

TUSCOLA COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT FACULTY HANDBOOK

Foreword

This handbook was written to acquaint you with the policies, procedures, and practices of Tuscola Community Unit School District No. 301. You should read it carefully and refer to it from time to time so that the information will not be overlooked or forgotten. Although it is quite detailed, it does not preclude the advisability of consulting with your principal on any question which may be raised.

Introduction

On March 24, 1869, the Governor of Illinois signed into law H.B. 852 entitled *An Act to Establish and Form the Tuscola Union School District*. The Act established the Tuscola Union School district giving it birth effective on June 1, 1869. Its charge was to provide for the education of residents between the ages of six years and twenty-one years. In 1948 the District's boundaries were expanded as outlying small rural communities were reorganized into the Tuscola District, and the name Tuscola Community Unit School District No. 301 was taken.

The first graduating class from Tuscola High School was the Class of 1875 as Lillian Daggy, Tennyson Daggy, John Russell, and Emma Wyeth received their diplomas. Tuscola High School is one of the oldest recognized high schools in Illinois by the North Central Association; it has been continuously recognized by the NCA since 1908. The Tuscola High School chapter of the National Honor Society holds the 299th charter issued in the United States of America. The Tuscola School District has a long and rich tradition of service, excellence, and achievement. It is a tradition that was not and is not built upon fad, whim, or fancy. It is a tradition that is due respect and an extra measure of effort.

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Absences, Sick Leave, and Personal Leave Days:

In the case of unforeseeable absences, the teacher shall notify the principal prior to 6:45 A.M. on the day of the absence. Since notification of a substitute is difficult after 6:45 A.M., your principal will appreciate an early notice. If the absence will extend to more than one day, please notify the principal or secretary prior to 3:00 P.M. to enable him or her to retain the same substitute.

Please refer to Article V (attached) of the current negotiated contract for information regarding sick leave, personal days, and leaves of absence for more information.

Accident and Illness:

All accidents which may need medical attention are to be reported in accordance with the following:

1. Contact the principal or nurse immediately. Do not send a child home without the principal or other office personnel knowing about the situation.
2. Notify the parent as quickly as possible. Tell them exactly what has happened but try not to alarm them.
3. Fill out an accident report immediately.
4. If a member of the family cannot be contacted, the final decision will be made by the principal.
5. Any student that is unconscious has a broken leg, back injuries, or similar injuries should not be moved from the playground or from the scene of the accident. The staff member in charge should remain with the injured child until he/she has been relieved of the responsibility.
6. The school nurse should check all head injuries.
7. If a child becomes ill at school, please take him/her to the nurse or to the office. Under no circumstances is a child to be sent home without notification of the office or parent.

Attendance and Tardiness Regulations:

If a pupil enters the classroom after the established time for classes to resume, he/she is to be counted tardy. The only exceptions to this are bus students who may arrive late through no fault of their own and students who are brought in by their parents because of hazardous weather conditions.

A child is considered absent during the morning session if he/she does not arrive at or before

10:00 A.M. He/she is considered absent in the afternoon if he/she does not arrive at school at or before 2:00 P.M. If a child arrives before the previously mentioned time, he/she is counted as being tardy.

If a child leaves school prior to 10:00 A.M. or 2:00 P.M., he/she shall be counted as absent that respective half day. If a child is present to or beyond 10:00 A.M. or 2:00 P.M., he/she shall be counted present for that respective half day.

If a pupil attends a clinic for remedial work such as reading or psychological testing, he/she shall not be counted as absent or tardy.

Audio-Visual Aids:

Equipment is available for use in the classroom, and you are encouraged to make use of the various visual aids. However, this equipment should be used when you believe that its use will present a better understanding of the particular lesson or concept being taught. To insure maximum effectiveness, *all films, filmstrips, videos, computer presentations, etc. are to be previewed before they are presented to the class and under no circumstances are they to be used to fill in time.*

Board of Education:

District 301 is governed by a seven member Board of Education. The Board elects from within its membership, a president, vice-president, and secretary. The superintendent of schools is the chief executive officer of the Board of Education. The Tuscola Board of Education meets regularly on the fourth Monday of each month unless determined otherwise.

Building and Grounds:

All staff has a responsibility to help supervise and protect the buildings and grounds of the District. Unusual or inappropriate activity or use of facilities should be reported to the principal or authorities. **Teachers shall not lend keys to non-staff**, this includes spouses and children, unless it is with the permission of the principal. If a staff member who allows people into the building, the staff member is then fully responsible for the supervision, security, and cleanup of the building.

As determined by the principal, a custodian may be required for certain building usages. The cost of the custodian shall be paid by the user. Staff should not get themselves into a situation wherein they are involved in a regular usage of a building. This creates an unfair situation for other groups who do not have “an in” and must pay rental fees. The buildings and especially the gymnasiums are not for the private use of staff and their friends. Clear usage with your principal.

