

# **CERTIFIED STAFF HANDBOOK 2021 – 2022**



Sheridan School District #5  
Sheridan, Montana

*PANTHER UNIVERSALS*

**BE SAFE**

**BE RESPECTFUL**

**BE RESPONSIBLE**

**BE SUCCESSFUL**

**BE A PANTHER!!!**

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This handbook is intended as a method of communicating general district information, rules, and regulations and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation, or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may, therefore, be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation, negotiated agreement, or changes in state or federal law.

Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination, without notice.

No information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, or as a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

***EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY (POLICY 5010)***

**Equal Employment Opportunity, Non-Discrimination, and Sex Equity**

The District will provide equal employment opportunities to all persons, regardless of their race, color, religion, creed, national origin, genetic information, sex, age, ancestry, marital status, military status, citizenship status, use of lawful products while not at work physical or mental disability. The District will make reasonable accommodation for an individual with a disability known to the District, if the individual is otherwise qualified for the position, unless the accommodation would impose undue hardship on the District.

Inquiries regarding sexual harassment, sex discrimination, or sexual intimidation should be directed to the District Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both. The Board designates the following individual to serve as the District’s Title IX Coordinator:

**Rebecca Larsen, District Clerk, 211 Madison Street, Sheridan, MT 59749**  
**406-842-5302 ext. 136 [becky.larsen@sheridan.k12.mt.us](mailto:becky.larsen@sheridan.k12.mt.us)**

Inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of disability or requests for accommodation should be directed to the District Section 504 Coordinator. The Board designates the following individual to serve as the District’s Section 504 Coordinator:

**Lanaie Morgan, Special Education Teacher, 211 Madison Street, Sheridan, MT 59749**  
**406-842-5302 ext. 115, [lanaiemorgan@sheridan.k12.mt.us](mailto:lanaiemorgan@sheridan.k12.mt.us)**

Any individual may file a complaint alleging violation of Policy 5012/5012P-Sexual Harassment, or Policy 5015-Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing by following those policies or Policy 1700-Uniform Complaint Procedure.

The District, in compliance with federal regulations, will notify annually all students, parents, staff, and community members of this policy and the designated coordinator to receive inquiries. This annual notification will include the name and location of the coordinator and will be included in all handbooks.

The District will not tolerate hostile or abusive treatment, derogatory remarks, or acts of violence against students, staff, or volunteers with disabilities. The District will consider such behavior as constituting discrimination on the basis of disability, in violation of state and federal law.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Retaliation against an employee who has filed a discrimination complaint, testified, or participated in any manner in a discrimination investigation or proceeding is prohibited.

## ***EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY***

Believing that the basic purpose of education is to prepare each student for life, and to impart to them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will best prepare them to become a happy, useful, and worthwhile member of society, the Board of Trustees has set down the following philosophies, policies, rules, and regulations which they hope will help achieve those ends.

### ***VISION***

Sheridan Schools will educate the whole person, empowering them to reach their highest individual potential.

### ***MISSION***

In order to achieve our vision, it is the mission of Sheridan Schools to:

- Ensure a safe learning environment;
- Welcome curiosity and instill confidence;
- Promote personal responsibility;
- Broaden opportunities for all interests;
- Model and teach tolerance;
- Encourage service to others;
- Deliver a well-balanced curriculum that includes academic, technological, creative, and physical disciplines;
- And most importantly, provide a place to belong!

### ***SCHOOL BOARD***

Individual Board members exercise their authority over school district affairs only as they take action at a legal meeting of the Board. In other instances an individual Board member, including the Chairman, shall have power only when the Board, by vote, has delegated authority to him or her.

### ***SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

The goal of the Sheridan School is to accept responsibility for the development of each child into an adult who can stand confidently, participate fully, learn continually, and contribute meaningfully to our world. Six objectives, which contribute to the achievement of this goal, listed without priority in arrangement, define desirable outcomes to be incorporated into short and long-range plans for the school system.

1. To ensure that each student develops proficiency in basic academic skills.
2. To ensure that each student develops the capacity to recognize and cope with the problems of an unknown future.
3. To ensure the development of meaningful interpersonal relationships among students, staff, and community.
4. To ensure that staff, students, and parents are afforded maximum feasible participation in the development and evaluation of programs and policies that meet the educational needs of each community.
5. To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of material resources.
6. To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of human resources.

### **CHALLENGING AND DIVERSE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Sheridan Schools will develop a rigorous educational program that is designed to both meet the needs of all students and support the talents of all students.

### **HIGHLY EFFECTIVE STAFF**

Sheridan Schools will develop a recruitment and retention program to ensure that the District hires and retains high quality effective personnel who use best-practice instructional strategies and each have a professional development plan in place.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Sheridan Schools will communicate to its stakeholders using various forms of media, ensuring access to school events, processes, and policies.

### **COMMUNITY SUPPORT OF SHERIDAN SCHOOLS**

Sheridan Schools will elevate the level of public awareness regarding the funding for Sheridan Schools and the associated linkages to achieve high quality educational programs.

### **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Sheridan Schools will allocate resources, with transparency, to have the greatest positive impact on the performance of students and staff.

### **FACILITIES AND GROUNDS**

Sheridan Schools will provide a welcoming, safe, and well-maintained environment, which keeps the focus on learning for both student and staff.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

Sheridan schools will implement technology in Sheridan Schools to enrich student learning and deliver more efficient administration services.

### **BEYOND THE WALLS OF SCHOOL**

Sheridan Schools will create a high-standard learning environment, outside the walls and hours of school, with accountability for achievement in academics, community service, and citizenship.

## **SUPERINTENDENT**

The school superintendent is responsible for providing the professional leadership and skill to translate the wishes of the Sheridan School Board into administrative action.

The superintendent shall be the chief executive officer of the school system and shall have, under the direction of the Board, general supervision of the school buildings and all personnel therein. The superintendent is responsible for the management of the schools under the Board's policies and is accountable to the Board.

## **SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

Acting with the approval of the superintendent, the principal shall be the chief administrator of the school buildings. The principal is charged with the direct supervision and direction of the staff and students assigned to the building, and with the care of the school facility and its equipment. Within the framework of the policies of the Board and the general rules and regulations set by the superintendent, the principal may establish and enforce such regulations as he deems advisable for the efficient operation of the school.



## **ABSENCE OF ADMINISTRATOR (POLICY 6122)**

When the superintendent is absent, the principal will assume responsibility for the operation of the school. If the superintendent and the principal are both absent, the guidance counselor or designated staff member will be in charge of the school. In the case that the administrators can not be reached, staff is encouraged to call the secretaries.

