Welcome to Zeeland Public Schools, we are happy to have you as a staff member in our school district. Our goal is to prepare students for a lifetime of learning and show them that they are safe, valued and loved.

This handbook has been prepared to help answer questions you may have about Zeeland Public Schools’ policies and procedures. We realize that it is a lot of information, but it is all very valuable.

We are proud of our district and the community has a great deal of confidence in our school system. The quality service we provide to the children of our community is a result of our valued staff.

Please feel free to contact the Human Resources office at (616) 748-3014 if you have any questions that are not addressed in the handbook.

Thank you for your service to the students of Zeeland Public Schools.

This handbook is applicable to all support staff employees and does not constitute an employment contract between the school district and its employees. The provisions contained in this handbook supersede any and all contrary representations that have been made either by the school district or you.

Updated October 2018
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NEOLA WEBSITE

Throughout the Support Staff Handbook, you will find links to the Neola website at neola.com/zeeland-mi/. Neola is a company that assists school districts track Board Policy and ensure they are in line with changes to state law. Not all items covered in this handbook relate to Board Policy, but when they do, you will find a link to the Neola website and the number of the Board Policy you would look up for additional information. The structure of the Neola website does not allow us to link directly to each individual Board Policy, but if you know the number of the policy referenced in the handbook, you can find it very easily with just a couple of clicks.

EMPLOYMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

The Board shall approve the employment, and also, when not covered by the terms of a negotiated, collectively-bargained agreement, fix the compensation, and establish the term of employment for each support staff member employed by this District. Individuals employed in the following categories shall be considered members of support staff – secretaries, aides, paraprofessionals, custodial/maintenance/grounds, cooks, food service, bus drivers, as well as both technology office and recreation office staff.

All support staff are subject to criminal history record check. Such approval shall be given only to those candidates for employment recommended by the Superintendent. Prior to hiring an applicant, the Superintendent shall obtain a signed Consent to Obtain Records Form and shall obtain from the applicant’s current or immediately-previous employer any records, including the applicant’s personnel file, relating to unprofessional conduct which the applicant engaged. Any such records are to be reviewed prior to a recommendation for employment and may be disclosed to those individuals directly involved in evaluating the applicant’s qualifications.

Relatives of Board members may be employed by the Board, provided the Board member does not participate in any way in the discussion or vote on the employment when conflict of interest is involved. Applications for employment will not be accepted from any current District Board member. If a Board member wishes to apply for a position, his or her resignation must be accepted by the Board prior to submitting an application.

[Based on BOE Policy 4120]

CREATING A POSITION

The Board of Education recognizes the need to establish positions which, when filled by competent, qualified support staff, will assist the District in achieving the education goals set by the Board. The District employs only U.S. Citizens and other lawfully authorized to work in the United States. The Superintendent shall verify all new employees and substitutes right to work in the United States according to the Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. The Board reserves the right to fix and prescribe the duties
to be performed by all personnel, to create new positions, to specify the number of persons within each job category and set the initial salary for a new position. The Board may create a new position or increase the number of support staff in an existing position. The Board delegates the right to fix and prescribe the duties of support staff to the Superintendent.

[Based on BOE Policy 4111]

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The maintenance of unusually high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and professional conduct by the School District's Board members, employees, officers, and agents is essential to ensure the proper performance of school business as well as to earn and keep public confidence in the School District. To accomplish this, the Board of Education has adopted guidelines which apply to all District employees, officers, and agents, including members of the Board, to assure that conflicts of interest do not occur. These guidelines are not intended to be all inclusive, nor to substitute for good judgement on the part of all employees, officers, and agents.

For this full policy, including a detailed list of possible conflicts of interest, see BOE Policy 4110 on the Neola website.

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

Every new support staff employee shall be placed on a 90 calendar day probationary period. Benefits such as paid holidays, sick days, snow days, business days, and bereavement leave will become effective after completion of the 90 calendar day probationary period, for those who qualify for such benefits.

Employees who qualify for insurance benefits are given health insurance, dental insurance and LTD coverage on the first of the month on the next month following employment.

Employees who have transferred from one department and/or building to another within the district are not required to complete another 90-day probationary period.

**EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of implementing a program of support employee evaluations for the purpose of promoting individual job performance and improving services to students.

The goals of the Board’s evaluation plan for support staff are:

A. to improve and reinforce the skills, attitude, and abilities which enable a support employee to be effective in achieving assigned job goals;

B. to identify and remedy weaknesses which prevent a support employee from achieving the goals of assigned duties.
The structure of the evaluation plan shall:

A. group support staff into position classes based upon similarities of duties, responsibilities, and qualifications; the evaluation process shall be similar for all classes of support staff;

B. provide a procedure for:
   1. identifying and commending effective performance;
   2. counseling and assisting support staff where improvement is desired;
   3. releasing the ineffective support employee when counseling and assistance fail to produce effective performance.

[Based on BOE Policy 4220]

**STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE**

Support staff members may be confronted with situations which, if handled incorrectly, could result in liability to the school and personal liability to the staff member.

It is the responsibility of the school leader to prepare administrative guidelines to ensure the maintenance of the following standards:

A. Each support staff member shall report immediately to the principal any accident or safety hazard detected by the staff member.

B. Each support staff member shall immediately report to the principal any knowledge of threats or violence by students.

C. A support staff member shall not send students on any personal errands.

D. A support staff member shall not associate with students at any time in manner in which gives the appearance of impropriety, including, but not limited to, the creation or participation in any situation or activity which could be considered abusive or sexually suggestive or involve illegal substances such as tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.

