

Shepherd Public Schools

Secretarial Handbook

2017-2018

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## FORWARD

This handbook has been prepared to assist secretaries in their service to Shepherd Public Schools and the people it serves. If a question arises which is not covered in this handbook, the secretary should contact the Superintendent.

The positions covered by the handbook include the secretarial positions in Appendix A (excluding substitutes).

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide and reference and is subject to change by the Board of Education. Suggestions and comments are welcome and should be forwarded to the Superintendent.

## SECRETARIAL HANDBOOK

### I. Orientation

#### A. *At the Beginning of Employment*

Responsibilities and obligations to the school district, pay, payroll procedures, benefits (insurance, forms, etc.), and retirement, will be reviewed with the secretary. The employee will report to their supervisor for specific explanation of the job and the relationship to the office and co-workers.

Every new employee is entitled time to learn the job. If a problem develops, it should be discussed with their immediate supervisor.

#### B. *Probation and Evaluations*

A secretary shall be considered a probationary employee for the first ninety (90) calendar days of continuous employment. Days missed will serve to extend the probationary period. During this period, assistance will be given to the secretary in making a satisfactory adjustment.

Progress will be continually assessed after normal probationary evaluation; the immediate supervisor will evaluate a secretary no less than once every two years.

#### C. *Office Hours*

An eight (8) hour day, forty (40) hour week is the regular workweek for most school departments/offices for those designated as full time employees. In buildings with two secretaries, normal hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This schedule and the number of work weeks may vary for individual offices or departments and will be established by the employee's immediate supervisor and central office.

**D. Punctuality**

Punctuality and regular attendance is expected of everyone and is important for satisfactory performance. If a secretary is unable to report for work, the immediate supervisor should be notified as soon as possible, in accordance with the procedure established. In the event the absence is for three (3) consecutive days without notification to the supervisor, the employee will be considered to have abandoned their job.

**E. Rest Periods/Lunch Time**

Employees may take two (2) rest periods of not more than 15 minutes each, for each eight-hour day of work. Rest periods are taken at a time scheduled by the supervisor. The rest period is intended to be a recess to be preceded and followed by an extended work period. Lunch time, 30 minutes, cannot be counted as work time. Rest period/lunch time may not be used to cover an employee's late arrival to work or early departure, nor may it be regarded as accumulative, if not taken. Supervisors will set the time of lunch for their employees.

**F. At Will**

Employees covered by this handbook are considered as employed at the will of the district and may be terminated with or without cause.

**II. Employee Responsibilities**

**A. Personal Conduct**

Employees are required to discharge assigned duties conscientiously and to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the district, public education and the community.

Employees are expected to be honest, trustworthy, of good character, reputation, and loyal to the district, community and public education.

Employees are expected to comply with Board Policy, Administrative Guidelines and recommendations, directives, and statutes.

The district does not desire to interfere in a person's private life unless their private life has an adverse impact upon the image of the district or the secretary's ability to perform their assigned duties.

If there is doubt about specific standards of conduct, the secretary should consult with the immediate supervisor.

**B. Dress**

A "dress code" or "dress regulation" is not published regarding appropriate office attire and grooming. An employee is hired because of the proficiency shown in the area of training,

experience and professional appearance. Appropriate dress is expected at all times.

**C. *Safety***

Safety is paramount at all times and under all conditions. The school system attempts to maintain safe working conditions and encourages employees to be constantly alert to hazardous situations and to promptly report all unsafe conditions to their supervisor or to Central Office.

**D. *Conflicts of Interest***

Employment within the district requires maximum thought and energy directed to the fulfillment of assigned responsibilities. While employment in work other than for the school is not prohibited outside of work time, it is discouraged.

Employees may engage in other employment outside of work time and off school premises, providing such employment does not: (1) interfere with the efficient performance of duties as an employee; (2) conflict with the interests or image of the district; or (3) bring discredit upon or cause criticism of the district.

If an employee is in doubt about the suitability of any type of other employment, the employee should secure advice and approval from the Superintendent.

