recommendation of the Superintendent. In the case of a rejection, it is the duty of the Superintendent to make another nomination.

ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTIONS LINK

WRITTEN NOTICE

The tenure of each employee of the District is incumbent upon his/her good behavior and efficient service. No such employee shall be reduced in pay or position, suspended, or removed, except for incompetency, inefficiency, dishonesty, drunkenness, immoral conduct, insubordination, discourteous treatment of the public, neglect of duty, violation of the Personnel Review Board, or any other failure of good behavior, or any other acts of misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance in office.

This does not limit the District's right to reduce employees due to lack of work, lack of funds, abolishment of positions, or other valid reasons as determined by the District.

Before reducing an employee, the Superintendent/designee shall give the employee notice of the Superintendent's intention to recommend such action to the Board, the grounds for the intention, a summary of the allegations against the employee, and an opportunity for the employee to appear before the Superintendent/designee to rebut or refute the allegations or to otherwise explain his/her conduct. The Superintendent after such opportunity may make her/his recommendation to the Board, which will not hold a hearing.

TRANSFERS

The Superintendent or designee has full authority to assign or reassign classified employees as he/she deems appropriate.

Voluntary Transfers

Requests for transfers shall be made in writing to the Superintendent/designee. The request shall state the reason for the requested transfer, the position sought, and any other supporting information that would help in making a decision.

The Superintendent/designee(s) will give full consideration to employees who apply for said positions. Candidates will be chosen on the basis of meritorious performance, potential for effectiveness, and experience. Seniority shall not be used solely as the basis for promotions or transfers.

Involuntary Transfers

Administration may initiate a change in job assignment when it is deemed appropriate for the welfare of the school district.

The immediate supervisor will meet with the classified employee being transferred involuntarily to discuss the reasons for the transfer.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

The Chief Talent Officer's Office shall maintain a personnel file for each employee, active and inactive. The file may include, but shall not be limited to:

- Application
- Pre-Employment Physical Examination Form (as applicable)
- Salary Information
- Work Hours
- Work Schedule
- Location
- Contracts (as applicable)
- Salary Notice (as applicable)
- Probationary & Evaluation Forms
- Transcripts, Certificates, Permits, Licenses (as applicable to the position held)
- Attendance Records
- Commendations
- Complaints
- Discipline Letters
- Suspension Letters
- Termination Letters

EXAMINATION OF PERSONNEL RECORDS

Upon advance request, employees shall have the right to view the contents of their personnel file. All contents of the file shall be available for viewing, except pre-employment information.

The District reserves the right to charge for copies of materials in the file (with the exception of pre-employment information). The Chief Talent Officer, his/her designee(s), or the principal must be present during the viewing of the personnel file.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN - NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Responsibilities of the Mason Board of Education Serving Its Citizens

The Mason Board of Education provides the finest educational opportunities for all its students and for its adult community. To ensure all its citizens are provided these services without regard for race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap, the Board believes it necessary to state its responsibilities.

Responsibilities in the Education Profession

The Mason Board of Education provides education and related services to all eligible citizens of the District without regard for race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap.

Responsibilities as an Employer

The Mason Board of Education is an equal opportunity employer. The District provides employment opportunities in accordance with all laws of the State of Ohio and all rules and regulations of the Personnel Review Board of the City of Mason, Ohio, Warren County, by Section 6.11 of the Charter of Mason, without regard for race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap.

Responsibilities as a Sponsor of Athletic Events & Other Activities

The Mason Board of Education provides athletic teams and other school activities for its students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Federal Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To comply with all regulations of Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504, the Mason Board of Education has designated the **Chief Talent Officer** as the **Affirmative Action Officer** for the District (211 North East Street, Mason, Ohio 45040, phone 513/398-0474).

