



**BIG WALNUT**  
**LOCAL SCHOOLS**

**INSPIRE  
& GUIDE**

# **BIG WALNUT LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **Staff Handbook 2022-2023**

Big Walnut Local School District  
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Sunbury, Ohio 43074  
740-965-3010

*Our mission is to inspire and guide each student to his or her maximum potential.*



## **Mission**

Our mission is to inspire and guide each student to his or her maximum potential.

## **Vision**

In order to accomplish our mission, the Big Walnut Schools will strive to achieve our vision of a:

- Student-focused, professional, and collaborative staff
- Student-focused, challenging, and current curriculum
- Supportive, involved, and informed community
- Safe, respectful, and welcoming environment

## **Forward**

The purpose of this staff handbook is to make all staff members aware of key information about working conditions, expectations for professionalism, and some policies that may affect employment. It is each staff member's responsibility to read and understand each of the items listed in this handbook. If there are any questions regarding the information included in this handbook, staff members are directed to contact their building administrator(s). This document is not intended to be an exhaustive list of employee expectations, as additional expectations are provided by Federal and State laws, Board Policy, and expectations provided by District and building administration.

## **Notification of Board Policy**

The Big Walnut Local Schools Board of Education contracts with NEOLA to provide updates and revisions to Board Policies. The full listing of District Policies is available at [www.bwls.net](http://www.bwls.net) by selecting the "District" tab and then "Board of Education."

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### **Absence Reporting**

Staff members are expected to report all absences to the building of employment in a manner that is determined by the building principal or immediate supervisor. Requests for personal, professional, or vacation leave must be made in advance, as outlined in appropriate union collective bargaining agreements. Unpaid days are an unacceptable practice within the District, unless deemed an extenuating circumstance approved by the Superintendent/Designee.

Steps for reporting absences for teaching and educational assistant aides are as follows:

1. Enter your absence into AESOP.
2. Complete a leave request form (unless it is a sick day).
3. Prepare and provide adequate sub plans (if applicable).

Staff members are expected to review bimonthly direct deposit notices for accuracy in reporting leave balances and financial details. Staff members should notify the Treasurer's Office immediately of any concerns.

### **Accidents/Injuries**

If an accident occurs on school grounds or at a district-sponsored event, appropriate medical personnel may need to be contacted immediately to assist with an injury. Once any injury is treated, an appropriate accident/injury form must be filled out by the affected staff member or supervising staff of the student involved. Efforts must be made to submit the appropriate form to the building administrator(s) immediately or as soon as possible. Staff members must take all reasonable action to prevent or minimize the accident/injury from recurring to the same person or any other individual. Upon receipt of the accident form, the building administrator(s) will investigate the issue and take any appropriate action to prevent or minimize the accident from recurring.

### **Student Accident**

1. Injured students should be sent (or escorted if appropriate) to the office for appropriate first aid, whenever possible.
2. The staff member who witnesses or has the accident reported to him/her must report the accident in detail through a "Student Accident Report" available in the main office.
3. Parents must always be notified of the accident via the reporting staff member or building office.

### **Staff Accident**

1. The "Employee Report of Incident and Injury" must be filled out by the affected staff member, unless the staff member is unable to complete the form. In that case, the form can be filled out by a co-worker or supervisor. This form is available in each building office and must be filled out, even if the employee does not feel that an injury has occurred.
2. If a witness was present, Part II ("Witness Statement") of the form must be completed by any witness.

### **Animals**

The Board of Education recognizes that there are many occasions when animals are present on District property and many reasons for those animals' presence. Animals are commonly utilized by teachers during classroom presentations for learning purposes directly tied to the curriculum. Additionally, employees, students, parents, vendors, and other members of the public may be accompanied at school by a service animal in accordance with federal and state law. Board Policy 8390 addresses acceptable terms for animals to be on District premises and requirements that must be met for having an animal on District property. Questions regarding animals in school shall be directed to a building administrator.

### **Announcements**

The public address system is used for general announcements, news broadcasts, music, and communication with classrooms. As much as possible, announcements will be made at a time that is least disruptive to instructional time. When a student or staff member makes an announcement, there should be no talking in the room, and the student's attention should be directed to the announcements. Please reinforce the proper behavior with your students and sustain this throughout the year.

### **Anti-Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain an education and work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all School District operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board. Further detail regarding this topic, including filing a complaint and investigation procedures, can be found under Board Policies 1662, 2266, 3362, 4362, and 5517.

