

O'Neill Public School Staff Handbook



2025-2026 Edition

To access school board policies please go to www.oneillpublicschools.org

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides information to persons who are employed by the school district and are referred to in this handbook as employees, staff, or staff members. It is designed to provide practical information about the daily operation of the schools in the district and contains building and district directories, safety and emergency information, as well as district policies and procedures. Each staff member should carefully review this handbook. The administration and the board of education continually review policies and procedures, so staff members should discuss comments, concerns, or suggestions about this handbook with their building principal or another member of the administrative staff.

This handbook does not create a "contract" of employment. Staff positions and assignments that do not require a teaching certificate or are not otherwise governed by the teacher tenure laws may be ended or changed on an at-will basis notwithstanding anything in this handbook or any other publication or statement, except a contract approved by the board of education.

Many situations may arise that are not covered by this handbook. In those instances, staff members should use their own good judgment or consult with the administration. If any information contained in this handbook conflicts with board policy or state statute, the policy or statute will govern.

The provisions in this handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of the superintendent and the Board of Education. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in the handbook. These updates should be kept within the handbook so that all procedures can be kept up to date. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please ask your supervisor or the superintendent for assistance.

Your suggestions about ways to improve the school are welcome and will always be considered.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The school district prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity in any education program or activity that it operates.

Individuals who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their disability, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the ADA/Title II Coordinator: Mr. Rotherham at 402-336-3775 (phone number), mikerotherham@oneillschools.org (e-mail address) or in person at 635 N 4th Street, O'Neill, NE 68763.

Individuals who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their sex, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the Title IX Coordinator: Nate Larsen at (402-336-1544), natelarsen@oneillschools.org, 540 E. Hynes St. or in person at school. The School District's specific Notice of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex may be accessed at the following link: [Insert Link to Notice of Nondiscrimination]

Individuals who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their race, color, or national origin, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the Title VI Coordinator: Mr. Rotherham at 402-336-3775 by phone, mikerotherham@oneillschools.org by e-mail address, or 635 N 4th Street, O'Neill, NE 68763 by mail or in person.

Individuals who believe that they have been the subject of any other unlawful discrimination or harassment should contact the Mr. Rotherham at 402-336-3775 by phone, mikerotherham@oneillschools.org by e-mail address or in person at the school. Students may report discrimination or harassment to any staff member who will then forward it on to the appropriate coordinator or administrator. The staff member will follow school district policies to respond to the report.

For additional prohibited discrimination and related information, please review school district [Policy 3053 – Nondiscrimination](#).

POLICY #4002 - DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS

It is vitally important to have a healthy workforce that is free from the effects of illegal drugs. The use or possession of unlawful drugs in the workplace has a very detrimental effect upon safety and morale of the affected employee, coworkers, and the public at large; and on productivity and the quality of work.

Federal law requires this school district, as a recipient of federal funds, to maintain a drug-free workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the district's workplace is prohibited. The term "workplace" includes every location where district employees may be found during their working hours or while they are on duty, regardless of whether the location is within the geographic boundaries of the district. Any employee who violates this policy will be disciplined with measures up to and including discharge. The district may, in its sole discretion, require or allow an employee who violates this policy to participate in and satisfactorily complete a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

The district shall provide every current employee with a copy of this policy, and shall provide each newly hired employee with a copy upon hiring. Every employee shall be required to signify receipt of a copy of the policy in writing. All district employees must abide by this policy, including those who are not directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to a federal grant.

An employee must notify his/her supervisor of any conviction of a criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace within five days. The failure to report such a conviction will be grounds for dismissal. If the employee convicted of such an offense is engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the provisions of a federal grant, the district shall notify the grant agency within 10 days of receiving notice of a conviction from the affected employee or of receiving actual notice of such a conviction.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING ALL STAFF

Accidents and Injuries

Staff must inform the building office immediately of all accidents and/or injuries to students or staff, and complete the appropriate accident form that is available from the office secretary, building principal or nurse. The accident form must be returned to the office within 48 hours of the incident.

Activity Accounts and Fundraising

Activity accounts are handled through the activities office. No student or sponsor may make any purchase without a signed purchase order from an administrator. **Purchases made without permission are the personal obligation and responsibility of the purchaser.**

The superintendent or their designee is responsible for authorizing any fundraising on the part of student activities. **No fundraising may occur without express administrative permission.**

Activity Tickets

All staff, spouses, and their school-age children will be admitted to home games free of charge. Activity tickets will be issued to staff through the building offices.

Agents, Salesmen and Other Business Representatives

All business representatives calling on school matters must obtain permission from the superintendent or building principal before conferring with staff. Staff must determine whether the business representative has been granted permission before discussing business matters. Classroom teachers may not interrupt classwork to confer with such representatives.

Staff may not use school time or school facilities for any personal activity for personal financial gain or confer with any business representative for personal business during school time.

Announcements and Circulars

No announcements shall be made before any school group without authorization of the principal or superintendent.

Any circulars or advertising displayed within the school shall have the approval of the building principal or superintendent before posting.

Board Policies, Rules, and Directives

The board of education has adopted policies that govern the operation of the school district. A complete policy manual is available on the district's website or in the main administrative office. These manuals will be updated as the board adopts new policies or modifies existing policies. In particular, the 4000 series deals with policies that affect personnel. Additionally, the Board has authorized the superintendent and his or her designee to adopt rules and directives regarding the conduct of students, staff, and other persons. Many of these rules and directives are published in the Student Handbook, Staff Handbook, and Activity Handbook, respectively. Each of these handbooks are available on the district's website and in the main administrative office.

By signing below, you agree that you have read and understood these policies, handbooks, rules, and directives, their application to you, and that you have had an opportunity to discuss any questions with the administration.

Child Abuse

School employees who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or neglect or observe a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which reasonably would result in child abuse or neglect will report the suspected abuse or neglect according to the following procedure.

1. Any school employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected shall report the suspicion to the building principal immediately.

Employees shall also personally report or cause a report to be made to local law enforcement or to the Department of Health and Human Services.

2. When the principal makes a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, he/she shall inform the employee(s) who made the initial report.
3. Nothing in the paragraph above shall hinder a school employee from fulfilling his/her/their obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect if he, she or they have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected.
4. Any doubt or question in reporting such cases shall be resolved in the favor of reporting the suspected abuse or neglect. Consultation between the administrator and school employee is encouraged, keeping in mind that prompt reporting is essential.

Complaint Procedure

Good communication helps to resolve many misunderstandings and disagreements. This complaint procedure applies to complaints unless the complaint is subject to a different procedure required by law, policy or contract. Individuals who have a complaint should discuss their concerns with appropriate school personnel in an effort to resolve problems at the lowest level of the chain of command. When those efforts do not resolve matters satisfactorily, including matters involving discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age, a complainant should follow the procedures set forth in any specific policy addressing those areas or the procedures set forth below. Allegations of sex discrimination covered by Title IX will be addressed through the board's Title IX policy.

References to "coordinator" in this policy refer to the board-designated coordinator for the applicable area, such as the Section 504 Coordinator for allegations of disability-based discrimination.

Under this policy, factual conclusions will be based on a preponderance of the evidence.

Complaint and Appeal Process.

1. The first step is for the complainant to speak directly to the person(s) with whom the complainant has a concern. For example, a parent who is unhappy with a classroom teacher should initially discuss the matter with the teacher. However, the complainant should skip the first step if complainant reasonably believes speaking directly to the person would subject complainant or complainant's student to discrimination or harassment.
2. The second step is for the complainant to speak to the building principal, coordinator, superintendent of schools, or president of the board of education, as set forth below. Anyone with questions about the appropriate person to speak with may request clarification from the superintendent.

- a) Complaints about the operation, decisions, or personnel within a building should be submitted to the principal of the building.
 - b) Complaints about the operations of the school district or a building principal should be submitted in writing to the superintendent of schools.
 - c) Complaints about the superintendent of schools should be submitted in writing to the president of the board of education.
 - d) Complaints involving discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age may also be submitted at any time during the complaint procedure to the applicable coordinator. Complaints involving discrimination or harassment may also be submitted at any time to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education: by email at OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov; by telephone at (816) 268-0550; or by fax at (816) 268-0599.
3. When a complainant submits a complaint to an administrator or coordinator, the administrator or coordinator shall first determine whether another applicable procedure is required by policy or law and if so, direct the complaint to the appropriate person to follow that procedure. If not, the administrator or coordinator will promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint, and shall:
- a) Determine whether the complainant has discussed the matter with the respondent.
 - 1) If the complainant has not, urge the complainant to discuss the matter directly with the respondent, if appropriate.
 - 2) If the complainant refuses to discuss the matter with the respondent, the administrator or coordinator shall, in his or her sole discretion, determine whether the complaint should or must be pursued further.
 - b) Strongly encourage the complainant to reduce his or her concerns to writing.
 - c) Interview the complainant and, if necessary, the respondent against whom the complaint is filed, to determine:
 - 1) All relevant details of the complaint;
 - 2) All witnesses and documents which the complainant believes support the complaint;
 - 3) The action or solution which the complainant seeks.
 - d) Respond to the complainant. If the complaint involves discrimination or harassment, the response shall be in writing and shall be submitted within 180 calendar days after the administrator or coordinator receives the complaint.

4. If either the complainant or the respondent is not satisfied with the decision he or she

may appeal the decision to the superintendent. The superintendent may assign a qualified designee to hear any appeal.

- a) The appeal must be in writing.
 - b) This appeal must be received by the superintendent no later than three (3) calendar days from the date of the decision.
 - c) For complaints addressed through other applicable procedures that do not include a separate investigatory process, the superintendent will investigate as he or she deems appropriate.
 - d) The superintendent will prepare a written decision and provide it to the complainant and any other person entitled by law to receive the appeal decision. For complaints involving discrimination or harassment, the superintendent shall submit the decision within 180 calendar days after the superintendent received complainant's written appeal. Appeals to the superintendent from complaints involving discrimination or harassment are final once the superintendent delivers the written decision, as are all other appeals/complaints to the superintendent unless the complaint can be appealed on the limited grounds to appeal to the board below.
5. The board's role is to set policy, establish and implement a budget, and evaluate the superintendent. The board does not manage the daily operations of the school district entrusted to its administration unless required by law or policy. Because of the board's statutory roles, it does not hear complaints or appeals that may involve oversight or discipline of students, staff, or others, unless those involve the superintendent as discussed below. The board does not hear complaints or appeals based on allegations of discrimination or harassment unless otherwise required by law. The board will hear appeals only in the following circumstances:
- a) When the complaint is about a board policy, not implementation of the policy;
 - b) When the complaint involves the budget or school expenditures that have been or must be approved by the board; or
 - c) When the board is required by law, policy, or contract to hear a complaint or appeal.

If a complaint involves those limited grounds and a party is not satisfied with the superintendent's decision regarding the complaint or appeal, he or she may appeal the decision to the board.

- a) This appeal must be in writing.
- b) This appeal must be received by the board president no later than ten (10) calendar days from the date the superintendent communicated his/her decision to the complainant.

- c) This policy allows, but does not require the board to receive statements from interested parties and witnesses relevant to the complaint appeal. However, all matters involving discrimination or harassment allegations against the superintendent shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the board president or a designee.
 - d) The board president will notify the complainant and any other person legally required to receive the decision in writing of its decision. If the complaint involves discrimination or harassment allegations against the Superintendent, the board president shall submit the decision within 180 calendar days after receiving the written appeal.
 - e) There is no appeal from any decision of the board unless authorized by law.
- 6. Formal complaints about the superintendent shall be filed with the president of the board. However, complaints about the superintendent do not include disagreement with the superintendent's decision on appeal based on a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or action of any other employee who is not the superintendent. Upon receipt of a complaint, the board president or his or her designee shall promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint, and shall:
 - a) Coordinate with school district staff, other than the superintendent, to determine if another procedure in policy or law requires the complaint against the superintendent to follow another procedure. If so, the board president will coordinate handling the complaint through that procedure. If another procedure applies, such as in the case of allegations of sex discrimination against the superintendent, the board president or, at his or her discretion, the full board will serve only to hear any appeal by a party to the complaint.
 - b) Determine whether the complainant has discussed the matter with the superintendent.
- 1) If the complainant has not, the board president or designee will urge or require the complainant to discuss the matter directly with the superintendent, if appropriate or required.
 - 2) If the complainant refuses to discuss the matter with the superintendent, the board president shall, in his or her sole discretion, determine whether the complaint should or must be pursued further.
 - a) Determine, in his or her sole discretion, whether to place the matter on the board agenda for consideration at a regular or special meeting by the full board.
 - b) Respond to the complainant or appeal. If the complaint or appeal involves discrimination or harassment, the response shall be in

writing and shall be submitted within 180 calendar days after the president received the complaint.