Responsibilities to Enforce All of the Above

The Mason Board of Education is mindful that in a large school community such as the Mason City School District, it is possible that some citizens may need active support to secure all rights due those citizens. To enforce all of the above rights and responsibilities of the school district, the Mason Board of Education asks that all complaints be directed to the **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER AT THE MASON BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICE, 211 NORTH EAST STREET, MASON, OHIO 45040.**

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The District is committed to having a school environment free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, economic status, age or military status. Harassment of a student, staff member, or school visitor is contrary to Mason City Schools' pledge to provide a safe and inviting environment in which to work and learn.

The District prohibits discrimination and harassment in the work and school environment, including the school bus or other school-related vehicle, all academic, extracurricular and school sponsored activities or events whether or not held on school premises. Retaliation and making false accusations and statements in connection with the reporting or investigation of discrimination and harassment is also prohibited by this policy.

The Board has created the following informal and formal discrimination and harassment grievance procedures for those members of the school community and third parties who believe they were unlawfully discriminated against or unlawfully harassed.

- Allegations of unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex will be promptly and impartially investigated pursuant to the grievance procedures set forth in Administrative Guideline ACA/ACAA-AG.
- Allegations of unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability will be promptly and impartially investigated pursuant to the grievance procedures set forth in Administrative Guideline ACB-AG.
- Allegations of unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, economic status, age, or military status will be promptly and impartially investigated pursuant to the grievance procedures set forth in this Administrative Guideline AC-AG.

Discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, economic status, age, or military status occurs when unwelcome conduct (including physical, verbal, and non-verbal conduct) is unwanted and offensive/ humiliating to the person and has the purpose or effect of: (1) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working/educational environment; (2) interfering with one's ability to participate in any District program or activity; (3) interfering with one's ability to benefit from any District program or activity; or (4) interfering with the individual's work and/or educational performance.

- Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:
  Physical: Intimidating gestures, physical violence, assault or threats of injury because of a person's race or ethnicity, culture, religion, etc.
- **Oral:** Derogatory remarks about a person's skin color or appearance based on race, ethnic background, nationality, language or cultural background; unwelcome remarks about a person's cultural or religious observances, offensive jokes and comments.

- **Written or graphic material:** Including graffiti, defacing notices or posters, cartoons, caricatures, written threats and derogatory statements.

The examples of harassing conduct apply to any complainant, including staff-to-student and peer-to peer incidents.

Complaints of discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, economic status, age, or military status must be filed within 180 calendar days of the alleged incident, as delays in filing complaints can make it difficult to investigate. Both the informal and formal grievance procedures are completed within 60 calendar days of the date the incident was reported to the Compliance Officer, unless extenuating circumstances exist. Periodic updates are made as appropriate during the investigation.

Reporting / Investigation Procedures

The District will investigate formal and informal reports/complaints of harassment. Any student (or parent/guardian of a student), staff member or other individual experiencing conduct which he or she believes to be discrimination or harassment should follow these procedures:

Informal Grievance Procedures

A person, including members of the school community and third parties, who believes he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, economic status, age, or military status may discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the District's Compliance Officer. Upon receipt of an informal complaint, the Compliance Officer or designee shall perform an investigation into the allegation(s). At any time, the Complainant or Respondent may terminate the informal grievance procedure and proceed under the formal grievance procedures.

Following the Compliance Officer's investigation, he/she shall either (i) respond in writing to the complainant to convey that the investigation did not substantiate the complainant's allegation(s); or (ii) exercise his/her authority to attempt to resolve the substantiated aspects of the complainant's allegations. Parties who are dissatisfied with the results of the informal complaint process may proceed to file a formal complaint.

Formal Grievance Procedures

<u>Step 1 – Compliance Officer's Investigation</u>

A person, including a member of the school community and a third party, who believes he/she has been discriminated on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, economic status, age, or military status may file a formal grievance with the District's Compliance Officer, verbally or in writing. When filing a complaint, the Complainant should be clear that he/she wishes to pursue the formal grievance procedures, otherwise the Compliance Officer shall exercise discretion to determine whether to investigate the grievance under the informal or formal procedure.