Two buildings of the school district contain asbestos building materials (ABM) in various degrees in various locations. The ABM is inspected periodically for condition and an ABM Management Plan is on file in accordance with applicable laws. North Ward School is asbestos free. If you need more information, speak with your principal or the Superintendent.

Bulletin and Mail:

In each school office there is a specific location for teachers' mailboxes. It is imperative that each teacher check his/her mailbox/**email** before classes begin in the morning and at noon hour period. From time to time, the superintendent or building principal will issue bulletins. After reading the information, staff members should file them for future reference. The mailboxes shall not be a storage space but should be emptied each day.

Care of School Funds:

All financial accounts will be handled through and with the approval of the Superintendent's Office. Any staff member who has charge of school funds is responsible for its safe keeping. A staff member should never leave cash or other attractive valuables in a desk or room. Money received by the classroom teacher should be turned in daily. Under no circumstances should a teacher hold school funds for more than a day without the approval of their principal.

Certification of Teachers:

There are certain requirements which each staff member must meet before the school term begins.

1. Teacher certificates must be registered or renewed. Legally, ***you cannot draw your salary until you have a valid registered certificate.***
2. All staff members must have on file in the Unit Office, the Internal Revenue Form W-4 and the Illinois Withholding Certificate (IL-W-2), Teacher Retirement Service forms, a child abuse notifier form, an illegal alien form, and insurance forms.
3. Each staff member must file with the Unit Office an up-to-date official transcript of training. If, by the result of additional training your salary needs to be adjusted, an up-to-date transcript must be on file on or before September 1.
4. All new employees of the school district must present evidence that they have taken a physical examination given by a licensed physician, are free from communicable diseases, and are physically able to perform the duties assigned.
5. All teachers must comply with State laws regarding continuing professional development five-year plans. To maintain eligibility for continued employment, certified staff must meet the requirements of the law. This is the individual teacher's personal and professional responsibility.

Teachers are responsible for the renewal of their teaching certificates and as professionals must comply with State certificate renewal requirements. The Board can only employ fully certified teachers. If a teacher cannot renew his/her certificate with the State, the teacher cannot continue in the employment of the school district.

Christmas Policies:

It is permissible for children to exchange gifts and for the teacher to participate in the gift exchange; however, teachers may only accept gifts of nominal value. We do not expect the teacher to purchase individual gifts for the children. All staff members should discourage room

mothers and the children from collecting money for collective gifts. Prior to leaving for the holidays, all Christmas decorations are to be taken down.

Classroom Management:

Each teacher is responsible for governing and controlling such routine matters as proper classroom lighting, opening and closing of windows and doors for ventilation, proper and orderly use of toilet and lavatory facilities, reporting of equipment and furniture breakdown, normal housekeeping chores such as assisting in chalkboard care and classroom cleanliness, reasonable control of noise, and other matters which influence the physical environment in which students live during the school hours.

It is important that students be made aware of the importance of proper care and use of furniture and equipment. They should feel a responsibility for removing paper or other debris from the classroom floor prior to dismissal. No class should be dismissed at noon or at night in a room which is disorderly, littered with papers, or otherwise unsatisfactory. Each staff member is to make periodic checks of books and desks to see that each are kept in proper order. Any undue abuse of books, equipment and furniture should be reported to the building principal.

Crisis Plan

Each school building has a written plan for responding to a crisis situation at the buildings. The crisis could range from a violent or potentially violent person entering the building to any other serious threat to the students and staff. In each plan, certain staff members are assigned special duties and all staff members must respond in certain ways. Upon the announcing of ***CODE RED***, each staff member will keep their student isolated in the classroom and away from the door. Public address calls to the office should be limited to reports on missing students and vital reports on the crisis. You must familiarize yourself with the Crisis Management Plan.

Curriculum Committees:

The district will attempt to make major textbook changes when appropriate. Attempts will be made to coordinate and develop a continuous program from K through 12th grade. At the elementary level one staff member from each grade level will be chosen to assist in selecting textbooks and when developing minimum guidelines for a particular subject area. A similar system will be used when curriculum development studies are needed or when State required curricular work is mandated.

It is expected that such assignments would be looked upon with a feeling of educational and professional responsibility and pride and that you consider your endeavors as a valuable asset in improving the instructional program with the district.

Disaster Drills:

Equally as important as fire drills to the safety of the students is the adequate preparation for natural disasters such as tornadoes, violent storms, or earthquakes. The principal of each attendance center will designate the various safety areas for the students or evacuation routes.

If possible each school will be notified if a severe storm or a tornado is in the area. If a storm threatens the school, the principal will determine the course of action.

