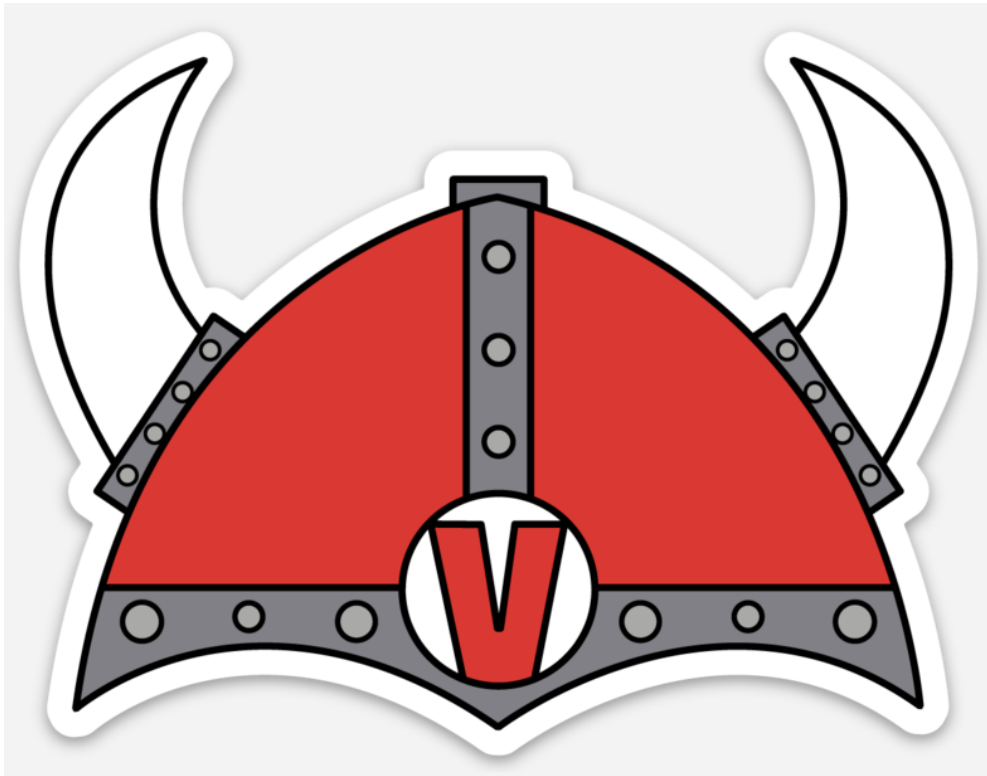


# **MSAD#8 Vinalhaven School**



## **Staff Handbook**

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## **Introduction**

This handbook is used to outline pertinent expectations for the Vinalhaven School staff. It is updated annually. It is our hope that this will provide guidance during the this school year. Please consult anyone in the administrative team with questions.

- [Valerie McKenney](#), Superintendent and Student Service Director,
- [Monte Selby](#) , Principal
- [Bryan Feezor](#), Assistant Principal
- [Tina Davidson](#), Business Manager

## **Affirmative Action**

MSAD#8 is committed to maintaining a workplace and learning environment that is free from illegal discrimination and harassment.

In accordance with applicable Federal and/or State laws and regulations, MSAD#8 prohibits discrimination against and harassment of employees, candidates for employment, students and others with rights to admission or access to school programs, activities or premises on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability. For the purpose of this policy, “sexual orientation” means a person’s actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality, or gender identity or expression.

Further, in compliance with Federal law, MSAD#8 prohibits discrimination against school unit employees and candidates for employment on the basis of age or genetic information.

The Board delegates the Superintendent the responsibility for implementing this policy. The MSAD#8 Affirmative Action Plan will include designation of an Affirmative Action Officer, James LePage, who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all Federal and State requirements related to nondiscrimination. An Employee Affirmative Action Officer and a Student Affirmative Action Officer will be appointed by the Superintendent and will be persons with direct access to the Superintendent.

The Affirmative Action Officers shall be responsible for ensuring that notice of compliance with Federal and State civil rights laws is provided to all applicants for employment, employees, students, parents and others, as appropriate.

## **Classifications of Employee Positions**

To aid in the determination of applicability of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), each position and/or title within the School shall be categorized as either exempt or non-exempt. Exempt or Non-exempt refers to the applicability to the position of the overtime provisions in the FLSA.

**Non-Exempt:** The minimum wage and overtime provisions of the law apply to non-exempt employees. Such employees are usually paid on an hourly basis and are required to record their hours. Non-exempt employees are ordinarily paid overtime at the rate of time and one-half their regular rate of pay for all hours worked beyond forty hours in a work week if pre-approved by the immediate supervisor who has checked in advance with the business office to ensure sufficient funds exist in the budget for such work.

**Exempt:** Employees who, due to their training and the nature of their duties, are not covered by the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the law. Such individuals are paid on a salaried basis and are not eligible for overtime. Executives, professional employees, and certain employees in administrative and supervisory positions are typically exempt.

**Employee Status:**

Employee status shall be determined for the purposes of allocating vacation and sick leave as well as eligibility for insurance benefits. The categories are Full-Time, Part Time and Temporary. Status shall be based on a position's scheduled hours per the employees Wage and Benefit Agreement.