**III. *Compensation Information***

**A. *Credit for Experience***

An employee being hired, with past experience, may be given one step on the index for each successive year of secretarial experience, up to six (6) years. Experience shall be based on comparable past performance and the granting of experience credit is discretionary.

**B. *Rates of Pay***

Step advancements will only be issued on July 1 each year providing the employee worked at least ninety (90) percent of the employees regularly scheduled hours for the year. No step advancements will be issued during the year.

The wage rates are shown in Appendix A

**C. *Payroll Period***

Payroll checks are deposited directly into the employee's bank account every other Friday.

**D. *Overtime***

Generally speaking, budgetary limitations and sound business practices restrict the use of overtime. Overtime is an exception, rather than the rule. If overtime work is necessary, the

secretary will be paid at the rate of time and one-half for all hours over forty (40) in a week. Paid and unpaid time off regardless of its origins will not be counted as hours worked for purposes of computing overtime pay. Overtime payments will only be issued after forty (40) hours physically worked in a given workweek. All overtime must be approved in advance by the Superintendent or Director of Business and Finance. Holiday, vacation, sick, personal, and other paid leaves do not count as time worked for overtime purposes.

**E. *Deductions***

Federal and State withholding taxes will be deducted from payroll checks in accordance with the number of exemptions claimed on the W-4 withholding exemption certificates on file in the payroll office. Social Security taxes and retirement will be withheld as required by law. The Board of Education also makes it possible, through payroll deductions, to contribute to various banks, credit unions, tax sheltered annuities, and other voluntary deductions.

**F. *Family Medical Leave Act***

Information regarding possible benefits for eligible employees under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is available in district policies and administrative guidelines, available for review at [www.neola.com/shepherd-mi](http://www.neola.com/shepherd-mi), policy 4430.01. Employees are required to use all accrued paid sick leave to substitute for the family leave described in this policy. The employee will have the option to use paid vacation or personal leave to substitute for the unpaid family leave described in this policy. Paid leave and unpaid leave run concurrently with family medical leave.

**G. *Unpaid Leave (Other Than Family Medical Leave Act)***

Requests for unpaid days off and extended unpaid leaves of absences must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, with a copy to the employee's supervisor. All unpaid leave must be approved by the employee's supervisor and the Superintendent. All accumulated paid leave time must be utilized before unpaid leave will be granted. Unpaid leave not qualifying for The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 will result in loss of cash in lieu benefits, or the payment by the employee of monthly insurance premiums if the unpaid absence exceeds three days in a fiscal year.

**IV. *Personnel Records***

A personnel record folder will be developed for each employee and filed in Central Office. All records that are generated in connection with employment at Shepherd Public Schools will be maintained in the personnel record jackets. The information gathered is considered privileged information and will be treated confidentially subject to the limitations of the Freedom of Information Act.

**V. *Benefits***

Benefits will be computed on the basis of regular hours worked.

**A. *Holidays***

Approved paid holidays are Friday of Spring Break or Holy Thursday (depending on calendar), Good Friday, Maple Syrup Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Friday after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas break as identified in the teacher master agreement calendar.

When any designated holiday falls on the weekend, the Friday before or the Monday after shall be considered as the holiday, whichever is more applicable based on the scheduling of school.

If it is necessary for a secretary to work during Christmas break, other than Christmas day and New Years day, the secretary will be paid straight-time compensation for the time worked in addition to the holiday compensation.

**B. *Worker's Compensation***

If an employee is injured in the course of employment at the school, they must notify the immediate supervisor. Supervisors have the forms for reporting such accidents/injury and will forward them to Central Office when completed. If an employee is unable to work due to an accident/injury arising out of, and in the course of their employment, they may be eligible for Worker's Compensation benefits.

In the event that an employee suffers an injury or illness that is covered under the Michigan Workers' Compensation Law, the employee will be entitled to use their sick leave in the same manner as if the injury or illness was not covered under Workers' Compensation; provided that said employee reimburses the Employer the amount of wage continuation benefits they received under Workers' Compensation for any day which they received sick pay from the Employer. For any day that the employee receives sick pay from the Employer and reimburses the Employer for the Workers' Compensation received, the employee's sick leave shall be reduced only by the portion of a day equal to the portion of the employee's gross pay actually paid by the Employer.