To insure the safety of our children in school, the following guidelines are to be used:

1. The lack of confusion and panic are of the utmost importance. A serious attitude, silence, and attention are the watch words of a disaster drill. Each teacher must display calm, confident leadership of the pupils.
2. Each staff member should check class attendance to be certain all students are accounted for during a disaster or drill.
3. Students in the hallways, restrooms, gym, or on the playground should return to their classrooms at once.
4. Safe places within the building will be assigned to each room by the building principal. Building evacuation routes or procedures will be developed by the principal.
5. When the alarm is sounded, the teacher will check attendance and proceed with the class to your assigned position or on your directed route. Again, it is of the utmost importance that order and silence be maintained.
6. When new pupils enter they should be oriented immediately to the various drills.

If total evacuation of a building is necessary due to a bomb threat, students will be routed as follows:

1. North Ward students will go to the Methodist Church.
2. East Prairie students will go to the high school gym.
3. High School students will go to the East Prairie gym.

Discrimination & Sexual Harassment:

The District has a policy prohibiting illegal discrimination and sexual harassment, a procedure for filing complaints or reports, a process for investigating complaints, and a range of disciplinary actions it might take against guilty parties. If you feel you are the victim of illegal discrimination or sexual harassment, you should review the policy in the *Board Policy Manual* available in any building office. The policy contains definitions of what the Board considers illegal discrimination and/or sexual harassment. No employee shall make sexually suggestive remarks to fellow employees, force unwanted sexual advances upon any fellow employee, or engage in sexual conduct or acts on or toward any student.

All employees will be required to sign a copy of the District Sexual Harassment Policy.

Discipline:

The processes of learning rely heavily upon the type of discipline within the individual classroom. The aim of discipline is to develop student self-control. As students progress through school, their capacity for higher degrees of self-control should be quite evident. Students should not be allowed to disrupt the orderly classroom setting, intimidate fellow students, or display conduct which is unacceptable. To help achieve this goal, you must be consistent, fair, and maintain the child's security and self-respect.

Each teacher must assume responsibility for student conduct anywhere in the building or on the school grounds as well as in the classroom. However, whimsical or unpredictable disciplinary practices, constant threats, sarcastic remarks, embarrassment, group punishment are not elements of effective or sound disciplinary procedures.

Staff members do not have the authority to suspend children from school or permanently remove pupils from their class. **DO NOT** threaten to do something you have no authority to do. The Board of Education and Illinois State law has vested this power in the building principal.

Effective January 1, 1994, the use of corporal punishment was prohibited by law as a disciplinary method in the State of Illinois. Also, staff shall not slap, maintain students in physically harmful positions for prolonged periods of time, or intentionally inflict bodily harm as a program of discipline.

It is possible that a staff member may at some time have to use physical force in dealing with an unruly student or a potentially dangerous situation. In these types of situations, the force used is not considered corporal punishment or a planned program of discipline. Staff may use reasonable force to maintain safety for students, school personnel, or other persons. Reasonable force may also be used for the purpose of self-defense, the defense of property, or as necessary to quell an immediate disturbance and bring about compliance with school rules. Purposeful injury of a student is allowed only when necessary to prevent imminent serious injury to the student or another.

Educational Conferences and Travel Expenses:

It is possible, within limitations, for the Board of Education to reimburse staff members for the amount they have spent on lodging, meals, and travel while attending educational conferences within the state. In all cases a request form for conference attendance must be submitted by the teacher to his/her building principal. The request should include an estimate of expenses and an explanation of how the conference will benefit the teacher and the District. If permission is granted by the principal, a substitute will be provided by the District. Teachers should not expect to be absent from class for more than three days.

Travel and other expenses shall be procured by the most economic means available. Travel expenses by car will be reimbursed at the rate established by the Board, and *it is expected that staff members will car pool whenever possible*. Requests for reimbursement of expenses incurred in this fashion should be submitted on a standard form which may be obtained from the

principal or Unit Office. Reimbursements will be limited to those that were approved in advance. The current mileage reimbursement is 48¢ per mile. With the approval of the superintendent, a travel cash advance can be made to staff members.

Staff members who did not attend a conference in the prior school year will have first chance to attend a conference in the current school year. This will be communicated by the building principal at the first faculty meeting of the school year. It is the responsibility of the staff member to notify the principal of their intent to attend a conference in the timeline given by their respective building administrator.

Educational Fieldtrips:

Educational fieldtrips are valuable provided they are correlated with the school curriculum and provide meaningful experiences. All details and plans in relation to any major field trip should be made well in advance and any which take the students away from school premises must be cleared with the building principal. On many occasions field trips will be within walking distance of the school; however, if transportation by bus is required, arrangements must be made through the principal ***and cleared with the Unit Office.***

When required by the principal, letters shall be sent home explaining the detailed arrangements of the trip, and it should include a permission slip which the parent should sign and return to the staff member. If a parent should refuse permission, the teacher should notify the principal.

