



# Employee Handbook

Prepared by the Office of Human Resources  
September 2024

*An Equal Opportunity Employer-Educator*

## **Disclaimer**

This information has been compiled to summarize several policies, rules and regulations of the school district as well as provide information useful to employees. Please feel free to contact Human Resources if you have suggestions for making this material more useful.

Bemidji Area Schools reserves the right to improve, modify, rescind, or add to any of the policies, procedures, benefits, or practices described in this handbook, without prior notice. The contents of this handbook are for information only and should in no way be construed to be a contract of employment.

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

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**The School Board Policies referred to in the employee handbook can be found at <https://www.bemidji.k12.mn.us/>**

Bullying (SBR 700-90-4)  
Confidentiality (SBR 900-20-1, 900-20-1R)  
Controversial Issues (SBR 400-30-5)  
Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace (SBR 900-10-4)  
Emergency Conditions (SBR 900-10-2)  
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Student Misbehavior (SBR 700-40-2)  
Transporting Students (SBR 500-10-1)  
Travel (SBR 500-20-1R)  
Weapons (SBR 900-30-1)

**Activity Passes:**

Employees of Bemidji Area Schools may use their District issued Photo Identification Badge (ID Badge) to attend District sponsored athletic and arts activities. Employees will be required to pay the gate/ticket fee for the activity if they are unable to present their ID Badge to the event staff. Student and adult passes are available for purchase at the Bemidji High School Activities Office. Activity passes and employee identification badges are not valid for admission to Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) tournament activities.

**Alarms:**

Security alarms are in operation at all District work sites. Activation of an alarm will result in a response by local law enforcement and a charge to the District. Employees should not attempt to access a District facility unless the alarm system has been turned off or they have received instruction on proper use of the alarm system.

**Annuities - 403(b) and Minnesota Deferred Compensation Plan:**

State and federal regulations enable qualified District employees to make contributions to authorized plans for retirement investments. Contributions to a 403(b) or Minnesota Deferred Compensation plan accounts are handled through payroll deduction and can be cancelled at any time.

Please refer to your collective bargaining agreement or terms and conditions of employment to see if you are eligible for a District match! **It is the employee's responsibility to complete a match form to add, change or increase their match amount.**

Employees who are interested in a tax sheltered annuity program should contact the Business Office or check the District Forms in the Staff Google Portal for a current list of participating providers. Additional information about the Minnesota Deferred Compensation Plan can be found online at [www.msrs.state.mn.us](http://www.msrs.state.mn.us).

**Attendance:**

Our primary responsibility is to provide educational services for our students. Employees are expected to report to their assigned work location on time each scheduled work day. Any time an employee is absent or late, students are negatively impacted and an extra burden is placed on other District staff.

Employees **must** notify their supervisor as soon as possible of any absence. Designated employees must also record the absence using the automated substitute system to ensure a qualified substitute is obtained. A substitute request should be made as soon as the need for leave is known.

**Bullying:**

The District and every employee have a responsibility to prevent and respond to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other inappropriate behavior. All employees should be alert to possible situations, circumstances or events that might constitute acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other inappropriate behavior and report the incident(s) to the appropriate supervisor or building administrator. Please refer to School Board Policy 700-90-4: *Bullying Prohibition Policy* for more information.

**Co-Curricular Program:**

Bemidji Area Schools has long been known for high quality co-curricular programs. All employees are encouraged to support our co-curricular programs. Employees with an interest in coaching a co-curricular activity should watch District email and the Job Opportunities page of the District website for information about applying for available positions.

**Community Education:**

The District has an extensive Community Education program with many opportunities for employees. Employees are encouraged to contact the Community Education Office for more information. Community Education programs include: Early Childhood, Kid's & Co. After School Childcare, Youth Programs, Aquatics, and Adult Enrichment Classes.

**Confidentiality:**

During the course of your employment with Bemidji Area Schools, you may have access to confidential information about students and/or staff. Please respect the privacy and dignity of our students and **only** discuss student issues with staff members who need to know the information. In accordance with state and federal laws, employees may not disclose confidential or private information without appropriate authorization. Employees who are asked to provide private or confidential information should contact their supervisor prior to responding to any request.

