



April 23, 2015

To: Jennifer Cheatham, Superintendent of Schools
From: Deirdre Hargrove-Krieghoff, Executive Director of Human Resources
RE: Development of the MMSD Employee Handbook

We know that our vision as a District doesn't come to life without a thriving workforce. That is why we are working hard to provide our employees with the resources and support they need to do their best work. To be successful for all students, we must be a District that attracts, develops and retains the best employees.

The District's current employee contracts expire June 30, 2016; after one more school year. The District is responsible for developing a handbook that will take the place of those contracts. The MMSD Employee Handbook will be collaboratively developed and reflective of expectations of both employees and the District (as the employer).

Purpose of the Handbook

As a result of Act 10's restrictions on collective bargaining, school boards have been developing employee handbooks. The purpose of a handbook is to establish the foundation for the relationship between the District and its employees and outline mutual expectations. In general, an employee handbook is a compilation of the policies, procedures, working conditions, and behavioral expectations that guide employee actions in the workplace. A handbook also includes information about employee compensation and benefits, and additional terms and conditions of employment. The primary distinction between a CBA and a handbook is that a CBA mainly sets forth the obligations of the employer but a handbook also outlines obligations of the employee. It is our goal for the employee handbook to be a comprehensive resource/document for staff incorporating not only previous CBA provisions but also Board policies and Human Resources policies governing employment issues and providing links to applicable documents. We are also looking to create uniform language regarding benefits and conditions of employment across employee groups.

Process for Development

Pursuant to the process outlined for the handbook creation, the CBAs are to form the foundation for the development of the handbook. An Oversight Committee comprised of District and employee representatives has been working collaboratively in the initial stages to develop the table of contents for the handbook. The District representatives on the Oversight Group are: Jennifer Cheatham, Deirdre Hargrove-Krieghoff, Lisa Kvistad, Caroline Racine Gilles, Chad Wiese, Tremayne Clardy, Karen Kepler and Heidi Tepp. The employee representatives on the Oversight Group are: Doug Keillor, Mike Lipp, Peg Coyne, Kristopher Schiltz, Erin Proctor, Neil Rainford, Rob Larson and Dave Branson.

The first step in that process required the Oversight Group to identify:

- a) What legally has to change for the handbook
- b) What policies or practices set forth in CBAs are recommended to be carried forward without change
- c) What policies or practices set forth in CBAs are recommended to be addressed but should be reviewed and possibly changed
- d) What policies or practices set forth in CBAs are recommended not to be carried forward

As part of the process to identify the items to be included in the handbook, District representatives on the Oversight Committee:

- met several times to identify items falling within categories a-d
- conducted conference calls with the principals
- met with Food Services and Building Services administration
- conducted several meetings of a smaller group of the Oversight Committee
- conducted one meeting of the full membership of the Oversight

MTI also held several listening sessions with its members. The following are the items the Committee identified for consideration broken out by categories (a-d).

Category A

The areas that have been identified under category “a” as legally requiring change include:

- the grievance procedure
- payroll deduction/fair share
- multiple provisions that reference
 - Arbitration
 - Arbitrator
 - Agreement
 - Contract
 - Bargaining

These will be reviewed and discussed as the language of the handbook is developed.

Category B

Given that we want the handbook to be concise, consistent and user friendly, there are very few provisions that will likely be carried forward with absolutely no change whatsoever (category “b” items). Rather most have been identified as areas where the substance remains the same but there may be editorial changes in the language. Examples include:

- salary schedule
- travel reimbursement
- holidays

Category C

Areas recommended to be addressed, but reviewed and possibly changed (category “c”) are items where either minor or substantive change may be considered. These categories are delineated below.

Minor Discussion Items

- paydate for teachers on the 12 paycheck plan
- retroactive payments for salary changes
- class coverage
- student teachers
- professional conferences
- evaluation criteria for support units
- electronic posting for support staff
- a uniform recall period for the support units

In Depth Discussion Items

- additive wage positions
- leaves of absence
- planning time
- hours of school
- management rights
- reduction in staff
- school calendar
- parent teacher conferences
- assignments, transfers
- compensation for special education additive duties
- income continuation plan (70/30 split)
- overtime for support units
- hiring process for support units
- salary, health insurance and personal illness leave for sub teachers

Category D

There are several provisions that the Committee recommends not be carried forward to the handbook (category “d”). First, there are provisions that will not be in the handbook because they will remain in the CBAs. These include:

- the recognition clause
- bargaining representative
- conference and negotiation
- duration
- severability
- contract printing

Other items that will not be addressed in the handbook because it has been agreed that they are outdated and/or unnecessary include:

- care of ill children
- staff directory
- verbal agreements
- gender reference
- unemployment compensation
- computerization of IEPs
- availability of health services
- family/community liaison.

New Additions

The items in **bold** on the attached table of contents are items that are not currently included in the CBAs, Board policy or Human Resources policy but will be discussed during the development of the handbook.

A draft table of contents is attached.