



Pine River Area Schools Mission Statement

Pine River Area Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide a safe and supportive environment to develop individuals academically, socially, and emotionally, so they are enabled to perform at their highest potential.

Pine River Area Schools Teaching Staff Handbook

2022-2023

*Pine River Area Schools:
Instilling PRide, One Student at a Time!*

Note: This staff handbook, like other Board policies, may be affected by directives from Lansing, the health department, or other lawfully recognized authorities. Changes to these or any other policies as a result thereof will be shared immediately upon notification to the district. When in doubt, ask your building administrator.

Pine River Area Schools is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity, and does not discriminate in the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, nor does it condone sexual or other harassment, on account of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, height, weight, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected categories under federal or applicable state or local law. Under this policy, equal employment opportunity is required in recruitment, hiring, training, and development, promotion, termination, compensation, benefits and all other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

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Teacher Hours Per Building

Building	*Staff in Room or at room door, greeting kids	Class Begins	Day Ends	Staff Able to Leave
Elementary	7:45 a.m.	7:55 a.m.	2:55 p.m.	3:00 p.m.
Middle & High School	8:05 a.m.	8:10 a.m.	3:14 p.m.	3:20 p.m.

*Staff in room times each morning are to assist students.

*Teacher/staff meetings are an exception to the arrival and departure time.

Daily Announcements

K-3: The Pledge of Allegiance needs to be recited each morning in your classroom at the start of the day. Other announcements will be as needed.

4-12: Announcements will be read to students at the beginning of the school or presented via video, or as designated by the building principal—a copy will be posted on the school website. The Pledge of Allegiance will be recited following the daily announcements. Please ensure that all students respect the Pledge of Allegiance and pay attention while the announcements are read. Any teacher wanting material in the daily bulletin should submit the information in writing to the office no later than 7:50 a.m. at the Elementary and 8:05 a.m. at the Middle School and/or High School. Student information for the bulletin needs to be signed by the teacher or advisor in order to approve its release.

Distribution of Student Instructional Materials and Supplies

Textbooks/resources are stored in the classrooms and storeroom. They may be distributed as needed. Students accept responsibility for the care of these materials. When the textbooks/resources will not be used for an extended period, you should collect them to ensure proper care. Students need to be made aware of their responsibilities for maintaining the condition of the textbooks/resources. Please report excessive or repeated instances of mistreatment to the principal. Please record resources you hand out for student use exceeding one class period.

Staff Communication

Although correspondence and voice messages will be placed in your mailbox (located in the office) and voicemail, the chief means of communication to staff will be in the form of email. Please check your district email account frequently (at least once daily, if not two-three times per day), including shared calendars, to keep abreast of information, memos, and other district-generated communiqués.

Personal and School-related Use of Electronic Media

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), Web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (i.e., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic communication is covered by Board policy; meaning in general that only professional questions or responses should ever be used via school email or when texting or answering the text of a co-worker, supervisor, parent, or student. Pertaining to student communications, ensure that all electronic

media use incorporates teacher-student protocols: these communiques should be regarding school work, projects, clubs, or athletics depending on the professional relationship with the student. [Example: answering a question about an assignment is appropriate; texting a student to ask where they were today is inappropriate.]

As educational professionals, the work day should be spent educating students. Please model appropriate cell phone use. Any personal use of electronic media is prohibited during the contracted day. Prior to posting any student pictures on school (or any) media, it is the staff's responsibility to ensure media release is on file.

Teacher Absence

The availability of substitute teachers can be very limited at times. Therefore, it is extremely important that requests for substitutes are made as soon as possible when a need arises. Teacher absences will be filled using WillSub. For a personal day, a request shall be made at least three (3) days prior to the expected date of absence.

When an absence occurs, copies of classroom packets, quizzes and tests should be prepared ahead of time unless an emergency is the reason for the absence. Materials should be available in the substitute folder in your classroom.

***ALL absences including days off, sick days, arriving early/late need to be recorded in Willsub (no paper forms are needed). ***See willSub attachment at the end of this handbook.**

Note for Covid-19 related absences: You will need to contact your principal before leaving for the day or, if you receive information away from work, please submit your absence as you would any sick leave (so we ensure an attempt at getting a substitute) and then call Dawn Sizeland in central office so we can code the absence correctly through the business office. You may also call your principal, but the call to Dawn will take care of your days correctly. If you need to request a specific leave allowed for under the employment laws for Covid-19, Dawn can also help.

