



Employee Resource Guide

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District Information

Introduction

This Employee Guide ("Guide") is a compilation of personnel policies, practices and procedures currently in effect at Maple Run Unified School District ("District").

The Guide's intention is to familiarize you with District policies, provide general guidelines on work rules, benefits and other issues related to your employment, and help answer many of the questions that may arise in connection with your employment.

This Employee Guide is not a contract. Maple Run Unified School District employment units vary from those with individual contracts, letters of intent or with no formal document of hire at all. This Guide does not create a contract, express or implied. The purpose of the Guide is simply to provide you with a convenient explanation of present policies and practices ~~at in~~ the District. This Guide is an overview or a guideline. It cannot cover every matter that might arise in the workplace. For this reason, specific questions regarding the applicability of a policy or practice should be addressed to ~~the Central~~ the District Offices.

The District reserves the right to modify any of our policies and procedures, including those covered in this Guide, at any time. We will seek to notify you of such changes by email and other appropriate means. However, such notice is not required for changes to be effective.

About Maple Run Unified School District

Maple Run Unified School District was created according to *Title 16 §706b, Act 46*, a State of Vermont mandate [Act 46, 2015] that provided opportunities for school districts to unify existing disparate governance. Members of MRUSD include Bellows Free Academy Union High School, Fairfield Center School, St. Albans City School and St. Albans Town Educational Center. The District website, maplerun.org houses all campuses. When on the site, use the top menu to navigate the site, or use *campuses* on the upper right to select your school and then navigate that site with its top menu.

Board of Directors

The Board consists of representatives from each town per census; two (2) from Fairfield (with .5 vote each), four (4) from St. Albans City, and four (4) from St. Albans Town. Our board seeks to guide every campus through both the mandates of leadership and the construct dictated by the Mission and Values of MRUSD. You will find Board [agendas](#) and [minutes](#) on the MRUSD website maplerun.org.

Mission

The Maple Run Unified School District is where inquiring minds, compassionate hearts, creative expression, healthy lives, and service to the community develop so all can learn, achieve, and succeed.

Core Values

In partnership with our families and community we value:

Children, first and foremost; safety and security; collaboration and relationships; joy and curiosity; relevance and rigor; independence and perseverance; flexibility and adaptability; respect and diversity; accountability and integrity; and commit to provide equity in access to a quality education.

District Office

MRUSD centralizes certain services. These Centralized services work collaboratively with campus-based staff and administration. Central Office houses the offices of the [Superintendent](#), [Curriculum and Instruction](#), [Special Education Services](#), Behavior & Student Engagement Services, [Early Childhood Programs](#), [Human Resources](#), and

[Business and Finance](#), [English Language Learner](#) and Psychologist offices are found here as well. Your District Office seeks to provide an environment where all employees feel valued and welcome.

Main Phone Line: (802) 524-2600, Direct lines for employees are at maplerun.org under [staff](#).

Fax: (802) 524-1540

Address: 28 Catherine Street, St. Albans, VT 05478.

Office Hours: 8 am – 4 pm, Monday through Friday. Central Office is closed on holidays and weekends.

MRUSD has an inter-office mail exchange between the schools and Central office. Please use the inter-office envelopes and be sure that the intended recipient is the last name on the list, with all others crossed out. If it includes items for multiple people, please mark as MISC – i.e., CO Misc. or SACS Misc.

General Employment

Employment Requirements

Prospective employees are subject to background checks. All offers of employment are conditioned upon acceptable background check results. In the event an employee commences employment prior to the completion of the background check process, continued employment shall also be conditioned upon acceptable background check results.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The District is an equal opportunity employer. We will extend equal opportunity to all individuals without regard to race, religion, color, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. Our [procedure](#) reflects and affirms the District's commitment to the principles of fair employment and the elimination of all discriminatory practices.

Immigration Law Applicable to All Employees

The District complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 by employing only U.S. citizens and non-citizens who are authorized to work in the United States. All employees are asked by their first day of work to provide original documents verifying the right to work in the United States and to sign a verification form required by federal law (Form I-9). If you cannot verify your right to work in the United States within three (3) days of hire, the District is required by law to terminate your employment.

Your Employment Relationship with the District

Maple Run Unified School District does not always offer individual employees a formal employment contract. Non-Contractual employment is "at will," meaning that you or the District may end your employment at any time.

This Employee Guide is not a contract. It does not create any agreement, express or implied, guaranteeing you any specific terms or conditions of employment. Nothing contained in this Guide should be construed as creating a contract guaranteeing employment for any specific duration, nor does the Guide oblige you to continue your employment for a specific period. Unless you have entered into an employment agreement that supersedes this document, either you or the District may terminate the employment relationship at any time. The Guide does not guarantee any prescribed process for discipline and termination.

No representative of the District, other than the Superintendent or his/her designee, has the authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specific period. No such agreement shall be enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by the Board Chair or the Superintendent/designee and the employee.

Employment Classifications

The following terms will be used to describe employment classifications and status:

Exempt Employees

Exempt employees are not subject to the overtime pay provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). An exempt employee is one whose specific job duties and salary meet all of the requirements of the [U.S. Department of Labor's regulations](#). In general, an exempt employee is one who is paid on a salary basis at a threshold rate set by federal statute who holds an administrative, professional, or management position. Certain Director positions and a few other job categories are also exempt.

Non-Exempt Employees

Salaried employees who are not administrative, professional, or managerial employees (as defined by the [U.S. DOL](#)) and many hourly employees are generally not exempt from the FLSA's overtime provisions.

Full-Time Employee

Full-time employees are those who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week (School year or Full Year) that are not hired on a temporary or casual basis.

Part-Time Employee

Part-time employees are those who are regularly scheduled to work fewer than 30 hours per week that are not hired on a temporary or casual basis. Part-time employees may be eligible for some District paid benefits.