### **Application for Job Openings**

Big Walnut Local Schools expects all online applications completed by current and prospective employees for open positions to contain accurate information. Any falsification, omission, or misrepresentation of any part of the application submission may result in denial of consideration for the position or termination of employment, if the person has already been hired by the district. In compliance with any applicable laws and as good practice, Big Walnut Schools completes reference checks on all prospective employees, prior to offering employment. Internal applicants for any available positions that have been posted by the district will be considered in accordance with any requirements set forth in the appropriate union collective bargaining agreement, where applicable.

### **Assemblies**

Supervision of students is a priority during any school assembly. All staff members attending the assembly must be diligent in providing this supervision. Staff members are to be active observers or participants in the event and therefore not be distracted by any other personal or work-related tasks (i.e. cell phone use, grading papers, etc.)

### **Bus Requirements for Students**

Staff members are expected to assist students in preparing for bus travel by adhering to the following guidelines:

1. All items need to be in students' backpacks whenever possible.
2. Plants, dirt, art projects, etc. must be in sealed bags.
3. No glass items can be taken on the bus.
4. Any exceptions to these rules must be pre-approved through the building administration.

### **Calendars**

At the beginning of each year, all staff members receive notification of work calendars for the contract year, based on a specific number of contracted days. Each staff member is responsible for working the days that they have been assigned. Staff members may be able to use eligible personal, sick, or vacation leave for any contractual days that they do not work. Unpaid days are not an acceptable form of leave, unless deemed an extenuating circumstance approved by the Superintendent/Designee.

### **Certification/Licensure and Background Checks**

Each staff member is responsible for attaining and maintaining the appropriate certification/licensure for their assigned position. Failure to attain or renew such certification/licensure as needed may constitute cause for disciplinary action, loss of pay, and/or termination of employment. Ohio Revised Code 3319.36 prohibits the Treasurer from making payment to a teacher without a valid license. Background checks for all staff members, except bus drivers, must be renewed every five years, regardless of licensure or certification renewal. Bus drivers must renew their background checks every six years with recertification. Fingerprinting services can be provided by the central office by scheduling an appointment in advance.

### **Children's Services**

All staff members have a mandatory legal obligation to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, including cases of abuse by school officials. The law requires the report be made immediately. It is important to recognize that school staff and non-licensed school employees may not rely on school administrators or others to make child abuse reports for them. The mandatory duty to report is a duty imposed on each school employee individually, and each school employee who suspects the abuse or neglect of a child must report it directly to the local children services agency or law enforcement agency. Additionally, the staff member shall notify the building principal when a report is going to be made.

The statute, which requires the filing of child abuse and neglect reports, declares that such reports are to be confidential. Neither the report nor the name of the person who made the report can be used or released for use in a civil action against the person who made the report.

### **Classroom Care**

Classroom appearance is a team effort between the individual classroom staff, students, and building custodians. Staff members are not expected to extensively clean the classroom. However, larger items (books, papers, pencils, etc.) should be picked up from the floor, and chairs should be stacked before the evening shift custodian comes to clean. Any concerns for classroom or furniture repairs must be made through the building custodians or administrator(s) as soon as an issue is observed. Each staff member is responsible for turning off classroom lights, powering down projectors, and locking windows before leaving for the day. Additionally, the following expectations are in place:

- Microwave ovens, personal heaters, coffee makers, and additional small appliances (as determined by the building principal) are not permitted in individual classrooms/offices. Personal refrigerators, while not encouraged, may be approved with prior approval from the building principal. These items place an additional strain on the electrical service in a building and can create a fire hazard. Any personal refrigerator in a classroom must be plugged directly into an outlet. Extension cords cannot be used for these appliances.
- District Property - Custodians should be notified before moving furniture to ensure that floors are not damaged. No district property shall be physically modified or removed from district premises.
- Personal Property - Any furniture or lighting being purchased and brought into a building/classroom by a staff member must be pre-approved by the building principal and meet any applicable law or fire code.

### **Classroom Celebrations**

All class celebrations must be approved by the building administration prior to the desired day. Celebrations should relate to the curriculum or be part of an incentive for students. Food items during celebrations are discouraged. However, if food is provided during a celebration it must be pre-packaged, nut-free, and caution must be given to any other ingredients that may affect a student's health. Any exception to the food limitations above must be discussed with and approved by the building principal in advance. If an exception is granted, proper precautions, such as wiping down tables immediately after the celebration, must take place.

**Classroom Management**

A positive classroom management plan must be established that manages the students in a positive, non-threatening, and non-punitive way that aligns with the building Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Plan. Classroom plans should be communicated with students and parents. Staff must follow and implement the school's PBIS Plan. All students being referred to the office for discipline must have an appropriate referral form.

