



North DuPage Special Education Cooperative

Employee Manual

2023-2024

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EMPLOYEE MANUAL

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Please note: This handbook is intended to provide guidance to NDSEC personnel in the operation of the organization. This document is not contractual in nature nor is it official Board policy.

NDSEC GOVERNING BOARD

BENSENVILLE DISTRICT #2

Lori Parthimos
(Robert Laudadio – Alternate)

ROSELLE DISTRICT #12

Sheryl LeVine

ADDISON DISTRICT #4

Dave Williams (**Vice Chairperson**)
(Serge Ruffolo – Alternate)

BLOOMINGDALE DISTRICT #13

Marc Kapral
(Linda Wojcicki – Alternate)

WOOD DALE DISTRICT #7

Merilyn Daniels
(Mary Fletcher-Gomez – Alternate)

FENTON HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #100

Leonel Figueroa (**Chairperson**)
(Reid Goodrich – Alternate)

ITASCA DISTRICT #10

Tina O’Neill
(Marty Lundeen – Alternate)

LAKE PARK HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #108

Joe Mangold

MEDINAH DISTRICT #11

Ian Neitzke
(Destini Best – Alternate)

Recording Secretary: Michele Celozzi

The Governing Board meetings start at 4:00 p.m. and take place in the conference room of the NDSEC Administrative Office, 132 E. Pine Ave., Roselle, Illinois.

The dates and times are as follows: August 14, 2023, March 11, 2024 & May 13, 2024. Other Governing Board meetings may be scheduled during the year if business occurs that must be addressed by the Governing Board.

NDSEC OPERATIONAL BOARD

BENSENVILLE DISTRICT #2

Dr. Katie McCluskey, Superintendent

ROSELLE DISTRICT #12

Dr. Mary Henderson, Superintendent

ADDISON DISTRICT #4

Dr. Nick Sutton, Superintendent

BLOOMINGDALE DISTRICT #13

Dr. Jon Bartelt, Superintendent (**Vice Chairperson**)

WOOD DALE DISTRICT #7

Dr. John Corbett, Superintendent (**Chairperson**)

FENTON HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #100

James Ongtengco, Superintendent

ITASCA DISTRICT #10

Craig Benes, Superintendent

LAKE PARK HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #108

Dr. Michael Wojtowicz, Superintendent

MEDINAH DISTRICT #11

Dr. Susan Redell, Superintendent

Recording Secretary: Michele Celozzi

The Operational Board meetings start at 3:00 p.m. and take place in the conference room of the NDSEC Administrative Office, 132 E. Pine Ave., Roselle, Illinois. (November 13, 2023 start time at 3:15p.m. at Lincoln Academy)

The dates and times are as follows: August 14, September 11, October 16, November 13 & December 11, 2023
February 12, March 11, April 8 & May 13, 2024

NDSEC Administrators	Support Staff
Todd Putnam – Executive Director	Michele Celozzi Assistant to the Executive Director
Susan Zikuda – Assistant Director • Psychologist, Social Worker, OT, PT, Assistive Tech, Nurse & IST Supervisor	Cristina Martinez Assistant to the Assistant Director
Julie Neenan – Director of Business and Operations	Donna Garmon Payroll/Accounts Payable Bookkeeper Assistant Maureen Hill Student Claims/Accounts Receivable Assistant Assistant/Home Hospital Billing Angelica Rodriguez Student Data Assistant/Transportation
Ray Rosy - Director of Technology	
Kelly Gould – Coordinator • Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) • Hearing/Vision Itinerant Supervisor • Wood Dale Dist. #7 • ESY	Kristine Gianneschi Administrative Assistant (ECSE) Barb Schreck (ESY) Administrative Assistant Yolanda Garcia (ESY) Administrative Assistants
Nicole Melquist – Coordinator • Academic Life Skills (ALSP) Peacock, Fenton HS, Lake Park East & West HS • Transition Learning Center (TLC)	Yolanda Garcia Administrative Assistant Sub Caller
Amy Ramsay – Coordinator • Academic Life Skills (ALSP) DuJardin Primary & Intermediate, Westfield MS, Benson (w/Karin Stevens) • Fenton D#100	Kristine Gianneschi Administrative Assistant
Ryan Kozin – Coordinator • Academic Life Skills (ALSP) Peacock MS • Medinah Dist. #11	Yolanda Garcia Administrative Assistant - ALSP Barb Schreck Administrative Assistant – SSP Peacock
Shalagh O’Neill – Coordinator • Social Support Program (SSP) Tioga, Medinah Intermediate and Peacock MS • Private Placement	Barb Schreck Administrative Assistant
James Zinni – Coordinator • Language and Social Skills Opportunity (LASSO) • Roselle Dist. #12 • ESY	Amanda Bolnius Administrative Assistant
Colleen Clifford – Principal/Coordinator • Lincoln Academy: Social Support (SSP) and Academic Life Skills (ALSP) • SLP & APE Supervisor	Amanda Bolnius Administrative Assistant
Member District Directors/Coordinators	Administrative Assistants
Dustin Berman – dberman@bsd2.org Director of Student Services - Bensenville Dist. #2	Eva Carpenter Assistant
Janet Diaz – jdiaz@asd4.org Director of Student Support Services – Addison Dist. #4	Cynthia Ortiz Assistant
Kelly Gould – kgould@ndsec.org Special Education Coordinator – Wood Dale Dist. #7	Debra Parenti Assistant
Sarah Olsen – solsen@itasca10.org Special Education Coordinator – Itasca Dist. #10 Emily Wickstrom-Ruiz - ewickstrom-ruiz@itasca10.org (EC)	
Ryan Kozin – rkozin@ndsec.org Special Education Coordinator – Medinah Dist. #11	Donna Leone Assistant
James Zinni – jzinni@ndsec.org Special Education Coordinator – Roselle Dist. #12	Dawn Wegner Assistant
Samia Hefferan – shefferan@sd13.org Special Education Director – Bloomingdale Dist. #13	Kim Dattilo Assistant
Rich Watts – watts@fenton100.org Special Education Coordinator – Fenton Dist. #100	Clarissa Sanchez Assistant
Kim Murphy – kmurphy@lphs.org Director of Special Education – Lake Park Dist. #108	Donna Pizzuto Assistant

Administration

Organization/Administration

NDSEC is recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education as the legal entity responsible for special education programming in its nine member districts. NDSEC is responsible for: (1) monitoring its member districts to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations in programming for students with disabilities, (2) providing technical assistance to member districts, and (3) serving as an extension of each district by providing a continuum of services for students.