- **Full Time** – 1350 hours annually or more. This includes work years of 180/7.5 and above.
- **Part Time** – less than 1350 hours annually
- **Temporary** – including but not limited to substitutes in all positions including long term teaching substitutes & summer employment

**Compensation: Wage & Benefit/Salary Notification Agreements**

All employees shall receive a Wage & Benefit/Salary Notification Agreement annually. These documents will detail the following:

- position title, work location, supervisor
- rate of pay, scheduled hours of work, work year & status, # of paydays
- number of paid days for holiday, vacation, & sick leave - including accrued time available
- tax status-including current exemptions & allowances,
- life insurance benefit – employer & employee share,
- health insurance benefit – employer & employee share,
- dental insurance benefit – employer & employee share,
- direct deposit information

**Compensation Documentation: Payroll - Time Cards**

MSAD#8 is required to keep records of hours worked by and paid to its hourly employees. All hourly employees are required to document and certify their hours worked and submitted for pay with employee and supervisor signature documenting pre-approval of all worked hours or paid time off. To ensure accurate and timely paychecks, it is important that employees remember to

record their hours daily and submit their time cards promptly. Timesheets are due on the Monday following the end of the pay period, prior to the next Friday payday. Time sheets should be totaled and signed by the employee prior to submission to the Business Office for payroll processing. ~~An annual notice of pay periods and check dates is available from the Business Office.~~

**Job Descriptions:** There shall be job descriptions for each position. These job descriptions shall set forth the following information:

- Job title/qualifications
- Responsible to and evaluated by
- Duties & Responsibilities

These are currently being reviewed and updated.

### **Attendance**

Staff must contact the School Secretary to report an unplanned absence so that proper coverage, if necessary, can be arranged. Staff should contact the School Secretary on the day of the absence no later than 6:30 AM or the evening before the absence. Non-instructional staff should contact a substitute who is approved to cover for them, then this information should be relayed to the School Secretary.

All planned absences (appointments that could not be scheduled during non-working hours, vacation time) require a [Leave Request form](#) submitted to and approved by the Assistant Principal as soon as possible but no less than three (3) days in advance. Jury duty, Bereavement leave and Family Medical Leave (FMLA) must also be requested as far in advance as possible. Leave Request forms may be found on the school website.

### **Charges: Employee Purchases – Lunch, or other fees**

Employees who purchase lunch or incur fees to MSAD#8 are expected to pay at the time of purchase, maintain a credit balance with the cafeteria, or incur a charge balance of no more than \$50 for no more than 1 pay period.

Employees will be charged, through payroll deductions for any balances owed to MSAD#8 as of the last day of school before the holiday break in December and as of the last day of school in June. Balances will be scheduled so that the outstanding balance will be paid in full within 30 days. Employees not receiving summer paychecks are expected to pay all outstanding balances as of the last day of school. Outstanding balances at the start of the next school year will result in a refusal of credit privileges until the outstanding balances are paid in full.

### **Charges: School Expense Reimbursement**

Expense reimbursement is available for pre-approved expenses incurred by employees during the course of conducting school business or for attending training requested or required by MSAD#8.

- Mileage - Employees required to drive their personal automobile for school purposes shall be reimbursed at a mileage rate equivalent to the current IRS standard. On island driving should be done with the school vans whenever possible.
- Ferry tickets, turnpike tolls and parking fees shall be reimbursed upon submission of receipts.
- Meals/Lodging - Employees shall be entitled to reimbursement for meals in a reasonable amount and for reasonable expenses for lodging, provided those expenses are directly related to the performance of duties as a school employee.

Any requests for reimbursement must be:

- Submitted in writing indicating the event attended and the person being reimbursed
- Be accompanied by a receipt indicating the amount being requested for reimbursement
- Only include expenses for the employee(s) attending the training
- Alcoholic beverages & Sales Tax will not be reimbursed

### **Compensation: Earnings and Deductions**

Each pay period employees will receive a detailed pay stub listing earnings and deductions for the pay period and for the year to date. It is important that everyone familiarize themselves with this information and verify it periodically. The earnings and deductions on the Wage and Benefit Agreement should match the ones on your paystub. Any discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the business office immediately for resolution.

#### **Mandatory deductions subtracted from gross pay include:**

- Federal & State Income Taxes
- Social Security (FICA) **OR** Maine State Retirement
- Medicare
- Levies/Garnishments ordered by a court of law – these may include student loans, tax payments, or child/spousal support
- Overdue balances with MSAD#8

#### **Other Deductions may include:**

According to policies, deductions can be taken from earnings on the employees final paycheck in certain circumstances such as an employee failing to pay an unpaid balance on a lunch account, recoup payments for tuition if the employee's obligations under the policy are not met, or damage to a school issued laptop or other device.

#### **Voluntary Deductions may include:**

- Employee share of premiums for health, dental & life insurance
- Organizational dues
- 403b/IRA contributions
- School Lunch payments
- Charitable donations

All personal voluntary deductions must come from one of the categories listed above and must be submitted to the Business Office in writing. Notification must include the reason for the

deduction, the payee of the deduction, the total amount to be deducted and the amount of each payment.

All Employees are eligible for Group Life insurance through the MePERS Group Life Insurance plan and/or MSMA Group Life & ADD Insurance plan offered by the school. All premiums are paid by the employee. Additional coverage restrictions may apply.

Employee premiums will be deducted from the employee's paycheck in either 20 or 26 pays depending on the employee's work year.

### **Compensation: Bereavement Leave**

Up to five (5) working days with pay shall be allowed in the event of the death of a spouse, parent, sibling or child. Up to three (3) working days with pay shall be allowed in the event of the death of a grandparent, parent-in-law or person living within the household of the employee. The Superintendent may make special consideration when an exceptional or unusual circumstance exists.