### **PRINCIPAL'S EXPECTATIONS**

- Teachers are expected to fulfill extra duties as assigned in the appropriate handbook.
- Teachers are expected to post their projects on the school website.
- Teachers are expected to take attendance and lunch count within the first 10 minutes of each class period.
- **Teachers are expected to be in their classrooms available to help students 15 minutes before the school day begins and 15 minutes after school is dismissed. (7:45 am until 4:00 pm)**
- Teachers are expected to ensure that their classroom meets all safety standards.
- Teachers are expected to attend all staff meetings. MS/HS: 7:15 am first Tuesday of the month, Elementary: 7:15 am second Tuesday of the month.
- **Teachers are expected to have a syllabus on the webpage for each course taught.** This should include your grading criteria, your class objectives, your class rules, your expectations, and your criteria for student of the month.
- Teachers are expected to keep their lesson plans current and up to date.
- **Teachers are expected to update their grades in their gradebook at least on a weekly basis.** (There shouldn't be a two or three week gap between grades in the gradebook)
- Teachers are expected to have on file in the principal's office a copy of your final exam for each semester.
- Teachers are expected to have a scope and sequence, with dates and standards, posted in the classroom for each class taught.
- When on duty, teachers are expected to **mingle with students**, listening to conversations, and defraying conflicts. This also includes anytime students are in the hall, coming in or going out to recess, at lunch recess, or during passing time for grades 7-12.
- Each teacher is required to have a written professional development plan which becomes a portion of the goal setting for our evaluation process. This is in accordance with the school accreditation process.

### **ASSOCIATIONS**

The Sheridan Federation of Teachers is the bargaining unit for all certified staff. Association officers and building representatives are as follows:

President: Laurie Bartoletti, Vice President: Sara Decker, Secretary: Paula Elser

### **BOARD MEMBERS**

The Legislature of the State of Montana delegates to the Board responsibility for the conduct and governance of district schools. Board members, as elected by residents of this district, are as follows: Kendra Horn, Chair, Therese Sutton Vice-Chair, Cory Rowberry, William Wood, Kaylie Theis, Ridgley Elser, and Bronwen Pfau.

### **BOARD MEETINGS/COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **REGULAR MEETINGS**

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings will be held in the C. B. Murray Media Center. Regular meetings shall be held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, or at other times and places determined by a majority vote. Except for an unforeseen emergency, meetings must be held in school buildings or, upon unanimous vote of the Trustees, in a publicly accessible building located within the District. If regular meetings are to be held at places other than the place stated above, or are adjourned to times other than the regular meeting time, notice of

the meeting shall be made in the same manner as provided for special meetings. When a meeting date falls on a school holiday, the meeting shall be held on the next business day.

## ***DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS***

The District office is open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

## **STAFF OPERATIONS**

### ***ABSENCES***

#### **DISCRETIONARY LEAVE**

Certified employees shall be granted leave according to the terms of the current collective bargaining agreement.

#### **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE**

Employees are eligible for benefits under the Family Medical Leave Act when the District has fifty (50) or more employees. The Sheridan School District has less than fifty (50) employees, and therefore employees are not eligible for FMLA benefits.

### ***COMPLAINTS***

#### **STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINTS**

The District recognizes that complaints regarding staff performance, discipline, grades, student progress, and homework assignments will be made by students and parents from time to time. Every effort will be made to ensure that such complaints are handled and resolved informally and as close to their origin as possible. Students, parents, and others with complaints will be encouraged to discuss the complaint directly with the staff member. All such meetings should be held in confidence and not in the presence of others.

If the complaint is not informally resolved, staff should advise the complainant that they may submit the matter directly to the building principal or immediate supervisor, as appropriate. The complainant will be provided with necessary formal complaint procedure guidelines in accordance with Board policy 1700 and the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

When a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to an individual Board member, it will be referred to the superintendent for appropriate building administrator follow-up.

All staff members should familiarize themselves with Board policy and the Collective Bargaining Agreement regarding the handling of complaints.

#### **STAFF COMPLAINTS**

Staff member complaints contending a violation, misinterpretation, or inappropriate application of District personnel policies and/or administrative regulations should be directed to the building principal for informal discussion and resolution.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, formal complaint procedures may be initiated by staff in accordance with Board policy and administrative regulations. This complaint procedure may not be used to resolve disputes and disagreements related to the provisions of any negotiated agreement.

## ***CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION***

Contracts for certified staff members will be initiated for all employees when hired.

Salaries, including compensation for extracurricular assignments over and above the duties associated with a staff member's regularly assigned duties, will be determined in accordance with salary schedules and salary placement guidelines established by the Board and/or policies adopted by the Board which are consistent with salary schedules and salary placement provisions of negotiated agreements.

It is the staff member's responsibility to provide all information necessary for placement on the salary schedule to the office in accordance with timelines established by the district and negotiated agreements.

Teachers will be compensated \$120.00 per day for time worked outside of the contracted calendar.

### **COPYRIGHT** (POLICIES 2312, 2312P)

While the District encourages its staff to enrich learning programs by making proper use of supplementary materials, it is the responsibility of staff to abide by District copying procedures and obey requirements of law. Under no circumstances will it be necessary for staff to violate copyright requirements in order to properly perform their duties. The District cannot be responsible for any violations of the copyright law by its staff.

All reproduction of copyrighted material shall be conducted strictly in accordance with applicable provisions of law. Unless otherwise allowed as "fair use" under federal law, permission must be acquired from the copyright owner prior to reproduction of material in any form. Permission forms are available in the office.

### **CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKS / FINGERPRINTING** (POLICY 5122)

It is the policy of the Board that any finalist recommended for hire to a paid or volunteer position with the District involving regular unsupervised access to students in schools, as determined by the Superintendent, shall submit to a name-based and fingerprint criminal background investigation conducted by the appropriate law enforcement agency prior to consideration of the recommendation for employment or appointment by the Board.

Any requirement of an applicant to submit to a fingerprint background check shall be in compliance with the Volunteers for Children Act of 1998 and applicable federal regulations. If an applicant has any prior record of arrest or conviction by any local, state, or federal law enforcement agency for an offense other than a minor traffic violation, the facts must be reviewed by the Superintendent, who shall decide whether the applicant shall be declared eligible for appointment or employment in a manner consistent with the expectations and standards set by the board. Arrests resolved without conviction shall not be considered in the hiring process unless the charges are pending.

The following applicants for employment, as a condition for employment, will be required, as a condition of any offer of employment, to authorize, in writing, a name-based and fingerprint criminal background investigation:

- A certified teacher seeking full- or part-time employment with the District;
- An educational support personnel employee seeking full- or part-time employment with the District;
- An employee of a person or firm holding a contract with the District, if the employee is assigned to the District;
- A volunteer assigned to work in the District, who has regular unsupervised access to students; and
- Substitute teachers.\*

*\*The requirement to fingerprint non-licensed substitutes may be waived in whole or in part by the trustees, if the substitute has previous teaching or substitute teaching experience in an accredited public school in Montana prior to November 28, 2002 and who has continued to substitute yearly thereafter.*

## ***DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE (POLICY 5255)***

Discipline and dismissal of staff will follow due process, administrative regulation, relevant provisions of negotiated agreements, and applicable law.

## ***DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (POLICY 5226)***

All District workplaces are drug- and alcohol-free. All employees are prohibited from:

- Unlawfully manufacturing, dispensing, distributing, possessing, using, or being under the influence of a controlled substance while on District premises or while performing work for the District, including employees possessing a “medical marijuana” card.
- Distributing, consuming, using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol while on District premises or while performing work for the District. For purposes of this policy, a controlled substance is one that is;
  - Not legally obtainable;
  - Being used in a manner other than as prescribed;
  - Legally obtainable but has not been legally obtained; or
  - Referenced in federal or state controlled-substance acts;

As a condition of employment, each employee will:

- Abide by the terms of the District policy respecting a drug- and alcohol-free workplace; and
- Notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction under any criminal drug statute, for a violation occurring on District premises or while performing work for the District, no later than five (5) days after such conviction.

