

# Southwest Valley Community Schools

## Teacher Handbook



SOUTHWEST VALLEY  
**#TWOVESTERRITORY**

DISCLAIMER: THIS HANDBOOK IS PREPARED TO BE INFORMATIONAL AND THEREBY TO ACQUAINT YOU WITH RESPONSIBILITIES, BENEFITS AND PRACTICES WHICH MAY BE APPLICABLE TO CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES. THIS HANDBOOK IS NOT INTENDED TO CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS IN FAVOR OF EMPLOYEES. THE DISTRICT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CHANGE THE TERMS OF THIS HANDBOOK AT ANY TIME.

## Table of Contents

Article 1	Access to Information	3
Article 2	Grievance Procedures	4
Article 3	Salary Schedule and Rate of Pay	5
Article 4	Group Insurance	7
Article 5	Sick Leave	8
Article 6	Leaves of Absence	9
Article 7	Employee Work Year	10
Article 8	Teaching Assignments, Staff Reductions, Reassignment, Experience in District List	11
Article 9	Health and Safety Provisions	12
Article 10	Certified Employee Evaluation	13
Article 11	Superintendent's Advisory Committee	14

## Article 1: Access to Information

The association upon written request will be provided a copy of routinely prepared information concerning the financial condition of the district. This report will include the reconciliation report for the last month and adopted budget for the school year.

The association will provide the board and Superintendent a copy of the annual PERB local association report.

The association and board will provide other pertinent information, which may not be relevant to negotiations and/or the processing of grievances. Nothing herein shall require the administrative staff to research and assemble information.

## Article 2: Grievance Procedures

### **A. Grievance Procedure Definitions:**

1. A “Grievant” is an employee or group of employees.
2. A “grievance” is a claim by a Grievant that there has been an alleged misapplication or misinterpretation of some provision of the handbook (or the master contract, if applicable).

**B. Timeliness** Failure of an administrator to render a decision within the prescribed time limits shall permit the Grievant to proceed to the next step. The failure of the Grievant to initiate or process a grievance timely shall bar further processing of the grievance.

### **C. Procedures**

**1. Step 1.** Within 10 calendar days following the alleged occurrence of a grievance, a Grievant may present a written grievance to his/her Principal. Within five calendar days of receipt of the grievance, the Principal may arrange for a meeting to discuss the grievance. The Principal shall issue a written response to the grievance within 10 calendar days of the receipt of the written grievance.

**2. Step 2.** If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved at Step 1, the grievance may be referred to the Superintendent or Superintendent’s designee within ten calendar days of receipt of the Principal’s written response. The Superintendent may arrange for a conference to discuss the grievance. The Superintendent shall provide a written decision to the Grievant within ten calendar days of the Superintendent’s receipt of the grievance.

**3. Step 3.** If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2, the Grievant may submit the grievance in writing to the Board within ten calendar days of receipt of the Superintendent’s decision. The Board will schedule and hear the matter at a regular or special meeting. The Board’s decision will be final and will be communicated to the Grievant.

Non-interference. Meetings regarding grievances shall occur at times that do not interfere with the conduct of the school day and the educational duties of school employees.

**D. Grievance Files** All documents, communication, and records dealing with grievance processing shall be filed separately from the personnel files of the employee.

Grievance forms will be made available to employees in each of the buildings in the district.

## Article 3: Salary Schedule and Rate of Pay

### **A. Schedule**

The salary of each employee is covered by the regular salary schedule set that is included in this handbook.

### **B. Placement on Salary Schedule**

Teachers new to the district are required to serve a probationary year set forth in the Chapter 279 of the Iowa Code.

Each employee will be placed on the salary schedule on his/her proper step of the salary schedule as of the effective date of this handbook.

### **C. Increments**

Employees on the regular salary schedule shall advance one step on the Salary Schedule for each year of service beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. A year of service consists of 90 or more days in one school year.

### **D. Educational Lanes**

Employees on the regular Salary Schedule who move to a higher educational level shall move to the corresponding step on the higher lane. Requests for reclassification in different educational lanes will be accepted until the first Monday following January 1. A certified transcript must be submitted to the Business Manager for evaluation by September 1 of that year.

#### **Bonuses**

Bonuses will be at the discretion of the Superintendent with final approval from the Southwest Valley Community School District Board of Education. Hiring bonuses could be granted for the difficult to fill positions determined by school administration.

Retention bonuses will be granted when an employee has successfully completed 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 years of service with the district, and returning to the district the following year. The five year bonus will be \$500, 10 will be \$1,000, 15 will be \$1,500, 20 will be \$2,000, 25 will be \$2,500, 30 will be \$3,000 and 35 will be \$3,500. This bonus system will begin July 1, 2020.

### **E. Method of Payment**

#### **Pay Periods**

Each employee shall be paid in twelve equal installments on the 20 of each month.

A pay stub will be emailed to all employees on their school issued email accounts.

#### **Balance of Contract**

Each employee who is not returning to the district for the next school year may receive the balance of their contract on June 20. A written request must be submitted to the Business Manager no later than May 31 to receive the balance of the contract on June 20.

