



**Union County Educational Services Commission  
Westfield, New Jersey**

# **District Staff Manual 2023-2024**

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## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Union County Educational Services Commission is to build partnerships and provide innovative educational solutions that support school districts and benefit all 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.

## **Belief Statements**

We believe that all students have the right and ability to learn.

We believe that students deserve a safe, positive, nurturing, & supportive educational environment.

We believe that every student can develop skills needed to be a productive member of society.

We believe that building upon successful experiences promotes life-long learners.

We believe in offering high quality specialized educational programs.

We believe that the UCESC is always evolving to meet the ever-changing needs of students by building partnerships between home, school, and communities at local, state, & national levels.

We believe that the UCESC exists to provide innovative solutions for the benefit of the 21<sup>st</sup> century students in an effective and efficient manner.

**This District Staff Manual is intended to provide guidelines covering employment and general procedures of the Union County Educational Services Commission and is not a contract. The provisions of this manual may be amended and supplemented from time to time without notice and at the sole discretion of the Commission.**

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## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICIES**

Union County Educational Services Commission is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, protected veteran or disabled status, or genetic information.

In addition to federal law requirements, the Commission complies with all applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the district has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to, recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, disciplinary action, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and/or training.

Union County Educational Services Commission also affirms its responsibility to ensuring that all students enrolled in its schools receive equal admission consideration and educational opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, protected veteran or disabled status, or genetic information. Limited English proficiency nor economic status are also not deterrents to admission to any Commission program.

Union County Educational Services Commission maintains its affirmative action plans for employment, contract and classroom practices on file for public review in the Office of the District Affirmative Action/504 Compliance Officer, Mr. John Marquet. All inquiries and correspondence should be directed to Hillcrest Academy North, 2630 Plainfield Avenue, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076 or (908) 233-9366. **(Affirmative Action Guide - Appendix A)**

## **ATTENDANCE**

The Commission recognizes the importance of attendance and its impact on consistent, daily instruction with regards to student achievement. In addition, the Commission understands that on occasion staff need to take off for both short and long-term periods of time and supports this need when it is necessary.

Staff are expected to report to work on time each workday. Persistent tardiness disrupts the effective operation of an assigned school, negatively impacts student learning, and compromises the staff member's ability to meet performance expectations.

Attendance will be monitored closely and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Excessive absences will negatively impact job performance ratings and may result in a recommendation to the Board of Directors of an increment withholding or termination. Staff members are strongly encouraged to speak to their administrator regarding attendance concerns.

All full and part time salaried staff receive paid sick, family illness, personal, and paid time off (PTO) days in accordance with negotiated collective bargaining agreements. Steadily employed part time hourly employees receive ten sick days annually consistent with their administratively approved assignment, with one full sick day charged for each absence regardless of number of hours worked on that particular day. Employees who work on an as needed basis, such as hospital tutors and home instructors will accrue sick leave according to the New Jersey Paid Earned Sick Leave Act.

All staff are required to report absences on a timely and accurate basis following procedures outlined in **Appendix B Attendance Policy and Absence Procedures**.

- **Professional Development:** Requests for Professional Development must be submitted in writing using the *Request for Professional Development Form (Appendix N)* and submitted to a Principal/Director for approval in time for approval by the Superintendent and the Board. All professional development requests must be submitted with appropriate signatures and documentation no later than the Friday before each monthly Board Meeting. The date of the absence must be recorded in Absence Management upon notification of approval.
- **Extended Absences:** Any staff member who requests or requires extended leave should meet with their supervisor as soon as possible and then contact the Superintendent's Office to discuss eligibility for extended FMLA/NJFLA leave. Requests for extended leave must be submitted in writing and approved by the Board of Directors.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

Any written communication between the certificated staff and parents or family members are part of the student's permanent academic record. Copies must be maintained and submitted to the building administrator at the end of the year. Written communication includes emails, log books or student journals. Parent communication via text messages is prohibited.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is of utmost importance that staff not disclose confidential information about their students.