### **Compensation: Holidays**

Paid holidays will be granted to all full and part time employees based on their scheduled work week. Paid holiday hours are based on the employees regularly scheduled hours for that day. School year employees will be compensated for holidays that occur during the school year only, inclusive of vacation periods.

The School recognizes the following 12 annual holidays:

New Year's Day	Independence Day (year round employees only)
Martin Luther King Jr.	Labor Day
Presidents' Day	Indigenous Peoples' Day
Patriots' Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Veterans' Day	Christmas Day

Holiday pay for employees required to work on a holiday will be computed at an employee's regular hourly rate of pay x 1.5 not including overtime. Employees who are scheduled to work on a designated holiday may be able to take another day off which must be scheduled through the employee's supervisor. When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday the district will follow the federal observance of the holiday.

### **Compensation: Jury Duty**

Employees must notify the School as soon as possible when called to serve on jury duty. The School shall pay the employee the difference between the employee's regular pay and the jurors pay upon presentation of the official statement of jury pay received.

### **Compensation: Military Leave**

If an employee is a member of the U.S. National Guard or U.S. Military Reserves and is involuntarily called to duty or is required to attend summer training camp, the employee may take up to 10 calendar days of unpaid military leave for such training. For any such period, the School will pay the employee the difference between service pay and the employee's regular compensation.

In the event that an eligible employee, who is a member of a National Guard or Military Reserve unit, is called to active duty by reason of any national, State or local emergency, MSAD#8 will pay the employee's regular wages for the first week of such duty. If the active duty is for a period more than ten calendar days, the employee shall be granted a military leave of absence without pay under the provisions of the School's personal leave plan. Re-employment at the School shall be in accordance with provisions of the Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Act of 1994, as amended, and all other applicable Federal and State statutes.

### **Compensation: Sick Leave**

The School provides paid sick leave in the event of illness and injury. Employees whose positions equal 1 FTE shall be entitled to one working day (7.5 hours) of sick leave per month. Employees receive sick leave from July 1<sup>st</sup>. The sick leave year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

All other employees will receive prorated sick days based on their % FTE/1 FTE (1 FTE = 2080 hours annually). For example:

- An employee whose regularly scheduled hours are 20 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, works 1040 hours annually or .5 FTE. This employee would receive .5 or the full time benefit of 12 sick days or 6 sick days (45 hours) annually.
- An employee who works 37.5 hours a week, 36 weeks a year, works 1350 hours annually. This employee would receive .65 of the full time benefit of 12 sick days or 7.8 sick days (58.5 hours) annually.

An employee may use sick leave when:

- the employee is unable to perform any of the duties of this position due to a non-work related personal illness or disabling injury.
- a personal medical or dental appointment(s) which cannot be scheduled during non-working hours.
- a medical or dental appointment or emergency medical situation for children, parents or spouse.

Sick leave taken or requested for less than a full day, must be in one hour minimum blocks for hourly employees.

All requests for sick time must be submitted to the Assistant Principal on a Leave Request form and approved by the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the Superintendent.

When an absence exceeds three working days, a medical note, signed by a physician, shall be submitted when requested by the Principal or the Superintendent.

When the medical leave is extended by a note from the doctor beyond seven days, the employee shall be automatically placed on Family Medical Leave (FMLA).



Non-contract employees may carry over sick leave balances into the next year up to a maximum sick leave balance of 30 days.

### **Compensation: Sick Leave - Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

The School may grant a family and medical leave of absence when circumstances make such a leave necessary. Employees with twelve months of service and one thousand two hundred fifty hours in the previous year are eligible for twelve weeks of unpaid, job protected leave during a twelve month period. For purposes of this policy, the twelve month leave period is measured backward from the date the employees uses any FMLA leave.

FMLA leave may be requested for the following reasons:

- to care for a new born child, a newly adopted child, or a child placed with an employee for foster care
- to care for a child, parent or spouse who has a serious health condition
- for an employee's own serious health condition

Employees must give thirty days' notice of the leave to the Superintendent. MSAD#8 requires that the employee submit a written request for the leave, detailing the reason, start date, and return date and provide medical certification of their serious condition or that of a family member, in a timely manner. In the event of an emergency situation such as sudden illness or accident, the employee shall make every effort to ensure that the Superintendent is notified verbally. In these cases, required documentation must be received as soon as reasonably possible, but not later than seven days from the verbal notification.

All leaves are unpaid. However, employees must use their earned sick and compensatory time before taking the unpaid leave. Vacation time can also be used by employees. During their leave the employee will retain their health benefit coverage. Employees are expected to pay their normal benefit contributions to the Business Office at the start of each month to ensure continuation of benefits.

In addition, family and medical leave will not result in loss of any previously accrued seniority or employee benefits. Upon completion of the leave, employees will return to the same position or a similar position as the one held prior to their leave. Eligible employees who are out on Workers' Compensation for more than seven days will automatically be placed on FMLA.

### **Compensation: Insurance - Dental**

All Full Time Employees are eligible for dental insurance through the school's dental insurance provider. The school will pay \$250 toward the cost of a single subscriber plan. Employees may elect greater coverage at their own expense.

Employee premiums will be deducted from the employee's paycheck in either 20 or 26 pays depending on the employee's work year.

### **Compensation: Insurance - Health**

All Full Time Employees (defined as annual hours of 1350 or greater) are eligible for employee health benefits through the school's health care insurance provider. The school will pay for 90%

of the annual premium for a single person MEA Choice Plus plan. Employees may elect greater coverage at their own expense.