In order to make employees aware of dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, the District will endeavor to:

- Provide each employee with a copy of the District drug- and alcohol-free workplace policy;
- Post notice of the District drug- and alcohol-free workplace policy in a place where other information for employees is posted;
- Enlist the aid of community and state agencies with drug and alcohol informational and rehabilitation programs, to provide information to District employees; and
- Inform employees of available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, reentry, and any employee-assistance program.

An employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment. Alternatively, the Board may require an employee to successfully complete an appropriate drug- or alcohol-abuse, employee-assistance rehabilitation program.

The Board will take disciplinary action with respect to an employee convicted of a drug offense in the workplace within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of a conviction.

Should District employees be engaged in the performance of work under a federal contract or grant, the Superintendent will notify the appropriate state or federal agency from which the District receives contract or grant moneys of an employee’s conviction, within ten (10) days after receiving notice of the conviction.

## ***EVALUATION OF STAFF***

The District’s evaluation program is designed to provide an opportunity for staff to set goals and objectives, including plans for professional growth and career opportunities, and receive administrative responses to them, to have formal and informal observations of licensed staff while teaching, to receive verbal and written comments

and suggestions for improvement from supervisors, and to have clear opportunities to make improvement within specific timelines.

The evaluation program also provides a tool for administrators who are responsible for making decisions about promotion, retention, dismissal, and discipline.

Evaluation of all staff will be conducted in accordance with Board Policy 5222, applicable district evaluation procedures, negotiated agreements, and Montana Code Annotated.

### ***GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS (POLICY 5223)***

Staff members are to avoid accepting anything of value offered by another for the purpose of influencing their professional judgment. No organization may solicit funds from staff members within the schools, nor may anyone distribute flyers or other materials related to fund drives through the school without building principal approval.

The solicitation of staff by sales people, other staff, or agents during on-duty hours is prohibited without building principal approval. Any solicitation should be reported at once to the building principal.

### ***GRIEVANCES***

Any staff member wishing to file a grievance not in relation to the Collective Bargaining Agreement must use the procedure outlined in Policy 1700. The grievance procedure found in the Collective Bargaining Agreement is used for grievances in relation to the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

### ***HARASSMENT/BULLYING/INTIMIDATION (POLICY 5015)***

The Board will strive to provide a positive and productive working environment. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation between employees or by third parties, are strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. This includes bullying, harassment, or intimidation via electronic communication devices (“cyberbullying”).

### **DEFINITIONS**

- “Third parties” include but are not limited to coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, or others engaged in District business, such as employees of businesses or organizations participating in cooperative work programs with the District, and others not directly subject to District control at inter-District and intra-District athletic competitions or other school events.
- “District” includes District facilities, District premises, and non-District property if the employee is at any District-sponsored, District-approved, or District-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events, where the employee is engaged in District business.
- “Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any act that substantially interferes with an employee’s opportunities or work performance, that takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or anywhere such conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member or an interference with school purposes or an educational function, and that has the effect of:
  - Physically harming an employee or damaging an employee’s property;
  - Knowingly placing an employee in reasonable fear of physical harm to the employee or damage to the employee’s property; or
  - Creating a hostile working environment.
- “Electronic communication device” means any mode of electronic communication, including but not limited to computers, cell phones, PDAs, or the internet.

## **REPORTING**

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Any employee or third party who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this policy, or feels they have been a victim of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in violation of this policy, are encouraged to immediately report their concerns to the building principal or the District Administrator, who have overall responsibility for such investigations. Complaints against the building principal shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent or District Administrator shall be filed with the Board, via written communication to the Board Chair.

The complainant may be provided a summary of the findings of the investigation and, as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Superintendent shall be responsible for ensuring that notice of this policy is provided to staff and third parties and for the development of administrative regulations, including reporting and investigative procedures, as needed.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

Staff whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to, and including, termination of employment. Third parties whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate sanctions as determined and imposed by the Superintendent or the Board. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

## **RETALIATION AND REPRISAL**

Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, whether or not a complaint is substantiated. False charges shall also be regarded as a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.

## ***PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES (POLICY 5224)***

The Board recognizes its employees' rights of citizenship, including but not limited to engaging in political activities. A District employee may seek an elected office, provided the employee 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. An employee elected to office is entitled to take a leave of absence without pay, in accordance with the provisions of § 39-2-104, MCA.

No person, in or on District property, may attempt to coerce, command, or require a public employee to support or oppose any political committee, the nomination or election of any person to public office, or the passage of a ballot issue.

No District employee may solicit support for or in opposition to any political committee, the nomination or election of any person to public office, or the passage of a ballot issue, while on the job or in or on District property.

Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict the right of District employees to express their personal political views.

## **PERSONNEL RECORDS** (POLICIES 5231, 5231P)

The District maintains a complete personnel record for every current and former employee. The employees' personnel records will be maintained in the District's administrative office, under the Superintendent's direct supervision. Employees will be given access to their personnel records, in accordance with guidelines developed by the Superintendent.

In addition to the Superintendent or other designees, the Board may grant a committee or a member of the Board access to cumulative personnel files. When specifically authorized by the Board, counsel retained by the Board or by the employee will also have access to a cumulative personnel file.

In accordance with federal law, the District shall release information regarding the professional qualifications and degrees of teachers and the qualifications of paraprofessionals to parents upon request, for any teacher or paraprofessional who is employed by a school receiving Title I funds, and who provides instruction to their child at that school. Access to other information contained in the personnel records of District employees is governed by Policy 4340.

Personnel records must be kept for 10 years after termination.

## **ABUSE/NEGLECT** (POLICY 5232)

A District employee who has reasonable cause to suspect, as a result of information they receive in their professional or official capacity, that a child is abused, neglected, or subjected to sex trafficking by anyone regardless of whether the person suspected of causing the abuse, neglect, or trafficking is a parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare, shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Public Health and Human Services and local law enforcement.

Child abuse or neglect means actual physical or psychological harm to a child, substantial risk of physical or psychological harm to a child, exposure to or involvement with sex trafficking, and abandonment. This definition includes sexual abuse and sexual contact by or with a student. The obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect also applies to actual or attempted sexual or romantic contact between a student and a staff member.

The District administration is authorized to provide access to educational resources for interested parents, teachers, and students on how to prevent and report child abuse, neglect and sex trafficking; identify the warning signs of child abuse, neglect and sex trafficking; recognize predatory behaviors; and coordinate efforts with law enforcement, the Department of Public Health and Human Services, and local organizations on these topics.

A District employee who makes a report of child abuse, neglect, or sex trafficking is encouraged to notify the building administrator of the report. An employee does not discharge the obligation to personally report by notifying the Superintendent or principal.

Any District employee who fails to report a suspected case of abuse, neglect, or sex trafficking to law enforcement or the Department of Public Health and Human Services, or who prevents another person from doing so, may be civilly liable for damages proximately caused by such failure or prevention and is guilty of a misdemeanor. The employee will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

When a District employee makes a report, the Department of Public Health and Human Services may share information with that individual or others as permitted by law. Individuals in the District who receive information related to a report of child abuse, neglect, or sex trafficking shall maintain the confidentiality of the information.

## ***ETHICS***

To maintain prestige as a professional group and to further harmony and cooperation in our school system, it is advisable to keep school problems within the school. Suggestions concerning improvement of procedures are always welcome.

