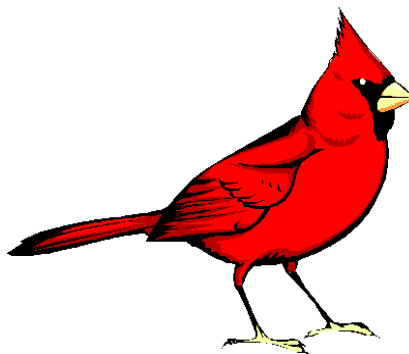


# SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK

2024-2025



MASON COUNTY EASTERN SCHOOLS

Custer, Michigan

**CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT  
OF  
SUPPORT STAFF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK  
AND  
INTERNET ACCEPTABLE  
USER AGREEMENT**

I have received a copy of the 2024-2025 Support Staff Employee Handbook.

I understand that I am expected to read and understand this handbook and its contents, and that, if I have questions, they are to be directed to the Superintendent.

I further understand that there are numerous policies adopted by the Board of Education and rules established by the administration that are my responsibility to review. I understand that they are available for review at the Superintendent's office and that any questions can be directed to the Superintendent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature



## **Mason County Eastern Schools Internet Acceptable User Agreement**

Internet access is available to students and teachers at the Mason County Eastern School District ("MCE"). We are pleased to bring this connection to Mason County Eastern Schools and believe the service offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence at Mason County Eastern Schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, communication, and research.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Teachers and students will have access to the following:

- (1) Electronic mail (e-mail) communication;
- (2) Information from research institutions;
- (3) Software and graphics of all types for school use;
- (4) Many university Library Catalogs , the Library of Congress, and ERIC, a large collection of relevant information to educators and students;
- (5) Discussion groups on a wide range of topics;
- (6) The World Wide Web, the newest and most exciting access tool on the Internet.
- (7) Social networking when appropriate for educational purposes

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of a public school. Mason County Eastern School District has taken steps to restrict access to controversial issues and materials.

Mason County Eastern Schools believe the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network is an asset to the District's educational goals. This policy may be revised from time to time as necessary.

### **Internet Conditions of Use and Etiquette**

(1) The use of your account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the laws, rules and regulations of Mason County Eastern Schools, the State of Michigan and the Federal Government (including the Children's Internet Protection Act).

The district will make its best effort to install server and/or client software which will restrict access to most inappropriate material.

The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

- (A) To access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material;

(B) To transmit obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, harassing, or threatening language or suggestions;

(C) To violate any local, state, or federal law;

(D) To access another person's materials, information, or files without permission;

(E) To violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another person or organization without permission; and

(F) To engage in commercial, political, or profit-making enterprises. Notify your teacher or principal immediately if you accidentally encounter or obtain materials in violation of this policy.

(2) Privileges- The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. An inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of those privileges and other appropriate consequences, including discipline.

All users must obtain prior approval before receiving an account. Each student and teacher who receives an account will be instructed in the proper use of the network. The system administrators may close an account at any time as required.

The administration, faculty, and staff of Mason County Eastern School District may request the system administrators deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

(3) Accounts will be terminated upon your departure from Mason County Eastern Schools.

(4) Network Etiquette and Use- you are expected to abide by acceptable usage rules and by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette (Etiquette). These include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Be polite. Do not get abusive or use profane language or vulgarities.
- Do not engage in personal attacks, cyberbullying or harassment of another person.
- Do not reveal personal information about yourself or others such as address, phone number, or credit card information, and do not agree to meet with someone you have met online without your parent's approval and participation.
- Watch humor and sarcasm when using e-mail. The meaning of messages can be easily misconstrued.
- You should consider all communication and information accessible via the network to be public property.
- Do not post private information about another person.

- All downloads will be saved to network drives or removable storage, not on the hard drive.
- All users must obtain prior approval from the Internet administrator before joining a list server.
- Do not respond to unsolicited online contact from anyone.

REMEMBER: Mason County Eastern Schools may review and monitor your use of district computers, including, but not limited to, the internet sites you access and e-mail you send and receive. You should have no expectation of privacy when using district computers.