The Executive Director leads NDSEC with the assistance of the Assistant Director, Director of Business & Operations, and Program Coordinators.

The Governing Board is the governing body of NDSEC. The Executive Director is responsible to this board. It consists of nine lay-board members from member districts. The Governing Board is the oversight of the NDSEC Articles of Agreement.

The Operational Board is composed of the superintendents from each member district in the cooperative. The Operational Board provides guidance for daily operations of the NDSEC organization.

The objectives of NDSEC shall include, but not be limited to the following (Policy 1:30):

- Foster in the student self-discovery, self-awareness, and self-discipline, enabling student to realize his or her worth as a human being and to formulate a personal set of values and goals.
- Develop in the student basic skills and concepts necessary to function effectively in a changing world.
- Help the student learn to deal effectively with other people, encouraging in the student a sensitivity to the needs and values of others and a respect for individual and group differences.
- Stimulate curiosity, guiding the student to learn how to seek further knowledge.
- Help the student realize relationships to others through learning about society and society's laws and how to live in harmony with them.

Student Programs

Program Philosophy

Our philosophical base is that, to the greatest extent possible, students are educated in general education settings located in various member districts, as close to the student's home as possible. NDSEC programs are designed with goals of all students achieving full life opportunities as adults.

NDSEC-Operated Programs

NDSEC-operated program descriptions:

Itinerants

NDSEC provides services to students identified in the IEP with visual or hearing impairments through the services of vision and hearing itinerant teachers. For these students, the itinerant teaches strategies, advocacy skills, provides accommodations and modifications, and consults with the district and NDSEC staff to help them with instruction to meet the student's ongoing educational needs. In addition, Orientation and Mobility services are provided for visually impaired students with identified safety concerns when traveling independently in familiar and unfamiliar environments.

Academic Life Skills Program (ALSP)

The Academic Life Skills Program serves students who are eligible for special education and require an educational environment with intensive programming. The program provides individualized interventions to support students across academic, communication, motor, social, behavioral, daily living skills, and pre-vocational/employment domains. Our focus is on nurturing the growth of the whole child by fostering independence throughout the learning process.

Characteristics of students typically referred to the Academic Life Skills Program:

- Students who function significantly below grade level across cognitive, academic, and daily living skills domains.
- Students who benefit from a functional academic curriculum as a means to reinforce and generalize traditional academic content.
- Students who require instruction in daily living skills, including community field trips to reinforce skills.
- Students who benefit from support to improve communication, including speech/language and assistive technologies, as appropriate.
- Students in need of support to develop fine motor and gross motor skills, as appropriate.

Program Model:

- Targeted instruction to develop academic and functional academic skills.
- Focus on functional skills development are embedded into daily instruction and activities to foster independence across daily living skills domains.
- Focus on language development and use that incorporates visual supports and communication systems, as appropriate.
- Attention to fine and gross motor development that incorporates sensory needs, as needed.
- Multidisciplinary team approach that includes a special education teacher, social worker, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, school psychologist, certified school nurse, and other related service personnel, as required.

Transition Program

The Transitional Learning Center Program serves students ages 18 – 22 years old who are eligible for special education and require an educational environment with intensive programming. The program provides individualized services to support students as they pursue post-secondary education, vocation, and independent living skills opportunities. Students are engaged in an educational learning environment with opportunities to participate in college, vocational, community and wellness activities, as appropriate. Our focus is on nurturing the growth of the whole child by fostering independence throughout the learning process.

Characteristics of students typically referred to the Transition Learning Center:

- Students who function significantly below grade level across cognitive, academic, and daily living skills domains.
- Students who require a functional academic curriculum as a means to reinforce and generalize academic and vocational skills.
- Students who benefit from instruction to support daily living skills, including community field trips to reinforce skills.
- Students in need of support to improve communication, including speech/language and assistive technologies, as appropriate.
- Students who benefit from support to develop fine motor and gross motor skills, as appropriate.

Program Model:

- Targeted instruction to develop functional academic and vocational skills.
- Focus on functional skills development are embedded into daily instruction and activities to foster independence across daily living skills domains, including community and wellness activities.
- Focus on language development and use that incorporates visual supports and communication systems, as appropriate.
- Attention to fine and gross motor development that incorporates sensory needs, as needed.
- Multidisciplinary team approach that includes a special education teacher, social worker, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, school psychologist, certified school nurse, and other related service personnel, as required.

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Program

The Early Childhood Program serves students who are eligible for special education and require an educational environment with intensive programming. Students three years old to five years old attend school for a half-day of instruction and learning activities. The program provides individualized interventions to support students across academic, communication, motor, social, behavioral, and daily living skills domains. Our focus is on nurturing the growth of the whole child by fostering independence and developing a curiosity for learning.

Characteristics of students typically referred to the Early Childhood Program:

- Students in need of pre-academic readiness skills.
- Students who require support with language and social skills.
- Students who benefit from support with behavior management and self-regulation.
- Students who require support with fine and gross motor skill development.
- Students in need of a more functional curriculum with opportunities to generalize across learning environments.