Leaving early/Arriving late, appointments, emergencies...etc.

Because of the distance for health and dental care, it may be necessary for a staff member to leave the building immediately after students have left or before their normal ending time. **Make arrangements with the building principal for approval well in advance. You MUST log these into Willsub.** Please try to make appointments so they do not interfere with your workday.

Additionally, teachers are directed to notify the office when they leave the campus. This helps ensure adequate classroom coverage and building safety. While it is recognized that there will be unforeseen accidents or emergencies and contractual obligations [by all parties], students can never be left without a teacher or otherwise supervised. Please let the administrator of the building know as soon as possible of any need to leave the building. **Please have your cell phone on and give the cell number to the secretary as well.**

Leaving Classroom Unattended

Although physical needs sometimes prevail upon us with little notice, students should never be in a classroom unsupervised. This is a safety issue. The liability in unsupervised classrooms belongs to the teacher and the building principal. Call the office, a teacher on prep, or a colleague down/across the hall to watch your room

should a bathroom break become necessary. Making copies or looking for supplies after class has started is not a sound practice. Be prepared to teach for the full classroom period, from bell-to-bell, plan ahead, and maintain good lines of communication.

Visitors

Because of concerns regarding school safety, all visitors must report to the office and receive a visitor pass that must be visible at all times they are on premises. If you see someone unfamiliar at any time, please ask them to identify themselves and then direct him or her to the building office. Please call the office to inform them of their presence. Unless the visitor is here for school business, they will be asked to leave—we have to watch out for each other, the students, and the safety of the building.

Teacher Identification

All teachers are required to wear their teacher identification cards provided by the district during teaching hours. It is important that students, visitors and/or those assisting during an emergency have a quick method of identification of staff serving the district.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

It is important to invite parents and citizens into our schools. We encourage you to do so at every possible opportunity. An informed and involved community is one who can and will support the school. Parents coming during the day should arrange appointments with you for before, or after school or at one of your conference times and report to the office. Class time is valuable and should not be interrupted if at all possible.

Fall and Spring parent-teacher conferences have been set. Inform parents truthfully of their student's educational status, being as positive as possible. A parent working with you is far better than one working against you. Encourage home help and explain to the parents ways they can help. Be sure to inform parents of the Parent Portal. Make the parent-teacher meeting one of the good things that could happen for that student.

Room Appearance

Neatness and cleanliness are important phases of education and should be stressed. Teaching students to be responsible for their desks, chairs, and area is important. Neat, clean rooms and bright bulletin boards help create a good learning atmosphere. The following are a few points to consider in the care of classrooms:

- A. Students shall not, without supervision, be allowed to operate classroom hardware such as drapes, shades or heaters.
- B. When arranging your room, take into consideration custodians who will be cleaning it.
- C. Students shall be responsible for maintaining a clean work surface for the next student using the area.
- D. Students must keep their feet off walls, tables, heaters, etc. in the classroom and halls.
- E. If you have a need for a classroom repair or see an issue in the building, please fill out a maintenance request form completed via the link on the District Homepage (Staff Tab).
- F. In order to prevent further deterioration of the painted walls, finished wooden doors, cupboards, and the desks and chairs, please ensure that glue or tape (masking or cellophane) is not used on these surfaces. Students should not place stickers on student desks, chairs, or books. Poster putty may be used to display posters and student work. If there is a question pertaining to this, please contact your building administrator.
- G. Breakfast in the Classroom requires teachers to be diligent in reporting spills, stains, etc. in a timely manner--please call the kitchen asap so we can clean up any spills.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Course Outlines/Welcome Letters (K-7) and Course Syllabi (8-12)

To establish initial contact with parents and set high expectations, it is imperative that teachers have a good school-to-home communication plan. Therefore, all teachers need to have a **principal-approved** course outline/syllabus given to all students at the start of the school year during Open House or during the first week of school. Students should be encouraged to share this course outline/syllabus with parents. Parents should have the opportunity to acknowledge receipt with a signature line.