Temporary or Casual Employee

Temporary or casual employees are hired for an interim or intermittent period, often to fill an absence, or for projects or seasonal work of a limited duration. Temporary employees are not eligible for District paid benefits, except as required by law.

Master Agreements & Employment Guidelines

These guidelines are found at <http://www.maplerun.org/o/mrusd/browse/10660> - be sure you are reading the most recent version.

Work Schedule

Work hours are guided by the MRUSD calendar, primary job requirements, and campus operating hours. Work hours for union employees are also guided by the [Master Agreements](#). Staff hours may vary within or between campuses, depending on student need, job title, and agreement between employee and building administration.

Professional Employees

Professional employees and campus administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10-, 11-, or 12-month basis according to the work schedules set by the District. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for professional employees and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules, including the start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

Support and Non-Exempt Employees

Support employees receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees are considered non-exempt employees and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. Employees are required to use District timekeeping methods to record time worked.

Part-time employees

Part-time employees have a regular schedule of hours prepared and made known to them at the beginning of their assignment.

In-service

In-service days begin and end as any other workday unless specifically informed otherwise. Support staff attendance will be expected unless otherwise directed by building administration.

Flex Time

The District recognizes that many employees need flexibility in work schedules to meet childcare and other needs. The very nature of education limits the ability of allowing for flex time. Pre-determined core hours exist for each position and all employees should be at work during those hours.

Within the structure of a determined work week, personnel with non-educational positions may use flex time occasionally if the job permits such flexibility and the supervisor approves the schedule in advance.

Working Overtime

On occasion, overtime may be required of hourly staff. Available overtime for members with a master agreement and guidelines will be offered in accordance with that agreement. Otherwise, every effort will be made to offer overtime opportunities fairly. You should not work overtime hours without prior approval by your immediate supervisor. Due to the nature of our business, the ebb and flow of work is fairly predictable, however, in instances of sudden need, your supervisor will try to give you as much notice as possible.

Attendance and Punctuality

It is important for you to report to work on time and to avoid unnecessary absences. The District recognizes that illness or other circumstances beyond your control may cause you to be absent from work from time to time. However, frequent absenteeism or tardiness may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Excessive absenteeism or frequent tardiness puts an unnecessary strain on your co-workers and can have a negative impact on the success of the District.

You are expected to report to work when scheduled. Whenever you know in advance that you are going to be absent, you should make the request as early as possible. If your absence is unexpected, you should attempt to reach the designated personnel as soon as possible.

Absences of more than 3 consecutive workdays must be brought to the attention of Human Resources. Staff experiencing such absence should call the Benefits Coordinator at 370-3936.

Please note that some absences may be compensated under the District's leave and benefits policies. Further, some absences may interplay with Federal and/or State law.

You are expected to be at your work area at the beginning of each business day. If you are delayed, you must call your attendance clerk or immediate supervisor to state the reason for the delay and estimated arrival. As with absences, you must make every effort to speak directly with a supervisor. Regular delays in reporting to work will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. You will receive direction, specific to your campus, on reporting a delay or absence.

Inclement Weather / Facility Closure

School is open unless announced otherwise by the Superintendent or there is a government-declared state of emergency. There may be times when we will delay opening, and on rare occasions, we may have to close. Use common sense and your best judgment when traveling to work in inclement weather.

In the event of school closings, students and employees of the MRUSD campuses shall be informed through Bright Arrow alert messages and television stations Channel 3 – WCAX TV and Channel 5 - WPTZ. In addition, all school closing information will be posted to the MRUSD Information App and website.

School closing information is listed by school and posted prior to 6:00 a.m. if possible. If school is closed, all daytime and evening school activities, programs and events are also cancelled unless you are notified otherwise.

If the District's facilities are closed by the District or the government, [the Master Agreement, or guidelines](#) for your position will determine whether employees will be paid for the day. If the District's facilities are open and you are delayed getting to work or cannot get to work at all because of inclement weather, the absence will be addressed as prescribed in [the Master Agreement, or guidelines](#) for your position.

Job Opportunities

The MRUSD posts all job opportunities on www.schoolspring.com – a list of the SchoolSpring positions can be accessed on the District website [here](#). Internal postings, only available to current employees, are sent via email and are posted physically at each school and central office.

Private and Outside Employment

Staff members may not engage in private or outside employment when that employment creates a conflict or impairs the proper discharge of school duties. Employees are expected to devote the maximum effort to their position within the school district. Outside employment cannot interfere with an employee's hours of work or professional obligations or effectiveness.

Transfers

In an effort to match you with the job for which you are most suited and/or to meet the business and operational needs of the District, you may be transferred from your current job. This may be either at your request or as a result of a decision by the District.

An eligible employee may request a transfer or to be considered for a transfer at any time. Your eligibility is also dependent on your ability to demonstrate the needed skills, education, experience, and other qualifications that are required for the job. All potential transfers will abide by the appropriate employment agreement.

Dress Code and Public Image

As an employee of the District, we expect you to present a clean and professional appearance when you represent us, whether you are in or outside of the workplace. You are, therefore, required to dress in appropriate business attire and to behave in a professional manner. It is essential that you act professionally and extend courtesy to co-workers, visitors, and parents. A cheerful and positive attitude is essential to our mission and values.

The District dress code is business casual. Generally, clean, neat clothing is acceptable. Torn clothing, suggestive attire, and tee shirts with inappropriate text or pictures are not appropriate business casual attire. As always, please use common sense in your choice of attire.

Pay special attention to footwear as it impacts safety. Wear footwear that is conducive to the job and season as it pertains to safety. During the winter season, for example, it is unwise to wear heels outside of the building. Custodians, especially, need to pay attention that their footwear meets or exceeds safety regulations. At no time should a custodian wear open toed shoes.