Employee premiums will be deducted from the employee's paycheck in either 20 or 26 pays depending on the employee's work year.

**Compensation: Social Security/Medicare/Maine State Retirement (MPERS)**

Employees serving in positions that are eligible for participation in Maine State Retirement will have the required percentage of their salary deducted for contribution to the MPERS. The district contributes a matching percentage as required by law.

Employees not eligible for participation in the Maine State Retirement System are covered under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). MSAD#8 pays 6.2% of the employees' eligible wages as required by federal law. The employee pays a matching amount through payroll deductions as prescribed by law.

All employees contribute the required percentage of their eligible gross wages to Medicare as required by law. MSAD#8 contributes a matching percentage as required by law.

**Compensation: Vacation Time**

MSAD#8 provides paid vacation time to employees to provide time for staff to gain rest and relaxation and to allow for the conduct of personal business. The amount of paid vacation benefit an employee earns is related to the length of employment and the percentage of FTE of their position.

Employees whose positions equal 1 FTE shall receive vacation time per the schedule below. One vacation day equals one regularly scheduled work day. Employees whose hours are less than 1 FTE will receive prorated vacation days based on their % FTE/1 FTE (1 FTE = 2080 hours annually).

Employees receive paid vacation from July 1<sup>st</sup>. The vacation year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>

Vacation pay is based on the employee's regular rate of pay at the time vacation is taken.

<b>Years of Continuous Service</b>	<b>Eligible Vacation Time</b>
After one (1) year	One Week (5 days)
After three (3) years	Two weeks (10 days)
After five (5) years	Three weeks (15 days)
After twelve (12) years	Four weeks (20 days)

Employees who work on a school-year schedule may not use vacation days during regularly scheduled school days. Use of vacation time by school year staff during regularly scheduled school time will be allowed for personal business, unable to be scheduled during non-working hours, only upon approval by the Superintendent.

All requests for vacation time must be submitted to the Assistant Principal on a [Leave Request Form](#) and approved by the employees immediate supervisor and/or the Superintendent

A maximum of 5 days unused vacation time may be carried-over into the next year.

### **Compensation: Withholding & Reporting Federal/State Income Tax**

Income tax withholding is governed by the employee's submission of a W-4 & a W-4ME at the time of employment. Changes may be made at any time with the submission of a new W-4/W-4ME. W-2's will be issued, in accordance with Federal law, before January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. Copies of W-2's can be received upon request from the Business Office.

### **Compensation: Workers' Compensation**

Upon employment employees are covered immediately by MSAD#8's Workers' Compensation plan so long as the employee completes the required reporting form to start the process to make a claim. This coverage is provided at no cost to the employee and covers the medical bills and lost wages that the employee may suffer as a result of a work related injury or illness.

Wage replacement is governed by current State law and may continue until an employee is released for either modified-duty or full-duty or the insurance of MSAD#8 otherwise concludes, in accordance with the law, that benefits should be discontinued or reduced.

Employees are required to pay (monthly) in advance for the cost of any benefits that continue to be provided. Failure to pay will result in forfeiture of the benefit(s).

If the employee is injured at work, no matter how minor, the employee must immediately report the incident to the Superintendent's Office.

#### **Reporting:**

All injuries sustained in the course of employment shall be immediately reported to the Superintendent's Office. The employee must immediately complete a First Report of Occupational Injury or Illness.

#### **Treatment:**

Pursuant to State law, MSAD#8 requires that treatment of an occupational injury or illness be provided by the health care provider of MSAD#8's choice within the first ten days of an injury. The appointment for an evaluation and treatment may be made by the supervisor or the Superintendent or their designee. If the injury is serious, the employee should go immediately to the nearest hospital emergency room for treatment. An employee may choose to go to their own physician, but must understand that MSAD#8 through its workers' compensation plan may not make payment for these visits unless the employee has successfully petitioned to change health care providers.

### **Collection & Deposit of School Funds**

All money collected during the course of the school day for whatever purpose or reason is to be deposited in the Business Office by the close of the school day. The Business Office will issue a receipt for such funds and deposit them in the appropriate account or hold the funds in the school safe, whichever is most appropriate. Under no circumstance is a staff member to keep in his/her

possession money collected during the school day. If money is maintained by the staff member during the school day, it should be kept on his/her person or locked in a secure area. Staff members who collect funds for Student Activities events must turn in the event funds immediately following the event to the Business Office.

### **Personnel Records**

**Directory Information:** As required by law, a record of directory information for each employee shall be open to inspection and copying by any person. Directory information shall contain:

- Name of employee;
- Date(s) of employment by the school unit;
- Regular and extra-curricular duties, courses, subjects taught, and any other responsibilities since the start of employment by the school unit;
- Post-secondary education institution(s) attended;
- Major and minor field(s) of study as required by those institutions; and
- Degrees received and dates degrees were awarded

**Confidential Information:** As required by law, all information (except Directory Information) about an employee, applicant for employment or an employee/applicant's immediate family shall be kept confidential if it relates to the following:

- All information, working papers, and examinations used in the evaluation or selection of applicants for employment;
- Medical information of any kind, including information pertaining to diagnosis or treatment of mental or emotional disorders;
- Performance evaluations, personal references and other reports and evaluations reflecting on the quality or adequacy of the employee's work or general character compiled and maintained for employment purposes;
- Credit information;
- The personal history, general character or conduct of the employee or any member of the employee's immediate family;
- Complaints, charges of misconduct, replies thereto and memoranda and other materials pertaining to disciplinary action;
- Social Security number;
- Any teacher action plan and support system documents and reports maintained for certification purposes; and
- Criminal history record information;
- Personal contact information, including home address, home telephone number, home facsimile number, home e-mail address, personal cellular telephone number and personal pager number.

