

2014 – 2015



ELBA PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER HANDBOOK

ABSENT FROM SCHOOL

Teachers who are ill and cannot make it to work should call Kelsey Witte the night before or before 6:00 am that school day. Her cell number is 402-322-1858. If there is no answer, please leave a voicemail.

Each teacher will maintain a red classroom binder. The binder should contain the following:

- a. Lesson plans – Generic sub plans and weekly teacher plans
- b. Daily schedule
- c. Class list and seating chart
- d. Any special duties
- e. Special needs of any student (medical, special education, speech problems, etc.)
- f. Fire drill procedure
- g. Tornado drill procedure
- h. Lockdown procedure

ACCIDENTS

Any accident that happens at school should be reported to the office. This will be necessary if there is insurance or liability claims. If there is a major injury, a written report should be turned into the office within 24 hours.

STAFF DRESS CODE

Please remember that you are a professional educator and your attire should reflect your status as such.

Dressing in a professional manner helps to maintain an atmosphere of respect from the students, parents, and co-workers.

STAFF DRESS CODE: It is important for teachers to project a professional image to students, parents, and co-workers. Appropriate attire and grooming is one of the means of projecting a professional image. Teachers are expected to be aware of the standard to be maintained.

All teachers and staff will use professional judgment when deciding appropriate attire for work. Final judgment and decision will be made by the administration. Casual attire may be worn when deemed necessary by administration approval. Teachers or staff needing special attire accommodations will be made based on medical and/or circumstances. Earrings are the only visible allowed piercings.

Teachers have been allowed to dress down on the last day of the school week. Staff members who choose to wear jeans and/or casual attire are required to donate \$35 to a scholarship fund controlled by your teacher association.

ACTIVITIES-ADMISSION AND WORK

All staff members and spouses will be admitted free of charge to Elba athletic contests, which are held in Elba and are not conference, district, state or NSAA activities or tournaments. We would hope that our teachers are supportive of the students' co-curricular activities as well as those of a more academic nature. It means a great deal to the students when teachers make their presence known at school events. Staff members may be asked to supervise at other activities.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES AS ASSIGNED

Within the contracted day, the Superintendent may assign teachers additional duties.

ACTIVITIES AND MEETINGS

All activities will be scheduled through the office. Student clubs and organizations may schedule meetings from 7:15 am until school starts in the mornings or after the dismissal time or with administrative approval.

School activities will not be scheduled on Wednesday evenings or Sundays without administrative permission and students should be released early enough from all school activities/athletics to be off school grounds by 6:30 pm on Wednesdays. When organizations or classes sponsor an activity (party, dances, car washes, etc.) the sponsor must be present or the activity will be canceled.

BULLETIN-ANNOUNCEMENTS-CALENDAR

Faculty is strongly encouraged to submit articles of interest to the school's web page. In addition, pictures of events of special interest programs are encouraged to be uploaded to showcase the accomplishments of the Students at Elba.

Only special announcements from the office will be read over the intercom system with approval of the superintendent. Announcements will be made at such a time as to not interrupt classroom instruction. Items for any elementary, middle, or high school facilities usage should be submitted to Mrs. Ackerson. All calendar items should be submitted to Kelsey Witte. Facilities usage will be identified on the school's master activity calendar located in the Superintendents Office.

CHILD ABUSE

Teachers are required by law to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect to the office. Abuse or neglect includes placing the child in a situation that endangers his/her life or physical or mental health, cruel confinement or punishment, deprivation of food, clothing, shelter, care, sexual abuse, or being left unattended. The hotline number to report cases of abuse of children and disabled adults is: 1-800-572-1999.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SCHOOL TO THE HOME

Establishing a positive communication network between the home and school is very important. Teachers can enhance the home-school communications network through the use of telephone calls, emails and written notes. All written communications to the home from the school should be made on district letterhead with dates included.

BULLYING PREVENTION

The Elba Public Schools recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, safety, and learning environment and therefore prohibits such behavior. Bullying is defined as any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle (owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or his or her designee), or at school sponsored activities or athletic events.