Workspace

Employees are responsible for maintaining the workspace assigned to them. A clean, orderly workspace provides an environment conducive to working efficiently. Employees should keep in mind that their workspace is part of a professional environment that portrays the District's overall dedication to providing quality

education. Therefore, your workspace should be clean, organized and generally free of items not required to perform your job.

Confidentiality

Employees are expected to maintain confidentiality of all students records and information in accordance with the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and the MRUSD policy on [education records](#). Employees should limit discussing any student by name with others in the school unless there is a “need to know”. Confidentiality includes all students, regular and special education. Another good rule of thumb is to not discuss the specifics of your work outside of school. If you have a concern about school programs, you should discuss it directly with the school principal.

Personnel Records

The District maintains one official confidential personnel file for each employee. The information found in the file shall only be available to authorized personnel and to the employee. Apart from pre-employment materials, the employee has the right to review the contents of the file upon request during regular working hours. The employee must call/e-mail Human Resources in advance to schedule a time for the review, which must be done in the presence of the Superintendent or designee. The contents of the file are the property of the district. As such, the Superintendent has final authority as to what materials will be contained in the file. No information of a critical nature shall be placed into the file without the employee’s knowledge. The employee has a right to attach a reply to the document, which shall be included in the file. For more information, please refer to The [Master Agreement or guidelines](#) language regarding district procedures.

Change in Demographic Information

Be mindful that the district has your current information on file. Employees can check and update their address and telephone number anytime by logging into the [Employee Access Center](#). Both Payroll and Human Resources will be notified of any change you make and thereby, the District insurance companies as well. Name changes will only be made by providing your new social security card to Central Office. By notifying the District of such changes, you will avoid compromising your benefit eligibility, the forwarding of W-2 forms, or similar inconveniences.

Employee Self-Service Portal (Portal)

All employees will be given access by secure means to the [Employee Access Center](#). This is an exclusive access site for MRUSD employees only. This is where employees can go for information related to employment, including compensation, benefits, leave, taxes and more. You will often receive emails when your information has been updated or a process/activity has been acted upon, such as a request for leave.

The [Employee Information Site](#) is where you will find the information and forms you will need as an employee. This site is updated regularly to accommodate the needs of employees.

Internet Access

Access to the Internet is provided for work-related activities or approved educational / training activities. Incidental and occasional personal use and study use is permitted. This privilege should not be abused and must not affect the employee’s performance of employment-related activities. This privilege should also impose no tangible cost to the district or unduly burden the electronic resources.

Right to Monitor

The District email and Internet system are the property of the District. By accessing the Internet, Intranet and electronic mail services through facilities provided by the District, you acknowledge that the District (by itself or through its Service Providers) may, from time to time, monitor, log and gather statistics on employee Internet

activity and may examine all individual connections and communications. Please note that the District uses email filters to block spam and computer viruses. These filters may block legitimate email messages.

Responsibilities and Obligations

Employees may not access, download, or distribute material that is illegal, or which others may find offensive or objectionable, such as material that is pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, or an incitement to violence.

You must always respect and comply with copyright laws and intellectual property rights of others. When using web-based sources, you must provide appropriate attribution. Software must not be downloaded from the Internet without the prior approval of qualified persons within the District.

In all circumstances, use of Internet access and email systems must be consistent with legal requirements and [District Policy \(D03\)](#). Violation of this policy and the requirements of the law may result in a range of sanctions, from restriction of access to electronic communication facilities to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Electronic Communications

Electronic communications (i.e. email, websites, apps, blogs, etc.) have become heavily relied upon to distribute valuable information to employees, peers, students, parents and the community. Employees are expected to familiarize themselves with the content and resources found on the MRUSD [website](#).

Since email is often the only form of communication used for important and time sensitive information, each employee is provided with a district Gmail address. All employees are expected to review their mail at least once daily while at work.

The email system is the property of the District. All emails are subject to review and monitoring by the District. Electronic mail is like any other form of District communication and may not be used for harassment or other unlawful purposes. Your email account is a District-provided privilege and is District property. Remember that when you send an email from the District domain, you represent the District whether your message is business-related or personal. All District email accounts are subject to public records laws.

Confidentiality of Electronic Mail

As noted above, electronic mail is subject to monitoring at all times and the release of specific information is subject to applicable laws and District rules, policies, and procedures on confidentiality. Existing rules, policies and procedures governing the sharing of confidential information also apply to the sharing of information via commercial software.

Social Media

Any conduct that adversely affects an employee's job performance or the performance of fellow employees, or otherwise adversely affects the District's legitimate business interests, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Similarly, inappropriate postings, including, but not limited to discriminatory remarks, [harassment](#) and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This restriction will not apply to any postings made in the exercise of any rights granted to an employee by federal law.

The district maintains policies and procedures for the appropriate use of [Technology for Employees](#) which covers protocols to guide the use of Social Media for School Purposes.

Employee Privacy

The District takes your privacy very seriously. The privacy and security of the personal data we collect from you is important to us. It is equally important that you understand how we handle this data. The District will not

knowingly collect, share, or use personal information in any manner not consistent with applicable laws or policies.

Collection of Information

In the course of conducting our business and complying with federal, state, and local government regulations governing such matters as employment, tax, insurance, etc., we must collect personal information from you. The nature of the information collected varies somewhat for each employee, depending on your employment responsibilities, the location of the facility where you work, and other factors. We collect personal information from you solely for business purposes, including those related directly to your employment with the District, and those required by governmental agencies.

Use of the Information Collected

The primary purposes for collection, storage and/or use of your personal information include, but are not limited to:

- **Human Resources Management.** We collect, store, analyze, and share (internally) personal information in order to attract, retain, and motivate a highly qualified workforce. This includes recruiting, compensation planning, succession planning, reorganization needs, performance assessment, training, employee benefit administration, compliance with applicable legal requirements, and communication with employees and/or their representatives.
- **Business Processes and Management.** Personal information is used to run our business operations including, for example, scheduling work assignments, managing District assets, reporting and/releasing public data (e.g., annual reports, etc.), and populating employee directories. Information may also be used to comply with government regulations.
- **Safety and Security Management.** We use such personal information as appropriate to ensure the safety and protection of employees, assets, resources, and communities.
- **Communication and Identification.** We use your personal information to identify you and to communicate with you.