### **Professional Development:**

Tuition reimbursement, training programs, certification courses and conferences are provided for employees as a benefit of employment. Individual professional development benefits are variable based on your position & job responsibilities.

If a course is required as part of a job related course of study, approved by the Principal for the employee, employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement for up to two university courses per school year. Employees are eligible for non-degree university courses and/or attendance at relevant conferences upon prior approval by the Principal. MSAD#8 does not pay for or reimburse any university fees other than course specific fees such as lab fees, or materials fees specifically approved by the Principal.

All requests for course reimbursement and conferences should be submitted, if possible, during the budget development process when requested by the Business office. Course requests should be submitted, on a [Course Request Form](#), to the Principal for approval prior to course registration. Upon approval by the Principal, the Business Office will complete course registration and/or travel arrangements. Tuition reimbursement is subject to completion of the course with a passing grade.

Prepayment of tuition or may be requested and will be approved by the Superintendent on a case by case basis. Prepayment is also subject to attainment of a passing grade of C (2.0) or better. If the employee does not attain a sufficient course grade reimbursement of course costs will be arranged by the Business Office through mandatory payroll deduction and will be completed within one semester.

## SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES

### Employee Computer & Internet Use (Policy [GCSA-R](#) and [GCSA-E](#))

MSAD#8's computers, networks and Internet access are provided to support the educational mission of the school and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff. This policy and the accompanying rules also apply to computers issued directly to staff, whether in use at school or off school premises.

Employees are allowed to use privately-owned computers at school with prior authorization only, provided that they comply with this policy and the accompanying rules (~~GCSA-R~~).

#### **Personal Use of School Computers**

- School unit computers, network and Internet services are provided for purposes related to school programs and operations, and performance of their job responsibilities.
- Incidental personal use of school computers is permitted as long as such use: 1) does not interfere with the employee's job responsibilities and performance; 2) does not interfere with system operations or other system users; and 3) does not violate this policy and the accompanying rules, or any other Board policy, procedure or school rules. "Incidental personal use" is defined as use by an individual employee for occasional personal communications which do not interfere or conflict with his/her job responsibilities.

#### **No Right to Privacy**

MSAD#8's computers remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school unit at all times. The school unit reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by

employees. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, network and Internet services.

### **RULES:**

Each employee is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving school unit computers, networks, Internet services and other technology, and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. These rules provide general guidance concerning the use of the school unit's computers and examples of prohibited uses. The rules do not attempt to describe every possible allowed or prohibited activity by employees. Employees who have questions about whether a particular activity or use is prohibited are encouraged to contact a building administrator or the Technology Director.

### **Access to School Computers and Acceptable Use**

- The level of employee access to school unit computers, network and Internet services is based upon specific job requirements and needs. Unauthorized access to secure areas of the school unit's computers and networks is strictly prohibited.
- All Board policies, school rules and expectations for professional conduct and communications with others including other staff, students and parents apply when employees are using the school unit's computers, network and Internet services, whether in use at school or off school premises.

### **Prohibited Uses**

Examples of unacceptable uses which are expressly prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any use that is illegal or which violates Policy [GCSA-R](#) and/or other Board policies, procedures or school rules, including harassing, discriminatory or threatening communications and behavior; violations of copyright laws or software licenses, etc. The school unit assumes no responsibility for illegal activities of employees while using school computing devices or our network infrastructure.
- Any attempt to access unauthorized web sites, or any attempt to disable or circumvent the school unit's filtering/blocking technology.
- Any use involving materials that are obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit or sexually suggestive, harmful to minors, or intended to appeal to prurient interests.
- Any communications with students or minors for non-school-related and/or non-educational purposes.
- Any use for private financial gain, commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes.
- Any use as a forum for communicating with other school users or outside parties to solicit, proselytize, advocate or communicate the views of an individual or non-school sponsored organization; to solicit membership in or support of any non-school sponsored organization; or to raise funds for any non-school sponsored purpose, whether profit or not-for-profit. Employees who are uncertain as to whether particular activities are acceptable should seek further guidance from The Superintendent or other appropriate administrator.
- Any communication that represents an employee's personal views as those of the school unit or that could be misinterpreted as such.

- Sending mass emails (SPAM) to school users or outside parties for any purpose without the permission of the Superintendent.
- Any malicious use, damage or disruption of the school unit's computers, network, Internet services or other technology; any breach of security features; any failure to report a security breach; or misuse of computer passwords or accounts (the employee's or those of other users).
- Any attempt to delete, erase or otherwise conceal any information stored on a school computer that violates these rules or other Board policies or school rules, or refusing to return computer equipment issued to the employee upon request.
- Employees should take special care to maintain a professional and ethical digital footprint, and not engage in posting inappropriate photographs or discriminatory or defamatory content on the Internet. Staff must not use, access, create, or distribute objectionable material such as jokes, stories or other material that is based on slurs or stereotypes of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion or sexual orientation when using district computing devices.

#### **Employee/Volunteer Responsibility to Supervise Student Computer Use**

- Employees and volunteers who use school computers with students for instructional purposes have a duty of care to supervise such use and to enforce the school unit's policies and rules concerning student computer use. When, in the course of their duties, employees or volunteers become aware of a student violation, they are expected to stop the activity and inform the building administrator.