- c) Appoint or contract with other individuals qualified to assist the board through this process or any other applicable procedure used to address allegations against the superintendent.

No Retaliation. The school district prohibits retaliation against any person for filing a complaint or for participating in the complaint procedure in good faith.

Special Rules Regarding Educational Services and Related Services to Students with Disabilities.

Students with disabilities and their families have specific rights outlined in state and federal law, including administrative processes by which they may challenge the educational services being provided by the school district. Therefore, the appeal process contained in this policy may not be used to challenge decisions made by a student's individualized education plan (IEP) team or 504 team.

Complaints about the educational services provided a student with a disability, including but not limited to services provided to a student with an IEP, access to curricular and extracurricular activities, and educational placement must be submitted to the school district's Director of Special Education. The Director of Special Education will address the complaint in a manner that he/she deems appropriate and will provide the complainant with a copy of the Notice of IDEA Parental Rights promulgated by the Nebraska Department of Education.

Complaints about the educational services provided a student with a disability pursuant to a Section 504 plan must be submitted to the school district's 504 Coordinator. The 504 Coordinator will address the complaint in a manner that he/she deems appropriate and will provide the complainant with a copy of the Notice of Section 504 Parental Rights adopted by the board of education.

Complaints about the educational services provided to a student who is suspected of having a disability must be submitted in writing to the school district's Director of Special Education or to the district's 504 Coordinator. The Director of Special Education or 504 Coordinator will either refer the student for possible verification as a student with a disability or will provide prior written notice of the district's refusal to do so.

Bad Faith or Serial Filings. The purpose of the complaint procedure is to resolve complaints at the lowest level possible within the chain of command. Individuals who file complaints (a) without a good faith intention to attempt to resolve the issues raised; (b) for the purpose of adding administrative burden; (c) at a volume unreasonable to expect satisfactory resolution; or (c) for purposes inconsistent with the efficient operations of the district may be dismissed by the superintendent without providing final resolution other than noting the dismissal. There is no appeal from dismissals made pursuant to this section.

Computers and the Internet: Acceptable Use by Staff

Internet access is an important tool for communicating, keeping up-to-date with current

developments in education, and for conducting research to enhance management, teaching, and learning skills. Staff members must refer to and comply with the board policy regarding Staff Internet and Computer Use. A copy of this policy is attached below. Staff should also refer to and comply with the board policy regarding Staff and District Social Media Use.

Conflict of Interest

All staff members are subject to the board's policy governing conflict of interest. That policy provides, in part, that no employee shall solicit or accept anything of value, including a gift, loan, contribution, reward, or promise of future employment based on an agreement that the vote, official action, or judgment of the employee would thereby be influenced.

Contact Information

Staff are required to keep the district informed of any change in their name, address, telephone or other contact information. Contact the Central Office at 402-336-3775 to report a change.

Copyright and Fair Use

The school district complies with federal copyright laws. Staff members must comply with copyright laws when using school equipment or working on behalf of the district. Federal law prohibits the unauthorized reproduction of works of authorship, regardless of the medium in which they were created.

The "fair use" doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes. "Fair use" of a copyrighted work includes reproduction for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Staff who are unsure whether their proposed reproduction of copyrighted material constitutes "fair use" should consult with their building principal, review the school district's copyright compliance policy, and review *Reproduction of Copyrighted Works by Educators and Librarians* from the U.S. Copyright Office found at [Reproduction of Copyrighted Works by Educators and Librarians](#). You can find more information on copyright compliance requirements and permitted uses from the U.S. Copyright Office and the Library of Congress at the following site: [Copyright and Primary Sources | Getting Started with Primary Sources | Teachers | Programs | Library of Congress](#).

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is the infliction of bodily pain as a penalty for disapproved behavior, and is prohibited by law. Some physical contact is inevitable, and most of it is appropriate. Corporal punishment does not include the use of physical force that is reasonable and necessary to (1) protect school employees; (2) protect students or property; or (3) remove a student from a situation that endangers the student, persons, or property. Staff members should promptly report any event that required the use of physical force to their building principal.

Crisis Response Team

Any staff member appointed by the district administration will serve on the Crisis Response Team as outlined in the board policies. The Crisis Response Team serves a vital role in supporting the district's staff and students. It is the responsibility of the appointed staff member to discuss with

the district administration any circumstances that may affect the staff member's ability to perform the tasks required by board policy.

Discrimination and Harassment

The school district prohibits discrimination and harassment based upon or related to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, marital status, disability, age or any other unlawful basis that (1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment, (2) has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an employee's school performance, or (3) otherwise adversely affects an employee's employment opportunities. Employees who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their disability should contact the following Section 504 Coordinator: Jill Brodersen at phone number, 402-336-1544 or email jillbrodersen@oneillschools.org or in person at school. Employees who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their sex should contact the following Title IX Coordinator: Nate Larsen, or in person at school. Employees who believe that they have been the subject of any other unlawful discrimination or harassment should contact the building principal either by phone, email, or in person at school. Employees may report discrimination or harassment to any staff member who will then forward it on to the appropriate coordinator or administrator. The staff member will follow school district policies to respond to the report.

Driving (both school and personal vehicles)

Staff members who drive school vehicles or volunteer to use their personal automobile to transport students must have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Staff members will be provided a Driver's Certification form to verify this information. Staff members who drive school vehicles or transport students in their personal vehicles are responsible for following safe driving practices, including use of seat belts by all occupants, and are responsible for any injury or accident. Staff members are not to use cell phones while driving a school vehicle or while transporting students. Please see the school district's policy on school vehicle use for further information.

Drivers for the school district must be free from drug and alcohol use or abuse. The school district will test drivers as permitted under state and federal law and in accordance with board policy.

Dress Code

Staff should dress in a manner that reflects the honorable profession of education. Certified staff, and office staff should generally dress in business casual attire. Paraeducators, custodial, maintenance and transportation staff should dress in attire appropriate to the work they are performing.

The superintendent or principal shall maintain the discretion to make determinations on staff dress and appearance. Administrators may temporarily suspend all or a portion of the dress code when other factors support a lower dress expectation for school employees (e.g., special "casual days" or field days). Any violation of school policy and rules may result in disciplinary action.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

School district administrators who suspect that drugs or alcohol may be present in a staff member's system may require the staff member to provide a body fluid or breath sample as provided in Nebraska law. Staff members who refuse a lawful directive to provide a body fluid or breath sample may be subject to disciplinary or administrative action by the employer, including denial of continued employment.

Duty to Report

School personnel shall self-report any of the following to the district's superintendent within 24 hours of its occurrence or at the beginning of the next school day, whichever is earlier:

- Any criminal citation if the alleged offense is a misdemeanor or felony under federal or Nebraska law or in the state in which the alleged offense occurred;
- Any arrest for any reason;
- Any criminal conviction;
- Any sentence of incarceration;
- Any criminal or civil filing or Department of Health and Human Services or law enforcement investigation for child abuse and/or neglect;
- Any complaint or other administrative filing that could impact any certificate or professional license held by the employee;
- Any action or threat of action by any entity against the employee's driver's license or ability or authority to operate a motor vehicle if the employee's job duties may require the operation of a motor vehicle.

The failure to make a report required by this section may result in disciplinary action up to and including cancellation, termination, and non-renewal.

Electronic Communication While Driving

Except as provided below, school personnel shall not use any electronic communication device to read a written communication, manually type a written communication, send a written communication, verbally communicate with others, or otherwise communicate with others while operating a school vehicle or while using a school-issued electronic communication device while operating a private vehicle. This prohibition includes but is not limited to answering or making telephone calls not related to the transportation and reading or responding to emails, instant messages, or text messages.

The superintendent or building principal may grant exceptions and allow verbal communication on an as needed basis for specific district-related work based upon employees' duties and responsibilities.

Event Staff

All staff will be expected to work in various capacities at home events throughout the school year. Staff members who coach a sport may work at an event they do not coach. Staff members who are unavailable to work at the event they are assigned to work must find their own replacements and notify the activities director and activities secretary of their replacement.

Expenses

The board will reimburse staff for all approved expenses incurred in attending to school business. Reimbursement for mileage, supplies, overnight travel expense, and credit card reimbursement fees are processed on an expense report form that is available from each building secretary. Appropriate receipts must be attached. Reimbursed meal expenses shall not exceed \$40.00 per day for overnight travel.

To be reimbursed for an item or for personal vehicle use, staff members must complete a reimbursement claim form, attach receipts and submit it to the superintendent for approval.

All claims for reimbursement must be approved by the board, so some delay is probable. Mileage reimbursement will be denied if a school vehicle was available unless approval by the superintendent is given prior to travel. If personal vehicle use for travel is approved, the rate of reimbursement will be calculated at 25% of the current IRS mileage rate. If by your choice you elect to drive your own vehicle, you assume all liability.

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

Qualified employees will be provided leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) as provided in board policy. The school district will utilize the "rolling" 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

In-School Communication

Every staff member will be assigned a mailbox in the building where he or she works. Staff members are expected to check their mailboxes for messages at least once daily.

A great deal of information is distributed to staff via the school's e-mail system. Each staff member must check his or her e-mail account frequently throughout the school day. Staff members are allowed to use their school e-mail accounts for a moderate amount of personal e-mail correspondence. However, sending or receiving personal e-mail during class time is prohibited, regardless of whether that personal e-mail is received on the staff member's school e-mail account or a personal account.

Intellectual Property

All written or artistic works, instructional materials, inventions, procedures, ideas, innovations, systems, programs, or other work product created or developed by any employee in the course and scope of performance of his or her employment duties on behalf of the district, whether published or not, shall be the exclusive property of the district. The district has the sole right to sell, license, assign, or transfer any and all right, title, or interest in and to such property.

Jury and Witness Duty Leave

An employee who has been called to serve as a juror will be granted paid leave. Employees must sign over to the district the compensation they receive for jury duty, but not compensation for expenses.

An employee who has been subpoenaed to testify as a witness in a court proceeding shall be entitled to one day of paid leave. To receive paid leave, the employee must sign over to the district his or her witness fee.

Keys

Staff will not lend or have any duplicate keys made of any school key. Staff will make sure all doors are locked when they enter or leave the building other than regular school hours and are responsible for setting the security system after hours.

Staff members are responsible at all times for all keys issued to them and must keep their keys in a secure location or on the employee's person. Each classroom teacher must check that the doors and windows in his or her room are closed and locked at the end of the school day. Staff must report lost or stolen keys to the building principal immediately.

Locker Room Supervision

Staff members must review and comply with the board's policy regarding locker room supervision.

Maintenance & Cleaning Request Forms

Staff members should fill out maintenance requests forms just as soon as they need or see a maintenance problem. These forms must be turned into the Director of Building & Grounds or Building Principal.

Meals Program

Staff may take advantage of meals offered through the district's foods program. Staff may purchase lunches from the school cafeteria for **\$4.25 per day**. The lunch price includes one carton of milk. Extra cartons cost 55 cents. Staff members must deposit funds in their lunch accounts before purchasing meals. Staff members will not be allowed to run a deficit in their lunch accounts.

Military Leaves of Absence

Leaves of absence without pay for military or Reserve duty are granted to all employees as required by law. An employee who is called to active military duty or to Reserve or National Guard training or who volunteers for the same should submit copies of the military orders to the superintendent as soon as is practicable. An administrator, at his or her discretion, may require an employee who requests leave under the Nebraska Family Military Leave Act to provide certification from the proper military authority to verify the employee's eligibility for the leave requested.

Military Leave under the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Nebraska Family Military Leave Act will be governed by the board's policies.

Milk Expression

Except as otherwise provided by law, the district will provide reasonable break time for an employee who wishes to breastfeed or express breast milk for her nursing child each time such

employee has the need to do so. The district will provide a place, other than a bathroom, which is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public. These accommodations will be provided for one year after the child's birth, unless otherwise required by law.

News and Press Releases

Only individuals who have prior administrative approval may issue press releases or other official communications regarding school activities and events in furtherance of the individual's official responsibilities. The superintendent may delegate responsibility for communicating with the media to building principals, the activities director, event sponsors, and other staff on an ad hoc basis.

Activity sponsors and other staff who are involved in newsworthy activity should submit typed press releases to the office for distribution to the media when noteworthy events have occurred. Coaches must communicate with local TV, radio, and print media promptly after matches or games to disseminate the results.