(5) Responsibilities- The user is responsible for all materials received via his/her user account and accepts responsibility for keeping all prohibited material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the center network, equipment, or software from entering the school via the network.

The user will not plagiarize or illegally download works (including music) he/she finds on the Internet and will respect the rights of copyright owners.

(6) Security- If you identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify the Mason County Eastern Schools Internet Administrators immediately. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

(7) Vandalism- Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and discipline to the offering party. Vandalism is defined as any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user. Internet

Administrators' decisions to discontinue use of privileges will be final in every attempt of vandalism.

Mason County Eastern Schools makes no warranties of any kind. Whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. MCE will not be responsible for delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors omissions. Mason County Eastern Schools specifically denies any responsibilities for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Any misuse of passwords, abusive or inappropriate conduct on the Internet, or any other inappropriate action while connected to the Internet, in Mason County Eastern Schools discretion, may lead to disciplinary action.

## **Education, Supervision and Monitoring**

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Mason County Eastern Schools staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

The Technology Coordinator or designated representatives will provide age appropriate training for students who use the Mason County Eastern School's Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote Mason County Eastern Schools commitment to:

- a. The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the Mason County Eastern Schools Internet Safety Policy;
- b. Student safety with regard to:
  - i. safety on the Internet;
  - ii. appropriate behavior while on online, on social networking Web sites, and in chat rooms; and
  - iii. cyberbullying awareness and response.
- c. Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA").

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of the District's acceptable use policies.

By signing below, the user certifies that they have read the Mason County Eastern Schools Policy on District-Provided Access to Electronic Information Services and Networks and agree to follow the policy and this Acceptable User Agreement. Each party further agrees to contact the Mason County Eastern Schools Internet Administrator if he or she has questions about the District's Policy or Acceptable Use Agreement.

I understand and will abide by the above Internet Use Agreement. I further understand that violation of the Agreement may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, Mason County Eastern Schools may revoke any access privileges, and I may be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

User's Full Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

User's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD  
STUDENTS 5517.01

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying / aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation

## CONTENTS

ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING DAILY ABSENCES	1
INTRODUCTION	1
PROFESSIONALISM IN THE WORK PLACE	1
SICK LEAVE DAYS AND UNPAID LEAVES	2
INSURANCE	3
INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS	4
OVERTIME, EXTRA HOURS AND SCHEDULES	4
BREAK AND LUNCH PERIODS	5
DISCIPLINARY PROVISIONS	5
PROBATIONARY PERIOD	5
PAID HOLIDAYS	6
UNIFORMS	6
VACANCIES	6
PAYROLL AND PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS	7
VACATION	7
COMPLAINT PROCEDURE	8
SECTION 504 POLICY	8

## **INTRODUCTION**

The provisions outlined in this handbook are not intended to serve as a contract.

The job classifications covered in this handbook include those regularly employed as Teacher Aides, Library/Technology Aide, Elementary Library Aid, Bus Drivers, Custodians/Maintenance, Maintenance/Custodian Supervisor, Foodservice, Foodservice Director, Elementary Secretary, Junior High/High School Secretary, Attendance Secretary, and excludes substitutes and temporary employees.

It is the Employee's responsibility to familiarize himself/herself with the Board of Education Policy manual and rules established by the administration which are available for review in the Superintendent's office.

The contents of this handbook may only be changed by the Board of Education.

## **PROFESSIONALISM IN THE WORK PLACE**

As an employee of Mason County Eastern Schools, it is the expectation that confidentiality and professionalism be practiced in all school-related matters.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) clearly requires that educational issues involving a student and/or his/her family are guaranteed strict confidentiality. You are encouraged to work closely with your immediate supervisor in an effort to always remain in compliance with FERPA. Please refrain from discussions within the office, hallways and staff rooms that may be in violation of the act.