Emergency Dismissal Procedures and the Closing of School:

During the winter months it may be necessary to dismiss students early due to extreme weather conditions. If the Superintendent decides upon this action, area radio and television stations will be notified at the earliest possible time. Under such circumstances rural parents may pick up their children before the busses depart.

There may be a time due to heavy snow or blizzard conditions that rural students cannot be transported home. As a precautionary measure, each rural student is required to complete a form designating a prearranged location in town where the student may stay.

If we are unable to open school because of weather conditions, area media will be notified by 7:00 A.M. Also, each building should develop a phone calling tree for rapid and dependable notification of staff members of such emergencies. Each teacher must fulfill his/her obligations in the tree.

If school is in session all staff members shall be expected to be in attendance. Decisions whether or not to open school shall be based upon local weather conditions only. ***If out-of-district residing staff members cannot or do not report to school, their salary will be docked for the missed time.***

Evaluation of Staff, the Process

Prior to October 15 each teacher to be evaluated will be orientated and given a copy of the

evaluation process and the evaluation instrument by the building principal. Each teacher being evaluated will receive a summative (final) evaluation report which is the final assessment for the year of the teacher's performance. All tenured teachers shall be evaluated on a biennial schedule beginning with the 1986-87 school year. Non-tenured teachers shall be evaluated annually until they are granted tenure, then they will be placed on the biennial schedule and a year may be skipped.

All summative evaluation reports shall be based on in-class observations and other assigned activities of a school-related nature within the school day or contractual obligations. All observations shall be done openly in that public address or other devices for the purpose of surveillance shall not be permitted. In-class observations may be both formal and informal observations. Formal observations will include a pre-conference where the observation date will be agreed upon, the observation, and a post-conference. It is the teacher's responsibility to prepare and present material such as written lesson plans, examples of grading, examples of teaching aids, student course guides, and other reasonably expected material as may be requested by the evaluator for the pre-conference. At the post-conference the evaluator shall present recommendations for improvement if applicable to the teacher. The formal in-class observation shall be no less than 30 consecutive minutes in length. The post-conference will be held within 10 school days of the observation. Informal class observations may not necessarily include a pre-conference; however, a post-conference will be held if requested by the observed teacher. The evaluator will inform the teacher that he/she is in the class to observe and will provide to the teacher either written or verbal comments on the observation.

A minimum of one formal in-class observation shall precede any summative evaluation report. For non-tenured teachers a minimum of two observations shall precede a summative evaluation report, one of which shall be a formal observation. Nothing here precludes the evaluator from evaluating teacher performance in non-classroom school activities or non-classroom job responsibilities.

Ethics, the Gift Ban Act

No Tuscola School District employee may solicit or accept a gift that he/she has reason to believe is offered in an effort to influence his/her official position or employment. This ban applies to spouses of employees and immediate family members living with an employee. Teachers may accept gifts from students of nominal value only. There are numerous acceptable gifts that can be accepted. The superintendent is designated by the Board as the Ethics Officer of the District and it is his role to give advice and serve as a resource for questions.

Fire Drills:

We must remember that a fire drill is one of the most serious things we have to do. Any lack of self control on the part of any staff member or student may lead to panic in an actual emergency.

No later than the second day of school all staff members are to acquaint their classes with the plans of exit. The warning for a fire drill will be the steady ringing of the fire alarm system. Upon hearing the alarm, you should:

1. Turn off the lights and close all windows and doors. Check attendance to be certain all pupils are accounted for.
2. Exit quickly and quietly according to the plans given to you by your principal. Do not permit the students to get their personal belongings or books.
3. Disorderly conduct, talking, etc. are not to be tolerated. Once evacuated, recheck attendance and notify the principal of any missing pupils.
4. The ringing of the classroom bell will be the all clear signal.

Grading and the Grading System:

District 301 uses a nine-week grading period at both the elementary and secondary levels. In Kindergarten a series of questions concerning the pupil's development, social and emotional adjustment, intellectual and language development are used to report progress. In the first grade the pupil receives a satisfactory or unsatisfactory mark.

Each instructor should make every effort to contact the parents of a student who is in danger of failing a nine -week period or who is performing clearly below his/her expected level. A mid-term report will be sent home to every student to inform the student's parents of their academic progress regardless of their standing in class.