Limited Disclosure

The District uses security measures to protect your personal information and ensure that it is not accessed by unauthorized individuals. We will not knowingly disclose, sell, or otherwise distribute your personal information to any third party without your knowledge and, where appropriate, your express written permission, except where disclosure is reasonably necessary to comply with the law. If you wish a spouse or other integral person to be allowed to discuss your payroll or benefits information, you must complete a [Permission to Disclose](#) form.

Security of Personal Information

We employ reasonable security measures and technologies, such as password protection, encryption, physical locks, etc., to protect the confidentiality of your personal information. Only authorized employees have access to personal information. If you are an employee with such authorization, it is imperative that you take the appropriate safeguards to protect such information. Paper and other hard copy containing personal information (or any other confidential information) should be secured in a locked location when not in use. Computers and other access points should be secured when not in use by logging out or locking. Passwords and user IDs should be guarded and not shared. When no longer necessary for business purposes, paper and hard copies should be immediately destroyed using paper shredders or similar devices. Do not leave copies in unsecured locations waiting to be shredded or otherwise destroyed. Do not make or distribute unauthorized copies of documents or other tangible medium containing personal information.

Electronic files containing personal information should only be stored on secure computers and not copied or otherwise shared with unauthorized individuals within or outside of the District.

The District will make reasonable efforts to protect personal information stored or transmitted electronically from persons who are not authorized to access such information.

Any violation or potential violation of these privacy guidelines should be reported to your immediate supervisor, designated manager, or the Human Resources. The failure by any employee to follow these privacy procedures may result in discipline up to and including termination. Any questions or suggestions regarding this procedure may also be directed to your immediate supervisor, designated manager, or Human Resources.

Telephones & Cell Phones

Access to the District telephone system is given for work-related activities or approved educational and training activities. The telephone system is the property of the District. By accessing the telephone system through facilities provided by the District, you acknowledge that the District has the right to monitor its telephone system from time to time to ensure that employees are using the system for its intended purposes.

Use your best judgment when making or receiving personal phone calls at work. To the extent possible, employees should make personal phone calls during their breaks or lunch times.

Use of hand-held cellular devices while driving is against the law in Vermont. Employees are expected to follow all laws during work and while operating any vehicle.

Tobacco Use

In order to provide a safe and comfortable working environment for all employees, smoking, chewing, and e-cigarettes, vaping or vapor cigarettes, as well as dipping product use is strictly prohibited at all times, on all campuses, inside and out, as per the District's [policy](#).

Drug-Free Workplace / Substance Abuse

The District takes seriously the problem of drug and alcohol use and is committed to providing a substance-free workplace for its employees. Substance abuse of any kind is inconsistent with the behavior expected of our employees. It subjects all employees and visitors to our facilities to unacceptable safety risks and undermines our ability to operate effectively and efficiently. The District has adopted a policy related to [substance abuse](#).

The District recognizes alcohol and drug abuse as potential health, safety, and security problems. The District expects all employees to assist in maintaining a work environment free from the effects of alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicating/altering substances. Compliance with this substance abuse policy is made a condition of employment, and violations of the policy may lead to discipline up to and including termination.

All employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, possession, use, distribution or purchase of illicit drugs, alcohol, or other intoxicants, as well as the misuse of prescription drugs on District premises or at any time and any place during working hours. All employees are required to report to their jobs in appropriate mental and physical condition, ready to work.

Substance abuse is an illness that can be treated. Employees who have an alcohol or drug abuse problem are encouraged to seek appropriate professional assistance. You may contact your immediate supervisor, designated manager, or Human Resources for assistance in seeking help to address substance abuse. As an employee benefit you may also contact [invest EAP](#). The Benefits Coordinator can also help you determine treatment coverage available under the District's medical insurance plan.

When work performance is impaired, admission to or use of a treatment or other program does not preclude appropriate action by the District. Any employee who violates this substance abuse policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Safety and Accident Rules

Safety is a joint venture in MRUSD. We provide a clean, hazard-free, healthy, safe environment to work, and make every effort to comply with all relevant federal, state, and local occupational health and safety laws, including the state and federal [Occupational Safety and Health Act](#). As an employee, you have a duty to comply with the safety rules of the District, and you are expected to take an active part in maintaining this hazard-free environment. You should observe all posted safety rules, adhere to all safety instructions provided by your supervisor and use safety equipment where required. Your workspace should be kept neat, clean, and orderly. You are required to [report](#) any accidents or injuries – including any breaches of safety – and to promptly report any unsafe equipment, working condition, process or procedure to a supervisor. Failure to abide by the District's safety and accident rules may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Work related injury or illness

If you become ill or get hurt while at work, you must notify your supervisor immediately. Failure to do so may result in a loss of benefits under the state workers compensation law. The process for reporting a workplace injury, seeking medical care in relation to that injury, and the forms to do so can be found in your [employee information site](#). More information for building level procedures will be provided at your location.

Workplace Violence

Acts of violence by or against any of our employees where any work-related duty is performed will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including involving law enforcement authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for contributing to an environment of mutual respect for each other as well as students and visitors, following all [policies, procedures](#) and practices, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

Evaluation Process

Check the [Master Agreement or guidelines](#) for the evaluation process utilized for your position. All performance reviews will be completed by your supervisor and reviewed with you. Factors considered in your review may include the quality of your job performance, attendance, meeting the requirements of your job description, dependability, attitude, cooperation, compliance with district employment policies, any disciplinary actions, and year-to-year improvement in overall performance.