## ***PAYDAY SCHEDULES***

All personnel employed regularly, either full- or part-time, shall be paid according to a specific schedule determined annually. Teachers may elect at the signing of a contract to receive extra duty pay earned: the same equal payment periods as the regular salary, at the completion of the activity, or in two installments for full-year activities. The monthly payroll will be distributed on the second Tuesday of each month by the administration.

## ***TEACHING CERTIFICATES***

Teachers must keep an updated teaching certificate (copy) on file in the business manager's office. This certificate must be registered with the County Superintendent of Schools.

## ***PIR DAYS (POLICIES 2100 AND 5211)***

Since the District pays staff for 7 PIR days during the year, teachers are required to work on District projects on those days. Certified staff may not “double dip,” by receiving pay from the District while working on personal credits which will allow them to move over on the pay scale. **In order to implement curriculum with integrity, it is paramount that staff members attend the PIR days, enabling the team approach to the implementation of any curriculum.**

## ***LEAVE REQUESTS***

Leave requests must be made as far in advance as possible through the District **Ready Sub** program. **Leave requests may not be granted during the last two weeks of the school year due to end of the year processes like preparing for exams and portfolio presentations.** Student behaviors may escalate during these last two weeks and having consistent discipline is vital to our District success. Requests for leave prior to, or immediately following, holidays may be granted on a first come first serve basis, depending on the availability of substitutes.

## ***FIELDTRIPS (POLICIES 2320-2320P)***

The Board endorses the use of field trips when educational objectives achieved by the trip outweigh any lost in-class learning opportunities. Policy 2320P outlines the procedures to be followed. Field trips that will take students out of state must be approved in advance by the Board. The Board will consider out-of-state field trip requests at two (2) board meetings per year. It is the teacher/advisor's responsibility to request their trips be put on the board agenda in October and April of each school year. Building principals may approve all other field trips.

## ***ATTENDANCE AT EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES***

**Please make every effort to attend extracurricular activities.** Students understand that you care about them when you take time to see them in situations other than your classroom.

## ***TEACHER'S WORK DAY***

Teachers will be at work by **7:45 a.m.** Please remain in your room until **4:00 pm** to assist students with projects and other work. If professional responsibilities are needed, teachers may be asked to stay later. The principal has authority to permit exceptions. Each teacher will have one preparation and planning period per day. On days preceding holidays or weekend recesses the teachers' day shall end at the close of the student school day. However, teachers are asked to remain on duty until after the buses have departed.



## ***COPY MACHINE***

Teachers may use the copy machine during their prep, before and after school, and at lunch. Teachers **will not** leave their class to make copies. Students are not allowed to use the copy machine. Do not send more than one person to the office for copies.

## ***DISMISSAL OF CLASSES OR LEAVING CLASSROOM***

Classes are not to be dismissed before the bell without permission. Do not leave your class at any time unless it is an emergency. Notify the office if you must leave your classroom for an emergency, so someone can take care of your class. Do not leave your room unlocked if you are not there. You are liable for any students unattended in your room.

## ***TEACHERS'/STAFF MEETINGS***

Staff meetings will be a minimum of one per month. Activities or problems that affect school operations should be brought up at this time.

## ***TEACHERS' ABSENCES (POLICY 5321)***

If you are unable to come to work due to illness, please use the **Ready Sub program** as soon as possible so that proper arrangements may be made to secure a substitute. It is also advisable to send an e-mail to your building principal and building secretary.

## ***TEACHERS' CLASS ADVISORY DUTIES***

In the 7-12th grade, two staff members are assigned to advise each grade level. They are responsible for completing, with their class group, any fundraising activities necessary to put on the Junior Prom and any graduation costs (chair rental, breakfast, flowers, speakers) and any senior trip. Any money raised will remain in their student body account to be used at the class's discretion.

## ***STUDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY***

### ***CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS***

Staff members are expected to maintain an orderly classroom. In that regard, have clear expectations outlined and posted that are consistent with other staff members in the Sheridan School District. When students are outside of regular behavioral expectations in the classroom, don't hesitate to immediately send them to the office for further discipline. (Remember routine behavior disruptions should be taken care of at the classroom level.)

### ***HONOR ROLL***

The honor roll is prepared at the end of each grading period on the basis of A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1. The names of the students earning a grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or higher will be included along with the GPA earned for that grading period.

### ***FAILING STUDENTS***

For a student to receive an "F" on their final transcript or report card, it is necessary to take the following steps: **When the student's work is unsatisfactory, the student's teacher must notify the parent/ guardian. The teacher is required to hold a parent-student conference. A student may not receive an "F" if the parent is not given timely notice. Teachers are required to send home weekly progress reports on Wednesday of each week for failing students.**

## **COMPUTER LAB USE**

Students will not be permitted in the computer lab without a pass. Do not send students to the computer lab if there is a class in session or there is not a class monitor available. Please clean and lock the computer lab door and close the windows as your class is leaving. **DO NOT LEAVE IT UNLOCKED!**

## **GUIDANCE SERVICE**

A counselor is available to students that need special assistance.

## **GYM USE**

P.E. teachers will lock their dressing room doors when leaving to go on the field or in the gymnasium. The following is a suggested procedure for closing the gym:

- Put away all equipment (weights, basketball, etc.).
- Turn showers off.
- Lock coach's office and door to dressing rooms.
- Check to see that all lights are off and the windows shut.
- Lock all doors leading to the inside of the basketball floor.

**No one should be in the gymnasium when the coach leaves, unless there is another teacher or coach supervising the group of students.** Seeing that the gym is adequately locked up with lights turned off, windows closed, etc., requires the cooperation of all concerned. The last faculty member to leave the gym after a major student activity, such as basketball practice or basketball game, is responsible for the condition of the gym. All District buildings should be left in this same condition. Your cooperation is a necessary to eliminate loss of equipment, injuries and other incidents.

## **LEAVING CAMPUS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

You are not to leave the school campus during the day except in an emergency situation or with the permission of the administrator. **DO NOT ASK OR GIVE STUDENTS PERMISSION TO LEAVE CAMPUS!**

## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS (POLICY 5314)**

One important responsibility of every teacher is to properly prepare for a substitute teacher when it is necessary to be absent. No one is a better public relations person for the school than a substitute who has had a good experience in the classroom. The opposite is also true. Some suggestions from substitutes who have worked at the school are as follows:

- Be sure to have a complete list of students, a grade book, a roll book, a seating chart, and various texts and materials available.
- **Be sure your lesson plans are complete. Have ample material prepared. A substitute will generally cover material faster than a regular teacher will. Problems multiply when a substitute does not have enough for students to do.**
- Be sure the substitutes are aware of any special rules and regulations that apply to classrooms.
- Be sure the substitutes know of any other extra duties they are to assume and what is expected of them in performing these extra duties.
- Ask substitutes for a written report on class progress and conduct.
- Stress the need for confidentiality in all student matters.

## **HOME RELATIONS**

Courtesy and diplomacy in dealing with parents are important. An effort to understand their difficulties may be instrumental in bringing about cooperation on their part and bring about receptiveness for understanding problems we have at school.