Obligations Related to American Civics Instruction

All staff members shall be familiar with, and comply with, the requirements of state law, board policy, and district curriculum to properly instruct students regarding American Civics, Social Studies, American History, and appropriate patriotic exercises on particular days of the year. Neglect of any such responsibilities by any employee may be considered just cause for dismissal.

Outside Employment

No full-time staff member may accept any other employment or carry on any business or activity for profit that interferes with the complete and competent discharge of his or her responsibilities to the school district.

Political Activities

District employees retain all rights of citizenship, including, but not limited to, engaging in political activities. An employee of the District may participate in the political process, including seeking an elective office, provided that the staff member does not campaign on school property during working hours, and provided all other legal requirements are met. The District assumes no obligation beyond making such opportunities available.

While the District supports its employees by allowing them to exercise their rights, any impact on the employee's ability to perform his or her functions as required by the district is grounds for discipline. For further guidance regarding political conduct on school grounds, contact the superintendent and consult the board policies.

Pregnant or Parenting Students

The school district encourages students who are pregnant or parenting are encouraged to continue to participate in the district's educational and extracurricular programs. Students who anticipate deviations from their regular school experience or accrue absences due to pregnancy or parenting have been told to notify their building principal as early as possible to

discuss their educational programming. The building principal will work with the student and appropriate district staff to develop a plan to assist the student in participating in district curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Such a plan may include:

1. If the student cannot regularly attend classes, the provision of online courses;
2. The arrangement of meeting times with teachers;
3. If the student has not identified appropriate childcare, the identification of child care providers that meet statutory requirements for quality and care; and
4. All other curricular adjustments, modifications, and means of supplementing classroom attendance deemed appropriate by the school administrators including, but not limited to, modification of attendance policies.

Professional Boundaries Between Staff and Students

All district employees must follow board policy when interacting with students in any way. School district employees are responsible for conducting themselves professionally and for teaching and modeling high standards of behavior and civic values, both at and away from school. District employees must be aware of professional boundaries between students and staff, and they must never blur the boundaries. These standards of behavior apply to social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., along with communications and interactions of any kind between staff and students.

Examples of unprofessional misconduct include: inappropriate sexual communications or interactions with students, meeting with students in private outside of school, and intruding on a student's personal space. These are a few examples of inappropriate behavior, not an exhaustive list. For further guidance, refer to the district's policies regarding professionalism and staff-student interactions.

Any teacher or student who witnesses or knows information about a district employee violating board policy should report the violation to the district administration *immediately*. Minor violations and questionable violations should be reported as soon as possible, but always within 24 hours.

A violation of board policies for professionalism will form the basis for employee discipline up to and including termination or cancellation of employment, filing a report with law enforcement officials, and filing a report with the Commissioner of Education.

Professional Growth

All employees must complete **24 points** of professional growth in six years and shall be provided opportunities for the development of increased competence beyond that which they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties.

In addition to this requirement, the superintendent will select in-service programming to provide

additional professional growth activities for certified and classified staff.

Purchasing

All requisitions for books and school supplies must be filed with the building principal. The requisition must include the name of the article being requested, where it may be purchased, how many articles are required and their cost. Requisitions are submitted through WebLink. Requisitions will flow from staff members through the superintendent.

When routine supplies are needed for immediate use, staff should contact the building secretary. When it is necessary to make a special or emergency requisition for supplies or equipment, staff should contact the building principal for the necessary forms. The superintendent will either approve or disapprove the request through the principal.

Records and Reports

Staff members must refer to and comply with Board Policy 5016 regarding the management and maintenance of student records.

All staff members shall promptly furnish the administration with any information relating to their professional training, experience, activities or work required for reports to county, state or federal officials or for official school records. Personal information will be treated confidentially by school officials.

Recordings of Students and Classrooms

Staff members may make audio and video recordings of classroom instruction and school activities upon authorization of the superintendent or supervising administrator. Staff should refer to Board Policy 5063 for information on recording by students.

School Calendar

The official school calendar is maintained in each building office. All activities and events must be scheduled and approved by the building principal. To avoid conflict, a sponsor should not call a meeting of any activity until the schedule has been checked and the meeting approved by the office.

School Property

School property is not to be lent to individuals except by permission of the superintendent or building principal.

Staff or groups who wish to use school facilities should make requests to the building principal or Activity Director as early as possible so that they may be placed on the school calendar.

Staff must inform the building principal of any school property that needs repair or that is lost, stolen, or damaged beyond repair. Matters regarding custodial service in the building should be handled through the Principal's office and/or the Building & Grounds Director.

School Vehicle Use

The transportation of students in a pupil transportation vehicle is governed by the rules of the Nebraska Department of Education and the district's Safe Pupil Transportation Plan or Safety and Security Plan. School district employees, board members, and other elected or appointed school district officials who are not transporting children are authorized to use a school district vehicle to travel to a designated location or to their home when the primary purpose of the travel serves a school district purpose. Staff should refer to the board policy regarding the use of school vehicles.

Security

Each staff member is responsible for the security of his/her own classroom or work area. Staff must lock the doors and windows of their classrooms and/or other work areas each night.

Staff members who use the building after it has been locked by the custodian or on weekends are responsible for turning off all lights and locking all windows and doors that they or students under their supervision may have used.

Under no circumstances are pupils to be allowed in the building after school hours without faculty supervision. Keys to any school areas are not to be loaned to students under any circumstances.

Smoking on School Premises or at School Activities

The use or possession of any tobacco product, including cigarettes, cigars, or other tobacco or tobacco derivative products; vapor products or electronic nicotine delivery systems; alternative nicotine products; or any other such look-alike or imitation product, is not permitted on school property or in a school vehicle, at any time.

Sniffer (Drug) Dogs

The administration is authorized to use sniffer dogs to minimize the presence of illicit items on school grounds. Students and staff are specifically notified that:

1. Lockers may be sniffed by sniffer dogs at any time.
2. Vehicles parked on school property may be sniffed by sniffer dogs at any time.
3. Classrooms and other common areas may be sniffed by sniffer dogs at any time students and staff are not present.
4. If contraband of any kind is found, the student or staff member shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Social Media Usage by Staff

Social media is an important tool for communicating, keeping up-to-date with current developments in education, and for conducting research to enhance management, teaching, and learning skills. The district also uses social media accounts to provide information to district stakeholders. All staff members must refer to and comply with the board's policies regarding Staff Internet and Computer Use and Staff and District Social Media Use. Staff members who are uncertain about the applicability of board policy to a particular situation must confer with their supervising administrator prior to posting on social media.

Solicitation and Distribution of Merchandise

In the interest of maintaining a proper school environment and preventing interference with school purposes, employees may not sell merchandise, solicit financial contributions, solicit, or distribute literature or printed material for any non-school related cause during working time or on school grounds, except as approved by the administration.

Staff Room

The staff room is maintained for the exclusive use and convenience of the staff. It is not for student use and staff members should not hold student conferences there. Each staff member will assume responsibility in keeping the staff room in an orderly and presentable condition.

Student Interviews

Employees shall refer any police officer, child protective service worker, or other similar individual seeking to speak to or interview a student to an administrator or designee.

Telephones

School telephones are maintained for the primary purpose of conducting school business. Staff members should limit their use of school phones to brief conversations. Teachers will not be called to the telephone during class time except in the case of an emergency.

Staff members may not use personal cell phones to make or receive calls or to send or receive text messages during instructional time.

Threat Assessment and Response

Team Concept

The board of education is committed to providing a safe environment for members of the school community. Students, staff and patrons are urged to immediately report any statements or behavior that makes the observer fearful or uncomfortable about the safety of the school environment.

1. Definitions

- a. A **threat** is an expression of a willful intent to physically or sexually harm someone or to damage property in a way that indicates that an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff, students or other members of the school community.
 - i. The threat may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means.
 - ii. A **transient threat** is an expression of anger or frustration that can be quickly or easily resolved.
 - iii. A **substantive threat** is an expression of serious intent to harm others which includes, but is not limited to, any threat which involves a detailed plan and means.

- b. A **threat assessment** is a fact-based process emphasizing an appraisal of observed (or reasonably-observable) behaviors to identify potentially dangerous or violent situations, to assess them and to manage/address them. Threat assessment is the process of identifying and responding to serious threats in a systematic, data-informed way.
 - i. The threat assessment process is distinct from student disciplinary procedures. The mere fact that the district is conducting a threat assessment does not by itself necessitate suspension, expulsion or emergency exclusion without complying with state law and board policy related governing those actions.
 - ii. The threat assessment process is distinct from specialized instruction which a student with a disability may receive from the school district. The school district will not change a student's educational placement as that term is used in the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act *solely* as part of a threat assessment.

2. Obligation to Report Threatening Statements or Behaviors.

All staff and students must report **substantive threats** to a member of the administration immediately and comply with any other mandatory reporting obligations. Staff and students who are unsure whether a threat is substantive or transient should report the situation. Staff and students must make such report regardless of the nature of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person(s) who were threatened or who were the focus of the threatening behavior. Staff and students must also make such reports regardless of where or when the threat was made or the threatening behavior occurred.

THREATS OR ASSAULTS WHICH REQUIRE IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE AT 911.

3. Threat Assessment Team

The threat assessment team (team) shall consist of building principals, superintendent, guidance counselors, assistant principal, OPD, technology coordinator, school psychologist, LMHP, and special education director. Not every team member needs to participate in every threat assessment. If the threat has been made by or is directed towards, a student with a disability, the threat assessment team must include a staff member who is knowledgeable about special education services or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as appropriate. Neither the student nor their student's family members are part of the threat assessment team.

The team is responsible for investigating all reported threats to school safety, evaluating the significance of each threat, and devising an appropriate response. The threat assessment team shall work closely with the crisis team in

planning for crisis situations. The threat assessment team shall be familiar with mental health resources available to students, staff and patrons and shall collaborate with local mental health service providers as appropriate.

4. Threat Assessment Investigation and Response

When a threat is reported, the school administrator shall initiate an initial inquiry/triage and, in consultation with members of the threat assessment team, make a determination of the seriousness of the threat as expeditiously as possible. The school administrator must contact law enforcement if the administrator believes that an individual poses a clear and immediate threat of serious violence.

If there is no reasonably apparent imminent threat present or once such an imminent threat is contained, the threat assessment team will meet to evaluate and respond to the threatening behavior. The team may, but is not required to, review the following types of information:

- Review of the threatening behavior and/or communication;
- Interviews with the individuals involved including students, staff members, and family members as necessary and/or appropriate;
- Review of school and other records for any prior history or interventions with the students involved;
- Any other investigatory methods that the team determines to be reasonable and useful.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the team will determine what, if any, response to the threat is appropriate. The team is authorized to disclose the results of its investigation to law enforcement and to the target(s) of any threatened acts. The team may refer the individual of concern to the appropriate school administrator for consequences under the school's student discipline policy or, if appropriate, report the results of its investigation to the student's individualized education plan team.

Regardless of threat assessment activities, disciplinary action and referral to law enforcement will occur consistent with board policy and Nebraska law.

5. Communication with the Public about Reported Threats

The team will keep members of the school community appropriately informed about substantive threats and about the team's response to those threats. This communication may include oral announcements, written communication sent home with students, or communication through print or broadcast media. However, the team will not reveal the identity of the individual of concern or of any target(s) of threatened violence unless permitted by law.

6. Coordination with the Crisis Team After Resolution of Threat

The threat assessment team will confer with the district's crisis team after a threat

has been investigated to provide the crisis team with information that the crisis team may use in assessing or revising the district's All-Hazard School Safety Plan.

Ticket Taking

All staff will be expected to take tickets at one time or another at home events. Staff members who coach a sport may take tickets at an event they do not coach. Staff members who are unavailable to take tickets at the event they are assigned to work must find their own replacements and notify the Activity Director of who will be taking their place.

Transportation Request Forms

Staff members must complete a transportation request form as soon as they know they need school-provided transportation to allow the activities director adequate time to schedule drivers and vehicles.

Visitors

Staff should welcome members of the public who wish to visit school, but should ensure that visitors follow the district's requirements.

All visitors must report to the building office before visiting any classroom or other areas of the building.

Visitors must comply with the following guidelines:

- if a visitor wishes to observe a specific skill or subject, he or she will be asked to observe during a specified time period
- children under the age of 10 years must be accompanied by a parent or guardian
- all visitors must have the prior approval of the building principal or superintendent
- salespeople and other such agents will not be allowed to solicit staff members during school hours
- visitors must wear the visitor's badge supplied by the building office

Wage and Salary Payments

Staff members are paid on the 20th of each month via direct deposit, unless the 20th falls on a weekend or holiday in which case they will be paid on the regular business day prior to the 20th. The district only provides direct deposit of paychecks to designated financial institutions. Staff who wish to activate or modify their direct deposits must contact the district office. Employees shall not be paid in advance under any circumstances.