Staff Ethics and Code of Conduct

MRUSD expects all employees to demonstrate the highest standards of conduct and ethics in their school relationships and in the performance of their duties. To ensure this, employees are expected to:

- Maintain just and courteous professional relationships with students, parents, staff members, board members and all other internal and external contacts.
- Maintain a professional relationship with students, both inside and outside the classroom, and make reasonable efforts to protect students from unhealthy, harmful, or unsafe conditions.
- Place the safety and well-being of students as their first concern. Demonstrate and encourage the highest standard of conduct among students, and strive to create an environment where hazing, harassment, and bullying are deemed unacceptable behavior.
- Exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of their work.
- Refrain from soliciting funds from other staff members within the schools or distributing flyers or other materials related to external fund drives through the schools, without the approval of the Principal.

- Be familiar with, and abide by, all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations that affect work, and [MRUSD policies](#), procedures and practices.
- Comply with all reasonable rules and directives established by the supervisor.
- Adhere to all laws regarding conflict of interest and avoid actions that might compromise the integrity of the school district and/or confidence of the community.

For additional information related to staff ethics and rules of conduct, please refer to [MRUSD Policy](#) and your [Master Agreement or guidelines](#).

Mandated Reporting

Act 60 made changes to the mandated reporter law that was effective July 1, 2015. The law now provides that any mandated reporter who reasonably suspects abuse or neglect of a child shall report in accordance with the provisions of Section 4914 of Title 16 within 24 hours of the time information regarding the suspected abuse or neglect was first received or observed (33 V.S.A. § 4913(c)).

All mandated reporters have an independent obligation to report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) even if they have knowledge that a report of the same suspected abuse or neglect has already been made. DCF offers the following guidance for group reporting: if more than one individual within an organization needs to make a report about the same information or incident, DCF recommends the following course of action for making a group report (note that the required 24-hour time limit for making reports applies to both steps below):

- The person(s) with the most direct knowledge of the allegation should contact the child protection hotline at (800)-649-5285 to make a verbal report; AND
- A written report should be drafted and signed (please print) by everyone with direct knowledge of the information (get the form on-line at mandatedreporters.vt.gov/). Please fax the written report to: (802) 241-3301.
- For more information and a training resource, please see the memo from the [VT Agency of Education](#)

Training and Professional Development

Annual training will include assignments through the District's video training platform, *VectorSolutions*®.

Mandatory training for all will include FERPA, Hazing Harassment and Bullying (HHB) and Bloodborne Pathogen Protocol. In addition to *VectorSolutions*® assignments, training may be assigned at the discretion of the District.

Please review the professional development benefit available in the district as outlined in your [Master Agreement or Guidelines](#).

Anti-Discrimination & Harassment

Discrimination Is Prohibited

MRUSD is an equal opportunity employer and makes all employment decisions without regard to race, religion, color, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. The [District procedure](#) applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, benefits, compensation and training. We seek to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws related to discrimination and will not tolerate interference with the ability of any employee to perform his/her job duties.

The District makes decisions concerning employment based strictly on an individual's qualifications and ability to perform the job under consideration, the comparative qualifications and abilities of other applicants or employees, and the individual's past performance within the organization.

If you believe that an employment decision has been made that does not conform with management's commitment to equal opportunity, you should promptly bring the matter to the attention of your immediate supervisor, designated manager, or Human Resources. Your complaint will be promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigated. There will be no retaliation against any employee who files a complaint in good faith, even if the result of the investigation produces insufficient evidence to support the complaint.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The federal [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, fringe benefits, job training and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. The ADA does not alter the District's right to hire the best-qualified applicant, but it does prohibit discrimination against a qualified applicant or employee because of his or her disability, or because of a perceived disability. As a matter of District policy, the District prohibits discrimination of any kind against people with disabilities.

Workplace Harassment

The District is committed to providing a work environment that provides employees equality, respect and dignity. The District's [Employee Harassment Policy](#) provides definitions of types of harassment and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the District will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct and take appropriate action. Such action may range from counseling to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Compensation

Pay rates and salaries are determined by placement on a pre-determined pay scale or salary schedule. MRUSD will consider education, experience, certifications, and licensure to make the initial determination of placement on a schedule. Note that placement on a schedule does not equate to years of service and is at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Payroll Practices

Employees are paid bi-weekly on Thursdays. When a payroll date falls on a bank holiday, employees will be paid on the last business day before the holiday. A payroll schedule will be provided via the [employee information site](#).

Time Reporting (Hourly Employees Only)

Recording your time worked is a vital piece to accurate payroll processing. All hourly employees must clock-in and out daily. The responsibility of providing the employer with a report of daily hours worked lies with each employee. Employees must approve their hours in the time management system by the end of each week.

The pay period begins on Sunday and ends the second Saturday following. The electronically recorded time sheets are conveyed to the payroll department in the Central Office automatically and are reviewed and approved by a supervisor. Be sure to record paid time off appropriately [in the employee access center](#).

Overtime

Your payroll coordinator will calculate your pay including any overtime earned. Overtime is provided at one and one-half times the regular hourly rate including a weighted rate formula for those with multiple hourly rates. Overtime pay is earned on any hours over 40 **worked** in a given week.

Compensatory Time

Compensatory time may be available to certain staff; check your [Master Agreement or Guidelines](#). Comp time is limited to 40 hours and will be paid out if not used by the end of the fiscal year.

Special Payments / Stipends

Supervisors must complete an extra duty form before work commences for any work that is not part of an employee's regular job and will require extra pay, either hourly, daily, or in a lump sum.

All worked time reported for payment will be added to an employee's regular paycheck according to IRS regulations. If no regular wage is being paid, the supplemental income will be paid and taxed according to IRS Regulations.

Requests for payment should be submitted in a timely manner and should be preceded by the creation of an extra duty form by the employee's supervisor.