## **MASTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

All events are kept on a master calendar in the high school office. Requests for dates on the school calendar are to be made by faculty members or by student organizations with the approval of their sponsors. To reserve a date, contact the high school Principal, who will check the master schedule, and approve or disapprove the date. It is important that we follow this procedure to avoid conflicts. Athletic events scheduled by the conference, or other activities not under the exclusive control of the school, will take precedence over local functions. In this regard, a rule of thumb is that scheduled activities will take precedence over non-scheduled activities. We hope this will minimize the number of choices our students will have to make. It is wise to make requests for calendar dates at least two week in advance. **PALZ uses the elementary cafeteria and gym after school and on Fridays. Please schedule all non-athletic events though the elementary office so PALZ can have input.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BULLETINS**

Announcements for the intercom should be left in the office prior to the end of the school day. All but emergency announcements will be made at the beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> period. Announcements can and will be made at any time during the school day. Therefore, it is important to keep your volume up on your telephone.

## **LETTERS TO PARENTS**

The principal must know in advance of any requirements in your classes that deviate from your course outline and plans submitted at the first of the year. This includes letters sent home to parents. **Please have the administrative office in your building proofread and approve any correspondence before sending it home.**

## **PERMANENT RECORDS**

The elementary staff is responsible for keeping permanent records, which includes the student health record, current for their students. The secondary staff should provide the office with pertinent data to be entered in a student's permanent record. Parents have access to these records.

## **KEYS**

Keys are issued to staff by the building principal. In order to protect property, students, and staff, and to ensure the building is adequately secured when no authorized personnel are present, all staff are expected to follow the following key-control procedures:

- The duplication of keys is prohibited;
- Keys are not to be left unattended. Avoid having keys on desks, tables, in mailboxes, unattended coat pockets, etc.
- Keys may not be loaned to students or to individuals not employed by the District. Under no circumstance should staff provide keys to students to "run errands", "unlock/lock" doors, etc.
- Lost or stolen keys must be reported to the building principal within 24 hours of discovery of the loss or theft so measures may be taken to protect District property. Three days will be allowed for finding or recovery of keys before any charges are assessed.
- Upon completion of a lost-or-stolen-key report form, presentation of the broken or damaged key(s), and submission of assessed fees, replacement keys will be issued within 72 hours.
- Charges for lost or stolen keys will be made to the staff member to whom the key(s) have been issued.
- All keys are to be checked in at the end of the school year. Staff with summer duties necessitating building access may make arrangements with the building principal to keep their keys as appropriate.

## **RELEASE OF GENERAL STAFF INFORMATION**

A staff member's address and personal phone number will not be released by the District. Such information may be disclosed if a staff member authorizes the District to do so.

The District may disclose information about a former employee's job performance to a prospective employer, under the following conditions:

- Disclosure of information is upon the request of the prospective employer; or
- Disclosure of information is upon the request of the former staff employee;
- The information is related to job performance;
- The disclosure is presumed to be in good faith.

The District will not disclose information that is knowingly false, deliberately misleading, rendered with malicious purpose, or is in violation of the staff member's civil rights.

### ***RESIGNATIONS (POLICY 5251)***

The Board authorizes the Superintendent and/or other school administrator to accept on its behalf resignations from any District employee. The Superintendent shall provide written acceptance of the resignation, including the date of acceptance, to the employee, setting forth the effective date of the resignation.

Once the Superintendent has accepted the resignation, it may not be withdrawn by the employee. The resignation and its acceptance should be reported as information to the Board at the next regular or special meeting.

### ***STAFF CONDUCT (POLICY 5223)***

District employees will abide by all district policies, state and federal laws in the course of their employment. Where applicable, employees will abide by and honor the professional educator code of conduct.

All employees are expected to maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, professionalism, decorum, and impartiality in the conduct of District business. All employees shall maintain appropriate employee/student relationship boundaries in all respects, including but not limited to personal, speech, print, and digital communications. Failure to honor the appropriate employee/student relationship boundary will result in a report to the Department of Public Health and Human Services and the appropriate law enforcement agency.

While on school property, employees shall not injure or threaten to injure another person; damage another's property or that of the District; or use, control, possess or transfer any weapon or any item that could be reasonably considered to be a weapon as defined in Policies 3310 and 3311. "School property" means within school buildings, in vehicles used for school purposes, or on grounds leased or owned by the school district.

In accordance with state law, an employee shall not dispense or utilize any information gained from employment with the District, accept gifts or benefits, or participate in business enterprises or employment that creates a conflict of interest with the faithful and impartial discharge of the employee's District duties. A District employee, before acting in a manner which might impinge on any fiduciary duty, may disclose the nature of the private interest which would create a conflict. Care should be taken to avoid using or avoid the appearance of using official positions and confidential information for personal advantage or gain.

Further, employees are expected to hold confidential all information deemed not to be for public consumption as determined by state law and Board policy. Employees also will respect the confidentiality of people served in the course of an employee's duties and use information gained in a responsible manner. The Board may discipline, up to and including discharge, any employee who discloses confidential and/or private information learned during the course of the employee's duties or learned as a result of the employee's participation in a closed (executive) session of the Board. Discretion should be used even within the school system's own network of communication and confidential information should only be communicated on a need to know basis.

Administrators and supervisors may set forth specific rules and regulations governing staff conduct on the job within a particular building.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

All new books must be stamped as property of Sheridan Schools, numbered and dated. Example: 1-21 meaning this is book 1 purchased in 2021. I also like the school stamp on page 100 as well. The book stamp is available in the office.

Textbooks will be issued by each teacher. Accurately record the name of the student, book number and condition of the book. Check books to see if numbers are original or erased before issuing the book to the student. Keep book numbers issued to the students in your grade book. Fines for misuse will be collected by the teacher and then turned into the office.

## **PURCHASING AUTHORITY**

No purchases are to be made without prior permission of an administrator. Any purchases made on behalf of the District by any employee must be made on an official purchase order that is signed by the building principal or superintendent.

Purchases that are made for student activities must be accompanied by a purchase order. Sponsors need to attach an invoice to each purchase order for payment. Please have the vendor's name and address on the purchase order.

All purchases are to be made by District Employees or club sponsors. (Please do not have parents purchase any items on behalf of the District.)

## **NEGLIGENCE**

The law states that schools take responsibility for children enrolled during the school day. There is a four-pronged test when assessing a school's liability in regard to negligence. A court would try to determine in a case of alleged negligence:

- Did the school have a duty to be careful not to injure a student and/or protect the student from being injured?
- Did the school fail to use due care?
- Did the school's carelessness cause the injury? (Or could school reasonably foresee problem?)
- Did student sustain provable damages?

It is not expected to anticipate every situation or prevent an unforeseen injury that happens without warning. However, our presence in the classroom, lunchroom, hallways, playground, and the locker room will help fulfill our responsibility to provide due care. Leaving a class or area of supervision unattended is an invitation for problems and is not acceptable.

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS (POLICY 3416)**

Students who must take prescription and/or over-the-counter medication at school, on a temporary or regular basis, must provide a written request to administer medication, signed by the parent. All medications will be kept in locked storage in the office unless a student must carry medication on his/her person during the school day. Parents of students who must carry and self-administer medication must complete the Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Medication form and return it to the building office.

Teachers are expected to assist students in remembering when a medication is scheduled to be administered. If the student refuses to take medication, teachers are expected to notify the parent whenever possible. Attempts to contact parents must be documented as to date and time.