#### **Additional Rules for Use of Privately-Owned Computers by Employee**

- An employee who wishes to use a privately-owned computing device in school must complete an Employee Request to Use Privately-Owned Computer form. The form must be signed by the employee, the school principal or supervisor and the Technology Director. There must be a legitimate work-related basis for any request.

#### **Employee Social Media Privacy (Policy [GCF A](#))**

For the purpose of this policy, "social media account" means an account with an electronic medium or service through which users create, share and view user-generated content including but not limited to videos, still photographs, blogs, video blogs, podcasts, instant and text messages, email, online service accounts and Internet website profiles and locations.

"Social media account" does not include an account opened at the employer's behest or provided by an employer or intended to be used primarily on behalf of the employer.

In compliance with Maine's employee social media privacy law, Vinalhaven School through its administrators or designees, shall not:

- Request, require or coerce an employee or applicant for employment to disclose a password or any other means for accessing a personal social media account;

- Request, require or coerce an employee or applicant for employment to access a personal social media account in the presence of administrative or other Vinalhaven School personnel or agent of the school unit;
- Require or coerce an employee or applicant to disclose any personal social media account information;
- Require or cause an employee or applicant to add anyone, including administrative or other Vinalhaven School personnel or agent of the school unit to the employee or applicant's contact list associated with a personal media account; or
- Request, require or cause an employee or applicant to alter settings that affect the ability of a third party to view the contents of a personal social media account.

Vinalhaven School shall not discharge, discipline or otherwise penalize any employee, who refuses to disclose or provide access, add contacts or alter settings as specified above, or to fail to hire an applicant based on his/her refusal to comply with illegal requests, requirements or coercion.

This policy does not prohibit Vinalhaven School from requiring an employee to disclose personal social media account information when the employer reasonably believes it to be relevant to an investigation of alleged employee misconduct or a workplace-related violation of applicable laws, rules or regulations, provided the information disclosed is accessed and used solely as necessary for the investigation of related proceedings. This policy does not apply to information publicly available which may be available on an employee or applicant's public social media accounts.

As employer, Vinalhaven School may maintain policies governing the use of its own electronic equipment, including a requirement that an employee disclose to the school unit the employee's user name, password or other information necessary to access employer-issued electronic devices or to access employer-provided software or email accounts.

### **Disclosure of Confidential Information**

- Employees are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential.
- E-mail and other Internet communications mechanisms (including web sites, blogs and social networking sites) should not be considered secure or private. Communications with students or minors via e-mail or other digital means must be for school related educational purposes only. Private use of social networking or other sites with students or other minors is strongly discouraged.

### **Staff Conduct and Communication with Students (Policy [GBEBB](#))**

The MSAD #8 School Board expects all staff members, including teachers, support staff, coaches, counselors administrators and others, including volunteers, to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in their conduct with students.



The interactions and relationships between staff members and students must be based upon mutual respect and trust, predicated upon an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in an educational setting, and consistent with the educational mission of the school.

Staff members are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their contacts with students. Staff members are encouraged to discuss issues with their administrators or supervisors whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct may constitute a violation of this policy.

The School Board is appreciative of, and wishes to be supportive of, staff members as they attempt to care for students in a personalized and caring manner, and do not wish to place unnecessary barriers to the myriad of times, places and ways that staff work to serve our students. The School Board also realizes that in our community staff members are themselves parents, neighbors and/or relatives of our students, and that consequently informal and outside relationships with students are healthy, normal and appropriate. Due to this circumstance, note that numbers 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 below include the language “unless such contact is linked to a legitimate relationship with a student outside the school.”\*

In attempting to legislate behavior in this realm, the School Board is primarily attempting to make explicit its intolerance of behavior motivated or prompted by an unwillingness or inability to respect the physical and/or emotional health of our students. The Board recognizes that by adopting a policy it cannot mandate safe and appropriate behavior to those bent on doing otherwise. The Board explicitly states that its support for collegial relationships or its decision to not ban outright many sorts of student/staff interactions should in not any way be seen as a plausible defense to inappropriate contact with students.

\*Students providing a service for a fee is permissible: i.e. childcare and lawn care.

### **Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees**

Harassment of school employees because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, or disability is prohibited. Such conduct is a violation of Board policy and may constitute illegal discrimination under state and federal laws. Harassment includes but is not limited to verbal abuse, threats, physical assault and/or battery based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, or disability. Under the Maine Civil Rights Act, violence or threats of violence against a person or their property based on their sexual orientation are also illegal. Unwelcome sexual advances, suggestive or lewd remarks, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an employee’s work environment or employee benefits;
- Submission or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as the basis for decisions on employment benefits; and/or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Any employee who engages in harassment or sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All complaints of harassment will be investigated in accordance with the School Employee Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure. Annually, each employee shall receive a copy of this policy and Employee Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure. This may be accomplished by including the policy/procedure with employee paychecks or by using other appropriate means to ensure that each employee receives a copy. All newly hired employees shall be provided training about sexual harassment in accordance with Maine Law.

The Superintendent and/or Business Manager will investigate complaints of harassment in accordance with the Employee Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure.

However, employees are hereby notified that they also have the right to report incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333 (telephone: 207-624-6050) and/or to the federal Office for Civil Rights, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Education, S.W. McCormack POCH Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557 (telephone: 617-223-9622).

The school's Affirmative Action Officer is James LePage.

### **Hazing** (Policy [ACAD](#))

Maine statute defines injurious hazing as “any action or situation, including harassing behavior that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any school personnel or a student enrolled in a public school.”