There are certain principles which you should consider in determining grades and developing tests:

1. Although grades are given, the major purpose of a test is to determine the various concepts which students have learned and what major areas need to be re-taught.
2. You must be consistent, fair, and able to justify the grades that are given. In averaging grades you must follow District policies.
3. All tests should encompass the material covered in a given length of time. Questions should be thought-provoking which include essay as well as objective type. At the secondary level many questions should require the student to apply taught concepts or ideas to reach new conclusions.
4. You should reevaluate your tests and teaching methods if the entire class makes low scores.
5. You should have enough grades to average during the nine-week periods so as to issue a valid grade. It would be sufficient to take a grade every week in each subject area.
6. Grades should reflect accurately the academic achievement of the pupil. Being an "easy" grader may make a parent happy but in reality you are not being fair to the

parent or the pupil. The same is true if you grade so rigidly that the grade is not connected to reality. You need to constantly evaluate your own performance in test making and expectations to determine whether or not your grades are too high or if you have an exceptionally large number of low scores.

Grading System:

Tuscola schools use a nine-week grading period at all levels. In kindergarten a series of questions concerning the student's physical development, social adjustment, emotional adjustment, intelligence, and language development are used to report the progress made by the student.

In first grade the child receives a satisfactory or unsatisfactory mark. In grades two through eight, letter grades are used with a numerical value attached to each:

Grade	Score Range
A	90-100
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	Below 60

At the end of the school term, all nine-week grades must be averaged to determine the yearly grade average.

Grades should reflect accurately the academic achievement of the pupil. Should a student/parent believe that an inappropriate grading period grade has been issued in deviation from District policies and/or procedures or that a miscalculation has occurred, they should first meet with the teacher. If unsatisfied they may meet with the principal who has the authority to change grades based upon deviations from District policy, procedures or miscalculations.

Any student who receives four (4) failing grades out of a total of (6) placed on the report card is to receive a failing grade in that subject for the year end average.

Grading at the High School Level:

Tuscola schools use nine-week grading periods at all levels. Credit for course work successfully completed shall be issued and recorded at the end of each semester. Any student receiving an “F” (failing grade) in both nine-week quarters in any semester shall receive a failing grade for the semester and no credit. Any variation to the above must be approved by the principal.

Any student must complete the semester examination (unless exempted by the instructor) in a course to pass the course regardless of the nine-week grades receive. All incomplete grades shall be completed within two weeks after the close of the grading period. If not done, the incomplete grade shall become a failing grade. Extension may be granted for cause as determined by the principal.

Grades should reflect accurately the academic achievement of the pupil. Should a student/parent believe that an inappropriate grading period grade has been issue in deviation from District policies and/or procedures or that a miscalculation has occurred, they should first meet with the teacher. If unsatisfied they may meet with the principal who has the authority to change grades based upon deviations from District policy, procedures or miscalculations.

The principal shall publish a list of high grade-average students. The list shall be published for each grading period and at the end of each semester. For this purpose, the following designations shall be given:

- High Honors - 4.0 avg.
- Honors - 3.5 to 3.00 avg.
- Honorable Mention - 3.00 to 3.49 (semester only)

Updated: July 19, 2004

Students

High School

Credits

At the high school level, credit for successfully completing course work shall be issued and recorded at the end of each semester. Credit is issued for successful completion of a course of study as based on the Carnegie Unit. An academic class which meets five days per week for 18 weeks is valued as one-half credit (5 days per week for 36 weeks is valued as one credit). Non-academic courses (Physical Education, Band, and Chorus) are valued at one-half credit per year or one-quarter credit per semester.

Transfer credits from another school shall be evaluated by the principal and converted to correspond with Tuscola school's standard of credit. Credits shall be given for subjects not offered at Tuscola High School if the principal evaluates them to be of merit as academic courses. Credits transferred from another school district may be accepted, denied, increased, or reduced as determined by the principal.

No more than two (2) units of credit for correspondence work shall be accepted toward graduation from Tuscola High School. To qualify to have correspondence credit counted, any student must have failed courses in high school and received the prior approval of the principal to enroll in the correspondence course. Only correspondence credit from a North Central Association accredited institution shall be allowed.

The awarding of credit by proficiency testing or evening classes will be determined on a case-by-case evaluation by the high school principal if prior approval of the program had been received from the principal. No credit shall be awarded for life experiences.

Any student may attend a public school district summer school and transfer the credit to Tuscola High School with the prior approval of the principal.

University or junior college credit shall not be counted towards graduation from Tuscola High School except if the credit is earned from a college which has a dual enrollment agreement with Tuscola High School. Dual enrollment agreements may include evening as well as day classes. Attendance in such a program for credit shall be with the principal's permission only.

TUSCOLA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

FRESHMAN		SOPHOMORE		JUNIOR		SENIOR	
English I	1	English II	1	Speech/Expo	1	Consumer Ed	½
Lab Science	1	American Gov	½	US History	1	PE	½
Math	1	Math	1	PE	½		
PE	½	Driver Ed	NC				
Keyboarding	½	PE	½				
		Health	½				

Number of credits required for graduation.....Beginning with the class of 2008.....18.5
 Number of academic credits required for graduationBeginning with the class of 2008.....16.5

In addition, students must earn the following:

1. A third credit in mathematics is required beginning with the class of 2009.
2. An additional one-half credit in Social Studies (Social Studies, World History, American Historical Studies, Psychology, or a third semester of US History).
3. One year in vocational, art, music, or foreign language course.