Salary Deductions and Withholding

The District will withhold the following from your paycheck:

- **Taxes** - Federal, state and local taxes, as required by law, as well as the required FICA (Social Security and Medicare) payments.
- **Insurance and other district provided benefits** - Your contribution to health insurance or other insurance premiums for yourself and any eligible family members or to other contributory benefit programs such as tax savings accounts sponsored by the District. Generally, these types of deductions are divided equally over the number of payrolls available. This may fluctuate in certain cases.
- **Retirement Plans** – Mandatory State Teachers and State Municipal retirement plans are deducted on a percentage basis from all eligible payments. Elected Retirement savings, such as a 403 or 457B are configured according to the employee's salary deduction form and stay in effect until terminated or modified in writing by the employee.
- **Other Deductions** - Court mandated deductions and other deductions to recoup loss to the District of over payment of wages or benefits to an employee.

Direct Deposit

The practice in MRUSD is to directly deposit your paycheck into your bank account(s). The practice at MRUSD is a secure one; we carefully determine our transfer mechanisms and protocols. Direct deposit allows for seamless and timely payment of earnings.

A Direct deposit form can be found [in the Employee Information Site](#) and on the MRUSD website [here](#). MRUSD does not allow for direct deposit into an account not held by the employee. To alter a direct deposit, simply submit a new form to your payroll coordinator.

Benefits, General

This section describes the fringe benefits provided by the District and information on your eligibility for benefits. Details regarding each benefit plan are contained in individual benefit materials. Benefit plans may be further described in formal Summary Plan Descriptions (SPD) or other legal documents available for review in your [employee information site](#) as well as on [VEHI.org](#), our insurance pool's website.

Employees meeting the eligibility criteria for benefits may participate in the various insurance programs offered by the District when initially offered upon hire or during an Open Enrollment period (described below). You may review the eligibility criteria for each benefit in the SPD for the particular benefit and in the [governing document](#) for your position. If you decline to participate in these programs on your initial eligibility date, you may request entry into the plan during Open Enrollment or Special Enrollment (described below).

The initial enrollment period is within 30 days of hire. Employees not completing the appropriate enrollment procedure during that time cannot enroll until the next Open Enrollment period. All benefit related forms can be found on your [employee information site](#) as well as [here](#).

Employee Contributions

The District's benefit package may contain contributory options. You may be responsible for a portion of the premium for your benefits. A portion of the premium as stated by your [Master Agreement or employee guidelines](#), is contributed by the District. Your contributory cost is deducted from your paycheck. The costs may be deducted on a pre-tax basis and are generally spread equally over all available and eligible pays. Missed contributions will be made in an ensuing pay period.

Late Applicants / Waiving coverage

At the time you are hired, you are given an opportunity to elect certain benefits. You have 30 days in which to complete the necessary paperwork and enroll in the plan(s). If you miss that initial opportunity or waive participation in any of these programs for either yourself or your eligible dependents, you will generally be allowed to apply for entry into the various plans only during annual Open Enrollment. Life and Long-Term Disability as well as Vermont State Teachers Retirement and Vermont Municipal retirement are auto-enrollments for new employees.

Open Enrollment

The Open Enrollment period allows employees to add or change their benefits coverage. Applications for Medical Plan, Dental Plan, and/or Health Care Spending Accounts, may be submitted during this period. Some benefits that do not contain contributory charges are automatic. These include the Life and Long-Term Disability Plans. Changes, additions, and other elections made during Open Enrollment will take effect on the effective date following the Open Enrollment period. Once you have made a change, you generally cannot change that selection until the next Open Enrollment period (except in the case of certain life events; see Special Enrollment). Open enrollment in MRUSD is a calendar year event.

Special Enrollment

Special enrollment allows individuals who previously declined coverage to enroll in the plan upon loss of eligibility for other coverage and upon certain life events, such as marriage and the birth, adoption, or placement for adoption of a child. Employees must request enrollment within 30 days of the loss of coverage or life event triggering the special enrollment. For specific details regarding special enrollment, please refer to your Summary Plan Descriptions found in your [Employee Information site](#).

Continuation of Health Coverage

Federal and State law generally requires employers with 20 or more employees to give employees, spouses (including same-sex spouses) and dependent children the right to continue group health benefits for limited periods of time under certain circumstances, such as voluntary, or some types of involuntary, job loss, reduction in hours worked, death, divorce, and other life events. Employees ordinarily may continue their health coverage for up to 18 months after employment is terminated. Dependents having lost coverage in MRUSD plans may have a longer period of Continuation Coverage. MRUSD is a covered entity and does offer eligible persons this option upon a loss of coverage except in cases of gross misconduct.

Tax Exempt Health Care Accounts

The District offers one or more options that eligible employees can use to pay for certain out-of-pocket health care costs. Please refer to the Summary Plan Descriptions and the [governing document](#) for your position for an explanation of benefits and limitations.

Medical Insurance

The District offers medical insurance to all eligible employees. Details of the plan(s) are available in the SPD's found in your [employee information site](#) and in the [benefit booklet](#) found on VEHI.org. The SPD contains more

details. In the event of any conflict between the information contained in this Handbook and in the District's SPDs, the SPDs shall govern. The plan(s) is subject to change.

Dental Insurance

The District offers a dental plan for eligible employees. Please refer to the dental [Outline of Coverage](#) for an explanation of the plan benefits and limitations. Employees are not auto enrolled and must follow enrollment opportunity guidelines mentioned earlier in this handbook. Coverage is provided for one plan for district employee(s) who can receive coverage in the same plan (e.g. both husband and spouse/partner work for the district, or both the parent and child work for the district).

Long-Term Disability Plan (LTD)

Long-term disability coverage is a benefit of income replacement for eligible employees ([check your Master Agreement or Guidelines](#)). The plan pays a portion of your regular wages for an extended period of time should you suffer a health issue keeping you out of work and disabled according to carrier review. LTD is employee specific.