   This provision should not be construed as precluding a support staff member from associating with students in private for legitimate or proper reasons. However, dating, romantic and/or sexual relationships with students, regardless of their age and regardless of consent are absolutely prohibited, unless the staff member and student are legally married.

E. A support staff member shall not transport students in a private vehicle without the approval of the principal.
F. A student shall not be required to perform work or services that may be detrimental to their health.

G. Staff members shall only engage in electronic communication with students via email, testing, social media and/or online networking media, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, MySpace, Skype, blogs, etc., when such communication is directly related to curricular matters or co-curricular/extra-curricular events or activities. Staff members will notify the principal when using these technologies.

H. Staff members are prohibited from electronically transmitting any personally identifiable image of a student(s), including video, photographs, streaming video, etc. via email, text message or through the use of social media and/or online networking media, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Skype, blogs, etc., unless such transmission has been made as part of a preapproved curricular matter or co-curricular/extra-curricular event or activity such as a school-sponsored publication or production in accordance with Policy 5722.

Most information concerning a child in school, other than directory information described in Policy 8330, is confidential under federal and state laws. Any staff member who shares confidential information with another person not authorized to receive the information may be subject to discipline or civil liability. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, grades, behavior, family background, and alleged child abuse.

[Based on BOE Policy 4213]

SICK LEAVE

Sick leave may be used for sickness, accident or disability of self or if needed to care for an immediate family member, such as a spouse or a child. Sick leave to care for extended family may be approved by supervisor.

Five prorated sick days will be provided to all less than full-time (30 hours per week) employees after 90 days of probation. Employees who work less than 15 hours per week do not receive sick days.

All full-time, school year employees (30 hours or more) will receive one sick day per month capping at nine sick days per year after 90 days of probation. All drivers with at least four runs will receive one sick day per month capping at nine sick days per year.

All full-time, full-year employees will be given one sick day per month capping at twelve per year after 90 days of probation.

All support staff employees receiving sick days will be allowed to accumulate up to 60 days.

When a full-time employee reduces their hours to part-time status, their sick bank time is reduced to reflect their part-time status (sick bank time is reduced but the maximum of 60 earned days will remain).
VACATION POLICY

Vacation benefits apply to full-time (40 hours)/full-year (52 weeks) employees. Zeeland Public Schools encourages the use of vacation days during those times of year that are scheduled student vacation periods. However, if the following restrictions can be met, administration may grant the employee vacation time during the time school is in session:

1. Time off request is given to the supervisor in advance of vacation.

2. Vacation cannot be taken during heavy workload periods as identified in each individual building or department (such as parent-teacher conferences, etc.).

3. If conflict exists due to multiple requests for the same time period, resolution will be made at the discretion of the supervisor.

To assure quality of service to students, staff, and community, all vacation requests must be adequately covered by either qualified substitutes or qualified in-house employees. The supervisor must approve all vacation time. Should denial be given, an explanation will be given at the time of denial.

Vacation time will be given after the 90 day probation period is complete. Employees may schedule vacation earned as of July 1 at the end of the school year in June. The vacation allotment is as follows:

Fulltime, full-year employees:

2 weeks after 90 day probation period 4 weeks after 15 years
3 weeks after 7 years 5 weeks after 25 years

If a fulltime, full-year support staff employee starts later than July 1, vacation time will be prorated using the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th># of days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in July or August</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>in September</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>in October</td>
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<td>in November</td>
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<td>in December</td>
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<td>in January</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>in February</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>in March</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in April</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in May</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in June</td>
<td>0</td>
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Example:

If a person is hired in February of 20XX, 4 days of vacation will be available after the 90 day probation period is complete. On July 1, 20XX, 10 days of vacation will be added.

No more than one year of vacation credit may be carried over into the next year.

♦ If a part-time employee moves to full-time/full year employment, vacation time shall accrue immediately. The district may consider past years of service in allocating vacation.
  - Example: If a part time employee moves to full time employment in February of 20XX they will be given 4 vacation days immediately and 10 days will be added as of July 1 of 20XX, that same year.
♦ If a full-time employee goes to part-time status, vacation time is paid out on the next pay period after part-time status begins.
♦ If a full time/full year employee transfers to different full time/full year position the vacation continues to accrue.
♦ If an employee voluntarily leaves employment with Zeeland Publics Schools, and provides the district with adequate notice to find a replacement, unused vacation time is paid out. If the employee later returns to full time/full year employment, vacation benefits will begin as a new employee.

**PAID HOLIDAYS**

Support staff will be paid holiday pay equal to the amount of hours normally worked each day. Sickness or absence immediately before and after shall not exclude the employee from holiday pay.

The following paid holidays apply to full-time, full-year employees after 90 days of probation:

January 1, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, day after Thanksgiving, half day before Christmas, Christmas

If July 4, Christmas, or January 1 is on a Tuesday, employees will have both Monday and Tuesday as a paid holiday. If July 4, Christmas, or January 1 is on a Thursday, employees will have both Thursday and Friday as a paid holiday.

The following paid holidays apply to school year or full year employees scheduled to work 30 or more hours per week and bus drivers who have a regular run each day after 90 days of probation:

January 1, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving Day, day after Thanksgiving, half day before Christmas and Christmas. July 4th and Labor Day are paid holidays when the employee is working their regular schedule on that date.
PERSONAL DAYS

Three Personal Days are provided for the support staff employees who work 30 or more hours per week to conduct personal business of a nature that cannot be handled other than the regular business day.