Program Model:

- Targeted instruction to develop pre-academic readiness skills. Includes Discrete Trial Training, as needed.
- Functional skills development and play/social skills are embedded into daily instruction and activities.
- Focus on language development and use that incorporates visual supports and communication systems, as appropriate.
- Attention to fine and gross motor development that incorporates sensory needs, as needed.
- Multidisciplinary team approach that includes a special education teacher, social worker, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, school psychologist, certified school nurse, and other related service personnel, as required.

Language and Social Skills Opportunities Program (LASSO)

The LASSO Program serves students who are eligible for special education and require an educational environment with intensive programming. The program provides individualized interventions to support students across academic, communication, sensory, social/emotional, and motor domains. Our focus is on nurturing the growth of the whole child by fostering independence and building skills for successful transition into the general education setting.

Characteristics of students typically referred to the LASSO Program:

- Students with core academic skills at grade level or approaching grade level expectations.
- Students with sensory needs that impact the ability to actively participate in the learning environment.
- Students who have frequent occurrences of emotional and/or behavioral dysregulation.
- Students who require support with language and social skills.
- Students in need of assistance with school routines, including schedules and transitions.

Program Model:

- Targeted instruction and intervention strategies to build upon existing skill sets across core academic domains.
- A classroom learning environment that is organized, predictable, and includes visual supports (e.g., picture schedule, cue cards, regulation cues, and social stories).
- Sensory needs are proactively managed by providing appropriate breaks, activities, and equipment, as needed.
- Focus on language development and use that incorporates visual supports and communication systems, as appropriate.
- Multidisciplinary team approach that includes a special education teacher, social worker, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, school psychologist, certified school nurse, and other related service personnel, as required.

Social Support Program (SSP)

The Social Support Program serves students who are eligible for special education and require an educational environment with intensive programming. The program provides individualized interventions to support emotional regulation, executive functioning, and academic growth. Student success is supported through a positive behavioral reinforcement system, direct social/emotional instruction, various levels of general education integration, and collaboration with family and outside service providers. Our focus is on nurturing the growth of the whole child by fostering independence and building skills for successful transition into the general education setting.

Characteristics of students typically referred to the NDSEC Social Support Program:

- Students in need of additional support across academic and social-emotional domains.
- Students who have frequent occurrences of emotional and/or behavioral dysregulation.
- Students who benefit from a less stimulating, more structured instructional environment with consistent behavioral expectations.
- Students in need of assistance with transitions, organization, and navigating social relationships.

Program Model:

- Targeted instruction and intervention strategies to support growth across core academic domains, including accommodations and modifications, as appropriate.
- Focus on social and emotional learning, including the consistent reinforcement of social problem-solving strategies.
- Structured behavior management/intervention system with clearly defined expectations and accompanying positive reinforcement strategies.
- Multidisciplinary team of special education teacher, social worker, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, school psychologist and other related service personnel as required.

Lincoln Academy

Lincoln Academy Therapeutic Day School is a public day school that serves students who are eligible for special education and require a more restrictive educational environment with intensive programming. The program provides a high level of therapeutic support and interventions to support academic growth, emotional-behavioral regulation, and making positive choices that are consistent with personal goals. Student success is supported through a positive behavioral reinforcement system, direct social/emotional instruction, and collaboration with family and outside service providers. Our focus is on nurturing the growth of the whole child by fostering independence and building skills for successful transition into the general education setting.

Characteristics of students typically referred to Lincoln Academy:

- Students in need of intensive support across academic and social-emotional domains.
- Students who have frequent occurrences of emotional and/or behavioral dysregulation.
- Students who benefit from therapeutic support to manage feelings of frustration and distractibility.
- Students who require social skills instruction to address impulse control and peer conflict.
- Students in need of a therapeutic environment to support underlying mental health needs (e.g., anxiety, depression) and/or environment factors (e.g., substance abuse, trauma, violence).

Program Model:

- Targeted instruction and intervention strategies to support growth across core academic domains, including accommodations and modifications, as appropriate.
- Focus on social and emotional learning, including the consistent reinforcement of social problem-solving strategies.
- Structured behavior management/intervention system with clearly defined expectations and accompanying positive reinforcement strategies.
- Therapeutic support, including crisis response and stabilization, provided in a timely and responsive manner
- Partnerships with community resources, including collaboration with existing service providers.

Multidisciplinary team of special education teacher, social worker, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, school psychologist and other related service personnel as required.

Related Services

NDSEC employs professional staff to support the needs of its students.

Psychologists

School Psychologists have specialized training in both psychology and education. They use their training and skills to team with educators, parents, and other mental health professionals to ensure that every child learns in a safe, healthy, and supportive environment. School psychologists understand school systems, effective teaching, and successful learning through

specialized assessment of individual student needs. Psychologists provide support to students and faculty throughout the educational process. Today's children face more challenges than ever before. School psychologists can provide solutions for tomorrow's problems through thoughtful and positive actions today.

Social Workers

School Social Workers are a vital part of the educational team, working together with educational administrators, teachers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, speech and language pathologists, and other staff. Their unique graduate level training in social work enables them to understand and interpret the student's response to school, home, and community environments. School social workers identify social and developmental factors that influence a student's opportunity to benefit from the general instructional program within the school.

Speech-Language Pathologists

Speech-Language Pathologists are professionals educated in the study of human communication development. Through evaluation of the speech, language, cognitive-communication, and swallowing skills of students, the speech-language pathologist determines what communication or associated problems exist and the best way to treat them. Speech-language pathologists collaborate with members of the trans-disciplinary team to support increased communicative competencies of students in school, home, and community settings.

Occupational Therapists

Occupational Therapists are trained and licensed health care professionals who can make a complete evaluation of the impact of the disease on the activities of an individual at school and in work situations. The therapist also considers the individual's interests and recreational activities when completing their assessment in order to facilitate an improvement in the student's participation across all life domains.