Life Insurance

Eligible employees are automatically enrolled in a group term life insurance program. Enrollees may designate or change the beneficiary for this policy at any time. The District pays the premium for this program. The face value of this benefit is pre-determined for different job categories of MRUSD employees.

For Life and Long-Term Disability details please see the appropriate policy on the [Employee Information site](#).

Retirement

Mandatory Retirement Enrollment

Membership in these retirement systems is mandatory for all eligible employees.

The Vermont State Teachers Retirement System (VSTRS) requires an employee contribution. In order to be enrolled in VSTRS you must meet the definition of a "teacher" according to 16 V.S.A. § 1931 AND the position occupied must require a teaching license. To clarify; the VSTRS board intends that positions qualifying for membership must require licensure by the State Board of Education, and not just be pursuant to the preference of the individual school district. There are restrictions concerning retired teachers. Currently, there is no option to increase your contribution and there is no employer match. VSTRS is calculated on your base contract. Whether or not VSTRS is applied to supplemental payments is decided on a case by case basis.

All non-teaching staff will be enrolled in the Vermont Municipal Employee's Retirement System (VMERS) Group B. This plan requires an employee as well as an employer contribution. VMERS contributions apply to all monies earned. Your payroll and benefits specialists will establish your membership status. Once you are enrolled, the state retirement office will begin communicating with you directly. Learn more about VSTRS and VMERS [here](#) or by calling 1-802-828-2305.

Elective Tax Deferred Retirement Options

These plans are available to all positioned staff. There is no specific enrollment period. You may enroll anytime.

§403 (b) Plan

Employees of public school systems are eligible to participate in tax deferred income programs as provided in §403(b) of the IRS Code. MRUSD's 403B plan authorizes deferrals solely to the State of Vermont 403B program.

§457 (b) Plan

Employees of governmental entities in the state of Vermont are eligible to participate in a deferred compensation program as provided in §457 of the Internal Revenue Code. MRUSD's 457B plan authorizes deferrals solely to the State of Vermont 457B program.

To enroll in either plan or to learn more, please go to your [employee information site](#) or contact the Benefits Coordinator. Contributions to each of these plans are limited by statute annually. You may enroll in either or both.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

To provide for payment of your medical expenses and for partial salary continuation in the event of a work-related accident, you are covered by workers' compensation insurance provided by the District and based on state regulations. The amount of benefits payable, as well as the duration of payments, depends upon the nature of your injury. All medical expenses paid, and salary payments made in connection with an on-the-job injury are paid in accordance with applicable state law. If you are injured on the job, you must immediately report the injury. This ensures that the District can help you obtain appropriate medical treatment. Your failure to follow this procedure may delay your benefits or may even jeopardize your receipt of benefits. Questions regarding workers' compensation insurance should be directed to the Benefits Coordinator.

Wellness Benefits

The District offers wellness programming for eligible employees, including membership to the Collins Perley Sports and Fitness Center. Bring your school identification badge to the front desk at CP and they will provide you with a membership card.

Employee Assistance Program

MRUSD provides, through our partnership with the Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust, an employee assistance program with Invest EAP. The Invest EAP counsellors strive to assist our employees with life situations such as mental health issues, addiction, legal issues, aging parents, and much more. The [Invest EAP website](#) contains all the information and your password would be vsbit.

Reimbursement for Professional Development Activities

This applies to all MRUSD employees as pre-approved by Building Administration. The District may reimburse certain costs of professional development activities as provided in the applicable [Master Agreement or guidelines](#). This may include coursework, conferences, or workshops. In some cases, travel and lodging expenses may be covered.

- Pre-approval prior to enrollment is required by the employee's immediate supervisor, building administrator and Central Office.
- Employees must pass undergraduate and graduate course work with a grade of "B-" or better. Failure to do so will result in reimbursement being denied.
- Classes may not interfere with an employee's job responsibilities/duties and must be arranged around work schedules.
- An employee who quits or is terminated from employment before completing a class will not be eligible for reimbursement benefits.

Other School Related Travel Expenditures

Mileage Reimbursement

The standard mileage reimbursement, set by the IRS, includes the costs of operating an automobile such as depreciation, maintenance, repairs, tires, gasoline, oil, insurance, taxes, and vehicle registration fees. If a vehicle rental is needed, please go through the Business Office to use the MRUSD account that provides discounts. Normal personal commuting costs are not subject to reimbursement. Complete the [mileage reimbursement form](#) and include a google map showing mileage to be reimbursed.

Public Transit Reimbursement

Employees may find it convenient and cost-effective to use light rail, train, or bus transportation for business-related purposes instead of driving.

Air Travel

Air travel expense is reimbursed based on the actual cost incurred by the traveler using normally traveled routes. Be sure to make reservations in advance, as most discounted fares are available when purchased several days prior to departure. Be flexible in the selection of airlines and flight time.

Accommodations

Travelers are encouraged to use standard accommodations at reasonably priced mid-market hotels or motels.

Meal Expenses

Employees need to check their [Master Agreement or Guidelines](#) regarding reimbursement for reasonable and actual expenses for meals incurred during business related travel. Any employee request for reimbursement received without the receipts will be returned to the employee. Employee request for reimbursement submitted with the proper receipts will be forwarded to the next level manager for approval.

Request for Reimbursement

All expenses for which an employee seeks reimbursement must be itemized on a request for reimbursement. Detailed **Receipts** (not card statements, etc.) are required for all expenses and must be attached to the request. Request for reimbursement should be submitted within one week of incurring the expense or as soon as possible following trip completion (if reimbursement for travel expenses is requested). There is a time limit to submit requests for reimbursement - In no instance will reimbursement be made if requested after 60 days from the date the expense was incurred.