**C. *Hospital/Medical Insurance***

Employee must be regularly scheduled to work at least thirty (30) hours per work to participate in insurance plans and/or receive cash in lieu of health insurance.

An Employee's spouse will not be eligible to enroll in the district offered hospital/medical plan if the spouse is eligible to enroll in a plan through the spouse's employer or is eligible to enroll in the spouse's retirement hospital/medical plan.

Employees will be required to sign an affidavit acknowledging their responsibilities in relationship to spousal restriction which will include the obligation to repay premiums, claims or other costs that should not have been paid on the behalf of the employee's spouse.

Subject to the restrictions above, employees are entitled to up to full-family benefits, covering



dependents as defined by the Internal Revenue Service and that fall within the two party or full family definitions of the underwriters.

The amount the district pays toward health care and other insurance plans will be determined annually as salaries are established.

Each employee that is eligible for health insurance but not taking health insurance will be provided \$300.00 per month cash in lieu of health insurance. This amount will be reduced for secretaries that are regularly scheduled to work less than eight hours per day. Insurance coverage will end the same day employment ends.

**D. Dental Insurance**

The Board will provide up to full family dental coverage for secretaries.

**E. Vision Insurance**

The Board will provide vision insurance to secretaries for up to full family coverage.

**F. Life Insurance**

The Board will provide a \$15,000 group term life insurance policy for secretaries.

**G. Long-Term Disability Insurance**

The Board will provide long-term disability insurance coverage for secretaries. The policy coverage includes 66 2/3% of the employee's wages subject to a maximum monthly benefit of \$6,000. The benefits begin upon expiration of 90 calendar days of disability accumulated in any twelve (12) consecutive months, whichever is later.

**H. Insurance Underwriters**

The district determines and changes from time to time the underwriters, third party administrators and makes all decisions related to the self-funding of insurance benefits.

**VI. Staff Services**

**A. Central Office**

Central Office is available to assist or answer questions regarding any problem of an employee (payroll or insurance information, etc.).

**B. Dining Facilities**

All dining facilities in Shepherd Public Schools are open to employees.

**C. Telephone**

Use of the telephone is an excellent way to further good public relations. Employees should be brief, direct and courteous at all times. In making or receiving telephone calls, an employee should identify their department and their name. Personal telephone calls should be restricted to a minimum. All personal long distance calls are to be charged to the employee's personal phone accounts or reimbursed to the District.

**D. Solicitations**

In order to minimize job interference, solicitations, selling and collections are not permitted on school grounds, unless authorized by the Superintendent. In all instances, approved solicitations are announced in advance.

**E. Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted on school grounds, in school vehicles, or while on duty.

**VII. Leave Time**

Sick leave, business leave, and vacation leave are credited in advance on July 1 each school fiscal year in anticipation of the employee completing the entire work year. Partial years of service as a result of a mid-year hire or termination, or other reasons will result in a pro-ration of the annually awarded vacation, sick, and business leave days. Any unearned leave time that has been used will be deducted from any remaining pay check(s). Scheduling of leave days of all types is subject to supervisory approval.

For purposes of this section, the term "day" shall be defined as the number of hours the employee is regularly scheduled to work per day.

Time cards are to be used to track leave time/absences. The employee is responsible for entering all leave time on their bi-weekly time card.

**A. Vacation**

Secretaries working less than twelve months per year do not earn vacation

If an employee was hired on or before December 31 of the fiscal year, vacation is earned at a rate of five (5) days per year during the first fiscal year worked and prorated for the number of months worked during that first year. Beginning in the second fiscal year of employment, vacation is earned at a rate of ten (10) days per year. Beginning in the sixth year of employment, vacation is earned at a rate of fifteen (15) days per year. Beginning in the eleventh year of employment, one additional vacation day will be earned each year up to a maximum of twenty (20) days per year.