LEARNING DISABILITIES RESOURCE PROGRAM (9-12)

The LD program provides supportive services for students who have been identified as having a learning disability. General goals include providing educational opportunities in basic skills which will promote optimal achievements; promoting physical, social, and emotional development. The LD student receives individual and/or small group instruction in a special classroom by an LD teacher for less than 50% of his/her day.

It is the responsibility of each mid-year graduate to make the necessary contacts and arrangements with the school and principal, attend practice sessions, and pay for cap and gown.

Correspondence work must be completed and a passing grade received by TCHS before a student may graduate and participate in graduation ceremonies.

The HONORARY titles of valedictorian and salutatorian shall be determined at the end of the seventh semester by class rank. Honorary titles are bestowed at the discretion of the principal. To be eligible a student shall have attended TCHS during the entire sixth and seventh semesters (entering no later than the tenth day of the sixth semester). Mid-year graduates are not eligible for the designation nor are students who entered high school with another year's class. Also, students who transfer away from TCHS in their eighth semester, may not return for graduation and assume an honorary title. Final rank in class is determined at the completion of the term.

Of those eligible, the highest-ranking senior may be valedictorian and second may be salutatorian. If there are co-valedictorians, no salutatorian shall be named.

Insurance:

The District has Workmen's Compensation insurance which covers all certificated and support staff in the event of personal injury while on duty in the school building or on school business. Please report any such injury within twenty-four hours to the principal.

Each full-time employee may be covered by the District's group health insurance program. The group is the Egyptian Area School Employee Medical and Dental Benefit Plan (Egyptian Trust for short). The Board pays 100% of the individual employee's premium, and you may have your dependents covered by paying the family premium. The Board also provides \$10,000 of term life insurance on each employee insured with the trust. It is your responsibility to file claims, know the policies, and communicate with the third-party administrator of the Trust (currently Meritain in St. Louis). HealthLink is the preferred provider network, and it provides enhanced benefits.

The District has a student accident insurance that covers all students as a supplemental plan. If an accident occurs in your presence or you have knowledge of such an accident, report it immediately to the principal and then complete an accident report form.

Lesson Planning:

Lesson plans show continuity, sequential development, preparation, and provide a substitute teacher or the principal with a guide for the day's activities in your classroom.

At the beginning of the school year, the building principal will issue lesson plan books to all faculty members. This plan book is to be used to develop adequate lesson plans for your teaching assignments. It will also serve as the format for lesson plan submittal to the building principal. Lesson plans are to be made out at least one week in advance with a copy turned in to the building principal.

The lesson plans should be based upon specific units of work, topics, problems, or concepts which you are attempting to teach. In addition, you need to give reference to that part of the teacher's manual which applies to the lesson of the day.

Payroll Procedures:

All regularly employed personnel will receive their paychecks on the 20th of each month. Certified staff may elect to take their pay in 10 or 12 monthly installments. You must notify the Unit Office by September 1 if you wish to change a previous designation. Anyone on a contract longer than the standard teaching contract must be paid in installments no less than the length of their contract.

For those who resign during the school year, their salaries will be prorated for the period of actual employment. Their final paycheck may be more or less than the usual monthly amount depending upon the monthly installment designation.

As a convenience for the staff, arrangements can be made for payroll deductions to cover dependent insurance, tax sheltered 403b annuities, union dues, vision care, cancer insurance, life

insurance, and other items as approved by the Unit Office. Where appropriate, certain deductions may be made under the Board's IRS Section 125 premium-only plan if desired. If you elect a deduction of these kinds, your deductions must correspond to the number of paychecks you receive. The staff member and his/her financial advisor are responsible for complying with IRS regulations as applied to 403b deductions, specifically deduction limitations. The District has no way of know nor the right to know your total financial planning.

If a deduction is to be made from a teacher's paycheck for an absence without pay (dock), the contract amount shall be divided by 185 to determine the daily deduction; however, the daily deduction rate for those on contract which are longer (extended, 10.5, 11, and 12 month) will be determined by the length of their individual contract.

Promotion & Retention at the Elementary Level (K-8):

At the end of each school term, each student is to be promoted or retained. The authority for decisions on promotion or retention rest with the building principal. In compliance with Section 10-20.9a of the Illinois School Code, the Tuscola schools shall not promote a student to the next higher grade level based upon age or any other social reasons not related to the academic performance of the student. Social promotion is not allowed.