Please refer to School Board Policy 900-20-1: *Public and Private Personnel Data*; and, School Board Policy 900-20-1R: *Public Access to Government Data – Administrative Procedures*. (See [www.bemidji.k12.mn.us](http://www.bemidji.k12.mn.us), select District and Board of Education for Procedures)

**Continuation of Benefits - COBRA:**

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) requires that most employers sponsoring group health plans offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health insurance coverage (called “continuation coverage”) at group rates in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end. If you are covered by the District group health insurance plan and lose coverage because of a reduction in hours or the termination of your employment, whether voluntary or involuntary (except for reasons of gross misconduct), you have the right to elect continuation coverage. For further details concerning continuation of benefits, please contact the District Payroll Office.

**Controversial Issues:**

Staff may not use class time to express an individual viewpoint or deal with matters unrelated to the course of study or regular school program. This does not preclude the inclusion of controversial subjects pertinent to the course. Staff should employ appropriate parent notification when controversial subjects are to be dealt with in the classroom. Please refer to School Board Policy 400-30-5: *Instruction – Controversial Issues*.

**Curriculum:**

Outcomes have been established for every course taught by Bemidji Area Schools. Information about Curriculum Outcomes and Minnesota Academic Standards are available on the District website.

Many employees also have children enrolled in one or more of our schools. Whenever questions arise about the educational needs of their students, employees are encouraged to talk to their students’ teachers and/or building administrators. Questions about the content of courses or test results should be directed to the child’s teacher.

**Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace:**

Board policy establishes that Bemidji Areas Schools shall provide a drug, THC, and alcohol free environment for all students, employees and patrons. No person may possess, distribute or use alcohol, THC, or any illegal drug at school sponsored activities, on school grounds, or in a District vehicle. Please refer to School Board Policy SBR 900-10-4: *Drug and Alcohol-Free School/Workplace Policy* for more information.

**Emergency Closings:**

All employees should monitor local and designated radio and television stations or check the District web page for the latest information regarding emergency conditions. A notification system has been established for all District employees to facilitate timely communication during emergency conditions/closings. All employees are expected to fulfil their notification system responsibilities to ensure the safety of students and staff. Please refer to School Board Policy 900-10-2: *Emergency Closings*, for specific information regarding emergency conditions, late starts, and cancellations. Employees may also register for “skylert” notifications via text message and/or voice call.

**Employee Assistance Program:**

The Bemidji Area Schools Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all District employees and members of their household. The EAP is provided through NuVantage Employee Resource and is designed to provide help to employees, their household family members and dependent children living outside the home, when they are experiencing marital and family issues; mental or emotional problems; financial difficulty; alcohol or chemical abuse/misuse; legal problems; or other concerns.

NuVantage Employee Resource services are free and completely confidential. EAP services can be accessed by contacting NuVantage at 800-577-4727. You can find out more about NuVantage Employee Resource by going to their website at [www.nuvantage.org](http://www.nuvantage.org).

**Employee Discipline Policy:**

Corrective action may be implemented by supervisors to address employee behavior or performance that disrupts the activities and goals of the District. Corrective action may also be initiated to address violations of work rules, violations of District policies, or other acts that undermine public trust in the employee or the District. Refer to School Board Policy 200-70-1: *Employee Discipline*; and School Board Policy 200-70-1R: *Employee Discipline – Administrative Procedures* for more information.

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):**

Bemidji Area Schools is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all. No applicant or employee shall be subjected to discrimination based on race, creed, religion, age, national origin, color, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or political convictions. The Director of Human Resources is the designated EEO officer for the District and will investigate all complaints of discrimination.

Bemidji Area Schools also complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Employees who require reasonable accommodation should contact the Director of Human Resources. The school district may request appropriate medical documentation of any disability forming the basis for an accommodation request.

Persons hired by the District are selected on the basis of ability, aptitude, experience, education and desire.