Whether a formal grievance is filed in writing or verbally, it should include the following information to the extent possible:

- a detailed description of the alleged discrimination;
- the date(s) and time(s) upon which the alleged discrimination occurred;
- the identity of the individual(s) who allegedly engaged in discrimination;
- the identities of any individuals who may have witnessed the alleged discrimination;
- and the resolution sought by the complainant.

Staff shall report any incident of alleged harassment of any form, whether such incident is actually witnessed by the staff member or reported. Administrative staff receiving reports of harassment will promptly notify the Compliance Officer.

The Compliance Officer or designee shall initiate an investigation within two calendar days of receiving a formal grievance. Each complaint of harassment shall be investigated in a way that respects the privacy of all parties concerned to the extent permitted by law and to the extent
practical and appropriate under the circumstances.

The Compliance Officer's/designee's investigation shall include an interview with the Complainant – which could be satisfied at the time a formal grievance is filed. At the interview, the Complainant shall have the opportunity to identify/present witnesses and identify/present evidence supporting the Complainant's allegation(s). The investigation shall also include an interview with the person(s) who allegedly engaged in discrimination ("Respondent"). At the interview, the Respondent(s) shall have the opportunity to identify/present witnesses and identify/present evidence refuting the Complainant's allegation(s). The investigation shall also include an interview with all other individuals who have a reasonable likelihood of knowing non-superfluous information relevant to the allegation(s). The investigation shall also include the collection and thorough review of any documentation or other evidence that is reasonably believed to support or refute the allegation(s). If the formal grievance was initiated as an informal grievance, the Compliance Officer/designee may rely on the investigation that occurred through the informal grievance process to fulfill any required aspect of the formal investigation.

<u>Step 2 – Compliance Officer's Written Report</u>

Upon the completion of the investigation, the Compliance Officer or designee shall prepare a written report summarizing the initial allegation(s), the details of the investigation, and the Compliance Officer's decision as to whether the allegation(s) of discrimination is substantiated. If the report is prepared by the Compliance Officer's designee, the designee shall consult with the Compliance Officer to determine whether the allegation of discrimination is substantiated. Even where the written report is prepared by a designee, the Compliance Officer is responsible for determining whether the allegation of discrimination is substantiated.

If the Compliance Officer substantiates the Complainant's allegation(s), then the Compliance Officer's/designee's written report shall include recommended corrective action aimed at immediately ending the discrimination/harassment, remediating its effects, and preventing it from occurring in the future.

District administrators may provide individual or group counseling, training and/or other interventions to restore a nondiscriminatory environment.

Unless a formal grievance presents complications that require additional time, the Compliance Officer/designee shall complete his/her investigation into the alleged discrimination and transmit his/her written report to the Superintendent within sixty calendar days of receiving the formal complaint. Immediately after transmitting his/her written report to the Superintendent, the Compliance Officer/designee shall notify the Complainant and Respondent in writing as to whether the allegation of discrimination was substantiated.

The Compliance Officer determines whether or not, by "a preponderance of the evidence," the Complainant's allegations are substantiated. "A preponderance of the evidence" means that evidence must show the alleged discrimination was more likely than not to have occurred.

Appeal to the Superintendent

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the decision reached in the Compliance Officer's/designee's written report, he/she may appeal the Compliance Officer's decision to the Superintendent. Any such appeal must be made in writing, directed to the Superintendent, within ten calendar days following the transmission of the Compliance Officer's written report. Upon appeal, the Superintendent will review the Compliance Officer's written report, may conduct (or have a designee other than the Compliance office conduct) a further investigation, and may also conduct an informal hearing. Unless an appeal presents complications that require additional time, the Superintendent shall notify the Complainant and the Respondent, in writing, of his/her decision within ten calendar days of receiving the appeal.

Harassment Consequences

Any student who engages in the harassment of another student or adult in the school setting may be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, including but not limited to meeting with school counselor, training, referral to community resources; and suspension/expulsion consistent with special education laws and regulations.