Physical Therapists

Physical Therapists are trained to assess the motor development of children. They have the expertise to determine the appropriate treatment for physical limitations or functional impairments. They may choose exercise, improvement of underlying sensory processing problems, use of therapeutic modalities, or development of compensatory strategies. Their goals may include improving a child's functional skills and preventing or limiting the effects of a disability in a variety of developmental areas.

Physical therapists collaborate with members of the trans-disciplinary team to support increased movement competencies of students in school, home, and community settings.

School Nurses

School Nurses strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children and by identification and assistance in the removal of health-related barriers to learning. The major focus of school health services is the prevention of illness and disability, and the early detection and correction of health problems. The school nurse is especially prepared and uniquely qualified in preventive health, health assessment, and referral procedures.

Intervention Strategies Team

IST members provide support to educators, students, and families across member districts and NDSEC programs. Primary responsibilities include supporting problem-solving teams through staff development and providing recommendations to support the academic, social, emotional, sensory, and behavioral needs of individual student referrals. IST provides consultative support and direct service support, as needed (e.g., FBAs/BIPs, data collection, report writing, coaching, etc.). IST also offers member districts a wide range of professional development opportunities.

Collaborative Consultation Model

- Supporting staff and family needs
- Identification of strength-based interventions
- Structured follow-up (2/4/6 weeks)
- Written documentation of "supportive intervention"

Supporting General and Special Education

- Referral criteria includes the student being "at-risk" of more restrictive placement
- Designed to support students' needs across all educational settings
- Evaluated in part by the number of maintained placements and student academic performance
- Individual and group intervention development
- Direct support to NDSEC classrooms for students with behavioral needs

Building Team Focus

- Develop and strengthen building teams via individual referral process
- Consultative support in development of individualized interventions
- Staff development programs developed from team request of need

Staff Development

- NDSEC staff training programs
- Member district staff training programs
- Parent and community education programs

Music Therapy

Music therapy is the use of music to address the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional needs of a group or individual. It employs a variety of activities, such as listening to melodies, playing an instrument, drumming, writing songs, and guided imagery.

Pet Therapy

Pet therapy is a broad term that includes animal-assisted therapy as well as other animal-assisted activities. Animal-assisted therapy is a growing field that uses dogs or other animals to help people recover from or better cope with physical, cognitive, social, and emotional needs.

Registered Behavior Technician (RBT)

A RBT is a licensed paraprofessional who practices under the supervision of a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). The RBT is primarily responsible for the direct implementation of behavior-related services and supports in the classroom.

Emergency Closing of NDSEC Classes/Programs

On occasion NDSEC and/or its member districts will be closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies. In the event of such an emergency, below are the methods of emergency notification:

1. Automated phone call to employee's home or cell phone*
2. NDSEC website – a special message will be placed right at the top of the home page
3. NDSEC main phone number (630-894-0490) – special answering message when classes in NDSEC programs are cancelled and the administrative office is closed.
4. www.emergencyclosings.com – enter facility: North DuPage Special Education
5. Radio stations: WBBM 780 AM, WGN 720 AM
6. TV: WBBM 2, NBC 5, WGN 9, FOX, CLTV

*Employee should notify NDSEC immediately of a phone number change.

Employees who provide student services in a member district need to determine if that district is open or closed before leaving for work. It is recommended these employees make sure they are on the member district's emergency closing call list and know its methods of notification.

NDSEC Home-Hospital Instruction (HHI)

Introduction: NDSEC will meet ISBE guidance that allows students and families to access materials and digital tools to provide meaningful learning opportunities. We will utilize HHI learning as a part of the plan during school closings.

NDSEC Home-Hospital Instruction (HHI): There are many ways that a local school district can implement HHI learning. NDSEC aims to offer HHI learning that will provide learning experiences and opportunities that will advance learning for each individual child. Students served by NDSEC will have HHI learning plans that align with their IEP goals.

Students who receive related services minutes in their IEP will receive services through the use of hands-on tasks and/or teletherapy provided by the therapist/clinician for HHI. Service minutes will be provided based on individual need, ability to participate in teletherapy, and forthcoming ISBE guidance. Individual approaches will be determined based on what is appropriate for each student and family.

PERSONNEL

Staff Composition

NDSEC employs approximately 170+ individuals within the following categories: special education, adapted physical education, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, nurses, social workers, psychologists, hearing itinerants, vision itinerants, paraprofessionals, administrative assistants, custodians, and special education program administrators.

Employees are assigned to either NDSEC-operated or district-operated programs. Employees assigned to NDSEC programs provide services and technical assistance for students with disabilities enrolled in specialized itinerant, instructional, or therapeutic programs. Employees assigned to district level positions maintain clear connection to the cooperative; however, they provide services to students enrolled within district programs.

Employee Hours & Calendar

1. Employees work the following on-site hours:
 - a. Licensed personnel covered by the NDSEC collective bargaining agreement work 183 days. Each is required to work not more than 8.0 hours per day including a 30-minute, duty-free lunch. The teacher may leave at the end of the students' day on days preceding breaks and holidays.
Work hours: Vary by school assignment.
 - b. Licensed Occupational and Physical Therapy staff work 183 days, 8.0 hours per day including a 30-minute, duty-free lunch.
Work hours: 8:00-4:00 pm.
 - c. All Paraprofessionals work the number of student attendance days on the calendar they are assigned to plus two additional in-service days. The work day includes a 30-minute, duty-free lunch.
Work hours: Vary by school assignment.
 - d. 10-month Administrative Assistants work 205 days. Each work 8.0 hours per day, including a 30-minute, duty-free lunch.
Work hours: 8:00-4:00 pm.
 - e. 10-month Special Education Program Administrators work 205 days. Each is required to work a minimum of 8.0 hours per day including a 30-minute, duty-free lunch.
Work hours: 8:00-4:00 pm.
 - f. 12-month employees work 260 days. Administrative Assistants work 8.0 hours per day, including a 30-minute, duty-free lunch. Administrators work a minimum of 8.0 hours per day including a 30-minute, duty-free lunch.
Work hours: 8:00-4:00 pm.