**Equipment Use Policy:**

District personnel may not use school equipment or facilities during or after school hours for personal gain or convenience. Please refer to School Board Policy SBR 600-20-1: *Equipment Transfer and Use*, for more information.

**Expectation of Privacy:**

Employees should be aware that District property may be entered and searched/reviewed by authorized District personnel at any time, without notice. This includes, but is not limited to: classrooms, offices, desks, file cabinets, lockers, vehicles, voice mail, e-mail, district provided cell phones, and computers. Please refer to School Board Policy 200-90-1: *Expectations of Privacy*, for more information.

**Facilities:**

District facilities exist primarily for the education of our students. The District welcomes and encourages the public use of school facilities. Please refer to School Board Policy 600-30-1: *Facility Use Policy*, for information regarding the appropriate use and scheduling of District facilities.

**Flexible Spending Accounts:**

The District maintains a flexible spending plan to which eligible employees may contribute pre-tax dollars from their pay to cover unreimbursed medical/dental expenses, child care expenses, and/or health insurance premiums. Please contact the Payroll Manager in the District Business Office for more information and enrollment form.

**Fundraising:**

All fundraising activities are governed by School Board policy. Employees who have fundraising responsibilities must be familiar with this policy and follow it carefully. Please refer to School Board Policy 300-90-3: *Student Activity Accounting*, for specific information.

**Harassment, Violence and Discrimination:**

Bemidji Area Schools is committed to maintaining work and educational environments that are free from harassment, violence and discrimination. All employees should familiarize themselves with School Board Policy 200-90-9: *Harassment and Violence*. Anyone found in violation of these policies will be subject to corrective action.

**Hazing Prohibition:**

Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district and are prohibited at all times. Please refer to School Board Policy 700-90-1: *Hazing Prohibition* for more information.

**Identification Badges:**

All staff will be issued a school district identification badge by the District Office. Your identification badge is an important part of your work attire as it lets students, parents, co-workers, vendors, and the general public know who you are. Ensuring that everyone who enters our schools is identified is an important part of providing a secure environment for students and staff.

Employees must wear their District issued identification badge any time they are at work. Please refer to School Board Policy 600-60-1: *Staff Photo Identification Policy* for more information. Lost or stolen identification badges should be reported to the building/department supervisor immediately.

**Insurance:**

Health, dental, long-term disability, long term care, cancer insurance and life insurance are available based on the provisions of the applicable bargaining unit's fringe benefit package. Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement or terms and conditions of employment summary to find out what is available for you.

The District health insurance plans are provided through Sanford Health Plan. Questions regarding health insurance should be made through the following toll free number: 1-800-752-5863.

The district's dental coverage is provided through Delta Dental. Contact Delta Dental at 1-800-448-3815 for any questions relating to dental coverage.

The District contact for insurance questions and benefit change deadlines is the Payroll Manager who is located in the District Business Office.

**Internet Acceptable Use Policy:**

Bemidji Area Schools recognizes the power of the Internet to support and enrich instruction. This medium allows access to thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards and other resources while exchanging information with people around the world.

Major policy points include the following staff expectations:

1. I will monitor student use of the Internet so it is always used for instructional purposes.
2. I will use the Internet on school properties to access information related to the duties I perform.
3. Other than occasional use, I will not use the Internet to promote my personal agenda.  
(Example: excessive use of E-mail or utilize sites strictly for personal use.)
4. I will not use the Internet to promote personal business.
5. I will not use the Internet for illegal purposes.



Failure to adhere to this policy will result in corrective action. Please refer to School Board Policy 600-50-1: *School Properties – Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy*.

### **Leave Requests (General):**

Employees who must be away from their assigned work location, other than for scheduled lunch periods and breaks, must obtain appropriate supervisory approval and complete a leave request. Leave request forms are available from every supervisor in the school district. When an employee has been away from work due to illness, they are required to complete a leave request form within **one** work day of their return to work. Failure to report an absence in a timely manner may result in a denial of the leave request and/or corrective action. Absences related to an on the job injury must be reported on a leave form within 24 hours of the absence.