All required deductions, such as for federal, state, and local taxes, retirement contributions, and all authorized voluntary deductions, such as for insurance or union dues, will be withheld automatically from your paychecks. Garnishments are legal proceedings imposed by a court of law upon the school district requiring payment to a third party of monies earned by district employees. The school district will accept all legal garnishments and tax levies against wages in compliance with state and federal law. An employee's pay will be held upon receipt of a garnishment until a court order is issued indicating satisfaction of the indebtedness or until ordered to surrender the monies to the court or its agent. The school district prohibits improper pay deductions, and employees shall be reimbursed for any improper pay deductions. If you

believe that an improper deduction has been made to your pay, you should immediately report this information to your direct supervisor, payroll personnel, or the superintendent.

Staff members, by their signature on the acknowledgement page of this handbook, authorize the school district to withhold such sums from their paychecks as necessary to cover property damage, cash shortages or other amounts owed to the school district by the employee.

Weather-Related Closings

If school is called off because of bad weather or for any other reason, it will be announced on KBRX radio, school social media, and the district alert system.

Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent. Staff members should treat the absence like any other absence for legitimate causes provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather (except in case of a tornado) at any time during the school day. Students will not normally be dismissed from school during severe weather on the basis of a telephone request.

Workplace Searches

To safeguard the property and interests of our students, employees, and patrons; to help prevent the possession, sale, and use of illegal drugs on school grounds, and in keeping with the spirit and intent of the district's drug-free workplace policy and other policies, the school district reserves the right to question employees and all other persons entering and leaving our premises, and to inspect any packages, parcels, purses, handbags, briefcases, lunch boxes, or any other possessions or articles carried to and from school when it has reasonable grounds to do so. The school also reserves the right to search any employee's office, desk, files, locker, or any other area or article on school grounds. All offices, desks, files, lockers, and so forth, are school district property and are issued or provided for the use of employees only during their employment with the district. Inspections may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the administration. Employees who refuse to cooperate with this provision will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING CERTIFIED STAFF

Absences

The accumulation of leave for teaching staff is governed by the Negotiated Agreement between the Board of Education and the Education Association. This handbook sets forth the process for using that leave

1. Sick Leave

Certified staff members who are too ill to perform their teaching duties must contact their building principal as soon as feasibly possible.

2. Paid Time Off Leave

The annual sick leave program has transitioned to a PTO program. At the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, the accrued sick leave balance will reflect the balance recorded at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year. The accrued sick leave balance has a fifty-five (55) day limitation.

- a. Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, full-time (part-time employee's leave will be pro-rated based on their FTE) certified personnel of the O'Neill Public School will be granted **eleven (11) days** each year of Paid Time Off (PTO) leave to be used at their discretion. PTO cannot be used on Parent/Teacher Conference days unless deemed an emergency or necessary and approved by the administration. PTO leave requests will be subject to administrative approval based on: (1) availability of substitutes; (2) adequate notice to the administration when possible; (3) number of staff that have already been approved for PTO leave on that day/time period. PTO may be used for illness, discretionary or prearranged absences.
- b. At the end of each contracted year, unused PTO leave becomes sick leave and will be added to the employee's personal sick leave bank.
- c. Sick leave can accumulate up to fifty-five (55) days which can be used for medical or family medical emergencies. No more than fifty-five (55) days can be accumulated. Immediate family shall be defined as: the employee's spouse, mother, father, child, or grandchild. The definition of immediate family may be expanded to include other individuals with the superintendent's approval.
- d. When a certified employee has used eight (8) current PTO days, they may access their accumulated personal sick bank for sick leave only.
- e. Teachers may donate unused sick/PTO leave for use by another teacher. Each day of donated sick/PTO leave shall result in one (1) day of sick leave available for use by another teacher. Teachers may only ask for sick leave donations if ALL available leave has been exhausted.

- f. Sick leave will be converted to hours instead of days and will be based on an eight (8) hour day. Sick leave may be used for doctor and dental appointments which cannot be scheduled before or after school hours. The administration may request a written statement from the doctor or dentist.
- g. Up to three (3) days of sick leave may be used for bereavement leave for the following family members: spouse, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, sister, brother, child, grandchild, spouse of any of these, or someone who bears a similar relationship to the spouse of the employee. Additional days for bereavement and funerals may be approved by the superintendent. Sick leave may be used for non-family funerals.
- h. Upon separation from the school district (i.e., retirement or resignation), certified staff will be paid \$100 for each remaining PTO day from that year.
- i. In the first year of this agreement (2023-2024), any sick or personal leave from the previous year that the employee has banked, will be added to the employee's personal sick leave bank.

3. Professional Leave

Each teacher shall be granted one (1) day of professional leave per year. Professional leave refers to time requested by teachers to engage in activities aimed at enhancing their skills, knowledge, and expertise related to their profession at their expense. For teachers, professional leave allows them to participate in workshops, conferences, research projects, or other development opportunities that contribute to their professional gain and ultimately benefit their students. It's a valuable opportunity for educators to stay updated with best practices, learn new teaching methodologies, explore innovative ideas, and collaborate with peers in the field of education.

4. Duty Leave

Duty leave for teachers refers to authorized time off at the request of the District/Principals for fulfilling specific professional responsibilities or obligations beyond their regular teaching duties. This type of leave may be provided to teachers for various reasons, including attending professional development workshops or conferences, fulfilling administrative duties, engaging in curriculum development activities, or representing the school or district at external meetings or functions. Duty leave allows teachers to contribute to the overall functioning and improvement of the educational institution while supporting their professional development.

5. Substitute Folders

Each teacher must prepare a substitute folder and keep the completed folder in his/her desk. The folder must contain:

- a) the current seating chart for each class;
- b) the daily routine followed by each class;
- c) all schedules (fire drill procedures, lunch schedule, etc.);
- d) a copy of this handbook is available in the building office or on the district

- website; and
- e) plans for the day if the teacher's absence was anticipated. (These plans are in addition to the teacher's regular lesson plan book.)

Assemblies

Classroom teachers must attend assemblies and pep rallies and sit with students to help maintain order.

All certified staff members should attend school assemblies and should try to attend as many of the school functions as possible regardless of whether they have specific assigned duties or not.

Assignment of Teachers

The administration will assign certified staff to individual duties. Certified staff will also be assigned for various forms of hall, extracurricular, recess, traffic, lunch period and other noontime duties, and athletic events.

Certificates, Teacher Contracts, Salary Information

Teaching certificates must be registered with the superintendent before they may legally be paid. It is the certified staff member's responsibility to make sure this is done.

Each certified staff member must provide the superintendent's office with the following information:

- a. social security number,
- b. retirement number,
- c. withholding form W-4, and
- d. authorization to withhold for insurance benefits.

Each new certified staff member must fill out forms for retirement benefits before the first pay day as well as the family coverage of the district hospital/medical insurance program.

It is the sole responsibility of the certified staff member to inform the superintendent of any changes, including but not limited to changes in certification, endorsements, benefits plans, and salary payment information.

Cheating

Students caught cheating (including plagiarizing) must be sent to the building principal for administrative discipline. The classroom teacher may also give the cheating student a zero grade for the test or assignment.

Students caught cheating may be sent to the building principal for administrative discipline per the severity of the incident. The classroom teacher may also give the cheating student a zero grade for the test or assignment or a possibility to earn back credit. The procedures are also spelled out in the Student Handbook.

Check-out Forms

All certified staff must complete a check-out form and obtain the building principal's signature on the form prior to departing for the summer. Classrooms must be tidy to allow the custodial staff to clean classrooms and work areas. Certified staff members who do not clean their work area before departing for the summer will not receive their paychecks until the work is completed.

Classroom Management and Student Discipline

Classroom discipline is first and foremost the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Individual teachers are expected to assume responsibility for good discipline throughout the school system. However, if a certified staff member needs assistance with student discipline, they should seek the advice and counsel of the principal or superintendent.

Classroom teachers may not leave their classrooms unless the students are supervised by a competent adult.

Classroom teachers should have a well-defined discipline plan that is known to the students. Rules and consequences should be stated clearly and posted where appropriate.

Each building has its own specific procedures concerning student discipline. Classroom teachers should consult with their building principal for more information.

Teachers may remove a student from the classroom for failure to comply with established rules of conduct. Only an administrator can suspend or expel students from class or school and due process must be followed.

Students may be kept after school for matters relating to discipline or to assist in their academic progress. Certified staff should allow all elementary students and junior/senior high students who ride the bus to arrange for parental transportation with their parents/guardians. Students who do not have transportation concerns may be kept without delay. Students may not avoid being kept after school because they have an after school practice or other school activity.

Both elementary and secondary certified staff are responsible for assisting with hallway discipline between classes and in the school lunchroom.

Classes should begin on time and end promptly. Work should continue throughout the period assigned for it. Classroom teachers have no right to waste the pupils' time. Classroom teachers may not dismiss classes early except by permission of the building principal.

Staff members may never send a student off school grounds without the authorization of the building principal.

Classroom Sanitation

1. Handling of Body Fluids

All body fluids of all persons should be considered to potentially contain infectious agents (germs). Hand washing after contact with a school child is

recommended if physical contact has been made with any child's blood or body fluids. The term "body fluids" includes: blood, semen, drainage from scrapes and cuts, tears, feces, urine, vomit, respiratory secretions, and saliva.

2. Infectious Diseases

Certified staff should promptly report any indication of an infectious or contagious disease to the school nurse or building principal. Certified staff should report to the school nurse or the student's parents any pupil whom they suspect of having been exposed to any infectious or contagious disease.

Coaching Supplies

Coaching supplies will be distributed by the activities director. Coaches should request additional supplies from the activities director only when they have run out of supplies.

Coaches must fill out and submit inventory forms to the activities director immediately after the season is complete.

Collection of Student Money

Staff members must comply with the school district's student fee policy before collecting any funds from students.

Money collected from students should be turned into the office on the day it is collected for deposit in the proper activity or school district fund. Any checks written by students or parents for various payments should be made out to O'Neill Public Schools, unless otherwise instructed. Certified staff must submit a **financial accountability form** when they turn funds into the office.

When students purchase items such as coats, rings, etc., through the school district, they must pay for these and other major items before the order is sent. The sponsor of any school organization is not to give merchandise to students; items will be distributed by the office after proper payment.

Community Involvement

Certified staff are encouraged to take part in civic affairs in the community and must do so when required by state law and board policy.

Display of Classroom Work in the School and the Community

Classroom teachers are encouraged to display student work for public viewing. Students and parents enjoy viewing the display and may be even more supportive of their school because the display shows them many of the things the students do. Classroom teachers may use the window area of the office or the commons area to display student work or they may use it during a night activity. Certified staff must contact the building principal before displaying student work at an evening activity.

Duties of Certified Staff

The duties of certified staff include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Becoming acquainted with board policies, district rules and regulations, and the state laws concerning teachers and pupils.
- b) Attending such education conferences as are required by law or administrative directives.
- c) Attending school assemblies unless excused by the principal.
- d) Instructing pupils in the proper use of equipment and instructional supplies.
- e) Reporting in writing to the principal any injury to any child while under the jurisdiction of the school, including athletic injuries.
- f) Complying with the Teachers Professional Code of Ethics which has been promulgated by the Nebraska Department of Education (92 Neb. Admin. Code § 27) and adopted by the Board of Education of the district.
- g) Discussing a student only with the child's parents and the superintendent, building principal, guidance counselor or classroom teachers who may know the circumstances and have a need to know. It is unprofessional and inappropriate to discuss students or other staff members in the staff lounge.
- h) Being responsible for students whom they keep in school at times other than during regular school time. Certified staff will be responsible for any special work done by their students, including field trips, joint assemblies, school programs, etc.
- i) Refraining from joining book clubs or film clubs using the school name.
- j) Turning in all monies collected to the main office by the end of the school day.
- k) Clearing all class meetings or trips through the principal's office.
- l) Participating in Student Assistance Teams pursuant to board policy.
- m) Assisting with the administration of standardized testing as assigned by the administration.
- n) Provide homebound instruction as assigned by the administration.
- o) Performing additional duties as assigned by the administration.