## **DIRECT DEPOSIT**

Employees who prefer the direct deposit for their regular paycheck to their bank account must complete the *Employee Direct Deposit Authorization form (Appendix C)* and forward it to Susan Fuller in the Business Office. Please note if your direct deposit is routed into your checking account, a voided check must also be sent to the Business Office along with the form.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The key to effective classroom management is a positive environment supported by all members of the learning community. In the classroom, the teacher, through effective lesson planning and respectful interactions with students, is responsible for maintaining an environment that enables all students to achieve. Due to the diversity of the student populations in Commission programs, each school will implement an appropriate behavior management program for its students.

## **DRESS CODE**

Clothing and appearance of all staff must be clean, neat and appropriate for a professional setting. No clothing should be worn that constitutes a danger to the health and safety of the wearer or to others. No clothing should be worn that interferes with the instructional program including clothing that contains inappropriate content or is of a revealing nature. Footwear must be appropriate for active movement and safety.

## **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYED OPENINGS**

When it is necessary to close district programs, delay the opening of schools, or schedule an early dismissal due to inclement weather or other unanticipated emergency situations, information regarding the closing will be communicated on the district website.

Staff will be notified about closings via the Everbridge Mass Notification System by phone, email and text message. **It is strongly suggested that staff provide a cell phone number for text messages.** If all else fails, text messages go through with the most reliability. Staff are reminded to update contact information as needed by submitting an *Everbridge Emergency Contact Information form (Appendix D)* to their immediate supervisor.

If a delayed opening is required, schools will start 90 minutes later than usual. Staff should arrive 90 minutes after their normal start time. A delayed opening lunch schedule will be followed. Three snow days are included in the calendar. Calendars can be downloaded/viewed on the district website. If additional days are needed due to closings, the days will be added as noted on the calendar. Staff should remain mindful of the possibility of the extended school year due to excessive school closings when making summer vacation plans.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

The primary goal of the Union County Educational Services Commission is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of our school community. The Commission strives to maintain a safe and secure school environment by providing direct support to our schools and programs while increasing our capacity to respond in the event of crises. The Commission recognizes that there is no greater priority than the safety and well-being of its students and staff members.

In addition to providing on-going safety training to our staff the Commission works closely with safety experts and law enforcement agencies at both the state and local level. We have forged partnerships with the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of School Preparedness & Emergency Planning (OSPEP), the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, Westfield and Scotch Plains Police Departments, and the Union County Prosecutor's Office.

Through these collaborations the Commission has developed and implemented comprehensive plans and procedures that enable us to follow best practices in our efforts to promote safety.

The Union County Educational Services Commission Emergency Management Plan is available for your review in the main office of each school and in the Superintendent's office. An Emergency Management Quick Reference Guide is also maintained in each classroom and the main office. Staff are responsible for reviewing the emergency procedures outlined in the guide and required to participate in school safety and security drills monthly. Staff assigned to buildings not directly under the auspices of the Commission (i.e. Trinitas Regional Medical Center, Children's Specialized Hospital, Overlook Hospital, or a Non-Public School) are responsible for following the safety procedures established by that organization.

All questions regarding school safety and emergency management procedures should be directed to the building or program Principal/Director, or John Marquet, UCESC School Safety Specialist.

## **EXTRA SERVICE REIMBURSEMENT**

In the event a staff member is required to forego a prep period due to unexpected circumstances, an ***Invoice for Extra Service form (Appendix E)*** is to be submitted to the building/program administrator within 24 hours for verification and approval. The form will be returned to the staff member for continued use that month. Extra service forms must be signed by the administrator and employee and sent to the Business Office by the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the following month. Staff should make every attempt to consult with their supervisor to reschedule the prep time whenever possible.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an integral part of the educational programs provided to students. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff must adhere to the following procedures:

1. Field Trip Request Forms must be submitted to an administrator by September 20<sup>th</sup> for all trips from September 20 through December 20 and by November 17<sup>th</sup> for trips from January 2 to June 22. The school nurse must review and sign off on each field trip. Please follow the routing system located in upper right-hand corner of the form.
2. Requests for bagged lunches for field trips must be submitted to Maschio's using the ***Field Trip Lunch Notification form (Appendix F)*** two weeks prior to the field trip.
3. Parents/Guardians must sign and return the ***Field Trip Permission Form (Appendix G)*** indicating consent for the student to attend the trip.
4. The teacher must provide the principal with signed permission slips, a list of students and staff and, if appropriate, parents attending the trip at least one day prior to the trip.
5. By law, permission slips for all trips are to remain on file for a minimum of three years.
6. Emergency contact/allergy information for students must accompany staff on field trips.
7. Teachers are to contact the school administrator in the event of an emergency or delay in the return to school as soon as possible.
8. Under no circumstances should the legal capacity of an assigned school bus be exceeded.
9. In the event of a medical emergency, the responsible chaperone must immediately summon help (911), accompany the child to the medical facility, distribute the remaining children to the other staff and notify the school. The teacher should not leave the child until a parent or administrator arrives.
10. If the return time is after dismissal, teachers must remain with students until all students are picked up by parents and/or safely transported home on a school bus.
11. All monies collected must be sent to the office according to the identified building procedure before the day of the trip. Appropriate arrangements must be made in advance for deposits and cash/checks needed for the trip.

## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING**

In April of 2010, the Governor of New Jersey signed into legislation the most comprehensive Harassment, Initiation and Bullying (HIB) policy in the nation. It requires that any incident of HIB that is reported or witnessed must be investigated. The goal is to make our schools a safe place for all students. This is not possible without the full cooperation of all staff.

It is important that all staff members review our *Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy (Appendix H)*. The law also requires the designation of a District Anti-Bullying Coordinator; School Anti-Bullying-Specialists and School Safety/School Climate Teams in each public school. The HIB policy and names of designated staff members is posted on the district homepage and school website as required by law and is also available for review in the main office of each school.

All questions regarding HIB rules and regulations should be directed to Mr. Will Graulich, who serves as the District Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

## **IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

All Commission staff are issued a photo identification card when hired. The identification card must be worn in a visible location at all times during the workday. Staff are responsible for contacting Barbara Jones in the Superintendent's Office to arrange for the replacement of lost, stolen or damaged ID card. Refer to *Employee Acknowledgement of Identification Card (Appendix I)* for information regarding the procedures and replacement fees for ID cards.

## **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM)**

The Commission has adopted an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy as required by law. The IPM coordinator is Eric Larson, School Business Administrator. As part of the pest management program it may be necessary to use chemical pesticides. The EPA and DEP register chemical pesticides to determine that use of the chemical in accordance with the directions does not pose an unreasonable risk to human health. Mr. Larson will maintain the product information of each pesticide product that is used on school property. These items will be available for your review. When a chemical must be used, the least toxic product will be applied. Notice will be given a minimum of 72 hours in advance of the pesticide application to those in the areas to be treated. In the case of a pest emergency, notice will be given as soon as possible. **(Annual IPM Notice - Appendix J)**

## **MAINTENANCE/REPAIRS**

All requests for maintenance/repairs should be brought to the attention of administration by submitting a *Maintenance Request Form (Appendix K)*. Emergency situations should be reported immediately via telephone. We remind all staff that safety is a shared responsibility.



## **MONEY COLLECTIONS/FUNDRAISING**

From time to time, teachers may be asked to serve as intermediaries for approved cash collections for school pictures, field trips, fund raising activities, and other events. All cash and/or checks must be submitted to the school office for safekeeping as soon as possible and no longer than the end of each school day. For the protection of staff and to remain in compliance with auditor regulations, all funds are to be deposited and distributed through the Student Activity Account not via cash.

All fund-raising activities must be pre-approved by the Superintendent. “Door-to-door” sales and incentives are prohibited. Staff mailboxes or email should not be used to distribute information regarding personal fundraising activities. These items should be left in the staff lounge after approval from the principal or designated administrator.