### **Leave Requests (Specific):**

**PCI Personal Illness:** This type of leave is used for illness or injury (not absences resulting from a work related accident/injury). It has also been approved for absences related to employee assistance program participation.

**FI Family Illness:** This type of leave is used when an employee has been absent due to a serious illness or injury of an immediate family member (refer to your employment agreement for definition of “immediate family”). Employees who are gone three or more days must provide Human Resources with documentation from the family member’s health care provider.

**DA Doctor/Dentist:** This type of leave is used for employee absences for doctor or dentist appointments.

**B Bereavement-Sick Leave:** Employees may be eligible to use sick leave in the event of a death in the immediate family. Please refer to your work agreement for more information.

**M Maternity/Medical Leave:** This type of leave is for an extended absence. As soon as an employee knows that he or she will need a medical or childbearing leave of absence, the employee should submit a written document to the Director of Human Resources requesting a leave. The employee should indicate the period of time the he or she is unable to perform his or her regular duties and the reason for the requesting leave. In most cases, a Certification of Health Care Provider (CHCP) form should be completed by the employee’s health care provider. CHCP forms are available from Human Resources.

**JI On-the-Job Injury:** This leave is used for absences resulting from an on the job accident/injury. On-the-job injuries **must** be reported to the building administrator as soon as possible.

**FLEX Flexible Leave:** A school term, noncertified employee who has completed the probationary period shall be eligible for one day of flexible leave per school year deductible from accumulated sick leave.

**SPD Special Leave:** Teachers who have completed one year of teaching service and who make their request at least three working days in advance may use this leave. These days can be used in half or full-day increments. The rate for a substitute teacher will be deducted from their payroll check.

**VAH Vacation Leave:** Various employee groups are eligible for vacation. (Refer to your employment agreement.)

**NDV Nonduty Days:** Employees in the principal’s group, nonlicensed group and support services group may work duty days. They are required to work a specific number of days between July 1 and June 30 and may use nonduty days in accordance with established procedures.

**PED Personal Leave:** Teachers are granted two days (prorated for part-time teachers) of Personal Leave. Requests for Personal Leave must be submitted at least three working days in advance and can only be used in half or full-day increments.

**ABD Association Leave BEA:** The BEA is granted 20 days of absence to carry out association duties.

**ASD Association Leave BEA Superintendent Discretion:** The BEA is granted 15 days to carry out the business which the district, in its sole discretion, determines will be of benefit to the district.

**B Bereavement Leave:** Refer to your collective bargaining agreement or terms and conditions of employment for specific information.

**EC Extra Curricular:** This type of leave is for coaches, advisors and other supervisors who take students to school sponsored events.

**JD Jury Duty/Subpoena:** When an employee is selected for jury duty, a leave request with this reason checked must be completed. Upon completion of jury duty time, the amount paid for serving must be turned in the Human Resource

Office in order to claim regular pay for the time missed. When a person is released from Jury Duty for the day, **the employee must report to their work station if their employment day has not ended.**

**MIL Military:** This leave is used when required to be absent due to military service obligations. The applicable orders must be attached. (Maximum of 15 days)

**O Other:** This leave is used only when advised to do so by the Human Resource Office.

**P Professional/Job Related:** This leave is used by employees who are away from the work place for District business.

**SD Salary Deduct:** When an employee requires time off for reasons that do not meet any of the specific requirement for other leaves, a leave with full salary deduction may be requested. Please refer to School Board Policy 200-90-12: *Other Absence*.

#### **Licensure/Certification:**

Each employee who is required to be licensed or certified must maintain a current license or certificate with Human Resources. Individuals are expected to know the date of expiration of their license/certificate and meet the requirements for relicensure or certification in a timely manner in order to remain employed in that capacity.

Renewal of a license for all licensed personnel requires evidence of completion of required clock hours during each relicensure period from July 1 of the year of issuance to June 30 of the year of expiration. Clock hours are verified and granted by the District Continuing Education Committee. Licensed staff should affiliate with the Continuing Education Committee as soon as the first continuing license is issued. Please contact Human Resources with any questions regarding continuing education requirements.