Personal Days must be scheduled at least two days in advance, except in case of emergency, and approved by your direct supervisor. It is understood and agreed that no such day shall be scheduled on the work day immediately before or after a holiday or vacation period unless approved by the supervisor.

While there is no formal limit regarding the number of Personal Days that can be approved in any one building at a given time, Personal Days will only be approved if a quality substitute can be found or if other arrangements can be made that the absence will not come at the detriment to students.

If the Personal Days are not used, they will be added to the employee’s accumulated sick leave.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Sick leave may be used for the funeral of immediate family members or of close associates, such as a close friend or neighbor. In the event there is an unfortunate death and the employee is out of sick days, vacation, personal, or unpaid days may be used with approval from your supervisor.

FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE (“FMLA”)

Note: A Family & Medical Leave Act leave of absence must be accompanied by medical certification from your health care provider. If you need to request a FMLA leave of absence, please contact the Human Resources office as soon as possible so that the proper paperwork can be put in place.

In accordance with Federal law, the Board of Education shall provide up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid FMLA leave in any twelve (12) month period to eligible classified staff members for the following reasons:

A. the birth of a child and/or the care of a newborn child within one (1) year of the child's birth;

B. the placement of a child with the staff member by way of adoption or foster care and/or to care for the child within one (1) year of the child's arrival;

C. the staff member is needed to care for a spouse, parent or dependent child if such individual has a serious health condition; or

D. the staff member's own serious health condition prevents them from performing the functions of their position.
For additional information regarding Family & Medical Leaves of Absence, see BOE Policy 4430.01 on the Neola website.

**MILITARY LEAVE**

The Board of Education provides military leave, reemployment, and other rights as established by the Federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and state law. To qualify:

A. the employee (or an appropriate officer in the uniformed service in which the employee’s military service is performed) gave advance written or verbal notice of their military duty unless excused;

B. the cumulative length of all periods of military service with the employer do not exceed five (5) years, except as provided under state or federal statute;

C. the employee timely reports to work after the period of military service ends;

D. the employee has not separated from service with a disqualifying or other honorable conditions.

The Superintendent shall post notices of employee’s rights under USERRA at conspicuous locations within the district.

Employees may contact the U.S. Department of Labor or the Michigan Department of Military and Veteran’s Affairs to obtain more information regarding their rights under these statutes.

This policy is intended to comply with and explain the service person’s rights under USERRA and state law. To the extent there is any conflict, the USERRA, state law, and their regulations prevail.

[Based on BOE Policy 4437.01]

**UNREQUESTED LEAVES OF ABSENCE / FITNESS FOR DUTY**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to protect students and employees from support staff members who are unable to perform essential job functions with or without accommodation.

The Board may place a support staff member on unrequested leave of absence when the staff member is unable to perform assigned duties in conformance with statute and the negotiated, collectively-bargained agreement with or without accommodation.

If the Superintendent believes the staff member is unable to perform essential job functions, the support staff member will be offered the opportunity for a meeting to discuss these issues.

If a support staff member refuses to attend the meeting, the Board may order the support staff member to submit to an appropriate examination by a physician designated and compensated by the Board.
For additional information regarding unrequested leaves of absence, see BOE Policy 4161 on the Neola website.

**LUNCH & BREAKS**

Employees who work a full day are required to take an unpaid duty-free lunch period of 30 minutes. Although short breaks are not required, breaks of short duration (15 minutes), as approved by the supervisor, are considered paid time.

**OVERTIME COMPENSATION**

It is the expectation of Zeeland Public Schools that all assigned work duties should be completed within the assigned work schedule. During rare periods when overtime work is necessary, it shall be assigned and approved by the supervisor.

Overtime compensation (time and one-half regular rate) will be paid for hours worked in excess of 40 for any scheduled workweek. Hours worked is defined as actual time on the job. Vacation, personal, or sick time will not be considered as hour worked, and will be paid at the regularly assigned hourly rate.

The principal or supervisor may assign flex-time, but it must be used within the same pay period. (Example: Employee works 2 hours late on Tuesday and takes 2 hours off on Friday within the same pay period.)

**LONGEVITY PAY**

A longevity stipend will be paid in December of each year to employees who have completed ten or more years of continuous service to the school district by June 30 to qualify for the stipend the following December and continue to be employed by the school district (inactive employees are not eligible).

Retiring employees eligible for longevity pay at the end of the school year (or prior to December) will receive the longevity stipend at the issuance of the last paycheck. Retired employees will not be eligible for longevity pay if they return on a substitute basis.

Payment is for hours worked the previous school year:

- 0.15 per hour after 10 years
- 0.25 per hour after 15 years
- 0.35 per hour after 20 years

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**

1. Unless notified by the Superintendent or his designee, full-time, full-year support staff must report by two hours after their normal start time, to receive a full day’s pay. If they report at their normal time, the two hours may be applied as flex time to be used within the same pay period. If the Superintendent issues a “code blue” no one should report to work.
2. Bus drivers will receive a minimum two hours pay when a cancellation occurs. Pay will be given only to those drivers scheduled to work on the day of cancellation.

3. All other support staff employees do not report and do not receive pay for the first two full snow days or tornado watch days. In the event there is a third or more full snow days, employees shall be paid for one-half of their regularly scheduled hours.