**Clinic**

The clinic is located in the office area. If a child appears ill, the supervising staff member shall refer the student to the clinic, sending a student or adult escort as needed. Once checked by the nurse or office staff, the student may either return to class or be sent home for the day. Attempts will be made to minimize instructional time lost by the student, while ensuring the health and well-being of the student and all classmates.

**Clubs/Activities**

Any staff member interested in organizing or beginning a club/activity must obtain approval from the building administration. Staff will be responsible for the safekeeping of funds collected as part of the club/activity and will ensure that funds are deposited in a timely manner as established in Board Policy 6600. Advising staff members are responsible for all students in the club/activity, including communication with parents/guardians and supervising all students until they have been released to their classrooms for the day or picked up by the appropriate person.

**Code of Conduct**

The Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators provides the framework for professional conduct for all Ohio educators, including coaches, support staff, teachers (including substitutes), school counselors, principals, superintendents and other licensed individuals serving schools (e.g. school nurses and treasurers). The District and the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Professional Conduct have authority to investigate complaints received regarding licensed Ohio educators whose behavior may have violated the Code of Conduct. A violation of the Code of Conduct may constitute cause for termination of employment. The Code of Conduct can be viewed online through the Ohio Department of Education's website at <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Conduct/Licensure-Code-of-Professional-Conduct-for-Ohio-Ed>

**Committees**

Staff members may be asked to serve on various committees on a voluntary basis. Committees may include but are not limited to: PAC (Principal Advisory Committee), Evaluation, etc. As needs in the building change, other committees may be formed. Committee representatives are responsible for communicating information back to their team of co-workers.

**Communication**

Each staff member is responsible for keeping parents/guardians informed of student progress, as well as developing and maintaining good public relations in our community. Responses to parent/guardian contact should occur within one workday by phone or email. Staff members shall keep documentation of parent/guardian conversations. All staff members are assigned a district email address and must check it regularly for important information from the district and communication with families.

**Confidentiality - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Big Walnut School District employees are directed to keep student information confidential as required by federal and state law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Employees may have access to or become knowledgeable of sensitive information regarding students and their families. All employees must maintain confidentiality in these matters and only share this information in a professional

context as defined in FERPA. No student information shall be released to third parties unless appropriate written permission has been received from the parent/guardian and the release is approved by the building or district administration. All written, electronic, or recorded communications created by employees of the district may constitute public and/or student records that may be subject to release upon request by the appropriate party. Additional information regarding this topic can be found under Board Policy 8330.

### **Copiers**

Staff members are expected to utilize building copiers for completing any necessary copying for work-related purposes only. All copying must be done outside of scheduled responsibilities. Students should not be directed to bring items to the office to be copied. Please ask office staff if there are any questions about operating the copiers or if a copier needs repair.

### **Display Areas**

Staff members are encouraged to display student work in any designated display cases, not just in the individual classes. Anything that will leave residue on the wall/glass or pull paint off when removed is not to be used to attach pictures, charts, posters, etc. Tack strips and bulletin boards are to be used, whenever present.

### **Drug/Tobacco-Free Workplace**

The Board of Education believes that quality education is not possible in an environment affected by drugs. It will seek, therefore, to establish and maintain an educational setting which is not tainted by the use or evidence of use of any controlled substance. No staff member is permitted to manufacture, possess, use, distribute, or dispense any controlled substance, alcohol, and any drug paraphernalia as the terms are defined by law at any time while on District property or while involved in any District-related activity or event.

The Board of Education is also committed to providing students, staff, and visitors with an indoor drug-free, tobacco-free, and smoke-free environment. The negative health effects of tobacco use for both the users and nonusers, particularly in connection with second hand smoke, are well established. Further, providing a non-smoking and tobacco-free environment is consistent with the responsibilities of staff members to be positive role models for our students.

No staff member is permitted to smoke, inhale, dip or chew tobacco at any time, including non-school hours in any building, facility or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by the Big Walnut Local School District, on school grounds, athletic grounds or parking lots or at any school-sponsored event off campus.

### **Duties**

Staff members may have various duties within their contractual time. Duties will be assigned or approved by building administration.

### **Education Plans and Accommodations**

Students may have individualized plans including, but not limited to, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, Written Education Plans (WEPs), Behavior/Safety Plans, and any other individualized plan created by the building or District. While these plans establish specific requirements for staff members working with these students, it is the District's philosophy that all students are treated as individuals and therefore may have specific needs that are supported by staff members connected to those students. Staff members must retain professionalism and confidentiality with all information related to the students with whom they work.