## **ASSEMBLIES AND PEP RALLIES**

Assemblies are held during the year to provide added experience for students. Teachers will attend all assemblies and sit so they can monitor the students to eliminate any unnecessary noise and discourteous acts. Pep rallies are under the direction of the Student Council and Pep Club. These are by nature a noisier type of activity and students are permitted to let off steam within the realm of the property. In general, these will be held prior to home games and before end of the season tournaments and playoffs.

## **INVENTORIES**

Teachers are required to update their complete inventory of texts, supplies and equipment at the end of each school year.

## **FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

Food and beverages are not to be brought or consumed in any elementary classroom, with the exception of classroom parties or cultural experiences. The high school classroom rule regarding food, gum and beverages will be up to the individual teacher.

## **GRADE BOOK**

Teachers are expected to update the grades in their gradebook at least on a weekly basis. An electronic version of your grade book **MUST BE TURNED IN** at the end of the school year.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

The following is a suggested range of minutes for homework per student, recognizing that some students may require more or less time to complete assignments. Homework is a necessary part of the educative process in that it teaches students to develop personal habits of self-directed work that will be beneficial in later life. Homework should be complimentary to classroom instruction, and appropriate feedback should be provided as immediately as possible so that students may build on a foundation of correct concepts. Homework should never be assigned as a punitive measure in retaliation for some student offense.

Teachers should make it a practice to be aware of the amount of homework that is assigned by their colleagues so students are not over-burdened by assignments that are to be completed outside of the classroom. Homework assignments that will require major amounts of a student's time should be assigned well in advance to allow the student to complete the assignment over a longer period of time than normal.

<b>Grade/Core Subjects</b>		<b>Reading to Self/Parent</b>
Kindergarten	5-10 minutes/day or 20-40 minutes/week	10 minutes/day
First Grade	15-20 minutes/day or 60-80 minutes/week	10 minutes/day
Second Grade	20-25 minutes/day or 80-100 minutes/week	10-15 minutes/day
Third/Fourth Grade	25-30 minutes/day or 100-120 minutes/week	15-20 minutes/day
Fifth Grade	35-40 minutes/day or 140-160 minutes/week	20 minutes/day
6-12th Grade	40-60 minutes/day or 160-240 minutes/week	20 minutes/day

Some days students are given time to work in class on these assignments. Therefore, the time fluctuates. Students may also have more homework if they do not use their time wisely on their in class assignments.

### ***MEDIA/TECH EQUIPMENT***

A/V equipment is for use by all teachers. All equipment will be checked out and checked in through the school secretary. Please return equipment promptly so others may use it.

### ***EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS (POLICY 8301)***

The District will average one emergency drill per month. Please read your emergency preparedness manual and become familiar with it.

### ***SUPERVISION TO/FROM HOME***

Discipline in the halls, school grounds, lunchroom and any other place within the jurisdiction of the school is the responsibility of all teachers. (The Sheridan School District is responsible for students from the time they leave their home until they return after school.) If a student is misbehaving at a school function, in the restrooms, lunchroom, etc., teachers are expected to take action. If the misbehavior is serious or continues, please bring the student(s) to the office and fill out a discipline referral. Teachers will be assigned various supervisory duties. It is imperative that you cover your area when assigned.

### ***SUPERVISION IN THE CLASSROOM***

The teacher is responsible for the good conduct of all persons in their room. Keep the students orderly and working from the opening bell to the bell for dismissal. Guidance and discipline should extend beyond the homeroom or classroom to include all students. Matters of discipline should be handled in most cases by the instructor. The principal or another teacher should not be used as threats. **Never send a child out of your class without a destination and a pass.** When possible, call the principal to let them know a student is being sent to the office and the reason for it. Teachers should feel responsible to correct student's actions whenever they are not in accord with school policy. If a disciplinary problem arises that you feel merits the attention of the principal, ask someone to supervise your class while you bring the matter to the attention of the principal.

**DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN A POSITION WHERE YOU FIND THAT YOU MUST USE PHYSICAL FORCE. (Walk away if you need to).**

### ***SUPERVISION - EVENING USE OF THE BUILDING***

There are several different organizations that use the building during the evening. In order to clarify and establish responsibility, teachers are asked to:

- Have administrative approval.
- Be in the building 15 minutes before the time your group is scheduled to meet.
- Permit only members of your group to enter the building. You are responsible for every student you allow to enter.
- Keep your group in your room or department. Lock the door after they are there and keep it locked.
- When your activity is finished, it is your duty to see that your group leaves the building. Supervise until your group has all gone. The teacher will be the last one to leave.
- Be sure that you lock every door you unlocked.
- Students often leave by other doors, be sure ALL entrance doors are locked.
- Have students out of the building by 9:00 p.m.
- On Wednesday nights, all activities must be completed by 6:30 p.m.

## ***PARTIES***

School parties and dances may be scheduled as frequently as the calendar and student interest permits. All functions outside the scope of the normal school day are to be scheduled through the building principal. The faculty member who sponsors the group shall make arrangements to take care of it. All school parties require one faculty chaperon when held after school hours or outside the school campus.

## ***STUDENT HANDBOOK***

All teachers will receive a copy of the Student Handbook/Calendar. Please take some time to become familiar with it. The policies in the handbook are ones you will be responsible to enforce directly or indirectly. Please take time on the first day of school to review with your classes.

## ***LIST OF STUDENTS' NAMES***

Teachers should not distribute lists of their students' names to any outside person or agency. Request of such information should be directed to the office.

## ***USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES ON SCHOOL BUSINESS*** (POLICIES 5630, 8121)

To safeguard the District, employees, and students in matters of liability, particularly as this relates to any employees transporting a student or students, the following policy shall be observed:

- **Employees may not transport students for school purposes without prior authorization by the superintendent or the principal.**
- For all special trips involving students, a travel form must be turned in two weeks in advance of the trip.
- Employees authorized to use their vehicles to transport students must provide the business manager with a photocopy of a valid driver's license and proof of insurance.
- The District shall assume no responsibility for liability in case of accident unless the employee has the authorization described above.
- No student shall be sent on school errands with their own automobile, an employee's automobile, or a district-owned automobile, unless cleared through the principal or superintendent.

## ***CONFERENCES & PORTFOLIO PRESENTATIONS***

Each school year we will have parent-teacher conferences scheduled. During conferences, please observe the following guidelines:

- Maintain complete privacy.
- Try to keep conferences to a scheduled time frame. Other parents are likely to be waiting to speak to you. If the scheduled time is not enough, schedule a meeting at another time.
- If parents have a complaint, **listen to what they have to say**, ask questions if necessary, and then respond. Remember to follow up. If you become aware of a situation that requires investigation, promise to report back to the parent when you have more information and **then do it!**
- **DO NOT** have televisions or radios on during the conferences, so parents have your undivided attention.

The student should address each of these areas in the presentation to their parents.

- Student's ability to do the required work.
- Samples of their work.
- Books and materials used.
- Student's special interests and abilities.
- How the student feels about themselves.
- Short and long term goals



## **FIRST AID (POLICY 3431)**

The administration of any type of medication is not the function of employees of the Sheridan School District. In the event that any student sustains a minor injury, it will be handled by a staff member. All accidents will be immediately reported on an "accident report form" to the principal or superintendent.