4. On days when the superintendent issues a “code blue”, all employees will be paid for their regularly scheduled work hours. Any employee, who is requested to work on a “code blue” day, shall receive flex time to be used at the discretion of their direct supervisor.

INSURANCE

Zeeland Public Schools offers insurance coverage, to non-instructional employees as indicated by the position title held, on the first of the month following the date of hire. All full-time (40 hours per week), full-year (52 weeks) employees qualify for insurance benefits. In the case of positions that are not full-time, full-year, insurance is offered on a position-by-position basis, and may be offered as full family or single subscriber only. Check with the Human Resources Office to see if your position qualifies for insurance. Employees who do not qualify for insurance benefits but are scheduled to work a minimum of 30 hours per week during the school year, may purchase medical insurance coverage.

PRIVACY PROTECTIONS OF FULLY INSURED GROUP HEALTH PLANS

The Board of Education provides coverage to eligible employees under fully insured group health plans. The Board has established the following fully insured group health plans:

A. Medical Plan
B. Prescription Drug Plan
C. Dental Plan
D. Vision Plan

The Board acknowledges that these group health plans are required to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule as amended by Title I of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA). Fully insured group health plans generally are exempt from many of the requirements imposed upon self-funded group health plans.

For additional information regarding privacy protections of fully insured group health plans, see BOE Policy 4419.02 on the Neola website.
PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The Board of Education acknowledges that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("ACA") imposes certain obligations upon the District. Such obligations may include the following:

A. The District shall notify new employees of health insurance options available through the Health Insurance Marketplace within fourteen (14) days of the employee’s employment start date.

B. Employees of the District have the option to enroll in the Health Insurance Marketplace. If a full-time employee (as defined by the ACA) of the District enrolls in the Health Insurance Marketplace and receives a subsidy, then the District may be liable for a penalty. In the event that the District concludes that it is fiscally-wide to incur the potential penalty in lieu of providing affordable, minimum value coverage to all full-time employees, the District shall incur the potential penalty.

[Based on BOE Policy 4419.03]

RETIREMENT

For information regarding the Michigan Public Schools Employees Retirement System, you can visit their website at www.michigan.gov/orr.

JURY DUTY

The Board of Education will ensure all support staff employees against loss of pay occasioned by a call to jury duty or if subpoenaed.

Should a support staff employee be called for jury duty, they shall report same to the department supervisor. Support staff employees called for jury duty shall be permitted to serve and will not be penalized in any way for doing so. They will receive full pay if they endorse the check received from the court or pay the amount shown on their record slip less travel allowance.

While on jury duty, support staff employees are required to report daily their schedule for the following day, and must report to work when excused for a day or more or suffer loss of pay.

[Based on BOE Policy 4235]

SUPPORT STAFF DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

Pay for meeting attendance will depend on the type of meeting held and whether attendance for the meeting is mandatory. For informative meetings to disseminate information of mutual benefit to both the employee and the employer the meeting should be scheduled at a convenient time for employee groups, attendance will be optional and will not be paid.
Employees will be paid at their regular rate of pay for attendance at mandatory meetings called by administration. In the case of bus drivers, this will be the driving rate.

When possible, meetings less than one hour should be scheduled prior to or at the end of employee work shifts. It will be the decision of administration whether a meeting is optional or mandatory.

**PAYROLL**

Due to the growing number of Zeeland Public Schools’ employees, it is imperative that the payroll process is followed on a timely basis to allow the payroll specialist to complete the generation of payroll checks, reports and process electronic transfers.

*Unless otherwise directed, all time sheets and pay requests, whether they be paper copies or submitted online, must be in the payroll office no later than Monday noon of the payroll week.*

Direct deposit will take place by Fridays only of the payroll week. For those support staff still receiving paper copies of their paychecks, those will be available on Fridays of payroll weeks as well. Should a holiday or vacation period fall on the Friday of the payroll week, the payroll specialist will notify employees in advance as to the status of paychecks and direct deposit.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, height, weight, marital or family status, genetic information, or any other legally protected characteristic, in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

The Superintendent shall appoint a compliance officer whose responsibility it will be to ensure that Federal and State regulations are complied with and that any inquiries or complaints are dealt with promptly in accordance with law. The Superintendent shall also ensure that proper notice of nondiscrimination for Title II, Title VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is provided to students, their parents, staff members, and the general public. Any sections of the district’s collectively-bargained, negotiated agreements dealing with hiring, promotion, and tenure need to contain a statement of nondiscrimination similar to that in the Board’s statement above. In addition, any gender-specific terms should be eliminated from such contracts.

The District’s Compliance Officers are:

Holly Boehle  
183 W. Roosevelt  
Zeeland, MI 49464  
(616) 748-3022  
hboehle@zps.org

Jon Voss  
183 W. Roosevelt  
Zeeland, MI, 49464  
(616) 748-3015  
jvoss@zps.org
You can reach out to either Jon or Holly with any civil rights or discrimination concerns.

For additional information regarding nondiscrimination, including information on reporting and investigating complaints, see BOE Policy 4122 on the Neola website.

**NONDISCRIMINATION / GENETIC INFORMATION OF THE EMPLOYEE**

The Board of Education prohibits discrimination on the basis of genetic information in all aspects of employment, including hiring, firing, compensation, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, training, fringe benefits, or any other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. The Board also does not limit, segregate, or classify employees in any way that would deprive or tend to deprive them of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect the status of an employee as an employee, based on genetic information. Harassment of a person because of their genetic information is also prohibited. Likewise, retaliation against an employee for engaging in protected activity is prohibited.