Eligibility Grades 7-12

Student academic eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities will be determined on a weekly basis. A student will become ineligible by maintaining an average of less than fifty-nine point five percent (59.5%) in two or more classes weekly. Eligibility will be based on the weekly cumulative semester mathematical average of each student. The report will be generated from PowerSchool beginning on the Monday following Labor Day for the first semester and the last Monday in January for the second semester. The ineligibility period will begin on Monday at 4:00 pm and will extend through Sunday evening. This list will be shared with all staff members and will be the basis for academic eligibility. The principal, or their designee, will notify parents of students on the "Academic Ineligibility List" by phone, mail, or email on Mondays. Students have until 3:59 pm each Monday to improve their grades or they will be deemed ineligible. At the discretion of the sponsor, ineligible students will be allowed to participate in practice. Activities affected by the eligibility rule are:

1. All interscholastic contests, including but not limited to, athletics, FFA, FCCLA, speech contests, and similar organizations or events.
2. Cheerleading.
3. Music competition, performances (except Christmas and Spring concerts), and clinics.
4. All school dances.

5. Other activities deemed appropriate by the principal.

A student deemed academically ineligible by the criteria above will not be eligible to participate in or miss class to attend extracurricular activities for one week.

- Junior High students involved in sports activities during the eighth period will still be allowed to practice.
- The above rules are minimum standards to be followed by all co-curricular participants of O'Neill Jr/Sr High Schools. Co-curricular activities include, but are not limited to, the following: athletics, drama, speech contests, cheerleading, flag corps, FCCLA, FFA, music programs, etc.

Note: NSAA Activities require students to receive 20 credit hours the preceding semester.

Extracurricular Activities

Staff must schedule all events and other extracurricular activities at the activities director's office to avoid conflicts. Activities must be put on the school calendar located in the activities director's office at least one week before the activity. Staff should avoid or shorten practices and activities on Wednesday evenings and Sundays, in order to give students sufficient time away from school for family-related activities.

Certain activities require time to be scheduled outside regular school hours. Any school sponsored activity involving students must have approval of the building principal prior to the activity, including all fund raising activities.

Regular classroom work in all grades will have precedence over any other activity. Students will not be dismissed from classes to participate in extracurricular activities without permission from the building principal. Make up slips must be completely signed and returned to the sponsor of the activity prior to dismissal from class. All evening activities, except practices, must have no less than two school sponsors. Non school sponsors must be approved by the administration. If vehicles are used for transportation, the drivers must be adults who have been approved by the school.

The activities director has the responsibility for all activities. Therefore, any ruling or handbook decision he/she makes will be school regulation in lieu of further board action.

No student may participate in a field trip off school property without written permission of his or her parent or guardian.

Evacuations

Early in the semester, classroom teachers should review instructions for leaving the classroom with all of their students. Classroom teachers should also periodically review with each class what to do in case of fire, tornado or other emergency.

1. Fire Drills

Fire drills will be held on a regular basis. Certified staff may or may not be notified in advance. These drills are important exercises that help ensure the safety of students in case of an emergency.

When the fire alarm is sounded, all students and staff immediately must cease the activity in which they are engaged and leave the building at once, following these regulations:

- (a) Students nearest the windows will close them before leaving.
- (b) The classroom teacher will be the last to leave the room. He or she will turn out all the lights and close the door as he or she leaves.
- (c) Classroom teachers will take their fire drill packets with them when they leave their classrooms.
- (d) The first two students reaching the exit doors will hold the doors wide open until everyone has filed out.
- (e) Staff and students will move far enough away from the building to avoid possible injury from fire and falling embers, and also, to remain clear of emergency vehicle traffic.
- (f) Once outside, each teacher must account for every student in the class. Classroom teachers will take roll for their class and;
 - hold up a Green Card (all students accounted for)
 - hold up a Red Card (missing/injured student(s) listed)
 - hold up a White Card (extra student(s) listed)

The signal to return to the school building will be the short bell. It will be sounded upon completion of the drill. Students will return in an orderly manner.

2. Tornado Drills

When a tornado warning has been issued, the school will evacuate classrooms and move students to the designated tornado shelters. Tornado alerts will be given via the intercom system. When a tornado alert is given, all students and staff immediately must cease the activity in which they are engaged immediately and seek shelter, following these regulations:

- (a) All students and staff should proceed to the designated tornado shelter.
- (b) Once in the assigned area, each teacher must account for every student in the class.
- (c) Classroom teachers should be sure that each student is sitting with his or her back to the wall, their knees up and their heads should be between their legs.

3. Protocol for all Evacuations

Upon evacuation signals, all students and staff must exit each building. Classroom teachers should do the following:

- (a) Take the class roster;
- (b) Lock the classroom door after all occupants have exited the room;
- (c) Keep the class together and move promptly in an orderly fashion; and
- (d) Upon arriving at the evacuation point, take roll, maintain order, and supervise students.

Evaluations

The appropriate district administrator will evaluate tenured and probationary teachers as required by law and district policy. Additional evaluations, both formal and informal, may be conducted as the district administration deems appropriate. Copies of the district's evaluation forms are contained at the end of this handbook.

Faculty Meetings

The superintendent and building principals will call meetings as needed. Certified staff are required to be present at all faculty meetings unless excused by the administration.

Field Trip Request Forms

Certified staff who wish to take students off school property must submit a request to the superintendent, or his/her designee, in advance of the requested activity.

Elementary grades will be limited to one field trip per year. Additional requests may be granted on a case by case basis.

Grading Policy

Grades must be entered in PowerSchool before 8:30 am on each Monday.

Grades are given as a letter or percentage as requested by the building principal. No incomplete or condition grades will be given, but grades may be changed by request of the classroom teacher to the principal. If a student fails the first semester and passes the second semester, a classroom teacher may pass a student for the full year.

A student is to be graded on academic performance. **A student's grade is not to be reduced for discipline.** Prejudice or favoritism has no place in grading a student. All grading should be explained in simple, understandable terms to the student.

Classroom teachers should provide students and parents with frequent updates regarding the student's progress during the quarter. At the conclusion of each quarter, students will receive an end-of-quarter report card. Classroom teachers should use the following symbols for each subject area:

A	100% - 92.5%	C	76.4% - 72.5%
A-	92.4% - 89.5%	C-	72.4% - 69.5%
B+	89.4% - 86.5%	D+	69.4% - 66.5%
B	86.4% - 82.5%	D	66.4% - 62.5%
B-	82.4% - 79.5%	D-	62.4% - 59.5%
C+	79.4% - 76.5%	F	Below 59.4%

Guest Lecturers

Guest lecturers must be approved by the administration before they are asked to address a class. The guest lecturer must have a specific, relatable objective in his/her lecture.

Hall Duty

Every classroom teacher is on hall duty before school in the morning and between classes. Classroom teachers are responsible especially for the part of the hall adjacent to their

classrooms.

Homework Policy

Homework is an important part of student learning. When parents, teachers, and students work together, out-of-class assignments are a valuable part of the instructional program. Homework should provide opportunities for students to practice acquired skills, develop initiative, form independent study habits, and use community resources.

Instructional Materials

Instructional materials are made available through the Educational Service Unit. A catalog and order forms will be made available to all members. Films should be used as instructional materials. All media must be previewed for suitability by the classroom teacher before being shown to students.

Lesson Plans

Lesson plans need to be available and can be reviewed by the administration upon request.

Media Center

The media center is set up to serve the needs of certified staff and students. Certified staff who need assistance with textbooks, literature sets, magazines and other reference materials should consult with the media specialist assigned to their building.

Classroom teachers may send individual students to use the media center during class time, but should contact the media staff before sending a group of students during class. The media staff may send disruptive students back to class or study hall, or may exclude unruly students from the media center for a specified period of time. Classroom teachers who send their entire class to the media center must accompany and supervise the students, unless prior arrangements have been made with the media specialist.

Paraeducators

Paraeducators provide valuable assistance in the educational process and allow teachers to carry out their responsibilities in a more efficient and effective manner. A paraeducator must not, however, assume teaching responsibilities. The classroom teacher must maintain the role of leadership and responsibility for the students, with the paraeducator in a supportive role. Paraeducators may be used to assist the classroom teacher by, among other tasks, assisting with instructional activities under the direction of the teacher, helping to supervise students, copying tests and other written material, organizing class materials, preparing bulletin boards, grading tests or class work, and calculating and recording grades. Paraeducators are to work only on and within their assigned work days. If the classroom teacher desires the paraeducator to work hours other than the assigned work hours or assigned work day, he or she must contact the administration for approval.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Students' academic success has been closely linked to parental involvement in school. Certified staff should strive to develop open and supportive relationships with parents and guardians.

Each classroom teacher is responsible for keeping a student's parents informed about the student's progress. This may be done by letter, telephone, e-mail, or personal conference. Certified staff must attend parent teacher conferences, promptly return phone calls, participate in teacher events for students and parents, and where necessary utilize a planner as a communication tool. Certified staff who need additional support in communicating with parents should contact their building principal or guidance counselor.

Parties

1. No activities or picnics shall be held by an organization of the school without the presence of the sponsor or sponsors.
2. The number of activities and the closing hour for activities will be determined by the building principal and organization sponsor.
3. In making arrangements for activities and picnics, staff must avoid disturbing the routine of the school.
4. Cleaning up after the activity is the responsibility of the sponsor.

Planning Time

Each classroom teacher is provided with duty-free time for planning, preparation of school-related materials, and a brief respite from the duties of the day.

The Board defines planning time as time for educational planning and other task-related functions that cannot normally be accomplished during instructional periods. Planning time should not be confused with personal time. **Planning time is not to be used for running personal errands, conducting personal business, or pursuing non-school hobbies and/or interests.**

PowerSchool

All teachers will be required to use PowerSchool. Attendance will be taken as follows: Elementary – at the beginning of the morning, and Secondary – at the beginning of every period. Attendance must be taken within the first five minutes of each period/beginning session.

A "comment bank" will be developed for comments on progress reports, report cards, and discipline reports at a later date. You may use the "comment bank" or enter your own free-form comment.

Certified staff who have trouble/problems with PowerSchool, should contact the building office.

Private Tutoring

Classroom teachers must provide individual assistance to students as a part of their duties. Any certified staff member who engages in private tutoring for pay (compensation of any kind from a source other than the District) is subject to the following rules:

- Certified staff may not arrange to provide private tutoring for any child enrolled in the staff member's class.
- Certified staff are not to provide private tutoring in a school building.
- Certified staff are not to provide private tutoring during duty time.

- Certified staff are prohibited from advertising or promoting the private tutoring services in the school or in the school's communications systems except with the express permission of the superintendent or designee.

Projection Maps

The school district will only use the Gall-Peters projection map or a similar cylindrical equal-area projection map or the AuthaGraph projection map for display or use in the classroom. Use of the Mercator projection map is prohibited unless:

1. The Mercator projection map is used in conjunction with other projection maps in a teaching exercise to demonstrate that all maps are flawed in some way and different map projections serve different functions and may affect how individuals view the world; or
2. The Mercator projection map is part of any:
 - a. book or material obtained prior to July 19, 2024; or geographic information system; or computer program that renders a three-dimensional representation of Earth based primarily on satellite imagery, such as Google Earth or similar software; and
 - b. a Gall-Peters projection map or similar cylindrical equal-area projection map or an AuthaGraph projection map is displayed in the classroom or shown to students during the lesson in which a Mercator projection map is used.

Rights of Certified and Probationary Teachers

Certified and probationary teachers are entitled to the legal and procedural rights outlined in the board policies and state and federal law with regard to the amendment, cancellation, or termination of the teacher's employment contract. For specific questions relating to those procedural or legal rights, please refer to the district's board policies.

School Day

All certified staff must be at school or on duty between the hours of 7:45 am and 3:45 pm, Monday through Friday. Under special circumstances, certified staff may seek permission from their building principal to vary these duty hours. In addition, certified staff may be assigned responsibilities at other hours by the principal or superintendent for supervising or directing school activities or affairs or for participation in affairs under the direct sponsorship of the school.

Each teacher will be in his or her classroom and ready to teach at 8:00 am each day. Classroom teachers will stand at their doors when class is dismissed and must be outside their classroom doors before each class period. Classroom teachers must be physically present in their classrooms at all times during class periods and conference periods.

Personal work may not be done on school time.

Sponsors

Certified staff members are assigned by the administration as class and club sponsors. Sponsors

must be present at all meetings and activities of the sponsored group. The procedure for activity accounts and meetings can be found in the student manual. Purchasing of supplies must be approved by the superintendent.

Student Activities

Staff members who sponsor extracurricular activities such as athletics, class plays, and class activities may leave the school building only after making sure that all students and other individuals have left the building. No student is to be left unattended in the school building at any time.