2. Staff members are not paid for working beyond the usual workday (attending evening meetings, etc.) unless the circumstances are unique and prior approval is granted by the Executive Director. If an IEP requires a student to be enrolled in an extra-curricular activity and if it is determined by his/her IEP team that a staff member needs to be involved to assist with a student's participation, the staff member shall be compensated at a rate of \$18.00/hour to align with the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Prior to the start of the staff member's involvement in the student activity, the program administrator will determine the number of hours approved for compensation. Forms to use for approval are:
 - Work Substitution Form available on the NDSEC Network at:
G:\Forms\Administrative Forms\Work Substitution Authorization
 - NDSEC Time Sheet available on the NDSEC Website at:
www.ndsec.org under Quick Links – Online Forms – Time Sheet

Employee Responsibilities

Employees have the following responsibilities in addition to those in their job description:

1. To read, understand, and abide by NDSEC policies and procedures and the provisions of the Illinois School Code.
2. To report to their immediate program administrator as soon as possible after learning that they have, or may have, a communicable disease.
3. To report any instances of known or suspected child abuse/neglect of students in NDSEC-operated programs to the Child Abuse hotline. Employees should also inform their program administrator when such reports are made.
4. To inform the immediate program administrator as far in advance as possible as to an anticipated absence from work, including the request for personal days.
5. Licensed staff requiring substitutes will have complete written instruction/lesson plans available for use by substitutes during their absence. Written plans will be monitored by each program administrator weekly.
6. All staff will complete a weekly schedule and submit as requested. Initial schedules must be submitted to program administrators after the first week school is in session. **Form available on the NDSEC Network @ *G:\Forms\Administrative Forms\Program Staff Schedule*.**
7. To inform the immediate program administrator as far in advance as possible as to an anticipated resignation. (Standard practice is to give minimally 30 days' notice before the start of the next school year.)
8. To ensure constant and appropriate supervision of all students for whom staff are responsible from the time the students arrive at school until they depart.

9. To avoid making recommendations to parents or other non-employees regarding a student's educational needs or program, such as services or methodology, that have not been recommended at an IEP Conference.
10. All staff with access to the NDSEC computer network are responsible for using and maintaining the email and computerized calendar system (Google) as established by NDSEC. All staff members have a NDSEC email account and are expected to check their email on a regular basis.
11. Staff assigned to classrooms that may utilize physical management procedures must undergo formal CPI training in behavioral response procedures annually prior to use with students.
12. Health and safety training will be required of all NDSEC employees who have a high occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. These individuals may also receive First Aid/CPR training and be offered the Hepatitis B vaccine at no cost.
13. All staff need to successfully complete each year's cycle of mandatory on-line trainings by the deadline they are given each year.
14. All staff need to familiarize themselves with the building emergency procedures and keep such documents in a convenient space for immediate reference.
15. Participation in professional meetings and in-service activities designed to increase the effectiveness of employees. Therefore, employees may be granted release-time as well as reimbursement of certain expenses. A request from an employee to attend a professional meeting or in-service activity other than those provided by NDSEC must be approved by the employee's immediate program administrator, the Assistant Director, and the Executive Director. **Forms are available on the NDSEC Network @ G:\Public\Forms\Administrative Forms\Professional Development Request.** From time to time, NDSEC calls meetings/workshops for its employees. A request from the employee to attend such events is not necessary. Any expenses incurred by the employee will be reimbursed. Part-time employees are expected to modify their work schedules to participate in meetings or workshops as scheduled.

Staff Personal Appearance

All staff are expected to use good judgment in maintaining a professional appearance including proper dress, grooming, personal hygiene and overall appearance. All NDSEC staff must wear their identification badge prominently above the waist while in school buildings when students are present.

In the event of inappropriate attire being worn by staff while at work, program administrators may require employees change into acceptable attire and/or conform to professional appearance and grooming standards before continuing their work day.

Tardiness/Hours Missed

Staff who must arrive late or leave early from his or her position will have their pay deducted for the time they were absent from work rounded to the nearest hour. The employee may choose to be deducted for not less than one-half day from his or her sick or personal leave.

Employees Assigned to Member Districts

1. A NDSEC employee assigned to work in a member district building must be cognizant of the assigned building's policies and procedures on life safety issues, special medical needs, student suicide, student discipline, issues regarding serious situations such as student pregnancy, student drug and alcohol abuse, and dispensation of medication for students. If a question exists, or when a NDSEC employee feels a discrepancy between the policy of the building and NDSEC policies, the employee should request an interpretation by the NDSEC program administrator.
2. NDSEC employees work a NDSEC calendar, which is developed in agreement with each assigned building calendar. NDSEC employees are required to work the number of NDSEC contracted days. When an employee believes there is a conflict in the employee's calendar or hours scheduled, the employee should contact their immediate program administrator for a decision or adjustment.
3. NDSEC employees in member district buildings are expected to participate in as many of the building and/or district staff development activities as possible. The NDSEC direct program administrator will be able to schedule with the employee the appropriate training activity to attend when NDSEC and the member district sponsor different activities on the same day.

Absence Procedures*

Teachers

When you are going to be absent for any reason (sick, personal, in-service, conference/seminar or other approved leave), the following procedures must be followed:

- A. IN ADDITION TO THE PROCEDURES REQUIRED BY THE SCHOOL IN WHICH YOU ARE ASSIGNED,

Two calls are required:

1. NDSEC Administrative Office – 630-894-0490 – After greeting starts, **press 6** for staff absence reporting
2. Your Direct Supervisor (Building Principal/Program Administrator)

Please make every effort to call by 6:30 a.m. (preferably the night before).