### **Emergency Closing, Delay, Early Dismissal**



There could be several reasons for the need to abbreviate the contractual day. It is imperative that staff members take responsibility for knowing their expected work schedule in the event of an abbreviated day. Staff members will be notified through several modes such as the District automated call system, District email, District website, social media, and/or administrative communication. If a staff member has any questions or needs clarification, the staff member is expected to contact an immediate supervisor.

### **Emergency Plans/Drills**

Each school maintains an Emergency Operations Plan, which is located in the main office. All staff must be familiar with the plan and have pertinent information available to substitutes. Emergency maps are to be posted inside the entrance of the classroom. If an emergency map is missing, staff members are to notify the building administrator(s) immediately. Please direct all questions regarding emergency plans to building administration.

Emergency drills must be conducted each month per state and federal laws, as well as any related District Policies. It is each staff member's responsibility to know what to do in any emergency.

### **Environmental Concerns**

If a staff member recognizes an immediate issue regarding the building environment such as, but not limited to, extreme temperatures, lighting, air quality, or health-related concerns, the staff member shall notify a building administrator as soon as possible. Any long-term environmental concerns shall be shared by sending an email to the building principal. Legitimate environmental concerns will be addressed as soon as possible or within a reasonable period of time.

### **Evaluations**

Certified staff - Each certified educator will be provided information on the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System process for the current school year after the first Evaluation Committee meeting. Educators have the responsibility of meeting all OTES and/or other District evaluation requirements.

Classified staff - Evaluations will be performed per negotiated agreement guidelines.

Staff members are encouraged to work with their building administrator(s) on any questions or concerns with the evaluation process.

### **Facility Use**

A facility use form must be approved by the building or District administration prior to any organization utilizing school facilities. Furthermore, staff members that desire to use school facilities for personal reasons must have prior approval through the building administration. Facility use during extended breaks in the winter, spring, and summer may be limited, due to construction and maintenance projects.

### **Field Trips**

All field trips or activities taking students off school property must have approval of the principal and be aligned with the curriculum. Parent permission is required, and a transportation form must be approved for all events requiring students to be transported. Field trips are expected to be well planned and properly supervised. A copy of any student medical authorization forms and medicine to be administered during the field trip must be in possession of the staff member leading/supervising the trip. Any distribution of medicine to a student must be administered by a designated staff member in coordination with the district nurse. Parental permission must be in writing, unless otherwise approved by building administration. Staff members are encouraged to review Board Policy 2340 regarding any additional expectations for field trips.

### **Fire Code and Building Safety**

Per state law, schools will be inspected throughout the year by District and outside professionals. Please take special note of the following prohibited items:

- 3-way adapters
- Daisy chaining (including surge protectors)
- Extension cords for permanent placement

All furniture and rugs need to have fire retardant spray applied or have special fire retardant certification by the manufacturer. Additionally, only 20% of a wall can be covered with student work or other instructional materials.

### **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

The [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#) provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. It also requires that their group health benefits be maintained during the leave. To be eligible for FMLA leave, a staff member must meet certain employment and work hour criteria, as well as have a qualifying event occur for such leave to be taken. FMLA leave may run concurrent with another allowable paid leave option under the staff member's union collective bargaining agreement. FMLA is also available for certain qualifying urgent needs for covered service members or to care for a covered service member with a serious illness. If a staff member believes that he/she is eligible for FMLA leave, the staff member should contact the treasurer's office and/or the district's human resources department.

### **Fraud Hotline**

All employees, within 30 days of hire, must verify in writing that they have been advised of the Ohio Auditor of State's system for reporting fraud (documentation provided upon hire). This system allows all citizens of Ohio, including public employees, the ability to make anonymous complaints regarding fraud, including misuse of public money by any official or office, through the following methods:

Telephone: 1-866-FRAUD OH (1-866-372-8364)  
 US Mail: Ohio Auditor of State's Office  
 Special Investigations Unit  
 88 East Broad Street, P.O. Box 1140  
 Columbus, OH 43215  
 Web: [www.ohioauditor.gov](http://www.ohioauditor.gov)  
 App: "Ohio Stops Fraud"  
 E-Mail: [fraudohio@ohioauditor.gov](mailto:fraudohio@ohioauditor.gov)

### **Free Speech**

As public employees, staff members have limited first amendment rights on a daily basis but especially during work hours. It is important that staff members refrain from imposing on students or colleagues their views of political or societal issues. While it is permissible in the context of certain learning standards and activities for students to consider current events, staff members must be careful not to push their beliefs on students or judge a specific side of a situation as being the "correct" viewpoint.

### **Fundraisers**

There are several fundraisers that take place during the year for a variety of reasons. Staff members considering a fundraiser must provide a written request to the building principal for approval. All money must be documented through the Sales and Project Potential Forms, available through the treasurer's office, and handled according to District or building guidelines, including guidelines for depositing money as established in Board Policy 6600.