Professional issues, concerns, complaints, clarifications, etc. will occur regularly within our school setting. When this happens, please talk to your immediate supervisor for the information that you are seeking. Often, you will be involved in committee work that involves preliminary discussions. It is expected that these discussions remain within the confines of the committee. Inappropriate information leads to rumors that can disrupt the working environment. Incorrect information or rumors spread by school employees are considered as "truth" to people outside the school setting. Incorrect information passed on to our parents/guardians and community can harm the reputation of individual staff members or the district as a whole.

## **ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING DAILY ABSENCES**

Attendance is a vital factor in maintaining continuity of services to the community. As much advanced notice as possible is expected in the event an Employee is going to be absent on a given day. Unless a specific time line for certain types of absences is required in this handbook (i.e. personal business and vacation time, etc.), a 24 hour advance notice is expected to be given through the process to the Employee's supervisor.

Good attendance is essential to the district's success and is among the factors considered in making assignments, in filling vacancies and in making decisions about continued employment.

The district may require verification from physicians or others as it relates to absences where over utilization or misuse is expected or when other conditions warrant.

### **SICK LEAVE DAYS AND UNPAID LEAVES**

- A. An Employee shall earn paid sick leave at the rate of one (1) day per full month worked. Unused days will accumulate to a maximum of 108 days. The appropriate annual number of days will be credited at the start of the work year. Days utilized prior to the time the Employee would have otherwise earned the credit, will result in payroll adjustments in the event the Employee separates employment or is on unpaid leave.

Paid sick leave may be utilized for:

1. Illness or disability of the Employee.
2. Up to three (3) days per year may be used for illness of the Employee's child residing at home.

In the instance of hospital confinement or other similar critical and emergency care situations of a spouse or other family members, the Superintendent may evaluate the situation on a case-by-case basis and approve additional days. The Superintendent will conduct an examination of the attendance record of the Employee in reviewing the request.

3. In the event the Employee is absent from work due to a compensable injury under the Worker's Compensation Act, the Employee's individual paid leave day accumulation will be deducted on a prorated basis to the extent permitted by law to offset the differences between regular daily pay and the amount provided under the Act. An Employee will not accrue paid leave time, under the provision, during the time prorated sick leave is utilized.

After the completion of at least ten (10) years of continuous service to the district, an Employee retiring under the provisions of the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System will be paid for unused sick leave in accordance with the following schedule.

0-50 days	- None
51-100 days	- \$15.00/day
101 +	- \$20.00/day

Any Employee hired or rehired after January 1, 2002, will not be compensated for unused sick leave days.

- B. In the event an Employee is directed to report for jury duty or selection during working hours, the Employee will be paid the difference between jury pay and his/her regular pay. On days where the Employee is directed to report for jury duty and is then released, the Employee must return to work unless excused by his/her supervisor.

In the event an Employee is required to testify in court on behalf of the Board in conjunction with a case to his/her employment, the employee will not suffer a loss of pay.

- C. Two (2) days will be allowed in the instance of the death of a member of the immediate family. Immediate family will be defined as spouse, child, sibling, parent or grandparent.
- D. An Employee will be allowed up to two (2) personal business days per year to attend to business which is not possible to conduct outside of work hours. Personal business days are not by way of example to be used for vacation or recreational pursuits.

At least seven (7) calendar days notice is expected unless the Employee can demonstrate notice that far in advance was not feasible under the circumstances. These days will not be deducted from sick leave and any days remaining at the end of the year will be added to the Employee's accumulated sick leave.

- E. Requests for unpaid days off and extended unpaid leaves of absences must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, with a copy to the supervisor. The request must be submitted well in advance and must include the date(s) in question and the specific reason for requesting the leave.

The final determination for approving unpaid days off rests with the Superintendent.

The final determination for approving other unpaid leave requests rests with the Board of Education.

- F. Partial years of service will result in a proration of paid leave days under Section A and D.

### **INSURANCE**

- A. The following positions are eligible for MESSA HSA.

- Food Service Director
  - Maintenance/Custodian Supervisor
  - Maintenance/Custodian
  - Elementary Secretary/District Administrative Assistant
  - Administrative Receptionist
  - Middle School/High School Secretary
  - Middle School/High School Guidance Secretary

An Employee who qualifies for MESSA HSA, but does not elect MESSA HSA , will be eligible for dental and vision plus \$500 per month under a qualified cafeteria plan.