If you know in advance that you will need a substitute, you must notify NDSEC ASAP.

* **Staff Absences That Are Not Reported According To This Procedure Will Result In a “Deduction from Pay”**

B. Information to give in your absence report:

- Name
- Position
- Work Location/Program
- Date(s), Time/Duration of absence
- Work Hours (Be specific –with arrival and dismissal times)
- Reason, i.e., sick/personal/professional conference**
- Location of substitute teacher plans

**Specific information related to the cause of your absence should not be shared when calling in an absence.

C. Absence Form

1. A **Staff Absence Form** needs to be filled out:
 - a. immediately after your return to work if it's an unplanned absence
 - b. in advance if it's a planned absence
2. Go to the NDSEC website (www.ndsec.org). Click on the **Online Forms** button under the Quick Links section of the homepage (middle of the page) to find the **Staff Absence Form**. Complete and submit.

Absence Procedures*

Paraprofessionals

When you are going to be absent for any reason (sick, personal, in-service, conference/seminar or other approved leave), the following procedures must be followed:

A. IN ADDITION TO THE PROCEDURES REQUIRED BY THE SCHOOL IN WHICH YOU ARE ASSIGNED,

Two calls are required:

1. NDSEC Administrative Office – 630-894-0490 – After greeting starts, **press 6** for staff absence reporting
2. Your Direct Classroom Supervisor (Classroom Teacher)

(Teachers will notify Program Administrator if Substitute Staff does not arrive by the beginning of the school day.)

Please make every effort to call by 6:30 a.m. (preferably the night before).

If you know in advance that you will need a substitute, you must notify NDSEC ASAP.

B. Information to give in your absence report:

- Name
- Position
- Work Location/Program
- Date(s), Time/Duration of absence
- Work Hours (Be specific –with arrival and dismissal times)
- Reason, i.e., sick/personal/professional conference**

**Specific information related to the cause of your absence should not be shared when calling in an absence.

***Staff Absences That Are Not Reported According To This Procedure Will Result In a “Deduction from Pay”**

C. Absence Form

1. A **Staff Absence Form** needs to be filled out:
 - a. immediately after your return to work if it's an unplanned absence
 - b. in advance if it's a planned absence
2. Go to the NDSEC website (www.ndsec.org). Click on the **Online Forms** button under the Quick Links section of the homepage (middle of the page) to find the **Staff Absence Form**. Complete and submit.

Absence Procedures*

Related Services and Administrative Support Personnel

When you are going to be absent for any reason (sick, personal, in-service, conference/seminar, other approved leave, or vacation for 12-month administrative support staff), the following procedures must be followed:

A. Two or more calls required:

1. NDSEC Administrative Office – 630-894-0490 – After greeting starts, **press 6** for staff absence reporting
2. Related Services Staff: Contact your immediate program administrator and all the buildings/NDSEC classrooms where you are scheduled to report on the date(s) of your absence.
12-month administrative support staff: Contact your immediate supervisor.

B. Information to give in your absence report:

- Name
- Position
- Work Location/Program
- Date(s), Time/Duration of absence
- Reason, i.e., sick/personal/professional conference**

**Specific information related to the cause of your absence should not be shared when call in an absence.

C. Absence Form

1. A **Staff Absence Form** needs to be filled out:
 - a. immediately after your return to work if it's an unplanned absence
 - b. in advance if it's a planned absence
2. Go to the NDSEC website (www.ndsec.org). Click on the **Online Forms** button under the Quick Links section of the homepage (middle of the page) to find the **Staff Absence Form**. Complete and submit.

* **Staff Absences That Are Not Reported According To This Procedure Will Result In a “Deduction from Pay”**

Assignment of Staff

Staff members assigned to NDSEC-operated programs are under the direct supervision of the program administrator. Staff should become acquainted with building policies and work with the administration and staff of the building in which they are assigned. District-assigned staff work under the supervision of a NDSEC/District coordinator. Such cooperative efforts are essential in building a positive relationship between NDSEC and school district staff members.

Personnel assignments are subject to changes as required by the program administrator to meet the daily needs of students enrolled within the NDSEC operated programs.

Reassignment of Staff

Employees have an opportunity to request reassignment for the following year to another type of position or location within NDSEC for which they are qualified and the position is vacant. Administration holds the rights to assignment but will hold the best interests of students first, the needs of NDSEC second, and the interests and aspirations of the individual teacher third.

At-Will Employees

Educational support personnel, paraprofessionals, custodians, and all non-union staff are at-will employees; however, NDSEC makes every effort to maintain these individuals' employment as long as the individual's performance meets NDSEC's standards or unless it becomes necessary to reduce the number of positions. NDSEC will make every effort to assist employees experiencing job-related difficulties, in improving their performance, prior to the decision to terminate employment. Reduction-in-Force (RIF) procedures shall be in accordance with existing law.

At-will employees can be assigned and re-assigned, as needed, throughout the NDSEC organization. The notification-of-employment information received by at-will employees does not allow them contractual rights. At-will employees may be transferred or dismissed without cause, depending upon program needs. In the case of a 1:1 paraprofessional losing a position due to changes in the student's IEP, NDSEC will make every effort to transfer the employee to another available opportunity within the cooperative.

All employees are required to attend appropriate institute meetings, in-service training sessions, workshops and parent-teacher meetings as part of their assignments. Paraprofessionals may be requested to attend additional staff development programs for compensation.

Personnel Records

Personnel records are maintained in the administrative office for all employees. Access to one's records may be arranged by calling the administrative office. Viewing of the record is to be done during the regular operating hours. Access to the personnel record by persons other than the employee is strictly controlled and subject to the provisions outlined in the policy manual.