Any staff member who permits or engages in the harassment of a student or another adult shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Further, any staff member who receives a report of harassment or witnessed harassment of a student, in any form, and who does not act promptly to forward the report to the Principal and/or the Compliance Officer shall be subject to disciplinary action. Remedial action such as individual or group counseling and/ or other interventions may also be provided.

Retaliation Prohibited

The District prohibits retaliation against any individual who has brought a report/complaint charging harassment, opposed harassment and/or participated in the reporting or investigation process. Any charge of retaliatory behavior received by the District will be investigated according to the reporting

procedure/investigation process established for harassment. Further, any individual found to have engaged in such retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with harassment violations.

TITLE IX

The Title IX Coordinators serve as the grievance officers and coordinate the District's efforts to comply with and carry out responsibilities under Title IX, including any complaint under Title IX. They are vested with the authority and responsibility for investigating all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedures set forth in the accompanying regulation and staff and student handbooks. Any investigatory responsibilities of the Title IX Coordinators may be delegated to a designee trained in Title IX compliance and procedures.

Mason City Schools' Title IX Coordinator:

Name: Laura Blessing
Title: Chief Talent Officer
Address: 211 North East Street
Phone number: (513)398-0474 extension 20107
Email: blessingl@masonohioschools.com

Reports may be made in person or made 24 hours a day via email, phone, or mail.

TITLE VI, TITLE IX, SECTION 504 GRIEVANCES

Any employee of the District who believes he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, or handicap may file a grievance by following the procedures listed below:

1. A sincere attempt shall be made to resolve any grievance by oral interview between the complainant and the building principal or immediate supervisor before any differences become formalized as a grievance.

2. If the grievance cannot be resolved on an informal basis, it may then be submitted in writing to the building principal or immediate supervisor as a formal grievance. Specific forms shall be used for each step of the grievance procedure.

Step I	-	Principal/Supervisor	(MCS-530)
Step II	-	Chief Talent Officer or Chief Operations Officer	(MCS-531)
Step III	-	Superintendent	(MCS-532)

Copies of these forms can be found on the Mason website.

3. The principal or immediate supervisor must respond in writing to the aggrieved party within seven (7) calendar days.

4. If the problem still remains unresolved, the employee may submit the grievance in writing to the Chief Talent Officer, using the MCS-531 Form - Step II. The completed form may be delivered in person to the Chief Talent Officer or Chief Operations Officer via email or mailed to 211 North East Street, Mason, Ohio 45040. A hearing/meeting shall be conducted within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the written grievance.

The aggrieved employee shall have the right to have others present at the hearing to provide information relative to the grievance.

5. The meeting coordinator shall respond to the aggrieved employee in writing within seven (7) calendar days of the date of the hearing/meeting.

6. The decision of the meeting coordinator will be final.

All attempts should be made to resolve grievances at the lowest possible level.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any employee of the District who believes he/she has been treated unfairly relative to his/her employment has the right to file a grievance.

1. A sincere attempt shall be made to resolve any grievance by oral interview between the complainant and the building principal or immediate supervisor before any differences become formalized as a grievance.

2. If the grievance cannot be resolved on an informal basis, it may then be submitted in writing to the building principal or immediate supervisor as a formal grievance. Specific forms shall be used for each of the three steps of the grievance procedure:

Step I	-	Principal/Supervisor	**MCS-530**
Step II	-	Chief Talent Officer	**MCS-531**
Step III	-	Superintendent	**MCS-532**

3. The principal or immediate supervisor must arrange for a hearing within seven (7) calendar days after receipt of the formal grievance. Following such a hearing, the principal or immediate supervisor must respond in writing to the aggrieved party within seven (7) calendar days after the requested hearing.

4. If the problem still remains unresolved, the employee may submit the grievance in writing to the Chief Talent Officer by moving to Step II of the Grievance Procedure. The second step may involve a hearing with the Chief Talent Officer . The hearing shall be conducted within seven (7) calendar days of the Chief Talent Officer's receipt of MCS-531 - Step II - Human Resources Chief Talent Officer.