The district will pay twelve (12) months premium for the above personnel.

- B. If hired before July 1, 2000, Teacher Aide, Food Service, and Bus Driver employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least thirty-five (35) hours per week will be eligible for premium payments up to full family health. The district will pay ten (10) months of premiums for health care.

An employee who is eligible for health insurance and who does not elect to use it or an Employee who is regularly scheduled to work at least twenty (20) hours per week, will be eligible for \$50.00 per month in cash under the district's IRS Section 125 Plan.

An Employee hired or re-hired after January 1, 2002, must work at least thirty-five (35) hours to be eligible for the \$50.00 per month option contribution.

- C. All eligible support staff will contribute through payroll deduction 10% of the cost of the monthly premium.

The specific insurance plans and underwriters are determined by the district and may, on occasion, be changed.

- D. An Employee working in more than one classification may not combine hours of separate positions for benefit purposes. If an Employee was assigned in more than one classification on December 31, 2001, the hours may continue to be combined for benefit purposes provided the Employee remains continuously employed in those specific positions.

### **OVERTIME, EXTRA HOURS AND SCHEDULES**

- A. An Employee must physically work forty (40) hours in a week to be eligible for overtime pay. Paid time off work will not be counted for purposes of computing the required forty (40) hours. Overtime must be specifically authorized by a supervisor before the hours are worked.
- B. The schedule of work hours, the work year and specific assignments are established by the supervisor, with final approval by the Superintendent.

No hours may be worked outside of the established schedule without the prior approval of the Employee's supervisor.

- C. To the extent that layoffs, reductions in hours or reductions in work weeks are implemented, the process will be determined by the Superintendent. The process will assure the "best qualified" employees will be retained. Laid off employees are encouraged to reapply for vacancies as they arise in the future.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS**

On days in which student attendance is cancelled due to inclement weather, an Employee (excluding full time Custodian/Maintenance) will not be required to report to work and will be paid for the day provided the day is considered by the State of Michigan to constitute an official student attendance day for purposes of receiving State Aid.

Current legislation allows up to thirty (30) hours of inclement weather or other extenuating circumstances that can be counted toward student attendance. After thirty (30) hours, any cancellation hours must be made up. Employees will be required to report to work on make-up days.

### **BREAK AND LUNCH PERIODS**

- A. An Employee working six and one-half (6.5) or more hours per day will be entitled to a thirty (30) minute unpaid lunch break. The building principals may reduce the unpaid lunch period for aides to facilitate operational needs or to require an Employee to work during lunch, in which case the time will be paid.

An Employee working four (4) or more hours per day will be entitled to one (1) fifteen (15) minute paid break period. An Employee working seven (7) or more hours per day will be entitled to a second fifteen (15) minute paid break period.

Specific break and duration of lunch times will be established by the Employee's supervisor.

- B. This section will not apply to bus drivers.

### **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

- A. The first ninety (90) calendar days worked will be considered a probationary period. Days/time missed during this period will serve to extend the probationary period.

A probationary employee is considered employed "at-will" and may be dismissed with or without cause at the discretion of the Superintendent.

- B. A probationary employee will not be eligible for paid leave time, paid holidays, vacation time or insurance benefits.

In those instances where the probationary employee does not have insurance benefits or where the probationary employee's insurance benefits, with a prior employer, will expire during the probationary period, the probationary employee's insurance benefits will be initiated.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROVISIONS**

- A. Following the completion of the probationary period, an Employee will not be disciplined for reasons which are arbitrary or capricious.

Other disciplinary measures may be taken by either the Superintendent or the Employee's supervisor subject to prior approval of the Superintendent. An Employee is subject to termination by the Superintendent.

- B. Any Employee who is 1) under the influence of, 2) in possession of or 3) who attempts to sell alcohol or controlled substances will be terminated.