#### **Maltreatment of Minors:**

Minnesota Statute §626.566, *Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors*, makes it mandatory for people working with children to report suspected neglect or physical and/or sexual abuse of children. Failure to do so could have serious consequences for the employee. The key to remember is, report, do not investigate. Please refer to School Board Policy 700-90-3: *Maltreatment of Minors* and School Board Policy 700-90-3R: *Student Personnel – Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse Administrative Procedures*.

##### General Rules for Reporting Maltreatment of Minors

1. *If you have contact with or have responsibility for children in your work, you are mandated to report any suspected neglect or physical and/or sexual abuse.*
2. *You must report suspected neglect or abuse if you have knowledge about the abuse or if you have reasonable cause to believe a child has been neglected or abused in the past three years.*
3. *You must report your suspicions personally.*
4. *You must report immediately.*
5. *Do not attempt to investigate the case on your own.*
6. *Do not contact the child's parents on your own.*
7. *Oral reports must be followed by written report within 72 hours*
8. *Reports can be made to either the police department or the Beltrami County Social Services department.*
9. *You will be immune from civil liability if you report in good faith.*
10. *If you fail to report, you can be criminally prosecuted.*

#### **Mandatory Reporter:**

Any person who works with students in Bemidji Area Schools; whether a paid employee or a volunteer; has a legal responsibility for protecting all students from sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect. Failure to fulfill these responsibilities can result in disciplinary action and/or criminal penalties.

#### **Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, and Neglect**

In general, when someone has touched the genital area, sexual abuse has occurred. Physical abuse is oftentimes observable. Neglect or the withholding of nurture or basic needs is more difficult to ascertain.

### ***Mandatory Reporting***

There is a very long and complex law on abuse. Part of the law **requires** anyone who works with children to be a mandatory reporter. This includes **all** paid employees (teachers, paraprofessionals, and school staff) as well as volunteers. This is an area where you are required to use your **own best common sense**. If, in your judgment, there is the potential that a student in your care has been abused, you must report the incident to social services and/or law enforcement immediately.

### ***How to Report***

If you suspect abuse or neglect you should call the applicable County Human Services Department or Law Enforcement Agency immediately.

|   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| Beltrami County Human Services                      | 218-333-8300                 |
| Beltrami County Law Enforcement & Police Department | 218-333-9111                 |
| Hubbard County Human Services                       | 877-450-1451 or 218-732-1451 |
| Red Lake Nation Human Services                      | 218-679-2122                 |
| Cass Lake Human Services                            | 218-335-0035                 |
| Clearwater County Human Services                    | 800-245-6064 or 218-694-6164 |

### ***Reporting Specifics***

If you suspect abuse:

1. Call County Human Services and/or Law Enforcement immediately. Minnesota statute mandates this call be made within 24 hours of knowledge of the incident.
2. Within 72 hours you must follow your verbal report with a written report. Send written report to the appropriate County Human Services agency.
3. **Do not investigate** – wait for someone in authority to ask you to do something.
  4. Do not talk about the case.
  5. Keep good documentation of what you have observed.
  6. Keep a copy of the written report in a locked cabinet.
  7. Staff who have first-hand knowledge are required to write and submit the report.
8. It is acceptable to report incidents of suspected abuse or neglect to your supervisor. However, it does not meet the requirement of the law. Mandatory reporters are immune from any legal action. This has been made part of the law to allow students maximum protection and freedom to grow up in a society free from abuse.

### ***Knows or Has Reason to Believe***

These words come from the statute. How do you know or have reason to believe? People who physically or sexually abuse children or neglect their basic needs come from all walks of life. You cannot look at someone and make a judgment about their potential to abuse students. Experience tells us it is better to look at the characteristics of those who have the potential to be abused. Assume anyone can be an abuser.