## **MOVIE AND AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS APPROPRIATENESS**

Audiovisual materials, including videotapes, DVD/CDs, and streaming media (i.e. YouTube), may be used to enhance instruction and support curricular objectives. Though at times it is appropriate to show students an entire movie, careful thought should also be given to only showing a clip that illustrates an important point of the lesson. Please note the following requirements:

1. Audiovisual materials must be clearly consistent with relevant curricular objectives.
2. All audiovisual materials, including streaming digital media must be previewed by the principal or designated administrator and judged to be of sufficient quality in both production and content to be a true aid to instruction of students.
3. If rated, audiovisual materials must be appropriate for the age group viewing the movie.
4. All audiovisual materials and broadcasts of live television programs must be approved in advance by the principal or designated administrator.

Requests for approval shall be made through the use of the *Media Approval Form (Appendix L)*. All approvals must be submitted to an administrator a minimum of one week prior to the date of use.

## **OPENING EXERCISES**

Opening exercises at the start of the school day shall include the Pledge of Allegiance and whenever possible the singing of a patriotic song. Each school/program is responsible for developing its own procedure for Opening Exercises and Morning Announcements.

## **ORDERING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Requests to purchase instructional materials (supplies, equipment, textbooks, etc.) shall be made through the use of the *Supply Requisition Form (Appendix M)*. All information must be completed before the order can be processed. Quotes and/or order forms from catalogs or websites must be attached to the requisition form for approval. Staff should discuss these items with their supervisor prior to submission. After receiving approval from the supervisor, a purchase order will be processed. Orders will not be approved unless the Supply Requisition Form is submitted.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

All staff members have access to a locked file cabinet and/or closet in their classrooms or office. It is important to secure all personal belongings (purses, money, etc.) in the locked cabinet/closet. UCESC is not responsible for replacement of any personal items that are lost or stolen.

## **POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

All Commission policies and regulations are available for review on the Commission website ([www.ucesc.org](http://www.ucesc.org)) under the Board of Directors tab.

## **PREPARATION TIME**

All certified staff shall be entitled to preparation time. This time is provided for activities including, but not limited to, lesson planning, grading, report writing, participation in IEP Meetings, consultations with administrators and colleagues, and parent-teacher conferences. Each full-time staff member will receive 150 minutes of preparation time per week. Preparation time for full-time staff members assigned to the Nonpublic Department will be scheduled collaboratively with the teacher and the Nonpublic Administrator. All other full-time staff receive a 30-minute prep period each day which shall be scheduled during the workday. Salaried part-time employees will receive a prorated amount of prep time based on their full-time equivalent (FTE).

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

As educators, we are always learning. Therefore, a well-rounded professional development program, focused on improving student growth and achievement, is key to a dynamic educational environment for staff and students. As per the State of New Jersey, every certificated staff member is required to complete 20 hours of professional development per year directly related to goals identified within their individual Professional Development Plans. Professional development hours should be recorded on the Professional Development Log included in the Staff Evaluation Manual. This form must be submitted to your supervisor when completing your Annual Summative Evaluation at the end of the school year.

Staff members are encouraged to seek professional development opportunities that promote individual growth, enhance district programs, and support mastery of goals outlined in Professional Development Plans. This includes, but is not limited to, workshops, conferences, school visitations, peer observations and committee participation. A ***Professional Development Request Form (Appendix N)*** must be completed as early as possible and submitted to your supervisor for consideration and approval of PD activities. Staff are reminded to follow procedures for submitting requests for absence in Absence Management immediately after receiving confirmation of approval by the Superintendent so substitute coverage can be arranged.

As required by law, staff cannot be reimbursed for workshops (registration fees, travel, etc.) unless the activity is approved by the Board **PRIOR** to attendance. Board meetings are generally held on the first Wednesday of each month. Professional Development requests, with all the necessary documentation, must be submitted to Lynn Thorn in the Personnel Office by the Friday before the Board Meeting, prior to the date of the workshop. Board Meeting dates are posted on the district website under the “Board of Directors” tab. Upon returning from the workshop a ***Staff Development Report Form (Appendix O)*** must be completed and submitted to Lynn Thorn in the Personnel Office. Please refer to the WEA Agreement for details regarding reimbursement for professional development activities.