If an employee was hired on or after January 1 of the fiscal year, vacation is earned at a rate of five (5) days per year during the first fiscal year worked and prorated for the number of months

worked during that first year. Beginning in the third fiscal year of employment, vacation is earned at a rate of ten (10) days per year. Beginning in the seventh year of employment, vacation is earned at a rate of fifteen (15) days per year. Beginning in the twelfth year of employment, one additional vacation day will be earned each year up to a maximum of twenty (20) days per year.

Beginning June 30, 2019, a maximum of five (5) days of vacation may be carried over to the next fiscal year. Any vacation days in excess of five (5) will be added to the employee's sick leave accumulation.

In the event that an employee terminates employment, vacation earned during the year of termination will be prorated based upon the number of months worked during that fiscal year.

## **B. Sick Leave**

Ten-month and twelve-month secretaries will be credited with ten (10) or twelve (12) sick leave days, respectively, at the beginning of each fiscal school year. Sick leave remaining at the end of the school year shall be accumulated to a maximum of no more than one hundred and ten (110) days. Any secretary who fails to complete the 10-month or 12-month secretarial assignment shall lose cumulative sick days at a rate of one (1) day per month for those months not worked.

Sick leave may be used in accordance with the schedule specified herein for personal or family illness or disability subject to the limitations set forth below. For all absences, the secretary is required to notify their immediate supervisor upon first knowledge of the necessity to be absent.

Sick leave may be used as follows.

Personal Illness -- bona fide incapacity to report for work.

Family Illness -- two (2) days of sick leave will be allowed for each incapacitation in the immediate family (mother, father, wife, husband, son, daughter and others living in the immediate household) that necessitates the presence of the secretary. The principal or immediate supervisor will grant extension of sick leave for this purpose if the patient is deemed to be in critical condition by the attending physician. The supervisor/building administrator may grant an extension of sick leave for other family illness.

### Unused Sick Leave

If a secretary ends a fiscal year with the maximum of one hundred ten (110) sick days. The secretary will be credited with the allotted sick days (10) or (12) at the start of the succeeding work year. In the event sick time is used, the days in excess of 110 will be used first. Any days in excess of 110 remaining at the end of the fiscal year will be paid off at the current substitute teacher daily rate.

**C. *Personal Leave***

Employees will be allowed three (3) personal days per year. Such leave will require at least two (2) days written notice to their immediate supervisor. This advanced notice requirement may be waived in cases of emergency by the Superintendent. Such leave may not be used immediately prior to or following a vacation, except in cases of emergency. Days unused at the end of the year will be added to the employee's sick leave accumulation.

**D. *Unpaid Leave***

In addition to mandatory leaves under the Family Medical and Leave Act, leaves of absence without pay for up to one year, as differentiated from vacation days or sick leave, may be granted, if there is unusual need, when an employee has completed a minimum of eighteen (18) months of continuous service with the school (except for leaves related to the incapacitation of the employee). "Unusual need" is considered individually on the merits of the case. There will be no extension of unpaid leaves beyond one (1) year. Under no circumstances will a leave of absence be granted to seek or accept other employment. The procedure to apply for an unpaid leave is as follows: (1) A written request must be submitted to the supervisor specifying the length of leave required. (2) When the supervisor has approved the request, the request must be submitted to the Superintendent for final approval. Thirty (30) days before the end of the leave, the secretary must notify Central Office of their intent to return to work.

**E. *Funeral Leave***

Three (3) days of paid funeral leave may be taken if there is a death of a member of the immediate family. For the purpose of funeral leave, immediate family is defined as spouse, child, parent, sister, brother, grandchild, grandparent, parent of spouse, or a member of the secretary's household. Funeral leave will not be deducted from sick leave for immediate family members. Up to three (3) days of funeral leave for non-family may be taken and deducted from sick leave upon approval of the Superintendent.

**F. *Jury Duty***

Employees required to report for jury duty during working hours shall be released with pay provided they turn over to the district any earnings (excluding mileage) received for jury duty.