The key word is vulnerability. Some children are more vulnerable than others. When students are placed in vulnerable positions they are potential victims: the last child to get off the bus; the coach who takes students home after practice; the only female in a work group. These are examples of things to watch. Homes with risk factors are also areas to watch. If a student is struggling with life issues, he or she could be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

### ***Summary***

Students can be physically abused. Marks left on their bodies are generally evidence of this type of abuse. Sexual abuse is generally identified by listening to student complaints as well as listening to their friends. Neglect is withholding life's basic needs from a child. This too will be observed by closely watching students and listening to what they say.

Students who are abused or neglected can be affected for life. You may be the only person who stands between them having a normal childhood and an abnormal one. This makes your responsibility one of the most important ones you will ever experience.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call:

|                                      |                         |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bemidji Area Schools Human Resources | 218-333-3100 ext. 31111 |
| District School Nurse                | 218-333-3115 ext. 37209 |
| High School Social Worker            | 218-444-1600 ext. 63310 |
| Middle School Social Worker          | 218-333-3215 ext. 58181 |
| Gene Dillon Social Worker            | 218-333-3400 ext. 49408 |
| Elementary School Social Worker      | 218-333-3115 ext. 37208 |

**Mentoring:**

Newly selected members of the teaching staff of Bemidji Area Schools will be assigned a teacher to work closely with them for the first year of employment. They should feel free to ask this person for help and guidance at any time. The assigned teacher should have regular contacts with the new teacher.

**Money:**

Staff members have occasionally left money in a conspicuous place only to find it gone when they return. If a staff member is responsible for handling school funds and they are stolen, that staff member may be held liable for the funds. Never leave money where it can be easily stolen. Submit all school funds to the appropriate office **at the end of each day**. The school mail is **not** to be used for the transmittal of cash and/or checks unless provisions have been made for special handling.

**Official Bulletin Board:**

There is an official bulletin board at every work site. All bulletins and memorandums relating to school district policy and procedures are posted on the official bulletin board. Employees are encouraged to read these bulletins. All job openings are posted through the District e-mail system.

**Overtime:**

Any hours worked by hourly employees over 40 hours per week may be considered overtime (unless stated differently in the employees working agreement). Overtime will normally be calculated at time and one-half normal base pay. No overtime shall be worked and/or paid **without the prior approval** of your Supervisor. Certain professional, administrative and supervisory personnel are exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

**Payroll:**

Bemidji Area Schools provides direct deposit of your paycheck into your checking or savings account. The school district has made it possible for anyone without a bank account to get one for purposes of receiving direct deposit payroll. Electronic deposits are made on the 15th and the last day of each month. Those persons completing time sheets must submit them to their supervisors at the end of the day on the **10th** and **25th** of each month.

Questions regarding insurance benefits and payroll can be answered by staff in the District Payroll Office. All forms must be completed properly and in a timely manner to avoid any lapse in insurance benefits.

New employees are expected to complete payroll information prior to their first day of employment. Failure to complete required payroll forms may result in a delay of an employee's paycheck.

**Personal Information:**

It is your responsibility to promptly notify the Payroll Office of any changes in your name, mailing address, telephone number or other contact information.

**Personnel Files:**

Every employee has a personnel file maintained by the District. With reasonable advance written notice, you may review your personnel file, but only in the Human Resources Office and in the presence of a member of the office staff. Whenever something is placed in the personnel file, a copy will be made available to the employee. Employees are notified when something is to be placed in their personnel file. Material in the personnel file may be reproduced at the employee's expense.

**Professional Appearance:**

As employees of Bemidji Area Schools, we are judged not only by our professional services, but by our personal appearance. It is the District's expectation that every employee will report to work well-groomed and professionally attired.

**Requisitions, Purchase Orders and Supplies:**

No employee or student shall financially obligate the District without completing a requisition and forwarding it through the appropriate administrative channels for approval by the superintendent or designee. All approved purchases shall be made by the use of an authorized purchase order from the Business Office. The same procedure shall be used when ordering material or supplies on approval basis.