School-owned clothing or equipment that is checked out to students remains the property of the school. The clothing or equipment is not to be used or worn by the student except for its intended use. Each piece of equipment or clothing is to be returned to the instructor or coach when the season or the use for such clothing or equipment is over. Certified staff will be held responsible for clothing and equipment that is not returned.

Student Aides

Student aides are to be directly supervised by the certified staff member and are not to leave the building or be in the halls or anywhere they are not being supervised. Student aides are not to be used to assist the certified staff member by helping supervise another student, grade tests or class work, calculate student grades, or record grades. Keys are NEVER to be given to students, whether they are student aides or not. A student aide should not be present and assisting a certified staff member without another adult present after the end of regular teacher duty hours.

Student Attendance

Students are expected to arrive at each class, be seated and ready for instruction prior to the beginning of the class day or class period, as appropriate. Student tardiness is the classroom teacher's professional responsibility. Classroom teachers must insist that students be on time.

Each teacher must maintain an accurate record of student attendance each day. Classroom teachers must carefully check and record attendance information at the beginning of each school day and, in upper grades, at the beginning of each period. Students and student assistants are not permitted to check attendance. Excessive absenteeism should be reported to the building principal or guidance counselor.

Students returning from an absence must report to the office prior to going to class. A returning absentee must show each classroom teacher the admittance pass that was issued by the school office. No student should be accepted back into class after an absence without this pass.

A student who departs school during the school day must report to the office and sign out before leaving the building. A student who returns during the school day must sign in at the building office before returning to class.

Student Attire

The responsibility for proper daily grooming and dress is primarily the responsibility of students and parents/guardians. However, certified staff members must insist that students do not remain in school while wearing attire that violates the dress code set forth in the Student Handbook.

Classroom teachers must report students who are not in compliance with the dress code to the building principal. The final decision on what is considered proper grooming and appearance is the responsibility of the building principal.

Student Illness

In the event of student illness or injury, classroom teachers should notify the building principal or superintendent immediately. Staff should never send a student home without notifying school officials and checking to see if his/her parents are home.

Student Medication

Student medications should not be dispensed by staff members unless they follow the following procedures.

No staff members other than the school nurse, or trained designee, may dispense medications (prescription or over-the-counter) to students at any time. Students may, with written parental or guardian permission, self-administer medications such as aspirin and cough syrup or cough drops.

Staff members are not authorized to dispense prescription medicine without an agreement with a parent or guardian to provide a prescription container for the medicine that includes a pharmaceutical label, the physician's name, a child guard cap and directions for administering the medication.

After receiving the medication, the school employee should lock the medication in a cabinet or place it in an area where access is restricted to school employees only.

Student Searches

Certified staff members may not search students or their belongings. If a staff member suspects that a student is in possession of contraband, he/she should immediately contact a member of the administration and supervise the student until the administrator arrives. Students who are suspected of having an item in violation of school rules may be directed to wait with a staff member.

Students' Records

1. Each classroom teacher must keep a set of records in PowerSchool of the class recitations, tests, exams, daily work, notebook, etc. This serves as a justification of the final grade in case of dispute between teacher and pupil, or teacher and parent, and assists in making out the final grades.
2. Report cards will be issued within one week following the end of the quarter/semester unless otherwise announced.

- a) Reports should be conscientiously and accurately made because they are a serious estimate of the degree of success of the pupil.
- b) Each classroom teacher should be adequately prepared to defend all decisions given on the report card.
- c) Classroom teachers must confer with the building principal before recording any incomplete, failing, or conditional grades on report cards.

Substitute Teaching During Planning Period

Certified staff may be required to substitute during their planning period. They will be compensated \$18 for subbing during their planning period.

Teaching Controversial Issues

Teachers may teach or lead discussions about controversial issues if they comply with the following criteria:

- The issues discussed must be relevant to the curriculum and be part of a planned educational program.
- Students must have free access to appropriate materials and information for analysis and evaluation of the issues.
- The teacher must encourage students to consider and discuss a variety of viewpoints.
- The topic and materials used must be within the range, knowledge, maturity, and competence of the students.
- The teacher must inform parents and the building principal before discussing sensitive or controversial issues.
- The teacher must keep detailed, documentary evidence to prove that both sides and/or all facts available were presented.
- Teachers must refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda through any classroom or a school device; however, a teacher shall not be prohibited from expressing a personal opinion as long as the student is encouraged to reach his/her own decision independently.

Textbooks

Classroom teachers will issue textbooks to the students, keeping a record of the number and condition of the book assigned to each student. If the books are new, classroom teachers must make sure the books are stamped and numbered before distribution.

Textbooks are to be stored in the classroom or storeroom. Textbooks are to be checked out to the students with teachers keeping an accurate record of each book by number in the place provided in grade books. Students are to pay for lost or damaged books. Student textbooks must be covered with a book cover.

Workbooks do not become the property of the students and in most cases should be retained by the school.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING CLASSIFIED STAFF

Employment Terms for Classified Staff

Each position listed below shall be hired by the superintendent on the terms and conditions stated.

Head and Assistant Custodian

- ◆ Employed on a 12-month basis
- ◆ Provided appropriate level of insurance coverage.
 - Full premium benefit for single health & single dental coverage
 - 70% of premium benefit for any other level of health and dental coverage
- ◆ Allowed ten (10) days paid vacation per year. Vacation days will be accrued monthly. Five (5) additional days of vacation will be granted after 10 years of service with the district. Unused vacation will be allowed to accumulate to a maximum of twenty (20) days. The unused balance above twenty (20) days will be paid up at the end of each contract year.
- ◆ Allowed ten (10) days of sick leave per year, cumulative to a maximum of 55 days.
- ◆ Leave can be taken in ½ or 1 hour increments and will be calculated on the employee's scheduled work day.
- ◆ Paid holidays include Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Easter, Independence Day and Memorial Day

District Office Secretaries

- ◆ Employed on a 12-month basis
- ◆ Provided appropriate level of insurance coverage.
 - Full premium benefit for single health & single dental coverage
 - 70% of premium benefit for any other level of health and dental coverage
- ◆ Allowed ten (10) days paid vacation per year. Vacation days will be accrued monthly. Five (5) additional days of vacation will be granted after 10 years of service with the district. Unused vacation will be allowed to accumulate to a maximum of twenty (20) days. The unused balance above twenty (20) days will be paid up at the end of each contract year.
- ◆ Allowed ten (10) days of sick leave per year, cumulative to a maximum of 55 days.
- ◆ Leave can be taken in ½ or 1 hour increments and will be calculated on the employee's scheduled work day.
- ◆ Paid holidays include Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Easter, Independence Day and Memorial Day

Building Secretaries

- ◆ Employed on an hourly basis only as needed
- ◆ Provided single health and single dental Insurance with the option to elect additional coverage at the employee's expense.
- ◆ Allowed one (1) day of vacation leave per year of service up to six (6) days. Unused vacation leave will be paid up at the end of the school year.

- ◆ Allowed ten (10) days of sick leave per year, cumulative to a maximum of 55 days.
- ◆ Leave can be taken in ½ or 1 hour increments and will be calculated on the employee's scheduled work day.
- ◆ Paid holidays include Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Easter and Memorial Day.

Paraeducators

- ◆ Employed on an hourly basis only as needed
- ◆ Provided single health and single dental Insurance with the option to elect additional coverage at the employee's expense.
- ◆ Allowed one (1) day of vacation leave per year of service up to five (5) days. Unused vacation leave will be paid up at the end of the school year.
- ◆ Allowed ten (10) days of sick leave per year, cumulative to a maximum of 55 days.
- ◆ Leave can be taken in ½ or 1 hour increments and will be calculated on the employee's scheduled work day.
- ◆ Paid holidays include Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Easter.

Other Provisions Applicable to All Classified Staff

Rate of Pay

All classified staff shall be paid an hourly rate.

Classified employees who work more than 40 hours in a workweek shall receive 1½ times their regular hourly rate for each hour over 40 worked.

At-Will Employment

Classified staff members are employed "at-will." Either you or the school district may terminate your employment at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice. This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, guaranteeing employment for any specific duration.

Bereavement Leave

All requests for bereavement leave should be submitted to the superintendent or building principal. Bereavement leave will be deducted from your sick leave balance.

Holidays

Employees will receive paid time off on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

Holidays falling on a Saturday are normally observed on the preceding Friday. Holidays falling on a Sunday are normally observed on the following Monday.

Classified employees will generally be required to work their regularly scheduled hours the workday preceding and workday following the holiday in order to be eligible to receive holiday pay.

Hours

Work hours vary with the classified staff member's department and position. Meetings will occasionally be scheduled before or after normal working hours.

It is vital that the district's employees arrive at work punctually and consistently. Staff members who are chronically late or excessively absent will be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Overtime

All classified staff members must keep an accurate record of all hours worked for the district. The only exceptions are those who have been notified in writing that they are exempt from this time-keeping requirement. Employees who are "non-exempt" under the Fair Labor Standards Act and who work more than 40 hours in a workweek will be paid at the rate of time-and-one-half (1½) times their regular rate of pay for all overtime hours. All planned overtime must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Scheduled holidays, vacation days, time off for jury duty, and time off for sickness, emergencies or other personal reasons will not be considered hours worked for overtime purposes. Classified staff should not work more than forty hours in a given week without the express permission of their immediate supervisor. Those who accrue more than forty hours in a given workweek will receive overtime pursuant to board policy.

Reporting When School is Closed

When school is closed due to inclement weather, classified staff should report to work based on their positions:

- 1) **Secretaries/Clerical staff** should not report to work unless specifically directed to do so by their supervisor or the superintendent.
- 2) **Paraeducators** should not report to work unless teaching staff are asked to report.
- 3) **Custodians/Maintenance staff** should report to work.

Classified staff can elect to use vacation leave on days closed due to inclement weather.

Sick Leave

Full-time classified employees will receive 10 days of sick leave based on the employee's scheduled work day. A staff member who is too ill to come to work, or who has a qualifying family member who is too ill to be left alone, must notify his or her immediate supervisor as soon as feasibly possible. Classified employees shall not be paid for accrued unused sick days at the end of the school year or in the event of termination/separation of employment.

Vacation

Eligible classified employees will receive paid vacation each school year. Employees should consult with their immediate supervisor for vacation information.

Classified employees shall be paid for any unused vacation days in the event of termination/separation of employment.

STAFF DIRECTORY

Administrative Staff

Mike Rotherham	Superintendent
Will Wragge	Jr-Sr High School Principal
Bryan Corkle	Asst. Jr-Sr High Principal
Jim York	Elementary Principal
Tricia Wiseman.....	Asst. Elementary Principal
Jill Brodersen.....	Special Education Director
Nate Larsen	Activities Director

District Office Staff

Terry Kloppenborg	Purchasing
Kathy Marvin	Payroll, Benefits
Jordan Schneider	Budget, Grants, Food Program

Child Nutrition Program

Unknown	Food Service Director
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Building & Grounds

Lenny Kraniewski	Secondary Head Custodian
Brandon Jackson	Elementary Head Custodian

POLICY #4012 - STAFF INTERNET & COMPUTER USE

Internet access is an important tool for communicating, keeping up-to-date with current developments in education, and for conducting research to enhance management, teaching and learning skills. The following procedures and guidelines are intended to ensure appropriate use of the Internet at the school by the district's faculty and staff. Staff should also refer to the district's policy on Staff and District Social Media Use.

I. Staff Expectations in Use of the Internet

A. Acceptable Use While on Duty or on School Property

1. Staff shall be restricted to use the Internet to conduct research for instructional purposes.
2. Staff may use the Internet for school-related e-mail communication with fellow educators, students, parents, and patrons.
3. Staff may use the Internet in any other way which serves a legitimate educational purpose and that is consistent with district policy and good professional judgment.

4. Teachers should integrate the use of electronic resources into the classroom. As the quality and integrity of content on the Internet is not guaranteed, teachers must examine the source of the information and provide guidance to students on evaluating the quality of information they may encounter on the Internet.

B. Unacceptable Use While on Duty or on School Property

1. Staff shall not access obscene or pornographic material.
2. Staff shall not engage in any illegal activities on school computers, including the downloading and reproduction of copyrighted materials.
3. Staff shall not use school computers or district internet access to use peer-to-peer sharing systems such as BitTorrent, or participate in any activity which interferes with the staff member's ability to perform their assigned duties.
4. The only political advocacy allowed by staff on school computers or district internet access is that which is permitted by the Political Accountability and Disclosure Act and complies with district policy.
5. Staff shall not share their passwords with anyone, including students, volunteers or fellow employees.