It is the policy of the Board that injurious hazing activities of any type, either on or off school property, by any student, staff member, group or organization affiliated with this school unit, are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times.

No administrator, faculty member, or other employee of the school unit shall encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate injurious hazing activities. No student, including leaders of student organizations, shall plan, encourage, or engage in injurious hazing activities.

Persons not associated with this school unit who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to ejection from school property and/or other measures as may be available under the law.

Administrators, faculty members, students, and all other employees who fail to abide by this policy; may be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate measures. In the case of an organization affiliated with this school unit which authorizes hazing, penalties may include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to receive any other benefit of affiliation with the school unit.

These penalties shall be in addition to any civil or criminal penalties to which the violator or organization may be subject.

The Superintendent shall assume responsibility for administering this policy. In the event that an individual or organization disagrees with an action - or lack of action - on the part of the Superintendent as he/she carries out the provisions of this policy, that individual or organization

may appeal to the Board. The ruling of the Board, with respect to the provisions of this policy, shall be final.

A copy of this policy shall be included in all school, parent, and employee handbooks or otherwise distributed to all school employees and students.

### **Blood Borne Pathogens**

The Superintendent/designee shall comply with Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standards (Title 29, Part 1910.1030) to prevent the spread of blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. The Director/designee has developed a written Exposure Control Plan designed to protect employees from the possible infection caused by contact with blood borne pathogens as a result of performing job duties.

As part of the Exposure Control Plan, the Superintendent/designee shall determine which employees could reasonably be expected to have exposure to blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials contaminated with blood as a result of performance of job duties. All current employees may have occupational exposure and shall participate in in- service education during their work hours and be offered hepatitis B vaccine at no cost.

Employee Awareness: The plan will be accessible to employees by annual training and copies of the plan are available either through the main office or on the school website.

### **Chemical Hazards** (Policy [EBAA](#))

MSAD#8 is committed to providing a safe environment for students and employees. It is the policy of MSAD #8 to follow safe practices in regard to the storage and handling of hazardous chemicals in its schools. The school unit will comply with all applicable Maine and federal laws and regulations concerning hazardous chemicals.

The Superintendent will be responsible for developing a Chemical Hygiene Plan that includes procedures relevant to the identification, purchase, storage, inventory, handling, and disposal of hazardous chemicals, maintenance of material safety data sheets (MSDS), and for ensuring that employees are provided required training and information concerning hazardous chemicals used in the schools. The Superintendent may delegate responsibilities associated with Plan development to school system staff, as appropriate.

The Superintendent will appoint a Chemical Hygiene Officer (CHO) for the school unit. The Chemical Hygiene Officer will have the primary responsibility for implementing the school unit's Chemical Hygiene Plan.

The Facilities Manager is currently the school CHO. His responsibilities include:

- Providing copies of the MSDS sheets for all chemicals in the building as well as a table of contents in the front of the MSDS booklet containing a comprehensive list of all chemicals.
- Monitoring chemical handling and storage procedures.
- Coordinate with others for disposal of unwanted chemicals.

**School system employees are responsible for:**

- Participating in training programs provided by the school system and others.
- Maintaining an awareness of health and safety procedures.
- Awareness of location and use of MSDS.
- Using and modeling good personal chemical hygiene habits.
- Reporting accidents, injuries, unsafe practices, and unsafe conditions.
- Providing safety training for all students participating in school work areas.
- Consulting the CHO prior to bringing any chemical on site.
- Completing an annual Chemical Inventory for their work area.

Students must adhere to safety procedures and good chemical hygiene habits. They should report accidents and maintain an awareness of health and safety procedures at all times.

The school system will develop and implement chemical training for all employees that includes:

- Awareness and location of written Chemical Hygiene Plan.
- Elements of OSHA's Hazard Communication Program.
- Appropriate safety measures and safe work practices.
- Training at new employee orientation, new assignments, and annually. A copy of the Chemical Hygiene Plan may be obtained in the Business office.

## **Integrated Pest Management Notification**

### Pesticide Use

Sometimes pesticide use may be necessary to control a pest problem. When that happens, the school will use the lowest risk products available. If higher risk pesticides must be used, notices will be posted at application sites and parents, guardians and staff have a right to know.

### Your Right to Know

Parents, legal guardians, and school staff will be notified of specific pesticide applications made at the school. Notification will be given at least five days before planned pesticide applications during the regular school year. In addition, for pesticides applied anytime during the year, notices will also be posted in the school and on school grounds two working days before until 48 hours after the application. Notification need not be given for pesticide applications recognized by law to pose little or no risk of exposure to children or staff.

The school also keeps records of prior pesticide applications and information about the pesticides used. You may review these records, a copy of the school's IPM Policy and the Pesticides in Schools regulation (CMR 01-026 Chapter 27) by contacting our IPM Coordinator, Alan Koenig at (207) 863-4664.

For further information about pests, pesticides and your right to know, call the Board of Pesticides Control at (207) 287-2731 or visit the Maine School IPM website at [www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolipm](http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolipm).