## **MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

All Mileage Reimbursement for Professional Development needs to be pre-approved. Employees who travel out-of-district for approved professional development are eligible for mileage reimbursement as follows:

- The distance traveled from home at the start of the workday until returned home at the end of the day **less** your round trip normal commute to work. If the result is a negative number, no mileage can be claimed. If the result is greater than your round-trip normal commute, you will be reimbursed for miles that exceed your normal commute.
- Travel reimbursement from work to the Professional Development activity during the workday is eligible for mileage incurred. Reimbursement is also provided for travel from the Professional Development activity to home that exceeds the mileage of your regular commute home.
- Reimbursement evidence should clearly indicate the mileage from your home to work and the miles claimed over and above your normal commute.
- Mileage reimbursement increased to 47 cents per mile.

## **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES**

Professional Learning Communities are groups of certified staff members working together to enhance student learning. All certified staff members will participate in one or more PLCs during the year. A minimum of two Tuesdays each month from 2:40-3:40, teams work collaboratively to follow the PLC Process (Implement, Assess, Learn, Revise) with the goal of facilitating student growth. Each School Improvement Panel establishes PLC goals for their school or department and oversees the work of the committees. Each school or department then presents their findings and evidence of student growth to the Board of Directors at the May Board Meeting.

## **PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS AND WORK HOURS**

The work hours and faculty meeting schedules for Commission staff shall be as follows:

### **1. Full-Time Certified Teachers**

Monday – Friday                      8:20 a.m. - 2:40 p.m. Student Time    8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

There will be 90-minutes of additional meeting time per week in the form of one 60-minute meeting per week and one 30-minute meeting per week either Tuesday or Thursday.

There will be a maximum of 3 evening meetings per school year, 2 of which can be 2-hours in length and 1 of which can be 3-hours in length. The 3-hour meeting can only be used for parent conferences.

The limitation on meetings does not apply to graduation. Any person required to attend an evening meeting beyond those required of the general faculty (including, but not limited to, the school social worker) shall be compensated at the contractual hourly rate. Participation in volunteer group meetings are not eligible for compensation.

Faculty meetings and conferences will not be scheduled on days that employees are requested to return for evening parent meetings, except in cases of emergency.

2. Part-Time Certified Salaried Teachers

Monday – Friday      8:20 a.m. - 2:40 p.m. (As Assigned)  
Student Time          8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Part-Time Certified Salaried Teachers hired for 3-days per week are required to attend one 60-minute meeting per week on a day that they are working.

Part-Time Certified Salaried Teachers hired for 4-days per week are required to attend one 60-minute meeting per week on a one 30-minute meeting per week on a day that they are working.

Part-Time Certified Salaried Teachers are required to attend a maximum of two evening meetings per year.

3. Full-Time Registered Behavior Technicians

Monday – Friday      8:20 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.  
Student Time          8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

There will be 60-minutes of additional meeting time per week in the form of one 60-minute meeting per week either Tuesday or Thursday.

There will be a maximum of 3 evening meetings per school year, 2 of which can be 2-hours in length and 1 of which can be 3-hours in length. The 3-hour meeting can only be used for parent conferences.

The limitation on meetings does not apply to graduation. Any person required to attend an evening meeting beyond those required of the general faculty (including, but not limited to, the school social worker) shall be compensated at the contractual hourly rate. Participation in volunteer group meetings are not eligible for compensation.

Faculty meetings and conferences will not be scheduled on days that employees are requested to return for evening parent meetings, except in cases of emergency.

4. Full-Time Teacher Assistants and Safety and Security Monitors

Monday – Friday      8:20 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.  
Student Time          8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

There shall be a maximum of 8 meetings outside the school day per school year for full-time Teacher Assistants and School Safety and Security Monitors.

5. Non-Public Teachers

The hours for Non-Public shall be 6 consecutive hours between 8:00 a.m.to 3:00 p.m. (Schedule to be determined by Supervisor)

There shall be a maximum of 20 meetings outside the school day per school year for Non-Public Teachers.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The active collaboration between schools, homes, and local communities is essential to the effective operation of the district. Media coverage of school events by the local newspapers is encouraged. However, all media releases must be approved by the building principal prior to the submission of the article to the media outlet.