For additional information regarding nondiscrimination based on genetic information of the employee, see BOE Policy 4122.02 on the Neola website.

**PROHIBITION AGAINST DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT**

The Board of Education prohibits discrimination against any employee or applicant based upon their disability. As such, the Board will not engage in employment practices or adopt policies that discriminate on the basis of disability, or otherwise discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. The Board further will not limit, segregate or classify applicants or employees in any way that adversely affects their opportunities or status because of disability. Additionally, the Board will not participate in any contractual or other relationships that have the effect of subjecting qualified individuals with disabilities who are applicants or employees to discrimination on the basis of disability.

For additional information regarding potential discrimination against employees with disabilities, including compliance officers and the complaint procedures, see BOE Policy 4123 on the Neola website.

**ANTI-HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain an educational and work environment which is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all school district operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board.
The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against harassment based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, genetic information, or any other unlawful basis, and encourages those within the school district community as well as third parties, who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify the problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

For detailed information about the district’s anti-harassment policies, including definitions, reporting, complaint and investigation procedures, see BOE Policy 4362 on the Neola website.

**CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK**

Before the district hires any employee (full or part-time) or allows any individual under contract to continuously and regularly work in the schools, a criminal history records check shall be conducted in accordance with state law. The cost of the fingerprinting is the responsibility of the employee.

For detailed information regarding criminal history record checks, see BOE Policy 4121 on the Neola website.

**CRIMINAL CONVICTION REVIEW**

In an effort to maintain a safe environment for students, staff and visitors, the district will review the criminal records of those individuals who apply to or work for the district or are contracted to work on a regular and continuous basis in the schools.

For detailed information regarding criminal conviction reviews, see BOE Policy 4121.01 on the Neola website.

**TERMINATION**

Unless otherwise defined by applicable law, any employment relationship with Zeeland Public Schools is of an “at will” nature. This means that the employer may discharge the employee at any time with or without cause. It is further understood that this “at will” employment relationship may not be changed by any written document or by conduct unless such change is specifically acknowledged in writing by an authorized executive of Zeeland Public Schools.

An employee may be suspended or terminated by the Superintendent for violation of policies of the Board of Education or for reasons set forth in law. The Superintendent shall abide by due process and such terms as may be set forth in a collective negotiated agreement if applicable.

Employees and those under contact to work regularly and continuously in the schools, whether part-time or full-time, may not continue employment with the Board if a criminal history records check or other authoritative source reveals a conviction of a “listed” offense under M.C.L.A. 28.722.
Individuals convicted of a non-listed felony may not continue to work unless both the Superintendent and the Board give written approval. Such conviction(s) may subject support staff to discharge or demotion. The State Board of Education will be notified of the report of conviction(s) as required by law.

[Based on BOE Policy 4140]

RESIGNATION

A support staff member may resign by filing a written resignation with the Human Resources Director. As an “at will” employee, you may resign at any time, but for continuity of operations, we request a two-week notice.

The Superintendent is authorized to accept resignations on behalf of the Board.

A resignation, once accepted, may not then be rescinded, except by formal action of the Board.

[Based on BOE Policy 4140]

ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER

The Board of Education believes that the careful placement of support staff within the district is vital to the utilization of qualified and competent support staff for the successful functioning of the district.

Responsibility for the assignment and transfer of support personnel shall be vested in the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services.

[Based on BOE Policy 4130]

STAFF DISCIPLINE

Whenever it becomes necessary to discipline a staff member, the Board of Education directs the Superintendent to utilize the procedures set out below and any related procedures described in the current negotiated agreement, if applicable.

The Superintendent or their designee shall conduct an investigation of any alleged act or mission that could lead to disciplinary action, as appropriate to the situation. The investigation shall include, at a minimum, providing the employee with reasonable notice and the opportunity to respond to the complaint. If the investigation includes a meeting with the employee, prior notice of this meeting shall be provided to the employee for any discipline that may result in a suspension or loss of pay. The meeting shall not proceed without the employee’s designated representative; however, the meeting shall not be unduly delayed to secure the attendance of the preferred representative. The District may substitute another representative from the union to timely process the investigation.

Discipline may include, but is not limited to written warning, written reprimand, suspension (paid or unpaid), discharge, or financial penalty in accordance with Michigan law.
The District does not have to apply discipline in a progressive manner, but, rather, may impose discipline consistent with the seriousness of the staff member’s conduct, as determined by the District. The Board strongly recommends that before a suspension or termination is invoked the Superintendent contact the school attorney. The Board requires that all disciplinary action involving loss of pay, suspension or termination be submitted to the Board for review as soon as possible after the action has been taken. The Superintendent should ascertain whether or not the staff member wishes such a report be made in a closed session of the Board, if a closed session is permitted by the Open Meetings Act.

[Based on BOE Policy 4139]

**EMERGENCY SITUATIONS AT SCHOOLS**

An orange folder clearly marked “Calm, Cautious, in Control” is located in every room in the district near the telephone with information regarding what to do in an emergency situation.

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment. Unfortunately, natural and man-made disasters do occur. Such emergencies are best met by preparedness and planning.

For detailed information regarding emergency situations at school, see BOE Policy 8420 on the Neola website.