II. School Affiliated Websites

Staff must obtain the permission of the administration prior to creating or publishing any school-affiliated web page which represents itself to be school-related, or which could be reasonably understood to be school-related. This includes any website which identifies the school district by name or which uses the school's mascot name or image.

Staff must provide administrators with the username and password for all school-affiliated web pages and must only publish content appropriate for the school setting. Staff must also comply with all board policies in their school-affiliated websites and must comply with the board's policy on professional boundaries between staff and students at all times and in all contexts.

Publication of student work or personality-identifiable student information on the Internet may violate the Federal Education Records Privacy Act. Staff must obtain the consent of their building principal or the superintendent prior to posting any student-related information on the Internet.

III. Enforcement

A. Methods of Enforcement

The district owns the computer system and monitors e-mail and Internet communications, Internet usage, and patterns of Internet usage. Staff members have no right of privacy in any electronic communications or files, which are stored or accessed on or using school property and these are subject to search and inspection at any time.

1. The district uses a technology protection measure that blocks access to some sites that are not in accordance with the district's policy. Standard use of the Internet utilizes a proxy server-based filter that screens for non-curriculum related pages.
2. Due to the nature of technology, the filter may sometimes block pages that are appropriate for staff research. The system administrator may override the technology protection measures that blocks or filters Internet access for staff access to a site with legitimate educational value that is wrongly blocked.
3. The district will monitor staff use of the Internet by monitoring Internet use history to ensure enforcement of this policy.

B. Any violation of school policy and rules may result in that staff member facing:

1. Discharge from employment or such other discipline as the administration and/or the board deem appropriate;
2. The filing of a complaint with the Commissioner of Education alleging unprofessional conduct by a certified staff member;
3. When appropriate, the involvement of law enforcement agencies in investigating and prosecuting wrongdoing.

IV. Off-Duty Personal Use

School employees may use the internet, school computers, and other school technology while not on duty for personal use as long as such use is (1) consistent with other district policies, (2) consistent with the provisions of Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 27 (Nebraska Department of Education "Rule 27"), and (3) is reported as compensation in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and taxes, if any, are paid. All of the provisions of Rule 27 will apply to non-certificated staff for the purposes of this policy. In addition, employees may not use the school's internet, computers, or other technology to access obscene or pornographic material, sext, or engage in any illegal activities.

POLICY #3057 - TITLE IX

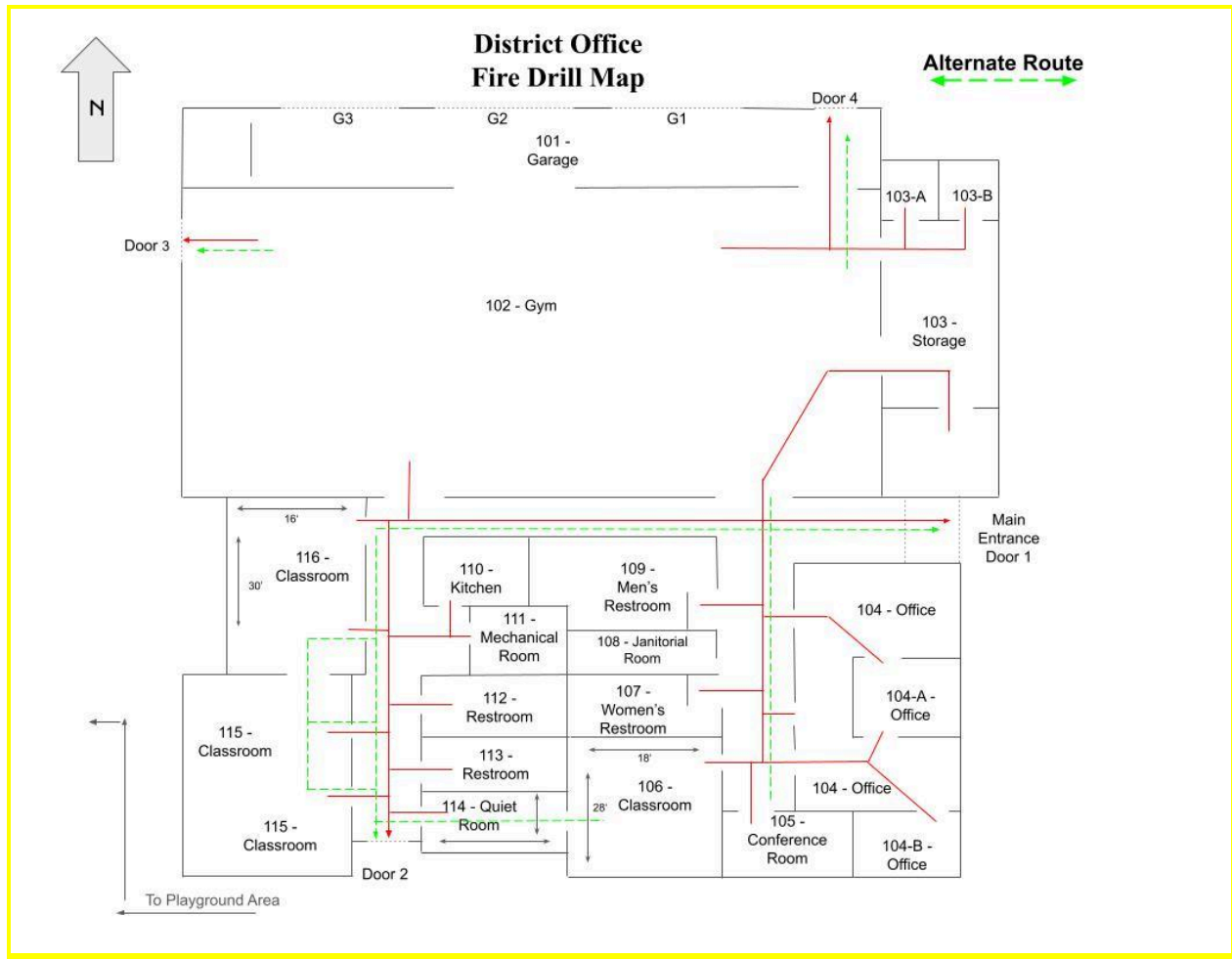
As required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is the policy of the district that no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any of the district's programs or activities, or in regards to admission or employment. Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. This report must be made by any means to the district's Title IX Coordinator whose contact information can be found on the district's website and in the district's student and staff handbooks. Any other inquiries regarding the application of this policy should be referred to the Title IX Coordinator.

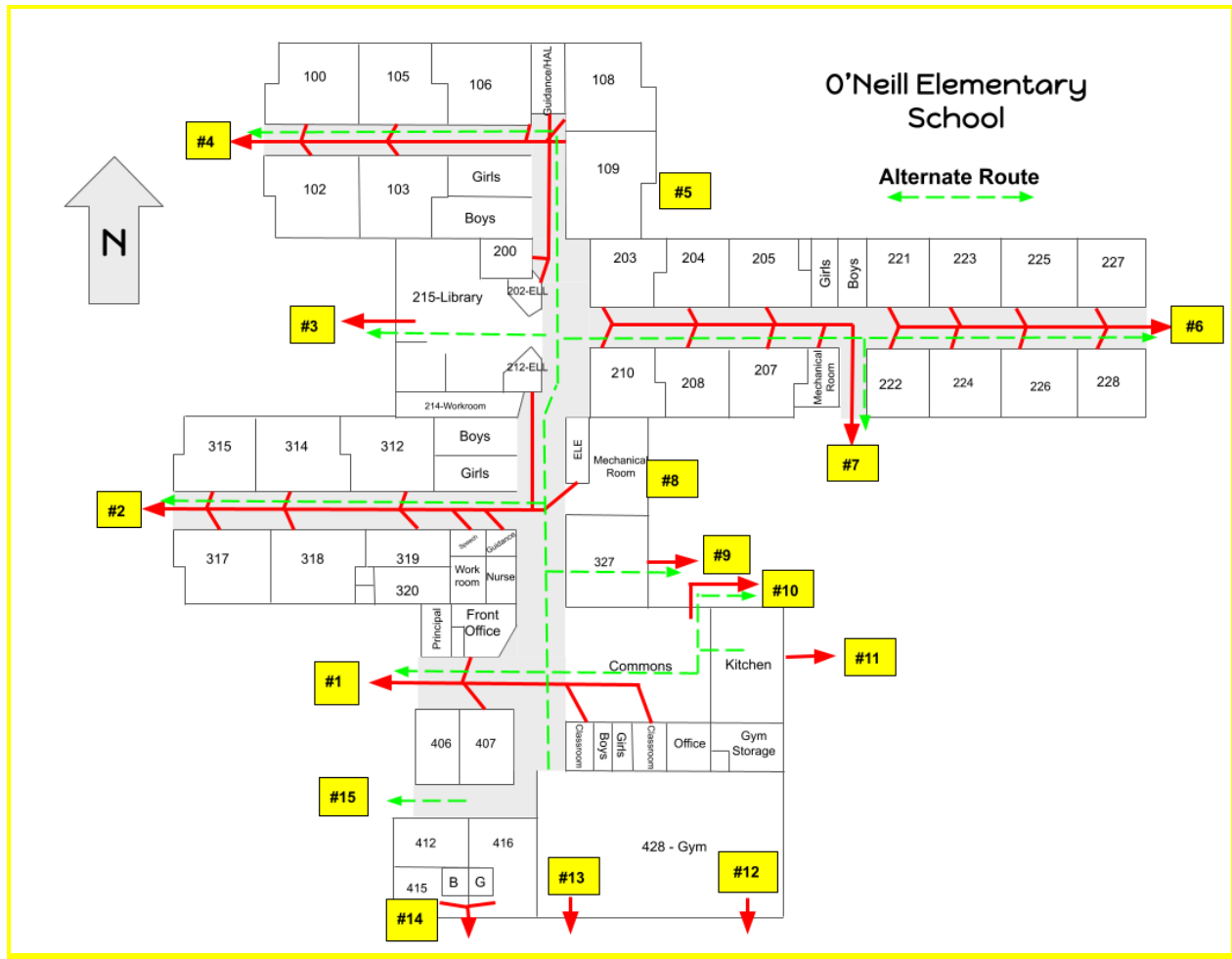
O'NEILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS CALENDAR