In the event of a serious injury to a student, an administrator shall notify the parent/guardian as soon as possible. The parent/guardian shall decide what physician shall treat their child and whether to pick up the child at the school or meet the child at the Ruby Valley Medical Center. The District shall provide personnel and transportation to the designated facility. If the parent cannot be reached and if the accident is serious, the student shall be transported to the Ruby Valley Hospital emergency room by ambulance, accompanied by a District employee.

## **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS (POLICY 7336)**

District employees and officials who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties shall be reimbursed by the District upon submission of a properly filled out and approved expense report and such supporting receipts as required by the administration. Such expenses may be approved and incurred in line with budgetary allocations for the specific type of expense. Expense reports must be submitted to the business manager within one month after the obligation of the expense in order for reimbursement to be made.

Anyone who makes a trip where expenses are to be reimbursed by the District must have the approval of the administration prior to making the trip in order to be reimbursed. The number of miles reimbursed will be determined by the official mileage chart that is maintained in the business office. Deviations from this official mileage chart may only be made when unusual traveling or lodging conditions occurred during the trip, and with the concurrence of the superintendent.

When official travel by personally owned vehicle has been authorized, mileage payment shall be made at the rate set by the Board. This rate may be adjusted annually.

## **TELEPHONE**

There are phones in all classrooms. Please do not use the phones during class time unless it is for emergency purposes. Secretaries will be instructed to not transfer any calls during instructional time unless it is an emergency. Check your messages between classes or during your prep period. **Students are not to be dismissed from any class to use the telephone, unless an emergency should arise.**

## **DRESS**

Faculty members are asked to dress in a professional manner. (If you have questions please ask your building administrator.)

## **HALL/NOON DUTY**

Each teacher will be expected to be responsible for his/her share of hall/noon duty. Elementary teachers are expected to assist their class through the lunch line and get them settled at the table before eating their own lunch.

Each teacher is expected to supervise the hall in the vicinity of their classroom between classes, before, and after school. Keep students moving and orderly. Students are not to loiter in the halls during school time. Teachers are to keep their rooms locked when not occupied.

## **ENROLLMENT OR WITHDRAWAL**

Upon approval of the principal, all K-12 students will enroll and withdraw through the secretary of the corresponding school. **THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL WILL APPROVE A WITHDRAWAL FROM INFINITE CAMPUS.** Withdrawal shall be done during regular class periods. In the case of an emergency, the office will assist the student with checkout. Students must return all books and pay all fines and other charges. If books are returned in good condition and no fines are due, the teacher will indicate this by placing the student's grade on the withdrawal slip. If other conditions exist, do not place their grade on the slip and give the reason. The student should report to the office with their withdrawal slip at the beginning of the seventh period to be officially withdrawn. The student will pick up the "Student Check-Out" form from the school office.

## **MAIL BOXES**

Please check your mailbox for messages and remove all materials from it daily.

## **LESSON PLANS** (POLICY 2123)

**All teachers must complete lesson plans.** Non-tenured teachers should review lesson plans with their principal. Lesson plans must list assignments and activities to enable a substitute teacher to cover the lesson. Lesson plans must be kept in a place where they are easily accessible for substitutes and administrators.

## **EQUIPMENT**

The removal of any equipment from the school must be approved through the superintendent's office.

## **CLASSROOM**

Leave classrooms in good order at the end of each day, with windows closed, lights off, and door locked. **The floors should be clean of all books and debris. No one should let a student into another teacher's locked room.**

## **PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION (PDA)**

Teachers are cautioned regarding inappropriate displays of affection with others while on duty. (Touching, holding hands, etc.) Public displays of affection which are inappropriate may be grounds for disciplinary action.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE (POLICIES 3300, 3310)**

School Law 20-5-201, states that pupils shall: "Comply with the policies of the trustees and the rules of the school which he attends; pursue the required course of instruction; submit to the authority of the teachers, principal and district superintendent of the district; and be subject to the control and authority of the teachers, principal and district superintendent while he is in school or on school premises, on his way to and from school, or during his intermission or recess. Any pupil who continually and willfully disobeys the provisions of this section, shows open defiance of the authority vested in school personnel by this section, defaces or damages any school building, school grounds, furniture, equipment, book belonging to the district, or harms or threatens to harm another person or his property shall be liable for punishment, suspension or expulsion under the provisions of this title. When a pupil defaces or damages school property as defined above, his parent or guardian shall be liable for the cost of repair or replacement upon the complaint of the teacher, principal, superintendent, or any trustee and the proof of such damage."

Classroom discipline is the teacher's responsibility. Please confer with the principal or superintendent on persistent problems. When a teacher brings charges against a student who is chronically defiant, it is necessary that the charges be specific and concise. As a result, it is suggested that teachers keep a written record of offenses. A good investment is to make a phone call home when the problem is small. Teachers, phone home!

There are certain fundamental principles which incorporate the elements of good discipline. The ordinary child usually does not need affection so much as he needs a sympathetic understanding of his problem and wants. Every teacher ought to have this understanding as a basis for personal guidance. One student needs encouragement, another restraint, a third appreciation, a fourth an awakened ambition. A word of caution here, of stimulus there, a warning particularly if in private, may not merely save temporary disciplinary troubles, but produce permanent results in character building. The teacher, who can cultivate such an attitude of trust on the part of their pupils that they will want to consult with them about their own troubles, has an opportunity for a type of service that is extremely gratifying. In the best controlled class, the problem of discipline is not obvious. Good discipline is a by-product when students are interested and busy.

### ***VISITORS (POLICY 4301)***

Students may bring visitors to school only with the principal's permission. Parents are always welcome, but are asked to check in through the office before visiting.

### ***VIDEOS/MOVIES***

Videos must have an educational purpose and relate to the curriculum.

- Make sure the videos have educational value and relate to the subject being taught. Be very selective of the content, character and impact the video may have on students. Videos should be appropriate, relevant and directly related to the instructional program.
- Always preview the video to ensure it is appropriate to show to students.
- With the limited amount of instructional days provided, the use of videos should not be a major tool of instruction. Consider using portions of the video which would best reinforce a subject theme which was taught using traditional methods.
- **All videos not part of the school based media collections must be approved by the superintendent or principal at least three days in advance.**

### ***CORPORAL PUNISHMENT (POLICY 3310)***

By statute, corporal punishment is not allowed in schools in the State of Montana.

### ***HOLDING BUS STUDENTS AFTER SCHOOL***

Considering that we have a large number of students who ride buses, it is imperative that before you keep a bus student after school, for any reason, you must check their status with respect to transportation through the office. When bus students are assigned detention, they are to be given one night to make proper arrangements.

### ***STUDENT DISMISSAL PRECAUTIONS***

No staff member shall excuse any pupil from school prior to the end of the school day, or into any person's custody, without the direct prior approval and knowledge of the building principal. The building principal shall not excuse a pupil before the end of the school day without a request for the early dismissal by the student's parents. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian.

As a general rule, students may not leave school to go home due to illness unless it can be established that some relative of the student is at home to care for them. Additional precautions shall be taken by the school administration appropriate to the age of students, and as needs arise. All students must check in or out of school through the school office.

## **STUDENT PROGRESS AND REFERRAL**

Teachers are expected to intervene when a student is struggling in their class. Contacting parents and setting up additional tutoring time before and after school are the norm. If a student continues to struggle after these interventions, the teacher should ask the counselor to set up a student assistant team meeting (SAT). The student will be placed on a Response to Intervention cycle using the classroom and Title I teacher to further assist the student. Only after intensive intervention will a student be referred to special education using the referral form.