Promotion means advancement to the next higher grade level. Retention means repeating the grade level just completed to the extent deemed necessary by the building principal.

To qualify for promotion based upon the successful completion of the curriculum, a student must:

- in grade 1 receive a satisfactory grade for the yearly average in reading;
- in grade 2 receive a passing grade for the yearly average in reading and arithmetic;
- in grade 3 through 8 must not receive a yearly average of "F" in three or more academic subjects;
- In grade 8 must receive a passing mark on the test on the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the United States Flag Code, and the Constitution of the State of Illinois; and
- in grades 1 through 8 not meet the qualification as a chronic truant regardless of the course grades received. Chronic truant shall be defined as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 10% or more of the previous 175 regular attendance days.

If a student does not qualify for promotion based upon the successful completion of the curriculum (above), the building principal may consider that student's academic performance in the following areas as a basis for promotion:

- performance based on Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT);
- performance on any standardized testing done at the building;
- successful completion of a summer tutorial program or summer school program;

- successful completion of additional instruction during the current school year;
- and other criteria in the opinion of the principal that is consistent with the intent of this policy.

If additional instruction or summer work is done outside the Tuscola schools, it should be approved in advance by the building principal. The responsibility for compliance with Illinois laws prohibiting social promotion and with this policy rests with the building principal. The building principal shall make all final decisions on promotion and retention.

Rental of Textbooks:

Proper care of textbooks is a necessity and staff members are to examine all books issued to pupils under their charge at regular intervals. Students must pay for books damaged beyond what could be described as normal wear or are lost. A staff member should report all such damage to the principal who will in turn determine the fair value of the book.

Textbooks are rented to pupils for their use during the school year. Workbooks and some other consumable materials are included in the rental cost to the student. A student withdrawing during the second semester will not receive any refund.

Requirements for Instructional Programs:

The State of Illinois has placed several requirements upon the instructional program in the public schools of Illinois that are specific to the teacher. As a teacher you should know some of the basic mandates.

- Instruction in the elementary branches of education shall be in the English language.
- Every public school teacher shall teach the pupils honesty, kindness, justice, and moral courage for the purpose of lessening crime and raising the standard of good citizenship.
- Each teacher shall teach the pupils kindness, justice to, humane treatment, and protection of birds and animals and the part they play in the economy of nature.
- Dissection of dead animals, or any parts thereof, shall be confined to the classroom and shall not be practiced in the presence of any pupil not engaged in the study.

Specific questions about programming mandates should be directed to the building principal.

Requisition of Supplies and Equipment:

At given times during the school year, the building principals will establish timelines for planning for the succeeding school year in compliance with the financial planning of the Superintendent. Teachers should evaluate instructional materials and equipment which they feel will enhance the educational program.

When requested by the principal, requisitions may be submitted for approval by the principal. If

approved by the building principal, the principal will seek approval from the Superintendent. ***Teachers should never go directly to the Superintendent and bypass their principal.*** The teacher should supply accurate information on the material requested such as quantity wanted, description, catalog and page number, and the price. The teacher shall also keep a copy of all data supplied to the office.

All supplies, materials, and equipment must be ordered with a valid Tuscola School District purchase order. Only office personnel may issue purchase orders signed by the principal.

Under no circumstances are staff members authorized to make purchases of supplies or equipment unless approved by the Superintendent or his designee.

Salary Schedule

Upon initial employment, placement on the salary schedule will be based upon the number of full-years of public school teaching experience and the level of education accepted by the Board through analysis of official transcripts. Part-time experience may be consolidated by the Board (two years of halftime service considered as one year of full-time service) and education prior to the awarding of a master's degree must be in a master's degree program and must be graduate level course work. On the salary schedule for teachers, years of experience start with "0" meaning no years of service. A new teacher with no experience will start at the "0" level. A teacher who has completed one year of teaching experience will be placed at the "1" level for their second year of teaching. Teachers who complete the experience side through step 20 on the salary schedule, go off the schedule according to the current negotiated contract and an individual rate is set for their salary each year.

The schedule has been set by collective bargaining and is not negotiable until it expires and then only with the exclusive bargaining agent of the teachers. Changes on the salary schedule by advancement of education are made once per year at the September payroll. Official transcripts must be in the Unit Office by Sept. 1 each year for changes to be made. All courses for advancement on the schedule must be approved by the superintendent. At the bachelor's degree level, it is the goal of the district to encourage the earning of a master's degree. Therefore, it is expected that course work before the master's will be within a graduate program to earn a master's degree. Exceptions may be allowed by the superintendent for the good of the District's programs. Only college hours earned after the date of the awarding of a master's degree will be recognized for credit "beyond the master's degree." Course work beyond the master's must demonstrate to the superintendent some benefit to the district. To attain the master's degree salary level, a master's degree must be earned at an accredited college or university; and to attain the 6th Year level, a specialist or doctorate degree must be earned. No teacher may advance educationally on the salary schedule after the September payroll of their twentieth step on the salary schedule. Staff members no longer on the salary schedule steps may file for tuition reimbursement for superintendent approved course work that they have taken and successfully completed with a grade of "C" or better.