## **Prohibited Conduct**

Examples of unacceptable conduct by staff members that are expressly prohibited including, but are in no way limited to, the following:

- Any type of sexual or inappropriate physical conduct with a student, or any conduct that might be considered harassment under Board Policies [ACAA-R](#).
- Using sexual banter, allusions, jokes, innuendos, flirtations or unduly coarse language with students.
- Encouraging or allowing a student to confide to the staff member or with a student the staff member's personal or family problems and/or relationships or other private matters with the intent or result that the staff member's relationship with the student blurs the professional boundaries between student and staff member, and as a consequence is or may become unhealthy or unsafe for the student. It is professionally appropriate for the staff member to be empathic and to help a student process and cope with a challenging situation. It is not appropriate to "over share" with a student. Staff members are expected to promptly refer acute or serious chronic problems expressed by students to administrative, counseling, or health care staff.
- Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention or friendship or ridicule within the school environment that displays or appears to display a lack of fairness and equity for all students and is done for other than appropriate educational purposes.
- Maintaining contact with a student(s) by telephone/text, email, Instant Messenger, or other social media, unless such contact is school related or linked to a legitimate relationship with a student outside the school. It is preferred that staff use school provided communication platforms when communicating with students. When emailing, staff personal email accounts may not be used.
- Referencing in a negative fashion, either explicitly or implied, Vinalhaven School or its students, staff and parents/guardians on personal social media platforms, including Facebook, unless such reference is linked to a legitimate relationship with a student, staff member or parent/guardian outside the school.
- "Friending" a student on Facebook or other social media unless such "friending" is linked to a legitimate relationship with the student outside the school.

## **Conduct or communication requiring administrative approval**

Before engaging in conduct such as the following, staff members shall review the activity with the superintendent or principal.

- Facebook and other social media may be used for school purposes (i.e. a National Honor Society page) to communicate with students, families and the community, and must be administered by a staff member who will approve all followers and will monitor the page.
- Inviting or allowing students to visit the staff member's home, or visiting a student's home, unless on official school business, or linked to a legitimate relationship with a student outside the school.
- Exchanging personal gifts beyond customary student/staff gifts unless the exchange occurs as part of a legitimate relationship with the student outside of school.
- Socializing with students outside of school-sponsored or community organized events unless the socializing arises out of a legitimate relationship with the student outside of school, or is incidental to socializing with other adults.

### **Reporting Suspected Violations**

Staff members are required to promptly notify the Superintendent or Principal if they reasonably believe a violation of this policy has occurred.

Students, parents/guardians, or other staff should not undertake an investigation before notifying the administrator. They need only have reasonable grounds to suspect that a violation may be occurring to make a referral.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Staff violations of this policy shall result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Violations involving possible sexual or other abuse will also be referred to the Maine Department of Human Services, law enforcement, and/or other officials in accordance with Board Policy.

### **Purchasing and Contracting: Procurement Staff Code of Conduct (Policy [DJH](#))**

#### **Conflict of Interest**

All employees of MSAD 8 shall perform their duties in a manner free from conflict of interest to ensure that the school unit's business transactions are made in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and in a manner that maintains public confidence in the schools.

No employee of MSAD 8 shall participate in the selection, award or administration of a contract supported by federal funds or in any other transaction in which the school unit is a party if he/she has a real or apparent conflict of interest in the transaction.

A conflict of interest would arise when the employee or any member of his/her immediate family, his/her (business) partner, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of these parties has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for the

award. For the purpose of this policy, “immediate family” is defined as spouse, brother, sister, parent, son or daughter.

### **Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

All employees with real or apparent conflicts of interest as defined above must disclose the conflict of interest to the Superintendent who will investigate the circumstances of the proposed transaction. The Superintendent will exercise due diligence in investigating the circumstances of the transaction and, if necessary, will make reasonable efforts to find alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement that would not give rise to a conflict of interest. If the Superintendent determines that the proposed transaction is in the best interest of MSAD 8 and is fair and reasonable, he/she may proceed with the transaction. In the event that the Superintendent may have a conflict of interest, an ad hoc subcommittee of the Board will investigate and make a determination regarding the transaction.

### **Staff Gifts and Solicitations**

MSAD 8 employees are prohibited from accepting money or things of material value from persons or entities doing business with, or desiring to do business with, the school unit. Employees may accept unsolicited items of nominal value such as those that are generally distributed by a company or organization through its public relations program.

### **Violations**

Employees of MSAD 8 who violate this code of conduct may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment and, if appropriate, referral to law enforcement.

### **Drug Free Workplace**

The MSAD#8 Board of Directors recognizes that alcoholism and drug dependency are treatable diseases. Left untreated, they may result in serious personal and family problems. At the same time, the Board is also seriously concerned about the effects of alcohol and drug dependency upon an employee's job performance and ability to serve as a role model for our students.

The Board believes strongly that all employees and students should be able to work and learn in an environment free from alcohol and drug abuse. Accordingly, the Board expects all employees to report for work and to perform their duties in a manner which does not jeopardize the health, safety and well-being of co-workers and students.

Any employee who suspects that he/she may have an alcohol or drug dependency problem is strongly encouraged to contact his/her supervisor to seek voluntary diagnosis and treatment. The employee will be provided confidential referral services to an outside agency upon request and assisted in determining the extent to which insurance coverage to help pay for such services is available. All voluntary referrals shall be kept confidential.

## **Smoking**

MSAD#8 prohibits smoking in all schools and on all school property in compliance with 22 M.R.S.A. §1580-A, known as the "Workplace Smoking Act of 1985". Any employee found smoking on school grounds or in any school building at any time shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

### Live Links

[GCSA-R](#) and [GCSA-E](#) Computer form and use policy

[Course Request Form](#)

[Leave Request form](#)

[GCFA](#) Social Media Policy

[ACAD](#) Hazing

[EBAA](#) Chemical Hazards

[GBEBB](#) Staff communication with students

[ACAA-R](#) Harassment of students

[DJH](#) Purchasing and contracting