Information should include how and when you can best be reached by parents for conferencing, clear expectations and grading procedures, how specific feedback will be given, how mastery shall be demonstrated, what success looks like, the scope of what will be covered in the course, and materials needed, grading policy and retest policy, etc. The best closure for affective behavior issues or academic deficiencies for the student-teacher and/or parent-teacher is one that is immediate and non-threatening--a good welcome letter or syllabus lets both parties know how to facilitate this process.

Reporting to Parents

Parents need to be informed on their student's progress. Informing or reporting to parents/guardians needs to be honest, accurate and as positive as possible. Try to start and end a report, either verbal or written, on a positive note. Confine the reporting to pertinent information, not "should haves", "should be-s", or "well last year's teacher..." **Communication instances and methods should be documented and up-to-date. Parent contacts need to be shared with the building principal.**

*Lesson Plans

Lesson plans are needed to provide the teacher a precise, continued and flowing direction of instruction easily understood and followed, and to provide a substitute with explicit instructions for lessons he/she is to provide that day in your absence. They should be written with these two points in mind. Lesson plans need to align with and include the Common Core State Standard/state content expectations as well as connect to the developed curriculum map for the course. **Lesson plans need to be turned in by Monday morning of each week or as requested.** Lesson planning is also one of the four domains evaluated when teacher evaluations are conducted and vital to the observer/evaluator when looking at the other domains. The Common Core and/or state content expectation and lesson objective or target should be listed on the board at the beginning of each lesson with the purpose of the lesson stated prior to instruction.

*Format of lesson plans will be determined by building principals.

Substitute Folder

A substitute folder will be provided to you at the beginning of the year. Keep the folder near your classroom computer or in a conspicuous location for access by substitute teachers. Please maintain and include all pertinent information that could be of use or assistance to your substitutes: class lists; how to take attendance; seating chart information; bell-to-bell, daily lesson plan(s) along with any specific directions that you might have. The goal is to help the substitute be successful. [Sometimes, we get short-handed and we commandeer substitutes to go to rooms they were not originally assigned to.]

Additionally, teachers are directed to maintain an “emergency” lesson plan (complete with any copies or materials needed). **This will be on file in the office by the end of the first week of school.** This will ensure that a substitute has something to fall back on in case of an unforeseen emergency. Once an “emergency” lesson plan is used, place a new lesson plan in your substitute folder.

Grading/Powerschool

Ensure you are remaining consistent with your building grading plan per district policy and within the confines of the parameters as agreed to for grading scale/system. Grade books are maintained electronically through Powerschool and viewed from home by parents and students through the Parent and Student portals. Be consistent. Keep records that could be interpreted by a person other than you and keep records up to date: **Grades are expected to be updated weekly by 10 a.m. on Monday in order to expedite grade checks, eligibility for athletics, and contact with the home.**

Report Cards, Progress Reports, Special Education Goal & Objective Updates

Elementary

Report cards are issued three times a year. Progress reports will be sent out periodically. Student grades are to be entered into the system by requested dates. Progress reports and report cards cannot be sent out until all grades are received from the teachers.

Middle School

Report cards are issued three times a year. Progress reports are sent home mid first trimester, mid second trimester and mid third trimester. Student grades are to be entered into the system by requested dates. Accurate progress reports and report cards cannot be sent out until all grades are received from the teachers.

High School

Report cards are issued at the end of the first semester and the end of the second semester. Progress reports are sent home mid first semester and mid second semester. Student grades are to be entered into the system by requested dates. Progress reports and report cards cannot be sent out until all grades are received from the teachers.

Special Education

Reporting on goals and objectives occur at the same time as general education peers as directed by the special education supervisor.