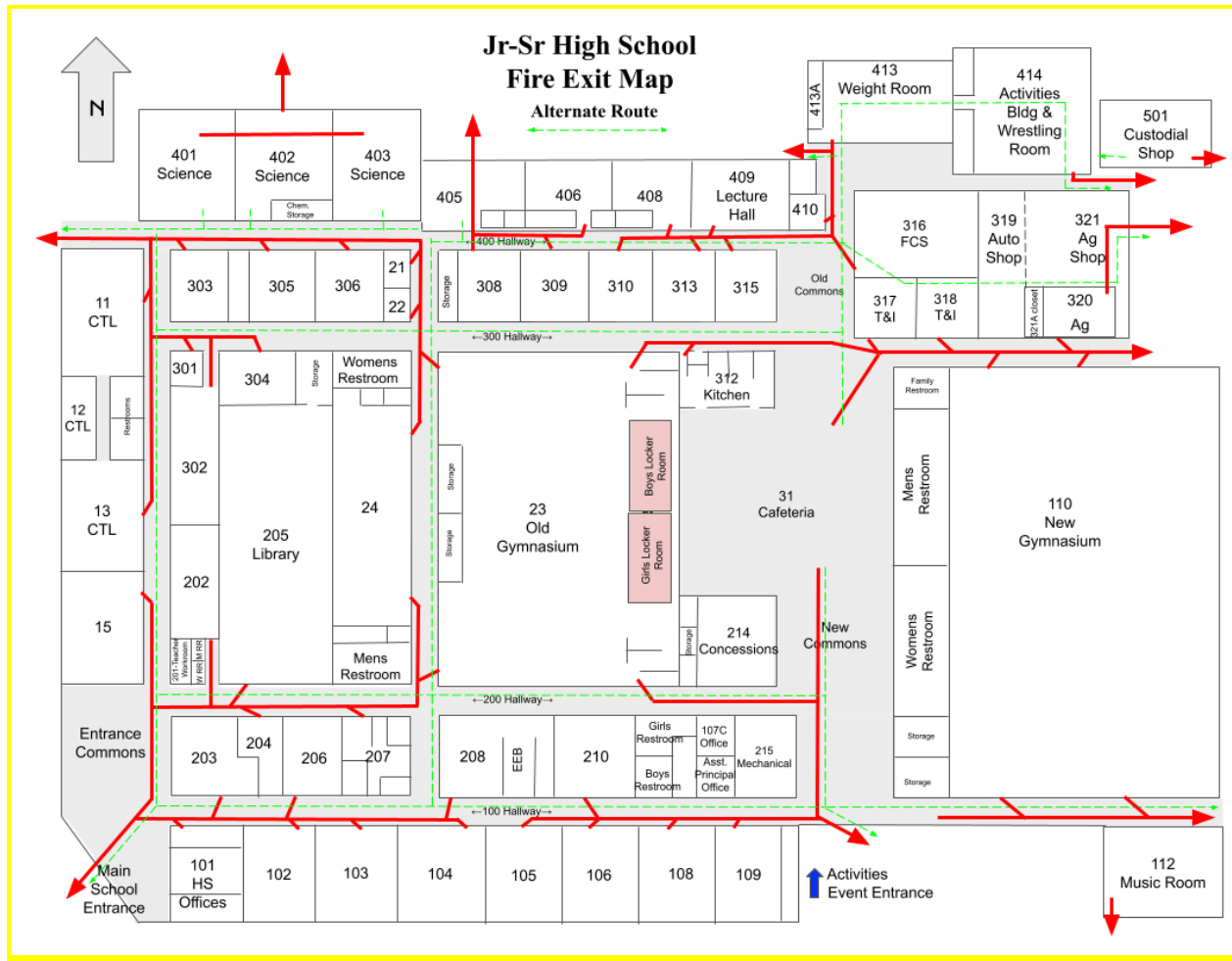
Approved 02-10-2025

Updated 06-09-2025

1st Day of Practices School Board Meeting Staff Development First Day of School - 12:30 Dismissal T - 15 H - 12 E - 12	August							February							No School - Students - 10-12 Staff Development - 12-6 K-12 P/T Conferences School Board Meeting No School - Students - Staff Development No School T - 19 H - 17 E - 17	
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
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No School - Labor Day School Board Meeting No School - Students - 10-12 Staff Development - 12-6 K-12 P/T Conferences No School - Students - Staff Development T - 21 H - 19 E - 19	September							March							No School No School End of 3rd Quarter School Board Meeting No School - Students - Staff Development T - 19 H - 18 E - 18	
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							28 29 30									
School Board Meeting No School - Students - District FCCLA - Staff Development End of 1st Quarter No School - Fall Break T - 22 H - 21 E - 21	October							April							No School - Easter Break 10:00 Late Start School Board Meeting No School - Students - Flex Staff Contract Day No School - Students - District Music Contest - Flex Staff Contract Day T - 20 H - 19 E - 19	
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							26 27 28 29 30 31									
School Board Meeting No School - Students - Staff Development 12:30 Dismissal No School - Thanksgiving T - 18 H - 17 E - 17	November							May							Senior's Last Day Graduation School Board Meeting Student's Last Day 12:30 pm Dismissal Staff Development Memorial Day T - 14 H - 13 E - 13	
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							16 17 18 19 20 21 22									
							23 24 25 26 27 28 29									
							30									
School Board Meeting 12:30 Dismissal No School - Winter Break T - 17 H - 17 E - 17	December							June							School Board Meeting 	







CERTIFIED TEACHER FORMAL EVALUATION DOCUMENT

This observation document is to be completed by the observer immediately following the supervisory visit to a classroom. Copies should be properly distributed following a conference.

Name of Teacher Observed:	Name of Evaluator:
Date of Formal Observation:	Time and/or Class Period:
Teacher is Probationary: YES NO	Subject Observed:

The purpose of the O'Neill Public School Certified Teacher Formal Evaluation Record is to measure teacher performance guided by the Dr. Robert J Marzano Instructional Framework and Nebraska Department of Education Rule 10.

As per O'Neill Public School Board Policy, all probationary teachers will be evaluated at least once per semester. Tenured teachers will receive a summative evaluation a minimum of once every three years. Formative assessment will take place between formal summative evaluations.

All certified teachers at O'Neill Public Schools shall maintain a Teacher Growth Plan that includes individual growth goals centered around instruction. Teacher Growth Plans shall emphasize instructional strategies that are identified in **The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework For Effective Instruction** (also known as A.S.O.T.). This research-based framework is authored by Dr. Robert J. Marzano.

Marzano Instructional Framework Domain I - “Lesson Segments Involving Routine Events”

DESIGN QUESTION #1: What is the teacher doing to “Establish and Communicate Learning Goals, Track Student Progress and Celebrate Success?”

Element Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
1. Providing Clear Learning Goals and Scales (Rubrics) to Measure Those Learning Goals Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy, but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher provides a clearly stated learning goal accompanied by a scale or rubric that describes levels of performance.	Teacher provides a clearly stated learning goal accompanied by a scale or rubric that describes levels of performance, and monitors	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

				students' understanding of the learning goal and the levels of performance.	
2. Tracking Student Progress Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy, but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher facilitates tracking of student progress using a formative approach to assessment.	Teacher facilitates tracking of student progress using a formative approach to assessment, and monitors the extent to which students understand their level of performance.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
3. Celebrating Student Success Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy, but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher provides students with recognition of their current status and their progress relative to the learning goal.	Teacher provides students with recognition of their current status and their progress relative to the learning goal, and monitors the extent to which students are motivated to enhance their status.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

DESIGN QUESTION #6: What is the teacher doing to “Establish and Maintain Classroom Rules and Procedures?”

Elements Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
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4. Establishing Classroom Routines Administrative Score:	Teacher should use strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher establishes and reviews expectations regarding rules and procedures.	Teacher establishes and reviews expectations regarding rules and procedures and monitors the extent to which students understand the rules and procedures.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
5. Organizing Physical Layout of the Classroom for Learning Administrative Score:	Teacher should use strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher organizes the physical layout of the classroom to facilitate movement and focus on learning.	Teacher organizes the physical layout of the classroom to facilitate movement and focus on learning, and monitors the impact of the environment on student learning.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

Marzano Instructional Framework Domain II - “Lesson Segments Addressing Content”

DESIGN QUESTION #2: What is the teacher doing to “Help Students Effectively Interact with the New Knowledge?”

Elements Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
6. Identifying Critical Information	Teacher should use strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy	Teacher signals to students	Teacher signals to students	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies

Administrative Score:		incorrectly or with parts missing.	which content is critical versus non-critical.	which content is critical versus non-critical , and monitors the extent to which students are attending to critical information.	for unique student needs and situations.
9. Chunking Content Into “Digestible Bites.” Administrative Score:	Teacher should use strategy but doesn’t.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher breaks input/experiences into small chunks based on student needs.	Teacher breaks input/experiences into small chunks based on student needs, and monitors the extent to which chunks are appropriate .	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
12. Recording and Representing Knowledge Administrative Score:	Teacher should use strategy but doesn’t.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher engages students in activities that help them record their understanding of new content in linguistic and/or non-linguistic ways.	Teacher engages students in activities that help them record their understanding of new content in linguistic and/or non-linguistic ways, and monitors the extent to which	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

				this enhances the student experience.	
13. Help Students Reflect On Learning Administrative Score:	Teacher should use strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher engages students in reflecting on their own learning and the learning process.	Teacher engages students in reflecting on their own learning and the learning process, and monitors the extent to which students self-assess their understanding and effort.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

DESIGN QUESTION #3: What will the teacher do to “Help Students Practice and Deepen Their Understanding of New Knowledge?”

Element Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
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16. Using Homework/Daily Work Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	When appropriate (as opposed to routinely), the teacher assigns homework/daily work that is designed to deepen knowledge of information or provide practice with a skill, strategy, or process.	When appropriate (as opposed to routinely), the teacher assigns homework/daily work that is designed to deepen knowledge of information or provide practice with a skill, strategy, or process, and the teacher monitors the extent to which students understand the homework.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
19. Practicing Skills, Strategies, and Processes Administrative Score:	The teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	When content involves a skill, strategy, or process, the teacher engages the students in practice activities.	When content involves a skill, strategy, or process, the teacher engages the students in practice activities, and the teacher monitors the extent to which the practice is increasing student fluency.	The teacher adapts new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

Marzano Instructional Framework Domain III - “Lesson Segments Enacted on the Spot”

DESIGN QUESTION #5: What is the teacher doing to “Engage Students?”

Elements Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
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24. Noticing and Reacting When Students Are Not Engaged Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher monitors the room, making note of when students are not engaged and takes action.	Teacher monitors the room, making note of when students are not engaged, takes action and gauges the extent to which students re-engage.	Teacher adapts & creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
29. Demonstrating Intensity and Enthusiasm Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher demonstrates intensity and enthusiasm for the content in a variety of ways.	Teacher demonstrates intensity and enthusiasm for the content in a variety of ways and monitors the extent to which students' engagement increases.	Teacher adapts & creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

DESIGN QUESTION #7 What does the teacher do to “Recognize and Acknowledge Adherence and Lack of Adherence to Classroom Rules and Procedures?”

Elements Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
33. Demonstrating “Withitness” Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher uses behaviors associated with withitness.	Teacher uses behaviors associated with withitness, and monitors the effect on	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

				students' behavior.	
34. Applying Consequences Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher applies consequences for not following rules and procedures.	Teacher applies consequences for not following rules and procedures consistently and fairly.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
35. Acknowledging Adherence to Rules and Procedures Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher acknowledges adherence to rules and procedures.	Teacher acknowledges adherence to rules and procedures consistently and fairly.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

DESIGN QUESTION #8: What is the teacher doing to “Establish and Maintain Effective Relationships With Students?”

Element Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
36. Understanding Students' Interests and Backgrounds Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher uses students' interests and backgrounds during interactions with students.	Teacher uses students' interests and backgrounds during interactions with students, and monitors the sense of community in the classroom.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

38. Displaying Objectivity and Control Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher behaves in an objective and controlled manner.	Teacher behaves in an objective and controlled manner, and monitors the effect on the classroom climate.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
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ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

DESIGN QUESTION #9: What is the teacher doing to “Establish High Expectations for all Students?”

Elements Being Measured	0 Not Using	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Applying	4 Innovating
39. Demonstrating Value and Respect For All Students Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher exhibits behaviors that demonstrate value and respect for all students.	Teacher exhibits behaviors that demonstrate and value respect for all students and monitors the impact on all students.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
40. Asking Questions of Students Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	The teacher asks questions of all students with the same frequency and depth.	The teacher asks questions of all students with the same frequency and depth, and monitors the quality of participation of all students.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.

41. Probing Incorrect Answers Administrative Score:	Teacher should use the strategy but doesn't.	Teacher uses the strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Teacher probes incorrect answers of all students.	Teacher probes incorrect answers of all students, and monitors the quality of responses.	Teacher adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations.
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ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

O'Neill Public Schools' Professional Expectations

Elements Being Measured	0 Unsatisfactory	1 Needs Improvement	2 Satisfactory
Appropriate Professional Appearance is Displayed Administrative Score:	Teacher shows disregard for typical expectations for appropriate professional appearance	Teacher doesn't consistently adhere to the expectation for appropriate professional appearance	Teacher consistently adheres to the expectation for appropriate professional appearance
Teacher Maintains A Positive Attitude In Their Working Relationships With Staff and Parents Administrative Score:	Teacher does not maintain positive relationships with other staff and/or parents	Teacher attempts to build positive relationships with some staff and parents	Teacher consistently builds and maintains positive relationships with staff and parents
Teacher demonstrates the ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders Administrative Score:	Teacher doesn't demonstrate effective and professional communication with all stakeholders.	Teacher rarely demonstrates effective and professional communication with all stakeholders.	Teacher consistently communicates effectively and professionally with all stakeholders..

Teacher engages in professional growth activities that will benefit their particular curricular area Administrative Score:	Teacher does not actively engage in meaningful professional growth, including, but not limited to: staff meetings, staff development sessions, and other opportunities for growth	Teacher rarely engages in meaningful professional growth, including, but not limited to: staff meetings, staff development sessions, and other opportunities for growth	Teacher seeks out meaningful professional growth, including, but not limited to: staff meetings, staff development sessions, and other opportunities for growth
Teacher utilizes relevant technology for instructional and learning purposes when appropriate. Administrative Score:	Teacher does not utilize technology.	Teacher utilizes technology but not always in an effective manner.	Teacher effectively utilizes relevant technology for instructional and learning purposes.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

Observer's Suggestions or Comments:

Teacher's Comments:

Teacher-Observer Conference Summary:

Date: _____ Teacher's Signature: _____

Date: _____ Observer's Signature: _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the O'Neill Public School District Staff Handbook which includes the district's drug-free workplace policy statement. I understand that, as a condition of my employment, I am required to read and abide by the provisions of the handbook and by all board policies governing my employment. Further, if I have any questions about any provision of this handbook or any board policy, I should confer with my supervisor or building principal.

Signature

Date

Printed Name