NDSEC's Purpose for Collecting Social Security Numbers

The Cooperative treats social security numbers (SSNs) confidentially. It uses SSNs for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Employment matters, e.g., income reporting to IRS and the IL Department of Revenue, tax withholding, FICA, or Medicare.
2. Verifying enrollment in various benefit programs, e.g., medical benefits, health insurance claims, or veterans' programs.
3. Filing insurance claims.
4. Internal verification or administrative purposes.

In addition, State law authorizes and/or requires the Cooperative to use or disclose SSNs in specified circumstances including, without limitation, in the following circumstances:

1. Disclosing SSNs to another governmental entity if the disclosure is necessary for the entity to perform its duties and responsibilities;
2. Disclosing SSNs pursuant to a court order, warrant, or subpoena; and
3. Collecting or using SSNs to investigate or prevent fraud, to conduct background checks, to collect a debt, or to obtain a credit report from a consumer reporting agency under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Director of Business & Operations.

Compensation

Compensation

Members of the collective bargaining agreement are paid based on the salary guidelines described in Article VIII-1 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Paraprofessionals' compensation is based on an hourly rate and is determined by the NDSEC Governing Board. All other employee groups (occupational therapists, physical therapists, RN/LPNs, and administrators) are employed using salary ranges. Prior credited experience must have been in education or an educationally related field and have been on a full-time basis.

Payday is every other Friday, unless Friday is a holiday, in which case payday is the Thursday before. Employees must elect to be paid either 22 or 26 times each year. All employees must submit their preference in writing annually on forms provided by NDSEC.

Direct Deposit

NDSEC's method of processing payroll is direct deposit. Forms are available on the NDSEC Network @ *G:\Public\Forms\Fiscal Forms\Authorization Agreement for Automatic Direct Deposit.*

There are several guidelines which will apply to direct deposit:

1. Any depository, which utilizes ACH direct deposit authorization, is eligible to be designated by you as your depository of choice. Virtually all banks, savings and loans, and credit unions are in this system. As a precaution, you should verify, in advance, that the depository indicated on your authorization form has direct deposit capability.
2. You must complete, sign, and send an "Authorization Agreement for Automatic Direct Deposits (ACH Credits)" form to the Payroll Department at the Administrative Office. If you do not have a paper check, a form can be obtained from your bank indicating your account number and the bank routing number.
3. **Due to all of the bank mergers, please make sure to notify payroll if any account number and/or bank routing number changes. It is the employee's responsibility to provide new account information when changes occur at the bank on record or new accounts are requested.**

Payroll Deductions

Involuntary Deductions

Involuntary deductions are those which are required by law including the following:

IMRF Employees

Social Security
Medicare
Federal and State Withholding
Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund
Contributions

TRS Employees

Medicare
Federal and State Withholding
Teachers' Association Dues
Illinois Teacher Retirement System
Contributions

Voluntary Deductions

Employees may choose to have deductions automatically made from their paychecks for reasons including the following:

- Payment to an approved annuity plan (403B)
 - Payment to a credit union
 - Payment of Federal income tax in a greater amount than required by the number of deductions for which he/she is eligible
 - Flexible spending account
- NDSEC will automatically deduct and transmit funds to a NDSEC-approved annuity vendor selected by the employee. NDSEC assumes no responsibility for financial advisement or counseling of employees in the selection of investment plans.

NDSEC employees can participate in a plan that will provide retirement funds in addition to the benefits from the Public-School Employees Retirement System. The plan is called a 403(b) and is named for the section of the Internal Revenue Code that governs this benefit. A 403(b) is a tax-sheltered annuity or qualifying custodial account which by federal law is only available to employees of educational institutions and other certain non-profit organizations. These plans have been allowed by federal law since 1958 for 501(c)(3) employers and 1961 for public education employers. The private sector often uses 401(k) deferred compensation plans as a similar plan, but schools cannot provide a 401(k) plan unless, as is true in some states, a grandfathered 401(k) plan established before May of 1986 has been retained.

What is a 403(b)?

Simply stated, a 403(b) allows you to set aside money for retirement on a tax-deferred basis using a payroll deduction process through the business office. The funds withheld from your paycheck are then invested with a 403(b) provider that you can choose from our list below. You will control how your funds are invested by consulting with a representative from the provider you select.

Your invested funds will grow tax free until withdrawal. When you withdraw your funds, they will be taxed as normal income.

403(b) Providers:

- Equitable
- American Funds
- Vanguard

Please contact NDSEC Fiscal Department for further information.

- NDSEC will automatically deduct and transmit funds to a credit union approved by the Executive Director. The same restrictions and requirements apply as described in the preceding paragraphs.
- An employee may request additional federal/state tax withholding by completing the required forms, which can be obtained from the Fiscal Department.
- Upon request, NDSEC will automatically deduct and transmit funds to the Flexible Spending Plan for pretax Premium Payments, Medical/Dental Spending Account, and Dependent Daycare.
- In each of the preceding situations, employees must inform the administrative office in writing of their desire to have deductions made and complete the required forms.

Pre-Service Training

Any staff member, who is asked to participate in NDSEC-provided Pre-Service Training, will be compensated at the current rate of pay for the time utilized. Pre-service training is calculated into each staff member's work calendar for the school term. Any staff required to extend their calendar beyond the anticipated number of work dates will be eligible for additional pay at the end of the school year, when appropriate.

Fringe Benefits Health/ Life/Long-Term Disability Insurance

Individual health insurance coverage, life insurance (\$50,000 benefit for a full-time person) and long-term disability insurance are provided to full-time employees at no cost. Additionally, the Board shall pay 20% of the health and major medical premium for any coverage above individual coverage. Part-time employees may participate in the health and life plans but must pay the percentage of the premium for the time not employed by NDSEC. For example, an employee who works 60% of the time would pay 40% of the premium. A part-time employee who works less than 20 hours per week is not eligible for health, life, or long-term disability insurance.