### **Gifts to Staff**

The Board of Education considers the presentation of gifts to professional staff members by students and their parents an undesirable practice because it tends to embarrass students with limited means and gives the appearance of currying favor. Based on the foregoing premise, it is the policy of the Board that professional staff members may accept gifts of nominal value from students or parents. Nominal value is defined as approximately \$25 in value or less. In the event that a staff member receives a gift of more than \$25 in value, the gift unfortunately must be returned. While this can create an awkward situation for the staff member, many families do not know about this ethical rule, especially since such rules do not often apply in many non-public business settings. It is fair for the staff member to make contact with the family and express appreciation for the gift that has been offered but state that the gift must be declined, due to requirements in the state's code of ethics, as well as Board policy. If a staff member has any questions or needs help in communicating with a family, the staff member should touch base with the building administrator(s) or immediate supervisor.

### **Grading/Report Cards**

Teachers should use a variety of assessment techniques including tests, quizzes, reports, observational data and/or other assignments appropriate to the subject matter being taught. A student's grade should be based on many assignments given throughout the grading period. Communication with students and parents is critical for success. The teacher should explain to students the grading procedures to be used at the start of the grading period. Parents should be kept informed through a variety of ways on the progress of their child including, but not limited to, formal report cards. Timelines for report cards to be submitted will be provided by building administration. Grades should reflect student mastery of content standards with multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery or a level of understanding. Additional guidelines on assessment of learning and grading will be provided by the administration.

### **Grants/Crowdfunding**

All staff members considering a request for grants or crowdfunding must first have the approval of a building administrator. If a grant or crowdfunding results in funds or items being provided to the staff member or classroom, notification must be provided to the District's Treasurer for Board approval. It is the responsibility of the staff member to verify the charity status of the organization and to clearly communicate this to appropriate parties. Any required follow-up or close-out documentation or reporting will be the responsibility of the requesting staff member.

Once a donation has been accepted, funds or items donated become property of the Board of Education. If an accepting staff member is reassigned to another position in the District or leaves the District, all items donated or purchased with donated funds remain the Board's property and shall not be removed from school premises without approval from an administrator.

For the current school year, staff members are only permitted to submit online crowdfunding requests through [www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org), after gaining approval for the proposal from a building administrator. At this time, this is the only site that meets specific criteria for any potential auditing purposes.

### **Hazing**

Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with and disruptive to the educational process, and prohibited at any time in school facilities, on school property, and/or off school property if the misconduct is connected to or associated with Board-sponsored activities (e.g., extracurricular teams, clubs, or groups) or incidents that have occurred on school property. No administrator, employee, faculty member, teacher, coach, consultant, alumnus, or volunteer of the District shall encourage, permit, authorize, condone, or tolerate any hazing

activities. The preceding prohibition includes recklessly permitting the hazing of any person associated with the District. Additionally, no student shall plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing.

Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any class, team, or organization or any act to continue or reinstate membership in or affiliation with any class, team, or organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person, including coercing another to consume alcohol or a drug of abuse. No person shall recklessly participate in the hazing of another. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Board Policy 5516 provides all language on this topic, as approved by the Board.

Board employees, consultants, and volunteers shall not intentionally remain ignorant of hazing or potential hazing activities.

### **HIPAA**

Information regarding the district's health plan(s) and HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices are located within Board Policy 3419.02 and 4419.02.

### **Identification Badges**

Staff members will be provided with an identification badge that must be worn at all times during work hours or at a Board-sponsored activity at which a staff member is functioning as an employee and representative of the District. If an identification badge is lost or forgotten, the staff member must notify the office immediately and receive an alternate identification badge until the badge is located. In the event that a badge is lost/stolen and not relocated, the staff member may be responsible for replacement costs of the badge.

### **Instruction**

The District is committed to continually preparing students for life today and also the future. Teachers are expected to incorporate 21st century skills into their curriculum - collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. Teachers are encouraged to design their classrooms to fit the needs of today's learners. Technology should be used as a tool to open new learning opportunities but not replace human interaction and hands-on learning experiences.

Our instructional vision requires that teachers:

- **Personalize Instruction** - The teacher is constantly aware of individual student abilities, interests, and/or learning styles and uses that information to make instructional decisions.
- **Engage Students** - Students are immersed in the classroom atmosphere - lessons/activities are meaningful, relevant, and add immediate value to their learning.
- **Grow Students** - The teacher collects student data and uses it to drive instruction and make class decisions in order to promote student growth.