Each work site stores an array of supplies necessary for day-to-day operation. Additional materials and supplies can be requisitioned from the central warehouse. Procedures for supply requisitions can be obtained from your supervisor. (Note: The Warehouse Catalog can be found at <http://www.bemidji.k12.mn.us> under the "Staff" heading.)

**Resignations:**

It is expected that non-licensed staff will provide the district with at least two weeks advanced written notice of resignation. Licensed staff should follow the notification requirements established by Minnesota law and the applicable collective bargaining agreement. The letter should be addressed to the Director of Human Resources with a copy to the immediate supervisor. Upon your separation of employment with Bemidji Area Schools, you must report to your supervisor on your last day of work to return keys, ID badge, and any other district property.

**Safety:**

All employees are expected to work together to develop and maintain a safe work place. The District owes students a safe environment in which to learn. Employees are asked to report any unsafe conditions to the Safety Officer at 333-3149 as soon as these conditions are known.

**School Board:**

Bemidji Area Schools is governed by a six member school board. All are elected for a four year term. The school board establishes policy for the District. Administrators, with the help of all other staff, are employed to carry out this policy. Like any other school patron in the District, employees should feel free to talk to school board members about areas of concern.

**School Board Policy:**

Employees are encouraged to review policies that have been adopted by the School Board. The policies are available on the District website at [www.bemidji.k12.mn.us](http://www.bemidji.k12.mn.us).

**School Calendar:**

The school calendar is approved annually. Staff members are encouraged to be in attendance on every student day during the school year. **Your consistent and reliable attendance is critical to the academic progress of students!**

**School District Mail Service:**

Employees may use the District mail service and electronic mail to communicate with each other. The mail service may not be used for personal or commercial gain.

**Security of School Equipment and Supplies:**

All employees, at one time or another, work with supplies and equipment that may be very costly to replace if lost, stolen or misused. All employees have a responsibility to account for the supplies and equipment issued to them. Borrowing school equipment for personal use is prohibited. Employees who take supplies or use equipment without authorization will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Sexual Harassment:**

If employees feel they have been subjected to sexual harassment, they should report it immediately to their supervisor or the Human Resource Office. The supervisor will work with the Director of Human Resources to investigate the complaint. Sexual harassment is generally defined as unwelcome conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Refer to School Board Policy 200-90-9: *Harassment and Violence*.

**Smoking/Tobacco Use:**

Bemidji School District buildings, grounds and vehicles are tobacco free. Use of tobacco products in any form is not allowed in any District facility, grounds, or vehicle. Refer to School Board Policy 900-10-5: *Tobacco-Free Environment, Possession and Use of Tobacco, Tobacco-Related Devices, and Electronic Delivery Devices; Vaping Awareness and Prevention Instruction Policy* for more detailed information.

**Special Education:**

Special Education provides specialized, adapted instruction for students with unique needs. The Individual Education Plans (IEP) require that a specialized education program be tailored to the students specific needs and strengths. All employees are expected to support instruction to ensure the best possible education for all students and full implementation of the student's IEP.

**Staff Evaluations:**

All staff will be evaluated according to a written plan. Employees are encouraged to talk to their supervisors about the components of this plan. Teachers should refer to School Board Policy 200-10-2: *Teacher Evaluation Policy* and 200-10-2R: *Teacher Evaluation Policy – Administrative Procedure* for more information.

**Student Injuries:**

The most basic expectation of every employee is to protect the safety of all students. Any employee witnessing the injury of a student is to take the following action:

- A. *If trained, perform the necessary first aid or call for someone who can administer appropriate first aid. (There is a health assistant at each school qualified to give first aid. Serious injuries should be referred to the school district nurse at 333-3115 ext. 37209.)*
- B. *Call for medical assistance if it is required.*
- C. *Contact and report to parents or guardians.*
- D. *Complete an accident report.*
- E. *Follow-up as required.*

**A student should never go home with an injury which has not been reported to parents or guardians.**

**Student Behavior:**

It is expected that employees will **never** strike students and that they be restrained only when there is a danger to the student and/or an employee or school patron. Employees who use restraint techniques must be trained in this technique. Employees are encouraged to seek help when they have problems with students. Refer to School Board Policy 700-40-2: *School Discipline Policy* for more information.