Bullying may constitute grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, subject to state and federal statutes and the district's student discipline and due process procedures.

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to implement appropriate programs or procedures for the purpose of educating students regarding bullying prevention. Administration shall develop Administrative Policy and annual bullying prevention.

This policy shall be reviewed annually.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

During the 1988 legislative session, LB 316 was passed. This bill prohibits corporal punishment in public schools. Corporal punishment is defined as striking, spanking, or rough handling students even if the punishment is not done in anger.

DISCIPLINE & CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

A safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning is the ultimate goal of any reasonable discipline and classroom management plan. Identifying every possible occurrence that may require intervention and resolution would be impossible. However, a program that involves an interactive dialogue between the student and staff member and is consistent will facilitate the effective resolution of most disciplinary situations. The following guidelines are intended to provide the foundations for a fair, consistent, and workable discipline plan for Elba Public School:

1. Teachers will use the Social Skills Model when students do not respond to normal requests. The model includes these steps:
 - a. Initial praise/empathy
 - b. Describe inappropriate behavior
 - c. Describe appropriate behavior
 - d. Rationale
 - e. Request acknowledgement
 - f. Practice
 - g. Feedback
 - h. Consequences
 - i. General praise

Not all of these steps need to be done all of the time. It is important to use your judgment and use as many of the steps as needed to change behavior. It is much more effective to teach appropriate behavior to students and outline your expectations of them before problems arise.

2. Teachers should handle most of their own discipline problems. Since most problems develop gradually, we would expect staff to take the opportunity to work with students and parents to improve or correct a potential problem. Communication early with students and the parents will generally help the situation.
3. Be firm, fair, and consistent. Establish fair rules of expected behavior and then enforce the rules firmly and consistently.
4. **Don't back a student into a corner!** As a trained professional, you should develop skills in enforcing your rules without causing students to "lose face" among their peer group. It is unacceptable to publicly ridicule or use **sarcasm** when correcting students.

5. Do not tell a student to leave your classroom and not come back, or that he/she will be suspended for this action. Only the administration may remove a student from your class or suspend from school.
6. Control your temper; a soft, firm voice and calm attitude are normally more effective than shouting and displaying anger or loss of self-control. **Remember**, in each classroom situation there are three variables, which interact: the teacher, the individual student and the students as a class. As a professional teacher, you must always have control over the key variable, yourself.
7. Rather than consistently calling attention to negative or disruptive behavior, teachers should exhibit a positive, appreciative attitude about good behavior.
8. An entire class is not to be punished for the actions of a few students.
9. Staff members are not to use profane/vulgar or suggestive language. Additionally, regardless of possible provocation, staff members are not to: (a) call any student something other than their name; (b) physically handle a student except to protect self, other persons, prevent the destruction of property, or prevent any illegal overt act on the part of the pupil.
10. Do not do anything, which shifts the focus from the student behavior to the teacher behavior. Yelling at the student, arguing with the student, and using sarcasm towards a student are examples of behaviors, which will shift the focus.

SUPERVISION

Classroom: Students are not to be left without adult supervision. In case of an emergency requiring a teacher to be absent from the classroom, arrangements for temporary supervision must be made before the teacher leaves the room. **At NO time should students leave the campus to run errands.**

Hall Duty: Teachers are to be on duty outside their classroom at the first bell. Teachers will also supervise students in the halls between class periods. Please encourage quiet and orderly passing in the halls. If misbehavior or improper conduct is observed, all staff members have the responsibility and authority to intervene.

DRILLS AND PROCEDURES

Within the first week of school, be sure to explain to every section the evacuation procedures in case of a fire or disaster. After the explanation, post the procedures on your bulletin board.

FACULTY MEETINGS

Building level faculty meetings will be held at the Superintendent's discretion. Teachers are expected to attend.

FUND RAISING

Fund raising projects must be approved, in advance, through the Superintendent.