### **Insurance**

The District uses a District Insurance Committee, with staff member representation from all employment groups, to make recommendations for any changes to the District's insurance offerings. Open enrollment occurs annually toward the end of the calendar year. Staff members may also be eligible to change their insurance options if a qualifying event occurs outside of the open enrollment window. Questions regarding insurance offerings should be directed to the Treasurer's office.

### **Interactions and Relationships with Students**

*Our mission is to inspire and guide each student to his or her maximum potential.*

Staff members are expected to maintain professional and appropriate interactions and relationships with students. Any communication from a personal device or resource regarding classroom or extra-curricular activities intended for an individual student shall include the parent(s)/guardian(s). Staff members are expected to adhere to the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators. The Code of Conduct can be viewed online through the Ohio Department of Education's website at [www.education.ohio.gov](http://www.education.ohio.gov). Any physical contact with students shall be considered carefully by the staff member with regard to professionalism working with students of certain ages, intended and perceived purpose, and student safety and well-being. Staff members, within the scope of their employment, may use and apply reasonable force and restraint to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon or within the control of the student, in self-defense or for the protection of persons or property.

### **Keys/Fobs**

Staff members may possess keys or fobs for accessing school buildings, classrooms or additional district spaces. Staff members are responsible for having any key or fob in their possession at all times. Keys and fobs shall not be used by non-staff members, unless given permission from the administration. If a key or fob is lost or stolen, it is imperative that the staff member contact a building administrator immediately to report the issue.

### **Latex-Free Schools**

Our District is a latex-free district. Staff members must be mindful of this expectation when bringing in and ordering materials. Latex items include but are not limited to balloons, gloves and rubber bands. If you have any questions about the latex-free expectation, please contact a building administrator.

### **Leaving School**

During school hours, any staff member leaving the building for any reason must notify the office upon departure and return. Additional procedures, such as signing out/in, may be expected based on building guidelines.

### **Local Professional Development Committee**

The District utilizes a Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC), which consists of representative staff members and administrators across the district. It is the responsibility of each staff member to fulfill any requirements necessary to renew his/her credentials and area(s) of certification. Staff members should reach out to a building representative on the committee with any questions about ongoing professional development hours or credit.

### **Lounge and Work Areas**

Staff members may be provided with a lounge and one or more work areas within their designated building(s). Staff members are encouraged to assist in keeping these areas clean and orderly for the use of the whole staff. If there are any issues or items needing repair in these areas, staff members should contact the main office.

### **Mailboxes**

Staff members should check their building mailbox multiple times each day. Students are not to retrieve mail for a staff member, due to possible confidential information.

### **Maintenance Requests**

Maintenance requests should be directed to building custodians first. Custodians will work with the building administrator(s) to address the concern and put in a work ticket to the District maintenance team if necessary.

**Medication**

Many students are able to attend school regularly only through effective use of over-the-counter or prescription medication in the treatment of disabilities or illness. If possible, parents/guardians are encouraged to give all medication outside of school. The District nurse or other District medical support personnel shall be consulted on medication questions or issues. All students taking over-the-counter or prescription medicine at school must have an authorization form on file in the main office. Administration of any medication is only to take place in the main office or clinic, unless documentation is on file in the main office, an emergency arises that requires medical attention, or permission is given by the District nurse or District medical support personnel.

It is the responsibility of the supervising staff member to ensure that students have any necessary medication available for a field trip or District-sponsored event.

**Movies**

The District maintains an annual license subscription to permit most movies to be shown in the classroom for instructional purposes. As instructional time is a valuable resource for learning to be taking place, all full-length movies or extended movie clips (generally more than fifteen minutes) must be approved by building administration, prior to the scheduled viewing. Only G-rated movies at the PreK-6 levels or G-rated/PG-rated movies at the 7-12 levels may be shown in the classroom, unless given prior approval by the building administration. Administrator approval may require written parental permission slips, so requesting prior approval should be done well in advance.

**MyBWLS**

All staff-related forms and additional district information, including insurance information, negotiated agreements, staff injury forms, and LPDC information, can be found on the myBWLS website at <https://sites.google.com/a/bwls.net/intranet/?pli=1>. You must be logged into your District Google account to access this site.

**Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes"), or any other legally protected category, in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. Additional details are included in Board Policy 1422.

**Online Classroom/Schoology**

Schoology is the online classroom platform for all Big Walnut teaching staff and serves the purpose of being a resource for parents/guardians and students to support student learning. Guidelines for Schoology will be provided by the building administrator(s).