If an overpayment or an underpayment is made to a staff member through error, the error shall be corrected through withholding of an amount or additional payment. Staff members are strongly encouraged to examine carefully their annual Payroll Worksheet and to report any errors in placement, years of service credit, or incorrect numbers.

Special Education:

The Tuscola schools offers special education programs and services to exceptional children. The district is also a member of the Eastern Illinois Area of Special Education (EIASE) cooperative which provides additional services. For more information, you may see your building principal.

Student Information:

Parents and students have a reasonable expectation that their situation or the activity of the student will not become a topic of open discussion in the school or the community. Staff is expected to treat information they gain on students in a professional manner. Gossiping about students or releasing personal student information is unprofessional conduct.

Student Teaching:

Although we feel it is necessary for the District to participate in the teacher training programs, we must be very careful to avoid hindering our major responsibility to the students and parents of our community. Each cooperating teacher should have no more than one student teacher per year from the universities.

Tax Sheltered Annuities:

Staff members may elect to participate in the approved Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA) program. If you plan to participate in the program, you must notify the Unit Office by September 1.

Staff members electing to take their pay in ten (10) months should arrange with their financial advisor to have the TSA payment made in ten months or change their payroll installment to twelve (12) months.

There are legal limitations on the total allowable TSA contributions. It is the responsibility of the teacher and his/her agent to know the limits and abide by them. Before starting a TSA or when changing the TSA deduction amount, all staff members must file a Maximum Exclusion Allowance (MEA) calculation prepared by the TSA company or its agent. It is understood that the District is not responsible for MEA calculation nor are they responsible for the tax liability of a staff member. Staff members will be required to sign a "hold harmless" agreement which relieves the District of any responsibility for staff member tax obligation because of a 403b TSA. Changes in TSA's or changes in TSA deduction amounts should be made by September 1.

A 403b teacher's committee will act as in advisory group to the district in the manner of 403b contributions. Board Policy # 455 states that a minimum of three (3) staff members must participate in any approved plan.

Technology, E-mail, and Other Uses of School Equipment

The technology equipment and e-mail capabilities of the District are provided to staff by the school district with the intended purposes of supporting learning, enhancing instruction, conducting research, and improving communications. Staffs are not to use the technology capabilities of the District for any unprofessional, commercial, political, or illegal activities. Also, no inappropriate, vulgar, harassing, obscene, or offensive language is to be utilized on District technology. This includes what some may view as jokes. Pornographic sites are not to be visited or view. ***Failure to comply with these prohibitions may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.*** Staff should familiarize themselves with the Board Policy #519 governing student use of technology and apply the rules stated in that policy to their own use of school technology.

Your Responsibilities as a Staff Member:

Each staff member will be held responsible for enforcing and abiding by the policies established by the Tuscola Board of Education and Administration.

1. Discharging instructional duties competently.
2. Carrying out the general policies and the program of education of the school as they apply to each classroom and as they relate to Board Policy.
3. Transmitting all notices, announcements, and directions to pupils as given by the principal and superintendent.
4. Being in the building by 8:00 A.M. and in your room or assigned area by the first Tardy Bell unless previous arrangements have been made for supervision of your room or area.
5. To be in the hallways to assist in supervising incoming traffic when the warning bell rings. This applies to the times when students are exchanging classes or are being dismissed.
6. To consider the time until 4:00 P.M. as part of the school day. It is permissible to leave the building prior to that time if there is not a staff meeting or conference but not before the buses depart.
7. Accounting for all money belonging to the school.
8. Collecting information and making such reports as requested by the superintendent or building principal.
9. Exercising care for school supplies, equipment, and the school room in his/her charge.
10. Reporting to the principal immediately any serious destruction of property in the school.
11. Not to withhold students from special classes unless written permission has been granted by the building principal.

12. To be in your classroom on time and not leave your class unattended.
13. Cell phones are not to be used by staff for personal use at any time during instructional periods.
14. Teaching professionals dress is to be consistent with the dress expected by the students and other professionals working in the educational environment.
15. To make written reports of accidents or injuries which you think may require medical attention.
16. Keeping complete records of attendance and achievement of each pupil enrolled in his/her class or room for permanent records of the school.
17. To attend all staff meetings. One or two days advance notice of these meetings will be given, and you are expected to be there.
18. To make all maintenance requests through the building principal in order that the services of the custodial staff may be more efficiently utilized.
19. To perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools, or the building principal.