GRADING AND MARKING SYSTEM

Students will be issued grade reports four times during the school year, at the end of each nine weeks.

At a minimum, teachers are expected to update student grades by Monday morning in PowerSchool. You are required to enter a minimum of (2) grade entries every week.

KEYS

Keys to the building and to the classroom may be obtained and checked out from the Head of Maintenance and/or your Superintendent. Additional keys for different parts of the building may be needed at various times. These keys may be checked out for use. *The loaning of keys to students or non-staff members is strictly forbidden.* There may be a charge for lost keys if locks need to be replaced or re-keyed.

LEAVING THE BUILDING

Teachers may leave the building during working hours with administrative approval. Teachers may also leave the building during their lunchtime. You must sign out in the office at the time of departure and sign in at the time of return.

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

School closing information will be broadcast on the major television and radio stations. Information will also be sent through the ADT IRIS Alert system.

SMOKING

There will be no smoking on school premises at any time including electronic/vapor devices.

STAFF TELEPHONE CALLS, MAILBOXES, AND MESSAGES

Staff members will only be called to the telephone in case of emergency. Messages will be placed in the staff member's mailbox or emailed. Staff members are asked to check mailboxes and emails at least in the morning, lunch, and before their evening departure. Emergency messages will be delivered to the teacher immediately.

Cell phones and/or electronic devices should be used with extreme professional judgment during school hours.

STUDENT USE OF THE TELEPHONE

The telephone in the office is a business telephone. Students will be allowed to use it only in emergency situations (i.e. illness, after school detentions, etc.). In the high school, and middle school, students are to use the phone in the office area with permission from staff. In the elementary students may use the classroom phone with teacher permission and assistance.

TEACHER EVALUATION

The Board recognizes that the teaching process is complex and the appraisal of this process is a difficult and technical function. Appraisal of teaching service should serve three purposes:

1. To aid the individual teacher to grow professionally.
2. To raise the standards of the teaching profession as a whole.
3. To raise the quality of instruction and educational services to the children of the community.

4. Each teacher shall be evaluated on criteria, which may include:
 - a. Instruction
 - b. Environment
 - c. Professional Practices
 - d. Professional Growth
5. Criteria for teacher evaluation shall be consistent with the school district's instructional policies and goals.
6. Certificated teachers on probation shall be evaluated at least once each semester during the school year.
7. Certificated teachers on permanent status shall be evaluated at least once during the school year.
8. The duration of each classroom observation to be used for the evaluation shall be one class period or a minimum of 45 minutes.
9. The evaluation report shall be prepared by the evaluator. A section of the evaluation/observation record shall contain space to clearly describe noted deficiencies, and provide an adequate time line for the teacher to implement the specific suggestions for improvement.
10. A conference shall be scheduled with the teacher following the observation visit to present and explain the written evaluation report.
11. The evaluator and the teacher being evaluated shall both sign the evaluation report to document that the evaluation has been conducted. The evaluation report form shall provide a space for the teacher's written response to the evaluation.
12. Evaluators shall possess a valid Nebraska Administrative Certificate.
13. The school district will approve administrative requests to attend workshops, seminars, etc., that center on teacher evaluation. This will enhance administrative professional growth in this area.
14. During the first three weeks of a teacher's official employment with the district, the teacher shall be given a copy of the teacher evaluation instrument to be used during the school year and an opportunity to ask questions regarding that instrument. Individual teachers will receive a copy in their Teachers Binder.

MONEY COLLECTIONS

Any staff member that is responsible for collecting money under the pretense of Elba Public School must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The receipt of all money is to be recorded on a spreadsheet or notebook indicating the source.
- All money is to be counted with a ticket, indicating how much money is contained in the bag or box.
- No staff person should hold money for more than one week and if the sum is over \$100, it should be counted and turned in immediately.
- All school activity with gate receipts or door collections will have TWO PEOPLE count the money and will turn in a ticket indicating the amount. This includes ball games, soup suppers, and similar activities. It should be turned into an administrator immediately following a game.