Bus drivers or others who are required to have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) will be terminated for the following in conjunction with alcohol and controlled substances:

1. Refusing to submit to testing
2. Testing positive

### **UNIFORMS**

Uniforms will be provided for full-time Custodian/Maintenance employees.

### **VACANCIES**

- A. When the district determines a vacancy exists, it will be published for consideration of both internal and external candidates. It is the policy of the Board of Education to assure that the best qualified candidates are selected to fill vacancies. Work experience related to the position, attendance, punctuality, interpersonal skills, relationships with others, work performance and other matters will be taken into consideration in filling vacancies.

The final decision regarding internal transfers rests with the administration. The Superintendent will make the final recommendation on newly hired employees to the Board of Education for approval.

- B. An Employee may occupy more than one position within the district provided the schedules do not conflict or create an overtime payment requirement.

### **PAID HOLIDAYS**

- A. A ten (10) month school year Employee will receive paid holidays in accordance with the following schedule.

Teacher Aides	-Thanksgiving Day
Elementary Library Aide	Christmas Day
Library/ Technology Aide	New Year's Eve Day ( <i>may be</i>
Food Service Staff	<i>exchanged with Christmas Eve Day</i>
Food Service Director	<i>with permission of Superintendent)</i>
Bus Drivers	New Year's Day
Middle School/High School Secretary	Memorial Day
Middle School/High School Guidance Secretary	



- B. A twelve (12) month school year Employee will receive paid holidays in accordance with the following schedule.

Custodians/Maintenance	-July 4
Maintenance/Custodian Supervisor	Labor Day
Elementary Secretary/	Thanksgiving Day
District Admin. Asst.	Friday after Thanksgiving
Administrative Receptionist	Christmas Day
	New Year's Eve Day <i>(may be exchanged with Christmas Eve Day with permission of Superintendent)</i>
	New Year's Day
	Memorial Day

- C. In order to receive holiday pay, an Employee must have worked the last entire scheduled work day before and after the holiday unless he/she is on approved paid leave or paid vacation time.

### **VACATION**

- A. An Employee, in a position scheduled for fifty-two (52) weeks per year, will be credited on their anniversary date with vacation time in accordance with the following schedule.

1 through third anniversary date	- 10 days
4 through sixth anniversary date	- 15 days
7 year and after	- 20 days

The days credited will be pro-rated for partial years of service due to unpaid leaves.

- B. Requests for paid vacations must be submitted at least seven (7) calendar days in advance unless amended by the Employee's supervisor.
- C. Vacation requests are subject to the approval of the Employee's supervisor and Superintendent.
- D. Vacation days must be used for each fiscal/contract year prior to July 1 of the subsequent fiscal/contract year, with the exception of twenty (20) days that may be kept as carry-over to be used in July and August. No more than twenty (20) days may be used as carry-over. Carry-over days must be used by August 31 of that subsequent fiscal/contract year. Payment will not be made for unused days.

### **PAYROLL AND PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

- A. An Employee may participate through payroll deduction in tax sheltered annuities, credit unions or other options available through the district's business office.

- B. The hourly pay schedules for all positions are determined annually by the Board of Education and will be distributed following approval by the Board.

In those instances where a classification pay schedule has a step(s), an Employee will advance on the schedule on his/her anniversary date provided the Employee has completed at least eighty percent (80%) of the scheduled work hours for the year ending on the date of his/her anniversary.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Complaints regarding the application of this handbook are to be directed to the Employee's supervisor within ten (10) calendar days of the incident upon which the complaint is based. If an Employee is not satisfied following the discussion with his/her supervisor, he/she may contact the Superintendent's office. The Superintendent's determination on complaints is final.

### **SECTION 504 POLICY**

It is the intent of the Board of Education to provide a free and appropriate public education to each student with a disability within its jurisdiction regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.

It is further the intent of the district to ensure that each student with a disability within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, is defined, evaluated, and provided with reasonable accommodations and adaptations to ensure appropriate educational services.

The superintendent will appoint a Section 504 coordinator who will serve as administrator for the policy within the district.