**Parent Conferences**

The District work calendar provides multiple opportunities each school year for staff members to meet with parents/guardians to inform them of student growth. It is the expectation of all staff to meet with parents/guardians during these scheduled times, as well as to make available additional times at the request of a parent/guardian. Staff members may request that a building administrator be a part of the meeting if needed. A building administrator should be contacted if a staff member is having difficulty scheduling a meeting with a parent/guardian at a reasonable time.

**Professional Appearance**

Staff members are expected to maintain an appropriate professional appearance during all work hours and

District-sponsored events where the staff member is representing the District. At a minimum, staff members should adhere to student dress code requirements. The building administration may designate casual and/or jeans days. Attire should not distract from the learning process.

### **Professional Development**

Staff members desiring to attend professional conferences during the school year must have prior approval by a building administrator. Conference costs, including costs associated with registration fees, travel, lodging, etc. may be reimbursed to the employee, if given prior approval.

### **Professional Learning Communities**

All teaching staff members are expected to be a part of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) within a given building, grade level or department. Specific expectations for PLCs at each building are provided annually by the building administration.

### **Public School Works**

Public School Works is the online platform used for required courses that staff must complete under Ohio and District guidelines. Each staff member will be notified annually via email of which courses need to be taken and how to access the site. All staff members must complete required coursework to be in compliance with state and Board policies and maintain their current contract with the District.

### **Reimbursements**

Reimbursement for any purchases made by a staff member shall only be given if prior approval was obtained through a building administrator and the purchase order process was completed prior to the purchase. Staff members are encouraged to keep school purchases intended for reimbursement and personal purchases separate. Reimbursements will not include any taxes paid for the purchase and must be accompanied by an original detailed receipt or invoice. Staff members shall not use any personal credit card, club card, or other such reward system to earn points, coupons, or any other type of award. Staff members are encouraged to discuss the method of payment with the building administrator(s) or District Treasurer.

### **Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered System of Supports**

Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered System of Supports is a tiered approach utilized by the District to assist students with their academic and behavioral needs. Data team meetings are regularly scheduled throughout the school year to formally discuss the RTI/MTSS process and student needs. All staff members play an important role in this process, whether through Tier I interventions in the general classroom or addressing more specific needs in smaller group settings. Providing intervention support is an ongoing and fluid process. Staff members are encouraged to discuss student needs within regular Professional Learning Community meetings and not just wait for any formal meetings to occur.

### **Security**

Student and staff safety is the district's highest priority. Throughout the year, buildings will have training and drills that relate to safety. Additionally, it is imperative that staff members acknowledge any unknown person in the building who is not wearing a substitute or visitor identification. These individuals must be directed and escorted to the main office for sign-in and appropriate identification. Also, all outside doors must remain closed and locked at all times. Exterior doors are not to be propped open at any time. Staff members that take students outside as part of a non-routine activity are to notify the office and follow any additional building

protocols, such as carrying a radio. Any actions by a staff member that compromises the safety and security of the students may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Social Media Guidelines**

In order to maintain appropriate staff member-student boundaries, current students who are not relatives should not be permitted to post to or become members of any employee's personal social networking site, nor should the employee post to or become a member of a student's personal site, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. Employees are strongly advised against using a professional profile page to interact or communicate with students for non-instructional/non-school-related purposes. Further, personal social networking sites, even if made private, must comply with any applicable laws and professional code of conduct. Postings made from an employee's professional social media site or site that the employee modifies must adhere to professional judgment standards and District policy. Staff members shall avoid taking a position on any political or societal topics on an account that is used or perceived to be used as representing the District.

### **Staff Children**

Staff children who are in the building either before or after school hours must remain under their parent's or designee's supervision at all times and out of earshot of professional conversations. Staff children shall not be in attendance for any PLC/staff meeting, professional development, or staff gathering, unless given prior approval by the building administrator(s). During instructional hours, staff children who do not attend the school are not allowed in the building without prior and ongoing approval from the building administrator(s).

### **Staff Meetings**

The District maintains an expectation of all staff members to have a growth mindset. With this in mind, staff meetings will be held throughout the school year to promote learning, challenge current levels of thinking, and inform staff members of issues around the District and with teaching and learning. Staff members are expected to attend all required staff meetings that are scheduled by building administration, so long as the scheduled meeting is in accordance with any requirements of a staff member's associated union collective bargaining agreement.

### **State Testing**

Staff members must maintain proper ethical behavior and test security regarding any mandated state or District test. Questions or concerns about a test should be directed to a building administrator. Failure to adhere to the code of ethics on testing or protocols for test security may result in the suspension or loss of a staff member's license.

### **Student Handbook**

Student handbooks are made accessible to all students and parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year. It is expected that all staff members have knowledge of the student handbook requirements, assist in reinforcing expectations for students, and provide a model to students that adheres to these expectations.