Non-Reimbursable Expenses

- Personal entertainment expenses, such as but not limited to, movies, games and health clubs.
- Costs incurred by failure to cancel reservations for lodging or transportation.
- Traffic and/or parking violation fines.
- Spouse or other guest expenses.
- Laundry Service.
- Alcohol.
- Meals for professional staff ([see Master Agreement](#))
- Frivolous spending

Holidays, Vacation and Other Leaves

All leaves should be requested through the [employee access center](#).

MRUSD leave time is provided on a credit basis. This means that all of your leave time will be granted to you immediately, except for probationary, hourly employees. This is done with the understanding that you will work a full schedule for the year. We want you to be able to be away from work when you need to be, however, if you resign mid-year or incur an altered FTE, your leave will be pro-rated based on your actual work time and any unearned paid time off will be rescinded accordingly. If an employee has overused leave based on this new calculation, MRUSD reserves the right to adjust any pay owed by the overdraft. Leave benefits in MRUSD are provided on a fiscal year basis.

Religious Observance

Federal and state equal opportunity laws generally require employers to accommodate the religious beliefs of employees, but do not require them to provide paid leave. The District respects your religious beliefs, and

therefore, will allow employees who, for religious reasons, must be away from work on days of normal operation. Employees who require time off may use paid vacation and/or personal days subject to availability. This leave must be requested through the normal mode of leave requests in your building.

Vacation

The District recognizes the importance of vacation time in providing rest, recreation and personal enrichment for full-year, full-time employees. Full-year, full-time employees earn vacation time according to their [Master Agreement or guidelines](#). First year vacation time for new employees is pro-rated. Vacation time for year-long part-time employees is also prorated.

Vacation Accrual and Carryover

Employees begin accruing vacation time when they begin work for the District. Employees may use their vacation at any time as pre-approved by their supervisor. Employees may carry up to ten vacation days from one year to the next, however, these days must be used by December 31st of the following contract year.

Procedure for Requesting Vacation Leave

Requests for vacation time should be submitted to your supervisor through the [employee access center](#) as soon as you know when you wish to schedule your vacation, but in no event less than two weeks prior to the time requested. Vacation time is coordinated so that staff is available to provide adequate coverage at all times, and there may be District-wide or department-specific “blackout dates,” as necessary. In the event of a conflict in vacation requests, your supervisor will consider the District’s staffing needs during the relevant period.

Holiday Pay

Full-Time, full-year employees are entitled to the paid holidays as listed in their [Master Agreement or guidelines](#). Holidays are not provided for school year or extended school year staff except for as may be agreed upon in the course of negotiations.

Personal/Sick Leave

When you take personal/sick leave, you should provide your immediate supervisor with as much notice as possible. Your personal or sick leave, up to a total provided according to your position, will be *credited* to you at the beginning of your work year. You may carry over sick leave from year to year and accumulate a maximum of days according to your unit of employment for full-time employees and pro-rata for part-time employees. Personal days do not accrue from year to year.

When you are absent from work and your absence has not been previously scheduled, you must personally notify your immediate supervisor or attendance clerk as soon as you are aware that you will be late or unable to report to work. Leaving a message with another staff member or using a method other than that approved does not qualify as notifying your supervisor.

For absences in excess of 3 consecutive days, the District reserves the right to require appropriate medical documentation. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Bereavement Leave

Employees will receive paid time off in the event of the death of a member of their immediate family as defined in their [Master Agreement or guidelines](#).

Military Service Leave

Employees serving in the uniformed services, including the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard and Public Health Service commissioned corps, as well as the reserve components of each of these services, may take unpaid military leave as described in the [Master Agreement or guidelines](#).

Family and Medical Leave

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Vermont version (VPLL) leaves are provided as described in the [Master Agreement or guidelines](#). You must contact your benefits coordinator at Central Office as soon as is practicable. Any absence for medical reasons of more than 3 consecutive days must be reported to the Benefits Coordinator.

Break Time for Nursing Mothers

The federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) allows employees to take reasonable, unpaid break time to express breast milk as needed for up to one (1) year after the birth of a child. The District will provide a place other than a bathroom for the employee to express breast milk that is shielded from view and free from intrusion. Employees will not be in any manner discriminated against in exercising their rights under this Act.

Jury Duty

The District encourages employees to fulfill their civic duties. To that end, employees are entitled to jury duty leave as described in the [Master Agreement or guidelines](#) that govern your position.

Appearance as a Witness

An employee called to appear as a witness will be permitted time off to appear, but without pay. Employees will be permitted to use accrued vacation and/or personal days when appearing as witnesses.

Voting

The District encourages all employees to vote. Most polling facilities for elections for public office are scheduled to accommodate working voters. The District, therefore, requests that employees schedule their voting for before or after their work shift when a vote falls on a workday. An employee who expects a conflict, however, should notify his or her supervisor, in advance, so that schedules can be adjusted if necessary.

Miscellaneous

Leaving the District (*hourly employees only*)

If you wish to resign your employment with the District, you are asked to notify your supervisor of your anticipated departure date at least two (2) weeks in advance. This notice should be in the form of a written note or letter.

The District may ask employees to participate in an exit interview with their immediate supervisor prior to leaving the District. This provides an opportunity to return keys and other property and to tie up any loose ends. You will receive preliminary information regarding continuation coverage and any other continuation of benefits for which you may be eligible.

If you leave the District in good standing, you may be considered for reemployment at a later date. However, in the case of rehiring, you will be considered a new employee with respect to leave, benefits, and seniority.

Dispute Resolution

In a perfect world, every employment relationship would be smooth and harmonious. However, there are times when employees and employers disagree. There may be times when you have a dispute with a supervisor or the

District which can best be resolved through a formal procedure for dispute resolution. Please see procedures as described in your [Master Agreement or guidelines](#).

All employees are encouraged to first seek to resolve matters through congenial means, including a conversation with their supervisor.