SUPPLIES AND PURCHASE ORDERS

Purchase orders must be obtained prior to ordering or purchasing any supplies or equipment. Purchase orders must be submitted to the Superintendent for approval. Teachers will be personally responsible for purchases with no previous purchase order.

Supplies and equipment are requisitioned at the end of each year for the following year. Should other supplies be needed they may be obtained from the office.

TEACHER DUTY HOURS

Teachers' duty time is 7:45 am to 4:15 pm during the school week. On the last day of the week teachers may leave when their student supervision is complete.

Occasionally, there may be a need for a conference; student staffing, or meeting that may require teacher's attendance outside the times listed above.

TRANSCRIPTS AND CERTIFICATES

All certified staff members should have official updated transcripts of all hours for placement on the salary schedule on file in the Superintendent's office. Teacher certificates must be registered with the Superintendent prior to a teacher receiving a paycheck.

VISITORS TO THE BUILDING

All visitors to the building are to report to the office. Class visitors, without written approval from the Superintendent, should be directed to the office immediately.

ADDRESSING THE BOARD

The board desires to maintain open communication channels between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will be through the superintendent. The superintendent will develop and recommend to the board processes for communications between the Board and district employees.

Communication or reports to the Board or Board committee from any staff member or members should be submitted through the superintendent. This procedure will not be construed as denying the right of any employee to address the Board about issues which are neither part of an active administrative procedure, nor disruptive to the operation of the district.

All official communications, policies and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the superintendent. The superintendent will communicate as appropriate to keep staff fully informed

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT EMPLOYEES

The Board recognizes situations may arise in the operation of the school district, which are of concern to parents and other members of the school district community. While constructive criticism is welcomed, the board desires to support its employees and their actions to free them from unnecessary, spiteful, or negative criticism and complaints that do not offer advice for improvement or change.

While speakers may during public meetings offer objective criticism of school operations and programs, the board will not hear personal complaints concerning district personnel nor against any person connected with the school system unless that complaint is an agenda item having followed the process described below. To do so could expose the board to a charge of being party to slander and would prejudice any necessity to act as the final review of administrative recommendations regarding the matter. The board president will direct the patron to the appropriate means for board consideration and disposition of legitimate complaints involving individuals. Any complaint about school personnel other than the superintendent will be investigated by the administration before consideration and action by the board. The board will not hear charges against employees in open session unless an employee requests an open session.

The board firmly believes concerns should be resolved at the lowest organizational level by those individuals closest to the concern. Whenever a complaint or concern is brought to the attention of the board it will be referred to the administration to be resolved. Prior to board consideration however, the following should be completed:

- Matters concerning an individual student, teacher, or other employee should first be addressed to the teacher or employee.
- Unsettled matters from above should be addressed to the principal for certificated employees and the superintendent for support staff.
- If a matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the superintendent, it may then be brought to the board. To bring a concern regarding an employee, the individual may notify the board president for inclusion on the board agenda of a regularly scheduled board meeting in accordance with board policy.

It is within the discretion of the board to address complaints from the members of the school district community, and the board will only do so if they are in writing, signed, and the complainant has complied with this policy.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

This Staff Laptop Computer Policy is a supplement to the Elba Public School's Computer Acceptable Use Policy. The school's Computer Acceptable Use Policy and Staff Laptop Computer Policy apply to the use of all laptop computers inside and outside the school premises and staff members are expected to follow these policies when using the school's laptop computers.

The Elba Public School has decided to allow staff to use the school's laptop computers inside and outside the school in order to enhance, enrich, and facilitate teaching administrative duties as well as school communications. The school's laptops are to be used as a productivity tool for school-related business, curriculum enhancement, research, and communication. Staff members may use the school's laptops for limited personal purposes subject to this policy and the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Staff members also shall exercise appropriate professional judgment and common sense when using the school's laptop computers.