Employees are expected to report to work if not impaneled for the day. If released during the day, the employee must contact their supervisor to receive directions as to whether to report. If excused by the supervisor, the employee will receive pay for the balance of the day.

**VIII. *Vacancies and Transfers***

**A. *Vacancies***

Jobs that become open/vacant throughout the school year will be posted by Central Office within the secretarial staff for five (5) working days prior to the time they are filled. Interested

employees should notify the appropriate administrator of interest in such posted job. Concurrent consideration may be given to qualified applicants from outside the employment of Shepherd Public Schools. The supervisor will evaluate all applicants and make the final decision regarding the transfer of an employee from another school/building/department or the hiring of an outside candidate, to assure the best person for the job.

**B. *Internal Transfer***

In the case of an internal transfer to a higher classification, the employee shall receive an experience rating equivalent to the hourly rate of their present level as a minimum. After Central Office has reviewed the past experience and made a recommendation, the Superintendent will give the final approval.

**C. *Involuntary Transfers***

The Superintendent, or their designee, shall notify the affected employee of the transfer and the reason for such transfer.

**IX. *Resignation***

When an employee resigns from Shepherd Public Schools, it is requested that at least two weeks notice be given to the supervisor.

**XI. *Retirement***

An employee who has ten (10) years of seniority, hired prior to July 1, 2011 and who otherwise meets all eligibility requirements for retirement under the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System shall be paid in full for all of their unused accumulated sick leave days up to a maximum of fifty-five (55) days, and for one-half (1/2) of their normal day's pay for all days accumulated over fifty-five (55) days upon the employee's retirement. Secretaries who meet the above noted requirements hired on or after July 1, 2011 will receive \$40 per unused accumulated sick leave day up to a maximum of sixty (60) days upon the employee's retirement. This payment will be made in the form of a contribution to the district's Section 403(b) retirement plan.

Employees hired on or after July 1, 2012 will not be eligible for a payoff of their accumulated sick time upon retirement.

**XII. *Miscellaneous***

**A. *Severe Weather***

If school is closed because of an emergency or severe weather conditions, the employee shall report to work as agreed with the Board of Education on November 5, 1970; that secretaries selected to have Christmas Break off the same as teachers in exchange for working snow days. This clause is not to be taken as a directive to be present if weather conditions make travel dangerous.

**B. Mileage Allowance**

Required mileage driven on the job in the employee's vehicle will be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage rate. This does not include going to or from work.

**C. Longevity**

Longevity pay will be based upon years of service in a secretarial position to Shepherd Public Schools. After an employee has accumulated the required years of service in a secretarial position, the corresponding lump sum payment will be made in January:

Beginning at year 7	\$200.00
Beginning at year 12	\$400.00
Beginning at year 16	\$600.00

**D. Board Policies and District Compliance Officers**

Further clarification on any of the following policies can be found on the Shepherd Public Schools district website <http://www.shepherdschools.net/>. You may obtain a hard copy of any district policy from Central Office or Shepherd Public School building main offices.

2260 - Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity

2260.01 - Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability

3362, 4362, 5517 - Anti-Harassment

5516 - Student Hazing

5517.01 – Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Towards Students

7440.01 - Video Surveillance and Electronic Monitoring

District Compliance Officers – Compliance Officers are available to investigate any harassment or discrimination violation.

Claire Bunker, Superintendent, P.O. Box 219, Shepherd, MI 48883  
989-828-5520 [cbunker@shepherdschools.net](mailto:cbunker@shepherdschools.net)

Julie Freeze Director of Business and Finance, P.O. Box 219, Shepherd, MI 48883  
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**APPENDIX A**  
**SECRETARY WAGE SCHEDULE (2017-2018)**

Steps	1	2	3	4	5	6
S-2	11.13	11.66	12.28	12.93	13.54	14.12
S-1	12.48	13.04	13.53	14.21	14.84	15.44
Executive Secretary	13.41	13.97	14.58	15.18	15.85	16.40