**SAFETY STANDARDS**

The Board of Education believes that the employees and students of this district, as well as visitors, are entitled to function in an environment as free from hazards as can reasonably be provided. In this regard and in accordance with law, the Board will provide reasonable and adequate protection to the lives, safety, and health of its employees.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for the maintenance of standards in the facilities to prevent accidents and to minimize their consequences. The Superintendent shall designate an employee who shall conduct periodic audits of health and safety conditions within the facilities of the district in accordance with the Federal OSHA standards adopted by the state, and take appropriate action on any violations thereof to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent shall ascertain that the employees of this district are aware of their rights to a hazard-free environment, that they are properly trained in safety methods, that protective devices and equipment are available to meet safety standards, and that proper rules and records are maintained to meet the requirements of the law.

In the event an inspection is made by a representative of the state, the Superintendent shall report the results thereof to the Board at the meeting following the receipt of the state report.

[Based on BOE Policy 7430]
The Board of Education authorizes the use of video surveillance and electronic monitoring equipment at various school sites throughout the district and on school buses. The video surveillance/electronic monitoring equipment shall be used to protect Board property and assets from theft and vandalism through deterrence and video documentation. The system is not designed nor intended to protect individuals from being victims of violent or property crimes, nor to detect other potentially illegal and undesirable activities that may occur, although information may be used as evidence in such cases.

For detailed information regarding video surveillance and electronic monitoring see BOE Policy 7440.01 on the Neola website.

**DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

The Board of Education believes that quality education is not possible in an environment affected by drugs. It will seek, therefore, to establish and maintain an educational setting which meets the requirements set forth in the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and which is not tainted by the use or evidence of any controlled substance.

In compliance with the Act, the district prohibits the manufacture, possession, use, distribution, or dispensing of any controlled substance, including alcohol, by any member of the district’s support staff at any time while on district property or while involved in any district-related activity or event. Any staff member who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with district guidelines and the terms of negotiated, collective bargaining agreements.

The Superintendent shall establish whatever programs and procedures are necessary to meet the federal certification requirements but which also comply or do not interfere with negotiated, collective-bargained agreements.

The Board shall not permit the manufacture, possession, use, distribution, or dispensing of any controlled substance, including alcohol by any member of the district’s support staff at any time while on district property or while involved in any district-related activity or event. Any staff member who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with district guidelines and the terms of negotiated, collective-bargained agreements.

The Superintendent shall establish administrative guidelines that will best ensure compliance with the intent of this policy and that will provide for appropriate disciplinary actions if and when needed.

[Based on BOE Policy 4122.01]

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The Board of Education recognizes alcoholism and drug abuse as treatable illnesses. When such illnesses impair the performance of support staff, the Board recognizes a responsibility to assist in a manner recommended by an appropriate specialist in the treatment of those illnesses.
A support employee having an illness or other problem relating to the use of alcohol or other drugs will receive the same careful consideration and offer of assistance that is presently extended to support staff having any other illness.

The responsibility to correct unsatisfactory job performance or behavior resulting from a suspected health problem rests with the support staff member. Failure to do so will result in appropriate corrective or disciplinary action as determined by the Board.

If a support staff member voluntarily requests counseling or assistance before the Board learns of the support staff member’s substance abuse problem (through a positive test result or otherwise), the support staff member’s job security or promotion opportunities will not be jeopardized by their request for counseling or referral assistance. A support staff member may not avoid the consequences of a positive test by requesting counseling or assistance for a substance abuse problem after being instructed to submit a drug test.

Support personnel who suspect they may have an alcohol or other drug abuse problem are encouraged to seek counseling and information on a confidential basis by contacting resources available for such service.

[Based on BOE Policy 4170]

**USE OF TOBACCO BY SUPPORT STAFF**

The Board of Education recognizes that the use of tobacco presents a health hazard which can have serious consequences both for the user and the nonuser and is therefore, of concern to the Board.

In order to protect students and employees who choose not to use tobacco from an environment noxious to them and potentially damaging their health, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco on district property (owned or leased), in district vehicles, at district-related events, and in all school buildings owned and/or operated by the district.

For the purposes of this policy,

A. “tobacco product” means a preparation of tobacco to be inhaled, chewed, or placed in a person’s mouth.

B. “use of a tobacco product means any of the following:

1. the carrying by a person of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or other smoking devise, including e-cigarette, or vaping tool,

2. the inhaling or chewing of a tobacco product

3. the placing of a tobacco product within a person’s mouth

[Based on BOE Policy 4215]
WEAPONS

The Board of Education prohibits support staff members from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon in any setting that is under the control and supervision of the district for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the district, including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the district, a school-sponsored event, or in a district vehicle without the permission of the Superintendent.

The term “weapon” means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type, including spring, air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded) that will expel a BB, pellet, or paint balls, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition and explosives, or any weapon described in 18 U.S.C. 921.

The Superintendent shall refer a staff member who violates this policy to law enforcement officials. The staff member will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as permitted by applicable Board policy and the terms of existing collective bargaining agreements.

Exceptions to this policy include:

A. weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel;
B. items approved by a principal as part of a class or individual presentation under adult supervision, if used for the purpose of and in the manner approved; (working firearms and ammunition shall never be approved.)
C. theatrical props used in appropriate settings;
D. starter pistols used in appropriate sporting events.