All laptops and related equipment and accessories are the property of the Elba Public School and are provided to the staff members for a period of time as deemed appropriate by the school's administration. As a condition of their use of the school's laptop computers, staff members must comply with and agree to all of the following:

1. Prior to being issued one of the school's laptop computers, staff members will sign the Laptop Acceptance Form and agree to all outlined policies.
2. Staff members may take their laptops home. However, the staff member must provide and use a properly padded laptop bag or case. Laptops are required to be at school each in-session day.
3. Staff members should NOT attempt to install software or hardware or change the system configuration including network settings without prior consultation with the Technology Coordinator.
4. It is the staff member's responsibility to take appropriate precautions to prevent damage to or loss/theft of your laptop computer. The staff member will be responsible for the costs to repair or replace the

computer if the damage or loss is due to negligence or intentional misconduct. The administration will determine the financial responsibility of the staff member in the event of damage or loss.

5. Staff members will provide access to any laptop computer, equipment, and/or accessories they have been assigned upon request of the Technology Coordinator or the school's administration.
6. The laptop is to be used for school related activities only; it is not for personal use by the staff member or anyone else.

General Laptop Use Rules

If you have important data on the laptop you must sync to your network folder as a safety precaution against hard drive failure. The seconds that it takes to sync your network home are well worth the frustration if/when the computer hard disk fails. Since the laptop's keyboard and touch pad are permanently attached to the rest of the system, make sure that your hands are clean before using them. Because hand lotion is a major contributing factor to dirt and dust, please make sure your hands are free from lotion before using the computer. It is costly to change a laptop keyboard and/or touch pad that has been damaged by excessive dirt.

Do not place drinks or food in close proximity to your laptop.

Extreme temperatures or sudden changes in temperature can damage a laptop. You should NEVER leave a laptop in an unattended vehicle.

When using the laptop, keep it on a flat, solid surface so that air can circulate through it. For example, using the laptop while it is directly on a bed can cause damage due to overheating.

How to Avoid Laptop Computer Theft

Due to size and portability, laptop computers are especially vulnerable to theft. Staff members should follow the rules set out below. A staff member will be held personally responsible for any school laptop computers, equipment, and/or accessories that are stolen during the time they have been assigned to that staff member. Below are some tips on how to protect your laptop from being stolen.

1. Do not leave a laptop in an unlocked vehicle, even if the vehicle is in your driveway or garage. Never leave it in plain sight. If you must leave your laptop in a vehicle, the best place is in a locked trunk. If you do not have a trunk, cover it and lock the doors.
2. Carry your laptop in a nondescript carrying case or bag when traveling.
3. Do not leave a meeting or conference room without your laptop. Take it with you.
4. Never check a laptop as luggage at the airport.
5. Lock the laptop in your office or classroom when you are out of the room or during off-hours or store it in a locked cabinet or desk when possible.

If a theft does occur, immediately notify the administration and the Technology Coordinator.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORKS

ADMINISTRATORS, FACULTY AND STAFF AGREEMENT

In order to make sure that all members of Elba Public School community understand and agree to these rules of conduct for use of the e-mail and Internet systems of the school district, the Elba Public School District asks that you, as an administrator, faculty member, or staff member user, sign the following statement:

I have received a copy of, and have read, the Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy adopted by the Elba Public School, and I understand and will abide by those district guidelines and conditions for the use of the facilities of Elba Public School and access to the Internet. I further understand that any violation of the district guidelines is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges will be revoked. School disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action will be taken.

I agree not to hold the Elba Public School, any of its employees, or any institution providing network access to the Elba Public School responsible for the performance of the system or the content of any material accessed through it.

Employee's Name _____

Employee's Signature _____ Date: _____

This form will be retained on file by authorized
faculty designee for duration of applicable
computer/network/Internet use.

Elba Public Schools
Teacher and Staff Handbook
2013-2014

As a staff member of the Elba Public Schools, my signature indicates that I have read and understand the teacher handbook in its entirety. Furthermore, my signature indicates that I agree to be in compliance with all items presented.

Signature

Date