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS** (POLICY 2421)

A student's achievement of the skills for the grade to which he is assigned and his readiness for work at the next grade level shall be required before he is assigned to the higher grade. Students who have mastered the appropriate skills will be promoted and those who have not will be recommended for retention. Such retention may be considered when:

- The child is in grades K-6.
- The child is achieving significantly below ability and grade level.
- Retention would not cause an undue social and emotional adjustment.
- Retention would have a reasonable chance of benefiting the child totally.

**Whenever such retention is being considered, the teacher shall confer with the principal.** This should be done before the end of the third 9-week grading period. The principal shall call a meeting of the parents, the teacher, and the counselor to explain the child's current academic standing in relationship to the group and their individual ability. If significant improvement is not noted in the child's academic performance, the principal and the teacher shall make the final decision on retention of the student. Only in unusual circumstances should a child be retained more than once.

**Middle School Promotion Requirements** – A student that fails more than one class may be considered for retention. A team of staff, parent, and administration will review all facts and make a recommendation to the superintendent.

## **PREGNANT AND MARRIED STUDENTS**

Marital, maternal, or parental status shall not affect the rights and privileges of students to receive a public education or to take part in any extracurricular activity offered by the school. Pregnant students shall be permitted to continue in school in all instances when continued attendance has the sanction of the expectant mother's physician. The physician's approval of this continued attendance must be on file at the school. The school administration is authorized to make special arrangements for the instruction of pregnant students and to provide an educational program designed to meet their special needs.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

The superintendent is empowered to close the district schools or to dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and staff. Such action is never to be taken lightly, for public education is one of the principal functions of the community and should be maintained at a normal level except in extreme circumstances. When this regularity of operation ceases, serious difficulties are caused and the welfare of children may be jeopardized. Schools may not properly be closed merely to avoid inconvenience. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour, or to dismiss students early, the administration has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory, and operational activity is continued as may be possible.

In making the decision to close schools, the superintendent or his or her designee shall consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of children:

- Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
- Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting the transportation of students
- Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition which would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.

The superintendent shall weigh these factors and shall take action to close the schools only after consultation with traffic and weather authorities, the principals, and school officials from neighboring districts. Refer to the emergency preparedness manual.

### ***CASH IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS***

Moneys collected by school employees and by student treasurers shall be handled with good and prudent business procedures. All moneys collected shall be receipted, accounted for, and directed without delay to either office for deposit. **In no case shall money be left overnight in school, except in the safe.**

### ***PATRIOTIC EXERCISES***

Montana Code Annotated requires that Montana school students recite the Pledge of Allegiance. We believe that the students of the Sheridan School District should learn the principles of liberty and democracy expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. Further, it is felt that the salute to the flag and the daily Pledge of Allegiance help students learn these principles. In all classrooms in grades K-12, at the beginning of the first regularly scheduled class or activity period, the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America will be given, except when the principal will arrange for other appropriate exercises which will include the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ***EXTRACURRICULAR GUIDELINES***

For student extracurricular guidelines, please see the respective student handbooks. The necessary travel forms must be filed in the office before any planned trip.

### ***SAFETY AND ACCIDENTS***

Safety is everyone's responsibility. Staff is responsible for the maintenance of items in the classrooms. If you have a chair that is not safe, it is your duty to let maintenance or the office know. **DO NOT** allow students to sit on table tops or the back of furniture. It violates safety codes. If you see an unsafe condition or situation you should bring it to the attention of a supervisor. If you have an accident/or injury while on the job, notify the principal or the school clerk immediately.

### ***STORAGE***

It is the teachers' responsibility to properly store all class and activity materials. A room should never be left in disarray.

### ***SHERIDAN SCHOOL DISTRICT GRADING SCALE***

A	=	94 - 100	C	=	74 - 76
A-	=	90 - 93	C-	=	70 - 73
B	=	87 - 89	D+	=	67 - 69
B	=	84 - 86	D	=	64 - 66
B-	=	80 - 83	D-	=	60 - 63
C+	=	77 - 79	F	=	59 and below

## **INTERNET USE BY STAFF** (POLICY 5450)

Personal use of school computers by staff should be limited while on duty and not used during instructional time. Inappropriate or illegal use of the internet may be grounds for disciplinary action.

## **FERPA** (POLICIES 3600, 3600P, 3600F)

All staff must comply with the Federal Equal Rights Protection Act (FERPA), which includes protection of individual children's privacy. Student information cannot be shared outside of the educational setting. Confine all conversations dealing with students to the closed meeting setting. If staff has questions in regards to personal student information or need specific information on a student, staff is directed to the guidance counselor, principal, or superintendent.

## **TOBACCO AND VAPING DEVICE USE** (POLICY 8225)

The District maintains tobacco-free buildings and grounds. Tobacco includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, snuff, pipe smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, vapor product, alternative nicotine product or any other tobacco or nicotine delivery innovation.

Use of tobacco or nicotine products in a public school building or on public school property is prohibited, unless used in a classroom or on other school property as part of a lecture, demonstration, or educational forum sanctioned by a school administrator or faculty member, concerning the risks associated with using tobacco products or in connection with Native American cultural activities.

For the purpose of this policy, "public school building or public school property" means:

- Public land, fixtures, buildings, or other property owned or occupied by an institution for the teaching of minor children, that is established and maintained under the laws of the state of Montana at public expense; and
- Includes playgrounds, school steps, parking lots, administration buildings, athletic facilities, gymnasiums, locker rooms, and school vehicles.

Violation of the policy by students and staff will be subject to actions outlined in District discipline policies. Use of FDA-approved cessation devices may be permitted at school buildings and on school grounds with the approval of the building administrator.

# **CERTIFIED HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of the Employee Handbook issued by the District, and understand and agree that I am to review this handbook in detail and to consult District policies and procedures and with my supervisor if I have any questions concerning its contents.

I understand:

1. that this handbook is intended as a general guide to District personnel policies and procedures and that it is not intended to create any sort of contract between the District and any one or all of its employees;
2. that the District may modify any or all of these policies and procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without prior notice; and
3. that in the event the District modifies any of the policies or procedures contained in this handbook, the changes will become binding on me immediately upon issuance of the new policy or procedure by the District.
4. I have received the school district policies via the School District Website and have attended an employee orientation on \_\_\_\_\_ (*date*) which included discussion of the school district policies. I agree to abide by all of them.

*I understand that as an employee of the District I am required to review and follow the policies and procedures set forth in this Employee Handbook and District policy. I agree to do so.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Employee*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**Return this signed form to the District Office.**

# **CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

## **2021-22**

As an employee or intern with the Sheridan School District, I may have access to student records. Student records contain confidential information protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 C.F.R. 99). Any confidential information contained in student records is to be used exclusively for professional purposes. I understand that the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may apply to records that I view in the course of my employment/internship with the school district. By signing this agreement, I agree to keep any and all information that I learn about students confidential and will not disclose confidential information obtained from student records.

The terms of this agreement remain in effect during and after my employment/internship with the school district. Violation of the terms of this confidentiality agreement can result in termination of employment/internship with the school district or other forms of discipline the district deems appropriate under the circumstances.

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

**Return this signed form to the District Office.**