## **PUPIL SAFETY/MEDICATION/FOOD ALLERGIES**

All staff members must remain alert at all times to factors affecting pupil safety. Injuries of any type should be referred to the school nurse and principal immediately and an accident report completed and submitted to administration (**Appendix P and Appendix Q**). Medication can only be administered by the school nurse or by a trained designee in the case of a life threatening allergic condition. Students may also self-administer specific medications related to asthma or other life threatening allergic conditions per ***Policy 5330 – Administration of Medication***. The school nurse will notify staff if a student has permission to self-administer medication. Staff must also remain aware that students may have **severe and/or life threatening allergies** to foods (i.e. peanuts, eggs, dairy products). All staff must discuss specific food allergies with the school nurse before providing any food to students.

## **REIMBURSEMENT**

Reimbursement for any cash expenditures must be pre-approved by the building administration. A receipt, cancelled check or credit card statement is required in order to be reimbursed. A requisition form must also be completed for this transaction. Please note that bills are paid once each month following the monthly Board meeting. Therefore, reimbursements will be made only at this time. Only under extenuating circumstances and with prior approval will reimbursements be issued at an alternate time. School districts are not permitted to reimburse sales tax. Therefore, be sure to request a tax-exempt form from the business office prior to purchasing any items. All receipts for expenditures must be submitted to your supervisor as soon as possible after the purchase. Items purchased in one school year cannot be reimbursed during the following school year.

## **REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS/GRADING**

The issuance of report cards/progress reports and teacher-parent conferences on a regularly scheduled basis represents the formal methods of reporting student progress to parents. Documentation to support student grades must be maintained. However, informal communication through e-mail, telephone calls, or brief notes is also recommended as a means of encouragement by acknowledging accomplishment and/or improvement by addressing problems before they become serious. Staff are reminded of the need to maintain a log of all communication with parents.

## **SCHOOL BUSINESS MILEAGE**

In order to be reimbursed for approved travel, a ***School Business Mileage Form (Appendix R)*** must be completed and submitted to your supervisor for approval. Please only use this form for mileage reimbursement. All mileage reimbursement forms must be submitted prior to the end of the school year to be reimbursed for approved travel. Mileage reimbursement has increased to 47 cents per mile.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS**

As required by NJ State Law, all schools are responsible for conducting at least one fire drill and one school security drill each month. Whenever a building is evacuated (including planned drills), the teacher/staff in charge must bring the class attendance roster with them to ensure that all students are present. Staff members must remain with their students, unless otherwise directed by the supervisor, during the emergency procedure. In addition, during the drill school nurses are responsible for maintaining in their possession all emergency contact information.

## **SIGN-IN/OUT - PROCEDURES FOR LEAVING THE BUILDING**

All staff members are required to sign-in immediately upon arrival in the morning and sign-out immediately prior to leaving the building at the end of the day. In the event of an emergency, it is critical that the administration is able to verify that everyone has exited the building safely. Therefore, all staff members who wish to leave the premises at any time during the school day, including lunchtime, must notify a member of the administration or designee and follow the sign in/out procedure.

## **SMOKING**

By law, smoking is not permitted in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school sponsored activities such as a field trips at any time.

## **STAFF EVALUATION**

The purpose of staff observations/evaluations is to provide meaningful and constructive feedback aimed at improving teaching and maximizing student learning. As often as possible, supervisors are encouraged to informally observe in classrooms, therapy sessions and other venues in the school. This is the most effective way to observe student learning over time. Please review the Teaching Staff Evaluation Manual for specific requirements and procedures regarding the observation and evaluation process.

## **STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The Commission recognizes that a student's right of privacy should not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure and directs that no pupil be searched without reason. At the same time, staff members are charged with the responsibility of maintaining order and discipline in the schools and of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the pupils in their care. A staff member may request the search of the person or property of a student whenever he or she has reasonable grounds to suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules. The extent of the search will be determined by the seriousness of the alleged infraction, the student's age, and his or her disciplinary history.