A Code of Conduct has been approved for implementation in the District. This Code directs the consequences for student misbehavior. All staff members are encouraged to secure a copy of this document and review the content.

**Transporting Students:**

Staff members who are asked to transport students must be licensed drivers and must complete all requirements for the use of a Type III motor vehicle. In no instance should students be allowed to transport other students. Only school vehicles are to be used to transport students. In general, only licensed school bus drivers will transport students. Other staff members may transport students on approved trips with approved school district vehicles upon completion of appropriate training and a review of their driving record. Refer to School Board Policy 500-10-1: *Student Transportation Safety Policy* for more information.

**Travel:**

When school district employees travel on District business, expenses such as mileage, meals and hotels may be fully or partially reimbursed. It is important to keep receipts related to expenditures and an accurate record of mileage. Employees travelling on District business are encouraged to seek instructions from their immediate supervisor regarding a vehicle request and submission of the travel voucher. All travel must be approved in advance by the appropriate supervisor. Refer to School Board Policy 500-20-1R: *Staff Travel – Administrative Procedures* for more information.

**Weapons:**

No student, employee, volunteer or visitor shall possess, use or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in SBR 900-30-1: *School Weapons Policy*. The District will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public who violates this policy.

**Work Related Injuries:**

The District covers employees for work related injuries through its Workers Compensation carrier. All work related injuries must be reported to the employee's supervisor and to the Administrative Assistant in the Business Office at 333-3100 ext. 31121. An official supervisor's accident report must be completed by the employee and supervisor. Failure to report an injury could result in the rejection of a workers compensation claim. Prior approval is necessary before visiting a doctor. The district has an active back to work policy. The District will work with the injured employee to identify alternate or modified work that is both productive and safe. It is expected that all employees will cooperate fully in facilitating the timely return-to-work of injured workers. It is further expected that all injured workers will cooperate by accepting alternate or modified work that is within their skills and abilities. If you have questions regarding workers compensation, please contact the Administrative Assistant in the Business Office.

The District allows employees to augment worker's compensation benefits with personal sick leave in order to receive 100% of regular pay. In order to receive this benefit, a leave form must be completed and approved by your supervisor.

## **A Message to All Employees**

The city of Bemidji and surrounding area is beautiful and pristine. This beauty comes from our people as well as the environment. We are a culturally diverse community and therefore, reflect this diversity in our school district. We believe this presents us with some unique opportunities.

We all know the school is supposed to be the showplace of a society. We are supposed to model the very best of our democratic society. In keeping with this goal, our district is a “free zone” with respect to any form of harassment or discrimination. This means that we are asking all who work here to learn as much as they can about the cultures of other people and be tolerant and civil to all people.

A free zone implies that although we cannot control the behavior of our students or staff outside the school we can make rules about how they behave while on school properties. In keeping with this free zone idea we have two very strong policies making it a violation to either sexually harass another or discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender or disability. A violation of these policies will most certainly result in a disciplinary response.

We hope that all of our employees are motivated to be civil to other people because it is the right thing to do and not out of fear of violating a school district policy.

We don't ask any of our employees to be perfect. We know that is impossible. All of us must deal with our bias and prejudices on a daily basis. Once we admit that they exist we can deal with them.

If you work in the school district I would like to ask that you take advantage of the opportunities that we have to learn about other people and cultures.

No matter what position you hold in the school district, I want to remind you that young people are our business. These young people have developing attitudes with respect to diversity. We cannot control what is done at home or the community to promote the proper attitudes with respect to diversity. We can make an impact at school. As an employee of the school district, I would encourage you to do whatever is in your power to make sure our students are inculcated with the proper attitudes about this very important subject. Best wishes as you do your part as an employee of the school district to positively interact with all of your colleagues as well as the students we serve.

From the Office of Human Resources  
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