Staff members shall report knowledge of dangerous weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the principal. Failure to report such information may subject the staff member to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

[Based on BOE Policy 4217]

DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING OF CDL LICENSE HOLDERS

The Board of Education believes that the safety of students while being transported to and from school or school activities is of utmost importance and is the primary responsibility of the driver of the school vehicle. To fulfill such a responsibility, each driver, as well as others who perform safety-sensitive functions with district vehicles must be mentally and physically alert at all times while on duty. To that end, the Board has established this policy and others related to employees' health and well-being.
For detailed information regarding drug and alcohol testing of CDL license holders, see BOE Policy 4162 on the Neola website.

**STAFF DRESS & GROOMING**

The Board of Education believes that staff members set an example in dress and grooming for their students to follow. A staff member who understands this precept and adheres to it enlarges the importance of their task, presents an image of dignity, and encourages respect for authority.

The Board retains the authority to specify the following dress and grooming guidelines for staff that will prevent such matters from having adverse impact on the educational process. All staff members shall, when assigned to district duty:

- be physically clean, neat, and well groomed;
- dress in a manner consistent with their responsibilities;
- dress in a manner that communicates to students a pride in personal appearance;

[Based on BOE Policy 3216]

**REQUIREMENTS FOR TITLE I PARAPROFESSIONALS**

All paraprofessionals hired for a Title I supported program must have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and one of the following: completed two (2) years study at an institution of higher education; or obtained at least an associate degree; or met a rigorous standard of quality and demonstrated through formal State or local academic assessment the knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics; or knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

The exceptions to these requirements are when a paraprofessional is proficient in English and a second language and serves as a translator primarily to enhance the participation of children in Title I programs; or whose duties consist solely of conducting parental involvement activities.

Paraprofessionals working for a Title I supported program may be assigned to provide one-on-one tutoring for eligible students during times when the teacher would not otherwise be instructing the student; or to provide instructional assistance in computer laboratory; or to provide instructional support in a library or media center; or to provide instructional services to students, if working under the direct supervision of a teacher; or to perform limited duties beyond classroom instruction or that do not benefit program participants, so long as those duties are also assigned non-Title I paraprofessionals.

For additional information, see BOE Policy 4120 on the Neola website.

**VOLUNTEERS**

The Board of Education recognizes that certain programs and activities can be enhanced through the use of volunteers who have particular knowledge of skills that will be helpful to members of the support staff.
responsible for the conduct of those programs and activities. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for recruiting community volunteers. He or She shall not be obligated to make sure of volunteers. Any person who volunteers to work with the District shall be screened through the Internet sites for the Sex Offenders Registry (SOR) list, the Internet Criminal History Access Tool (ICHAT) criminal history records check, and the Offender Tracking Information System (OTIS), prior to being allowed to participate in any activity or program.

[Based on BOE Policy 4120.09]

PHYSICAL EXAM

The Board of Education or Superintendent reserves the right to require any employee or candidate, after a conditional offer of employment, to submit to an examination in order to determine the physical and/or mental capacity to perform assigned duties. Such examinations shall be done in accordance with the Superintendent’s guidelines and/or the terms of currently-valid, negotiated, collectively-bargained agreements.

For additional information regarding physical exams, see BOE Policy 4160 on the Neola website.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES OF SUPPORT STAFF

It is the policy of the Board of Education that support staff members avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities and associations may conflict with the interests of the district. If such situations occur, the Superintendent shall evaluate the impact of such activity or association upon the support staff member’s responsibilities and take appropriate action as necessary.

A. Employees should not give work time to an outside interest, activity, or association when there is not valid reason to be excused from assigned duties.

B. Employees shall not use school property or school time to solicit or accept customers for private enterprises without written administrative permission.

C. Employees shall not engage in business transactions on behalf of private enterprises in which they may profit by virtue of their official position or authority or benefit financially from confidential information which the employee has obtained or may obtain by reason of their position or authority.

D. Employees shall not campaign on school property during duty hours in behalf of any political issue or candidate for local, state, national office.

[Based on BOE Policy 4231]

PERSONNEL FILES

It is necessary for the orderly operation of the school district to prepare a personal information system for the retention of appropriate papers bearing upon an employee’s duties and responsibilities to the district and
the district’s responsibilities to the employee.

The Board of Education requires that sufficient records exist to insure an employee’s qualifications for the job held, compliance with federal, state, and local benefit programs, conformance with district guidelines, and evidence of completed evaluations. Such records will be kept in compliance with the laws of the State of Michigan.

For additional information regarding personnel files, see BOE Policy 8320 on the Neola website.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is the policy of the Board of Education that when the district receives in trust from a public agency information identified to be confidential or exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, Common Law, Privilege Case Law, or Federal Law, the Board will maintain the confidentiality of said information to the maximum extent permitted by the law.

Employees must not divulge confidential information contained in the records and files of this Board, except to other employees who may need such information in connection with their duties and to authorized parties in accordance with proper departmental procedures.

Neither the Board nor its employees shall permit the release of the social security number of an employee, student, or other individual except as authorized by law. Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has been authorized access to such records.

Freedom of Information Act requests shall only be responded to in accordance with the district’s policy.

If an employee is approached to provide information inappropriately, the employee must refuse to release the requested information in accordance with applicable procedures, and should refer the requestor to the employee’s immediate supervisor.

Any employee who inappropriately releases information, or uses confidential information for personal reasons, will be disciplined in accordance with established policies and procedures.