The aggrieved employee shall have the right to have others present at the hearing to provide information relative to the grievance.

5. The Chief Talent Officer shall respond to the aggrieved party within seven (7) calendar days after receipt of the grievance or within seven (7) calendar days after the hearing.

6. The third level of the grievance is the final option available to the aggrieved party. The MCS-532 - Step III - Superintendent Form must be submitted to the Superintendent. Copies of Step I and Step II Grievance Forms must be attached to the appeal request. The Superintendent may also appoint a designee to stand as Hearing Officer to hear the appeal.

7. The decision of the Superintendent/designee is final.

EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF
(Administrators Both Professional and Support)

The Superintendent institutes and maintains a comprehensive program for the evaluation of administrative personnel. Administrative personnel are all persons issued contracts in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code. Evaluations should assist administrators in developing their professional abilities in order to increase the effectiveness of District management.

The purpose of administrator evaluations is to assess the performance of administrators, to provide information upon which to base employment and personnel decisions and to comply with State law. All administrators are evaluated annually. In the year an administrator's contract does not expire, the evaluation is completed by the end of the contract year, and a copy is given to the administrator.

In the year an administrator's contract does expire, two evaluations are completed, one preliminary and one final. The preliminary evaluation is conducted at least 60 days prior to June 1st and prior to any Board action on the employee's contract. A written copy of the preliminary evaluation is given to the administrator at this time. Evaluations are considered by the Board in determining whether to re-employ administrators.

The final evaluation includes the Superintendent's intended recommendation for the contract of the employee. A written copy of the final evaluation must be provided to the employee at least five days prior to the Board's action to renew or nonrenew the employee's contract. The employee may request a meeting with the Board prior to any Board action on his/her contract. The employee may have a representative of his/her choice at the meeting.

The evaluation measures the administrator's effectiveness in performing the duties included in his/her written job description and the specific objectives and plans developed in consultation with the Superintendent.

Evaluation criteria for each position are in written form and are made available to the administrator. The results of the evaluations are kept in personnel records maintained in the central office. The evaluated administrator has the right to attach a memorandum to the written evaluation. Evaluation documents, as well as information relating thereto, are accessible to each evaluatee and/or his/her representative.

This evaluation procedure does not create an expectancy of continued employment. Nothing contained herein prevents the Board from making any final determination regarding the renewal or nonrenewal of an administrator's contract.

Ohio Principal Evaluation System (OPES)

Procedures for evaluating principals and assistant principals are based on principles comparable to the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System, but are tailored to the duties and responsibilities of principals and assistant principals and the environment in which they work. Principals and assistant principals are evaluated**,** under the above system, with the inclusion of the following components.

Principals and assistant principals are assigned an effectiveness rating of Accomplished, Skilled, Developing or Ineffective.

Principals and assistant principals are evaluated via two formal observations and periodic building walkthroughs. The principal and assistant principal performance measure is based on the Ohio Standards for Principals. Proficiency on the standards includes consideration of professional goal setting, communication and professionalism, and skills and knowledge.

The Superintendent/designee evaluates all principals and assistant principals annually. Annual evaluations include two formal observations at least 30 minutes each and periodic building walkthroughs.

The Board allocates financial resources to support professional development in compliance with State law and the State Board of Education's evaluation framework.

OPES Performance Rating Rubric

Updated Forms

MCS-501	**Absence from Duty (online)**
MCS-502	**(Request for) Leave of Absence (online)**
MCS-503	**(Request to) Attend Professional Meeting**
MCS-504	**Personal Leave Request**
MCS-505	**Employee Incident Report**
MCS-507	**Change of Address**
MCS-508	**Vacation Request**
MCS-510	**Separation (Resignation, Retirement, Non-Renewal & Termination)**
MCS-530	**Grievance Form – Step I**
MCS-531	**Grievance Form – Step II**
MCS-532	**Grievance Form – Step III**
MCS-541	**Performance Appraisal - Non-Union Classified/Unclassified Employees**
MCS-606	**Monthly Mileage Form**