Public Relations

Though educating students is our prime responsibility, it is also vitally important that all staff members act as public relations representatives and promote our school and program to the public. Remember that at all times we all represent our District to the community. We should do everything possible to communicate with parents and the general public and to make them feel welcome at school. We should try to convey to the public that neither the home nor the school can do the whole job of educating children, that this must be a cooperative effort and that we are ready and willing to work with them in any possible way. Attending school and community events, creating opportunities for parent/community involvement and working school events all promote this message. **Please document your involvement on the Teacher Activity Worksheet on the Standards For Success evaluation system.**

End of Year Check Out/Summer

At the end of the school year, building principals will disseminate a summer check out list. Teachers are expected to return the completed check out sheet per the principal's instructions and understand that summer is the district's time to clean, move, and perform maintenance. Teachers should know that district classrooms may not always be locked during summer, especially during periods of cleaning. Personal items should be taken home or otherwise made secure. Teachers should contact their building principal for procedures and protocols for coming into the building during summer.

STUDENT MANAGEMENT/RECORDS

Emergencies

Fire/Tornado/Intruder Drills and Responses

These drills will be held throughout the school year. Teachers have the responsibility for directing students inside the classroom and to designated areas inside and outside the school and for supervising them during the drill or actual emergency response. It is vital that all staff members demonstrate attitudes that impress students with the seriousness of these drills and responses. Please familiarize yourself with the proper procedure per the drill or response in accordance with the information found in your Teacher Resources Folder.

*Emergency Procedures Protocol, Red/Green Card, and Class Lists should be kept by the room phone.

Security

Each teacher is responsible for the safety of his/her classroom and equipment. Do not leave your keys out in the open, give your keys to students, or give your access code or computer password to students. All exterior doors should be locked at all times.

At the end of each day:

1. Lock up all small equipment.
2. Lock and check all windows, files, desks, cabinets and doors.
3. Turn off all computers, electrical appliances, and lights.
4. Classroom doors **MUST BE** locked at all times, including during instruction.
5. Teachers should never leave unsupervised students in their classrooms.

Attendance

Attendance should be taken and entered onto Powerschool within the first ten minutes of the class start or AM/PM attendance. The attendance policy outlined in the student handbook will be adhered to. Students may not miss more than eleven (11) days of school before facing possible loss of credit and/or possible truancy referral.

Class Dismissal

Teachers dismiss their classes, not the bells. Holding a class in order to instill proper classroom behaviors and expectations is the right of the teacher. If a test or quiz goes long, or the class is late coming in from outside or a field trip, please use email to notify the rest of the staff.

Conducting Class Outside/Open Windows & Doors

Yes, you can take your classes outside. Going outside is encouraged. Time it so students are returning to the building in time to make their next class/passing time. You are encouraged to prepare students a day ahead of

time by announcing your intentions. “Hey, tomorrow, if it’s nice again like they’re saying, then we’re going to the football stadium for class in the bleachers.

Bring the outdoors inside: teachers are encouraged to introduce fresh air into the classroom. Please be vigilant and watch the door and open windows during class and pull them into a locked position whenever you leave the room.

***If you leave your classroom with students, please notify the secretary and have your cell phone and/or walkie talkie with you so the office can reach you.**

Movies/Videos

Movies and videos should serve an educational purpose. They should be used sparingly and as part of your curriculum. Share the relevance with the students in your classroom. When there is a shared rationale, students tend to pay attention to the material differently—use writing prompts, pause and ask questions much as you would with written material: pre-, during-, and post- strategies offer a more engaged learner. When planning on showing a movie, first secure building principal approval and include it in your written lesson plan.

Student Discipline-Student Code of Conduct-Student Behavior

It is expected that teachers will have control over their class in order to promote the best learning atmosphere possible. Teachers will be expected to handle discipline problems that interrupt the instructional environment and the atmosphere of the classroom to the best of their ability and **in accordance with their building level referral process**. It is also the teacher’s responsibility to communicate behavior concerns to the parents. Please document these contacts. It is when repeated offenses occur and the student is not self-disciplined or willing to take that responsibility or when the safety of other people is endangered or harm is coming to personal or school property, that the office becomes involved in the situation. Above the Line systemic discipline calls for closure between teacher and student and the quicker and more personal the better.