An employee who resigns or who is terminated at the end of the school year maintains insurance coverage through August 31 of that year on the same basis the employee enjoyed during the prior school year. Beginning September 1 of that year, an employee who resigned or who was terminated at the end of the previous school year may continue insurance coverage, at his/her expense, for a period of time in accordance with Federal COBRA regulations (18 months) or until insurance coverage commences as a result of taking a job with an employer who provides health insurance coverage to its employees, whichever comes first.

Detailed benefit summaries are available by contacting the Fiscal Department.

Job-Related Injury (Workers' Compensation)

If you are injured on the job, you must contact your program administrator immediately. Your program administrator will meet with you to complete the "Employee Accident and Injury Investigation" form and "Authorization for Records and Reports" form. If you visit a physician or clinic for treatment, be certain to inform the health care facility that you incurred the injury on the job. Do not attempt to use NDSEC's health insurance, since job injuries are covered by Workers' Compensation. **Forms are available on the NDSEC Network @ G:\Public\Forms\Human Resource Forms\Worker's Compensation.**

Any absence of three workdays or less due to the injury will be deducted from your accumulated sick days, and you will continue to receive full pay from NDSEC. If the claim is approved by Workers' Compensation, then beginning with the fourth day of absence, Workers' Compensation will pay two-thirds of your salary and NDSEC will pay one-third. You may receive paychecks from both agencies. For each day after the third day of absence, one-third of a sick day will be deducted from your accumulated sick days. If your sick days become exhausted and you are still not able to return to work, you will receive payment only from Workers' Compensation. It is your responsibility to keep the administrative office apprised of your health status and anticipated date of return to work.

Liability Insurance

NDSEC provides liability coverage for all its employees, including bodily injury and property damage for up to \$1,000,000 for each occurrence. The policy covers NDSEC employees who are accused of being either partially or wholly responsible for any injury to a student or damage to property, allegedly committed during the scope of employment. Such coverage also includes court defense in the case of a suit brought against the employee.

Personnel Reimbursement

Because distribution of funds within NDSEC requires board approval, timelines defined for reimbursement, timesheets, and mileage will be strictly enforced.

Mileage:

- NDSEC will reimburse staff for work-related travel that is approved by the immediate supervisor.
- Under no circumstances will mileage to and from an employee's home or other non-work-related destination be reimbursed.

Mileage may be accumulated, but will not be reimbursed if submitted more than 90 days after the miles were accumulated. **Forms are available on the NDSEC Network @ G:/Public/Forms/Fiscal Forms.**

Reimbursement of Items Purchased: (NDSEC Policy Reference: 5:60)

NDSEC will reimburse staff for budgeted items that are purchased for NDSEC-operated programs, provided that the employees adhere to the following guidelines.

- Prior approval from program administrator for purchasing is required using the Reimbursement Request Form.
- Provide a tax-exempt letter to the vendor when making a purchase (tax will not be reimbursed to staff).

***Please Note:** Staff is to make every effort to make purchases using a Purchase Order.

Timesheets:

- NDSEC timesheets are available on the NDSEC website (www.ndsec.org). Click on the **Online Forms** button under the Quick Links section of the homepage (middle of the page) to find the **Staff Absence Form**. Complete and submit. It will be routed to the program supervisor and Executive Director for approval.
- Timesheets must be submitted **within 30 days after the date of service** and be approved by the program supervisor and Executive Director for compensation to occur.

NDSEC Policies and Procedures

All staff are strongly encouraged to review the policies and procedures posted on the NDSEC webpage (www.ndsec.org) throughout the year as policies and procedures may change. (See **NDSEC Board Policy Manual** under Main Menu.)

Staff should familiarize themselves specifically with the following policies & procedures:

- ◆ 2:105 – Ethics and Gift Ban
- ◆ 4:170 – Safety
 - 4:170-AP1 – Comprehensive Safety/Crisis Program
 - 4:170-AP1, E1 – Employee and Student Accident or Injury Forms
 - 4:170-AP1, E2 – Memo to Staff Members Regarding Contacts By Media About a Crisis
 - 4:170-AP6, E1 – School Staff AED Notification Letter
 - 4:170-AP6, E2 – Notification to Staff and Parents/Guardians of CPR and AED Video
- ◆ 4:190 – Targeted School Violence Prevention Program
 - 4:190-AP2, E6 – Target School Violence Prevention and Threat Assessment Education
- ◆ 5:10 – Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment
- ◆ 5:20 – Workplace Harassment Prohibited
- ◆ 5:40 – Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease
 - 5:40-AP – Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease
- ◆ 5:50 – Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace; Tobacco Prohibition
- ◆ 5:90 – Abused and Neglected Child Reporting
- ◆ 4:165 Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors
- ◆ 5:120 Employee Ethics; Conduct; and Conflict of Interest
- ◆ 5:120-AP2 Employee Conduct Standards
- ◆ 5:120-AP2-E Expectations and Guidelines for Employee Student Boundaries
- ◆ 5:125 – Personal Technology and Social Media: Usage and Conduct
- ◆ 5:130 – Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information
 - 5:130-AP – Email Retention
- ◆ 5:140 – Solicitations By or From Staff
- ◆ 5:185 – Family and Medical Leave
 - 5:185-AP – Resource Guide for Family and Medical Leave
- ◆ 5:250 – Leaves of Absence
- ◆ 6:235 – Access to Electronic Networks
 - 6:235-AP1 – Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks
 - 6:235-AP1, E1 – Staff Authorization for Electronic Network Access
- ◆ 7:15 – Student and Family Privacy Rights
- ◆ 7:20 – Harassment of Students Prohibited
- ◆ 7:190 – Student Behavior

In addition, union members should refer to the most recent Collective Bargaining Agreement in addition to this manual.