### **Student Records**

Student records are maintained in a designated location in each building. At no time shall a student record be removed from the designated location, unless the staff member has approval from a building administrator and has notified a building secretary. All student records are to be returned within the work day. Confidentiality of student records must be kept to the specific staff members who work with the student and have a need to know such information. At no time shall any information within the student record be removed without approval from an administrator.



### **Substitutes**

It is the responsibility of the staff member to provide adequate plans and building procedures for any substitute on a day that a staff member is not present. Staff members should not rely on other staff members or the substitute to provide these plans or create any materials for instruction. Plans shall include emergency procedures or access to these procedures.

### **Technology**

The goal of the Big Walnut Local School District is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. All District-provided computers, telephone systems, electronic mail systems, and voicemail systems are the District's property and are intended to be used for school business purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic mail, voicemail, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer, telephone, electronic mail, and voicemail systems. Staff members are encouraged to review Board Policies 7540, 7540.01, and 7540.03 for further details on their responsibilities with regard to technology use.

### **Technology Work Tickets**

The District utilizes a work ticket system for all technology issues. The system can be accessed through the Freshdesk icon located in Google Drive. Issues should be reported through the work ticket system as soon as they are identified to promote a timely resolution.

### **Transporting Students**

Staff members shall not transport any student for whom they are not the parent or guardian in a vehicle that is not owned by the District, unless given specific approval by a building administrator. Permission from a parent/guardian alone, without permission from a building administrator, is not acceptable.

### **Tutoring**

Unless expressly approved by the Superintendent, staff members may not accept fees for tutoring when such tutoring is conducted during the normal work day. Similarly, unless expressly approved by the Superintendent, staff members may not accept fees for remedial tutoring of students currently enrolled in any of their classes. Staff members are encouraged to contact other staff members to offer additional instructional support for a student, if a request for paid tutoring sessions outside of the work day is made by a parent/guardian.

### **Unpaid Leave**

Unpaid leave is not an acceptable option for any staff member, unless allowed through federal or state laws such as the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or deemed an extenuating circumstance approved by the Superintendent/Designee. Staff members are given the ability to use personal, sick, professional, or vacation leave where appropriate and accumulated. Requests for unpaid leave when not eligible under a federal or state law or deemed an extenuating circumstance approved by the Superintendent/Designee will be denied by building administration.

### **Video Surveillance**

The Board of Education authorizes the use of video surveillance and electronic monitoring equipment at various school sites throughout the District and on buses. The video surveillance/electronic monitoring equipment shall be used to protect Board property and assets from theft and vandalism, through deterrence

and video documentation. The system is not designed nor intended to protect individuals from being victims of violent or property crimes, nor to detect other potentially illegal and undesirable activities that may occur, although information may be used as evidence in such cases. Video surveillance monitoring and recordings may be used as evidence for staff and student discipline. Video surveillance is not used for the purpose of routine staff appraisal/evaluation.

Any use of video or audio recording equipment in a classroom or instructional setting must be prior-approved by the building principal.

### **Visitors**

Visitors are generally welcome in the building but must report to the office before visiting any part of the building. Visitors who wish to observe particular classrooms must make prior arrangements with a staff member and the administration. Student visitors from other schools will not be permitted in any classroom while school is in session, unless approved by the building administrator(s). The first line of safety is recognition of an intruder. All visitors must wear building-provided identification. If a staff member sees someone without proper identification, the staff member is expected to approach and escort the person to the main office. If the visitor is noncompliant, the staff member shall report this to the main office immediately.

### **Volunteers**

The District appreciates and encourages volunteer support from our greater community. However, staff members shall not leave student supervision and support to a volunteer, unless proper background checks have been completed for the volunteer or prior approval from a building administrator has been given.

### **Weapons**

The Board of Education prohibits professional staff members from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school-sponsored event, or in a Board-owned vehicle, except as permitted by law. The term "weapon" means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns of any type (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, clubs, ammunition, and explosives. The Superintendent shall refer a staff member who violates this policy to law enforcement officials, regardless of whether such staff member possesses a valid concealed weapon license. The staff member will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as permitted by applicable Board policy and the terms of existing collective bargaining agreements. Staff members should review Board Policy 3217, 4217, 5772, and 7217 regarding weapons. Prior approval by a building or District administrator is required for any event or activity that involves the presence of a weapon or look alike.

### **Work Hours**

Staff work calendars and work hours are provided at the onset of each school year. Staff members are expected to follow all established work hours, unless taking an approved leave or given approval from a building or District administrator.