In order to prohibit the unauthorized disclose of information identified as confidential by sending public agency, the Board may seek to obtain court protection by:

A. denying requests for release of such information absent subpoena or court order;

B. pursuing motions to quash or protective orders to prohibit unauthorized disclose.

When possible, the Board will attempt to notify the sending public agency of the request for release of such information prior to complying with the request.
Employees who intentionally violate this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. The Superintendent shall assure that employees receive a copy of and have readily available access to this policy.

[Based on BOE Policy 8350]

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

The Board of Education expects all its employees to be honest and ethical in their conduct, and to comply with applicable state and federal law, Board policies and administrative guidelines. The Board encourages and requires staff to report possible violations of these Board expectations. Parents, volunteers, contractors and concerned citizens are encouraged to report possible violations, when done in good faith.

It is the responsibility of an employee who is aware of conduct on the part of any Board member or employee that possibly violates federal or state law, or Board policy, to call this conduct to the attention of their immediate supervisor. If the employee’s immediate supervisor is not responsive or is the employee whose behavior is in question, the employee may report to the Superintendent. If the reported conduct relates to the Superintendent, the report may be filed directly with the Board President.

After such report is made, the employee will be asked to put the report in writing. Any employee making such a report shall be protected from discipline, retaliation, or reprisal for making such report as long as the employee had a good faith belief as to the accuracy of any information reported. Employees are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for knowingly making a false report under this policy. Employees may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, if they are aware of a violation of federal, state, or local law involving or relating to the business of the district and they do not make a report confirmed in writing to a supervisor in accordance with this policy.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines necessary for implementation of this policy, including the development of forms upon which such reports may be made.

[Based on BOE Policy 4211]

REPORTING ACCIDENTS

The Board of Education directs that all reasonable efforts be made to insure a safe learning and working environment for the students and employees of this district. To that end and to the end that legitimate employee claims for worker’s compensation be expedited, the Board requires that accidents be reported and evaluated.

Any employee of the Board who suffers a job-related injury must report the injury and its circumstances to the building administrator or job supervisor, as appropriate, as soon as possible following the occurrence of the injury. The failure of an employee to comply with this mandate may result in disciplinary action. Please check with your supervisor for the proper protocol and documentation if outside medical attention is needed.

[Based on BOE Policy 8442]
**DIRECT CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The Board of Education seeks to provide a safe educational environment for students and staff. This can best be accomplished by assuring that all persons within the school community understand the method of transmission and prevention of diseases that are not contracted through air-borne pathogens, but rather, through direct contact with body fluids and excretions, especially blood, vomit, feces, or urine. The Board is also committed to assuring the confidential status of individuals who may have been diagnosed with a blood-borne communicable disease.

For additional information regarding direct contact with communicable diseases, see BOE Policy 8453 on the Neola website.

**CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The Board of Education recognizes that control of the spread of communicable disease spread through casual contact is essential to the well-being of the school community and to the efficient district operation.

For additional information regarding the control of casual-contract communicable diseases, see Board Policy 8450 on the Neola website.

**LENDING OF SCHOOL OWNED EQUIPMENT**

No item of district-owned equipment shall be loaned for non-district school use off school property. If equipment is required for the use of those granted permission to use district facilities, it may be loaned in accordance with Board of Education policy on the use of school facilities. Any exception must be approved by the Superintendent.

District equipment may be removed from district property by students or staff members only when such equipment is necessary to accomplish tasks arising from their school or job responsibilities. The consent of the building principal is required for such removal.

Personal use of district equipment or facilities by staff or students is prohibited. Removal of district equipment by staff from school property for personal use is prohibited.

[Based on BOE Policy 7530]

**COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS**

The Board of Education is committed to the effective use of technology to both enhance the quality of student learning and the efficiency of Board operations. It also recognizes that safeguards have to be established to ensure that the Board’s investment in both hardware and software is achieving the benefits of
technology and inhibiting negative side effects.

For additional information regarding our computer technology and networks, see BOE Policy 7540 on the Neola website.

**TECHNOLOGY PRIVACY**

All computers, telephone systems, electronic mail systems, and voice mail systems are the Board’s property and are to be used primarily for business and educational purposes. The Board retains the right to access and review all electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the Board’s computer system, telephone system, electronic mail system, and voice mail system. Staff members should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

For additional information regarding technology privacy, see BOE Policy 7540.01 on the Neola website.

**STAFF NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY**

Advances in telecommunications and other related technologies have fundamentally altered the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in our society. Such changes are driving the need for educators to adapt their means and methods of instruction, and the way they approach student learning, to harness and utilize the vast, diverse, and unique resources available on the Internet. The Board of Education is pleased to provide Internet service to its staff. The Board encourages staff to utilize the Internet in order to promote educational excellence in our schools by providing them with the opportunity to develop the resource sharing, innovation, and communication skills and tools which will be essential to life and work in the 21st century. The Board encourages the faculty to develop the appropriate skills necessary to effectively access, analyze, evaluate, and utilize these resources. The instructional use of the Internet will be guided by the Board’s policy on Instructional Materials.

For additional information regarding the staff network and internet acceptable use policy, see BOE Policy 7540.04 on the Neola website.

**REASONABLE ASSURANCE**

The school district has regularly scheduled breaks, including summer break, during its normal year. These breaks occur when school is not in session or in recess. During these breaks, the district provides you the assurance, in good faith, that you will return to work in the same or similar position at the completion of that break or recess. When you return to work at the completion of that break or recess, the district has validated your continuing employment.