A building administrator must be notified and issue approval prior to any search of a student's locker, possessions, or person. The Superintendent shall also be notified of the proposed search of a pupil's person or personal belongings. The building administrator is responsible for recording in writing each pupil search, including the reasons for the search; information received that established the need for the search and the name of the informant; the persons present when the search was conducted; any substances or objects found; and the disposition made of them. Please refer to *Policy 5770 – Student Right to Privacy* for additional information regarding search and seizure procedures.

## **SUSPICION OF PHYSICAL ABUSE, SEXUAL ABUSE, AND CHILD NEGLECT**

New Jersey Law requires that any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse shall report this information immediately to the **Department of Children and Families (DCF) - Telephone Number: 1-877-652-2873**, as well as the local police. Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect pursuant to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law is subject to a fine or imprisonment. Though not required, it is preferred that the staff member report the incident to administration prior to making the call.

## **SUSPICION OF SUICIDAL IDEATION**

Teachers who suspect that a student may be depressed and/or considering suicide must report their concerns immediately to the administration, School Nurse and/or School Social Worker.

## **SUSPICION OF SUBSTANCE USE AND/OR POSSESSION**

Staff members are required to report any suspicion of substance use and/or possession immediately to an administrator. It is required that a student must be taken for an immediate medical evaluation if he/she is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. A ***Student Incident Report (Appendix Q)*** must be completed as soon as possible. A description of the reasons the student is suspected of being under the influence must be included. Annual training will be provided to all staff members on the warning signs of substance use and strategies to monitor students' behaviors.

## **TEACHER LIABILITY/CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Students must be supervised at all times by appropriately certificated personnel. There are no exceptions. Any acts of Corporal Punishment are prohibited by law (N.J.S.A. 18A:6-1) in that "No person employed or engaged in a school or educational institution...shall inflict or cause to be inflicted corporal punishment upon a pupil...but any such person may, within the scope of his employment, use and apply such amounts of force as is reasonable and necessary:

1. to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others;
2. to obtain possession of weapons or dangerous objects upon/within the control of a pupil;
3. for the purpose of self-defense; and
4. for the protection of persons or property.

The Commission recognizes that, due to the highly specialized nature of students served in our schools, physical interventions may be required on occasion to maintain safe and orderly learning environments. It is important to recognize that restrictive physical interventions are a measure of last resort and should only be utilized in circumstances that prevent an immediate risk to physical safety. The Commission will provide annual training to staff on the application of safe and effective physical intervention strategies. All physical interventions must be reported immediately to building administration and documented on a ***Physical Restraint Incident Report (Appendix S)***.

## **TECHNOLOGY/USE OF DISTRICT COMPUTERS**

Technology devices (computers, tablets, smartboards) are invaluable tools to enhance and strengthen the curriculum in our schools. Careful consideration should be made on how technology tools can be incorporated into weekly lesson plans and infused into daily instruction. At the same time, staff must monitor students closely to ensure that technology resources are utilized in a safe, responsible manner.

Content filters are in place to prevent students from accessing inappropriate websites. In the event that a student does access content deemed inappropriate, staff must immediately notify an administrator.

Staff are also expected to use technology resources in a responsible manner for school-related business. All Commission staff are required to review Policy and Regulation # 3321 – Acceptable Use of Computer Networks and Resources (**Appendix AA or Appendix BB**) and signing the ***Employee Acknowledgement of Acceptable Use Policy (Appendix DD)***. Staff members who are issued technology devices must also review and sign an ***Employee Acknowledgment of District Technology form (Appendix T)***.

## **TELEPHONE, INTERCOM AND EMAIL**

The Commission must pay for all outgoing telephone calls, even those made to local phone numbers. Therefore, the district telephone system should be used for conducting school related business and emergency situations only. In addition, the internal intercom should be used to prevent unnecessary interruptions in the classroom.

Email is the primary form of written communication in the Commission. Therefore, it is vital that all staff check their e-mail a minimum of two times per day. The e-mail program is web-based and can be accessed from any computer by going to the district website; [www.ucesc.org](http://www.ucesc.org), and clicking on the “Staff Email” link under “Staff Resources” box on the left side of the home page.