Systemic Discipline:

1. Staff and administration will develop a working understanding of what a fully functioning classroom looks like (above the line), what behaviors are disruptive or otherwise interfere with the learning process that should result in teacher intervention with an offer to students “to fix or accept the consequences” (below the line), and what behaviors constitute an “auto send” to the administrator (below the bottom line). That understanding will be posted in the classroom.
2. Referral process:
 - a. When a student is sent to the office, the teacher will complete the referral form found on the District webpage under staff forms immediately--or at the direction of the administrator--and send it to appropriate personnel. This will give an option for a simple “time out” or an indication of the concern. Please be realistic and fair when completing the form. True closure happens upon the return of the student to the classroom.
 - b. Call the office if the student refuses to leave the room and/or creates a threat to others. Understand and adhere to the rules of Seclusion and Restraint in dealing with all students.
 - c. Student handbooks will be followed for each building.

Rules of thumb in dealing with discipline:

1. Never become emotionally charged when handling discipline: emotion obscures logic.
2. Invite students to help you establish classroom agreements and procedures.
3. Carefully plan lessons that use the entire period and then constantly monitor the effectiveness of your teaching. Engaging students is the key to any classroom management plan.
4. Greet students at the door as they come into your classroom—be interested in their lives and they will be interested in you and in each other!
5. Never use physical means to deal with discipline of students unless there is the chance for imminent harm from one student to himself/herself, another student, or from a student to a teacher.
6. Make constant contacts with parents of undisciplined students to seek their support.
7. Never use humiliation or sarcasm in addressing student behavior. Tackle the behavior, not the person.
8. Consider the administration a partner in dealing with inappropriate behaviors.
9. Establish and maintain an end-of-hour departure routine: exit slips, teacher-at-door verbal check for final understanding, other.

It is expected that staff will distinguish between academic concerns (slipping grades, missing tests, missing papers, forgetting book, lack of homework, not prepared, etc.) and behaviors that disrupt or otherwise interfere with the learning process of others in the room (shouting out loud, arguing with the teacher, striking others, ripping textbook pages, etc.). Academic behaviors must be addressed through positive modeling, parent contact, eligibility, help desk, and/or counseling/social work referral; remember, affective behaviors that interfere with learning are screams for help from the student and indicate anger or apathy—either way, a trip to the office and a parent contact is necessary. Rule of thumb is: if the environment is disrupted so that you cannot teach, reach out to the office for help and remove the student from the setting (hallway, office, or other designated area).

Passes

Every attempt must be made to account for all students each period of the day that students are assigned to teachers. It is not acceptable to find a student wandering the halls without a pass. Teachers should create a “perma-pass” with their name on it for student use and a sign out chart. One bathroom pass at a time is sufficient. **Passes should not be given the first or last 10 minutes of class** if at all possible. Students who are not in the classroom cannot obtain the learning objective. **All student cell phones should be left in the student’s locker or confiscated by the classroom teacher.**

Assemblies

Student assemblies will be held from time to time during the year. Students are to remain in classrooms until dismissed and are not to leave the building during an assembly. Teachers with classrooms next to exits are asked to monitor those exits when students are released to go to the assembly. Staff are asked to help supervise the student body during the assembly by locating among the students.

Illness/Injury

1. Illness or injury of any kind is to be handled through the main office.
2. If a student becomes ill or is injured while under a teacher’s supervision, that teacher has the responsibility of having that student escorted to the office. The office will notify Parents/guardians. If the student cannot be escorted or moved, make contacting the office/administration a priority and get the student the necessary medical attention immediately.

3. If an injury occurs, the **person supervising the student when the incident occurred** will complete a student injury/accident form.
4. Because teachers are in a unique position to observe students on a daily basis, any questionable condition—physical, emotional, or otherwise—should be reported to the counselor or the office.

Supervision of Students

Teachers, faculty advisors, and coaches are responsible for the supervision of students involved with extracurricular activities both at school and away from the district. Do not leave classrooms or students unsupervised. At the conclusion of a practice, meeting, trip, dance or other activity outside the school day, stay with the students until all students have been picked up by their parents.

Students should not be sent on errands outside of the building without first securing permission from the office. No staff member shall excuse any pupil from school prior to the end of the school day, or into any person's custody, without the direct prior approval and knowledge of the principal.

Hallway and general student supervision is the responsibility of the entire staff. Hallway supervision includes supervision of restrooms.