## **CELLPHONES**

Staff are permitted to use personal cellular phones, including text messaging and email applications, only during nonstudent contact time (i.e. prep periods) or when students are not present in the room. In order to ensure that students are supervised properly, cell phones are not to be used when students are in the classrooms or while performing assigned responsibilities. Please refer to ***Policy # 3322 “Staff Members Use of Cellular Telephones”*** for additional guidance in this matter.

## **TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

Certificated staff, paraprofessionals and safety and security monitors whose positions are recognized in the collective bargaining agreement are entitled to apply for tuition reimbursement per the guidelines in the WEA contract. Staff must complete a ***Tuition Reimbursement Request Form (Appendix U)*** and submit it to the Superintendent’s Office **PRIOR** to completing the course. In order to be approved, documentation of registration for the course is required and no reimbursement shall be issued without documentation of successful completion. Please refer to the WEA contract for the specific terms and conditions of tuition reimbursement for staff.



## **VISITORS AND GUESTS**

All visitors are required to report to and sign in at the main office and will be given a visitor's badge that identifies them as a visitor. Staff members are asked to assist with the implementation of this policy to insure the safety of everyone in the building. All staff requests to bring visitors to work (i.e. children, family members, special guests) must be approved in advance by an administrator.

## **WEBSITE**

The Commission website ([www.ucesc.org](http://www.ucesc.org)) is an important vehicle for sharing information between districts, staff and parents. Staff can access email accounts, attendance data, payroll data, Board policies and regulations, district manuals and forms, and the Help Desk system to request support from the IT Department. Requests to add additional content and/or pictures to the Commission website must be directed to an immediate supervisor for review and approval.

## **WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES**

Safety is a priority in Commissions schools and programs. All workplace accidents and staff injuries must be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor and/or school nurse. Staff members are also advised to follow the ***“Procedures for Responding to Work-Related Injuries”*** (Appendix CC) for additional guidance on reporting and/or receiving medical treatment for workplace injuries.

## **WORKPLACE DEMOCRACY ENHANCEMENT ACT**

The Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act requires that public employers provide the required information to the majority organization representing those employees, for new employees eligible to be in the collective bargaining unit within ten days of hiring and for all existing unit employees every 120 days. The law requires the employer to provide the name, job title, worksite location, home address, work telephone number, home and personal cellular telephone numbers, date of hire, and work and personal email addresses. If you are a member of your association or eligible to join and you have not provided us with the required information noted above Lynn Thorn will contact you.

# **Union County Educational Services Commission District Staff Manual 2023-2024**

## **APPENDICES and FORMS**

Appendix A:	Affirmative Action Guide
Appendix B:	Attendance Policy and Absence Procedures
Appendix C:	Direct Deposit Authorization Form
Appendix D:	Everbridge Emergency Contact Form
Appendix E:	Invoice for Extra Service Work Form
Appendix F:	Field Trip Lunch Notification Form
Appendix G:	Field Trip Permission Form
Appendix H:	Harassment Intimidation and Bullying Policy
Appendix I:	Employee Acknowledgement of Identification Card
Appendix J:	Integrated Pest Management Notice
Appendix K:	Maintenance Request Form
Appendix L:	Request for Media Approval Form
Appendix M:	Supply Requisition Form
Appendix N:	Professional Development Request Form
Appendix O:	Staff Development Report Form
Appendix P:	Employee Incident/Accident Form
Appendix Q:	Student Incident/Accident Form
Appendix R:	School Business Mileage Form
Appendix S:	Physical Restraint Incident Report
Appendix T:	Employee Acknowledgement of District Technology
Appendix U:	Tuition Reimbursement Request
Appendix AA:	Acceptable Use of Computer Networks- Teaching Staff
Appendix BB:	Acceptable Use of Computer Networks- Support Staff
Appendix CC:	Procedures for Responding to Work Related Injuries
Appendix DD:	Employee Acknowledgement of Staff Manual

**\*\* All Forms are Available for Download on the “Staff” Section of the UCESC website \*\***