***It is the absolute responsibility of the classroom teacher to post and notify the office of any change in class meeting location.**

Confidential Information/Student Records

Information related to a student's academic or school life should be held in confidence and used only for evaluation, planning for the student, or reporting to the parent. This is covered in depth by the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA).

Confidential records include documents relating to social, emotional and psychological evaluations of students. Such materials are on file in the principal's office. You will be made aware of any confidential records filed on your students. This, as all information, should be protected from public knowledge.

****Teachers must document when they access a student's CA-60.***

TEACHER PROCEDURES

Building/Facility Use

All requests for school-sponsored activities must be approved by the building principal and athletic director (if at the MS/HS complex). Building Use request forms must be filed with the Transportation & Operations Secretary. Records will be maintained on the school activity calendar on the school home page.

Meetings

Staff meetings, committee and group meetings will be scheduled ahead of time, as much as is possible. A list of these meetings will be given to you or posted. All staff members are to attend these meetings unless their absence is necessary due to emergencies or illness—please inform an administrator if something comes up.

Building Committees and Duties

To be established by the staff and principal as the need arises and in accordance with the teacher contract.

Field Trips

Field trips provide a vital out-of-school experience and a connection to what is happening in the classroom. They should be planned and used as an educationally sound experience coordinated with pre- and post-activities in the classroom. Trips of an extended nature will require School Board approval.

Teachers will need to put in writing their request for field trips and transportation. This needs to be **submitted to the principal at least two school weeks prior to the anticipated trip; in the case of an extended trip, this may need to be up to one month prior**. Failure to do so may result in cancellation or non-approval of your trip. Whenever a teacher desires to take their class from the building, the principal must be informed prior to leaving and provided with an anticipated time of return. Please send field trip information to the office. **Parent permission forms and pre-arranged absence forms must be on file for a student to attend. Any parent chaperoning must have an approved background check on file. A background check expires at the end of every school year, so each year parents must complete a new one.**

Teachers need to fill out their own transportation request and arrange for a substitute if needed.

Requisitions/Budget

Ordering supplies and equipment: Each unit in the school shall be given a budget for the school year, which the unit or grade level must manage. If you would like to make a purchase, work with your unit or grade level to secure the funds you will need for the purchase, then submit a filled out requisition form to the building principal for approval and processing. If you are in a grade level where the budget is shared, all unit members must signify their agreement by signing the back of the requisition form.

*Requisition & Process Forms can be found on the District Webpage.

Fundraising & Class/Activity Accounting

A centralized accounting system is used for all class and club money.

Fundraising: Any fundraising activity by any staff member, school sponsored club or activity must have prior approval of the administration. Fundraising request forms are available on the District Webpage. Fund raising activities will not be scheduled in close proximity to each other. Fundraising requests must be in clear compliance with the Smart Snacks legislation.

Money from Activities: Club and Activity money is to be accounted for using receipts and kept in the appropriate account. **All money is to be turned into the central office in the high school, with the appropriate accounting form, within 48 hours of receipt by the teacher, coach, or advisor.** If an amount is required for activities, a request form should be filled out and submitted to the ISD Business Office.

At the Elementary level, appropriate forms must be filled out and given to the building secretary.

Forms

All forms required through policy and practice are available to staff on the District Webpage under "Staff".

Professional Dress

Teachers, volunteers, and support personnel (paraprofessionals) are expected to project a professional image that sets positive dress and grooming examples for students and shall adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with an effective learning environment. All employees are expected to dress in a

professional manner. The rule of thumb is business casual. However, from time to time, Pine River Area Schools raises money for community needs by having “Jean Weeks.” If in doubt, consult with the building principal.

Teacher Evaluation

Standards For Success is the system (platform) used for the purpose of completing each element of teacher evaluation. The teacher evaluation rubric is based on the Danielson model (2007). The process for teacher evaluation is as follows:

1. Teachers complete the self-evaluation, due ***October 1, 2022***.
2. Teachers determine goals, one linked to the school improvement plan and one additional professional goal and complete the form by ***October 2, 2021***.
3. Observations/walk-throughs completed.
4. Formal evaluations to be completed by ***June 30, 2023***.

Attachment A: Pine River Area Schools’ Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Procedures.

Attachment B: willSub Employee Quick Reference