#### **Annuities**

A 403b Tax Sheltered Annuity is available to all employees and will be funded by the employee.

## **F. Schedule B**

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

**Rates of Pay** Employees who participate in such activities shall be compensated according to the rate of pay or other stipulations in Schedule B. Rate of pay for any new or substantially changed activities will be negotiated at the time they are added or changed.

**Mileage Compensation** When a school vehicle is not available for use, the district will compensate an employee at .655 rate per mile. A school vehicle should be used when available.

**Extended Contracts** An employee who has a contract that extends beyond the school calendar year shall be compensated with a salary equal to the present rate pro-rated.

**Complimentary Pass** A complimentary pass to all co-curricular and extra-curricular activities of the Southwest Valley Community Schools shall be provided to each employee when employee completes pass requirements. This is a pass that includes the spouse or guest.

## Article 4: Group Insurance

### A. Board Provided Insurance

**Coverage** The Board-provided insurance programs for continuing employees shall be for twelve consecutive months. Employees new to the district shall be covered by Board-approved liability insurance as of their first day of in-service or regular school day, whichever is first.

**Health, Major Medical, and Dental** Each full-time employee shall be covered by a health, major medical, and dental program. The Board of Education will pay nine hundred (\$900) dollars per month based on the employee's FTE toward their health and/or dental premiums. Maximum cash amount for employees not subscribing to the provided insurance shall be two hundred (200) dollars per month. If an employee opts out, they must provide proof of insurance at enrollment. Employees not subscribing to the health insurance may opt for the dental and/or vision plan; the dental premium shall be deducted from the non-subscriber cash amount.

**Life Insurance** Each full-time employee shall be covered by a \$10,000 term life insurance program fully paid by the board.

**School Liability** All employees shall be covered by a school financed liability insurance covering performance of duties in the scope of the employee's employment. Employees required to use personal automobiles in their assigned duties shall be covered under the school umbrella liability policy.

## Article 5 Sick Leave

- A. Accumulative Benefits** All employees shall be given fifteen days of sick leave beginning on July 1. A maximum of 115 days may be accumulated by an employee. Sick leave will be used in units of one-half day or all day.
- B. Sick Leave Transfer to Personal Leave** A transfer of 10 sick leave days to 1 personal leave day. Maximum transfer of 20 sick days to 2 personal days per year. The transfer days are not eligible for “unused personal leave” pay and must be used by the end of the school year. A request for transfer can occur after all personal leave has been used. This request needs to be submitted to the Business Office two weeks prior to requested leave date.
- C. Sick Leave Transfer** Thirty days of sick leave may be transferred in from another district, or a combination of districts, should they be continuous in length with no breaks in time between districts.
- D. Notification of Accumulation** Employees shall be given a copy of a written accounting of accumulated sick leave days no later than September 1 of each school year.
- E. Sick Leave Bank**
- Establishment** A voluntary sick leave bank will be established for the use of employees who choose to donate to the bank.
- Enrollment** Enrollment will take place, for the purpose of determining membership, prior to September 15, or if any employee is hired by the district after the start of the school year, within twenty working days after the beginning employment with the district.
- Contributions** Each year, each member of the bank will contribute no more than one day to the bank of days which shall be made to the members of the bank. Once a sick leave day has been contributed, the employee forfeits the day.
- No Accumulation** At the end of the year, assets of the bank will reset to zero.
- Eligibility** An eligible employee is one who:
1. Is a contract employee
  2. Has timely volunteered for participation in the sick leave bank
  3. Has exhausted their personal sick leave and personal leave
- Utilization** The use of the sick leave bank days will be on a daily basis. Sick leave bank days may not be requested prior to the day of absence. The member will make application to the committee of three association members selected by the association and the Superintendent for use of days from the bank.



## Article 6: Leaves of Absence

**A. Paid Leaves** Employees shall be entitled to the following leaves of absence with full pay each school year. Such leaves shall be in addition to sick leave.

1. **Personal Leave** Each employee shall have three days leave per year to be used for personal affairs, without loss of pay. Personal leave days shall be credited to the employee as of the first official work day of the school year. An employee shall arrange for personal leave with their building administrator. Only one of the allotted personal days may be taken in May. Personal leave may not be used on the day immediately preceding or the day following holidays or vacations, or the first and last student days of the school year, unless approved by the Superintendent. Personal days shall not be deducted from sick leave. Each employee will be paid \$130 dollars for each personal leave day not used during the school year. This will be paid in the June paycheck.

2. **Jury or Legal Leave** An employee called for jury duty or who is required by a subpoena to appear in any judicial or administrative proceeding, or who shall be required by a subpoena to testify in any arbitration matter shall be provided such time. Any compensation the employee receives during such leave shall be turned over the Southwest Valley Community Schools. Jury or legal leave days shall not be deducted from sick leave.

3. **Family Illness Leave** An employee shall be excused from duty, without loss of pay for up to three days at any one time for serious illness or injury of a family member requiring medical attention. Family illness leave days shall be deducted from the sick leave of the employee. Family shall be defined as immediate family members, which includes spouse, parent of the employee, child, or other relative living with the employee for whom they are responsible.

4. **Professional Leave** Each employee may be entitled to use at least two professional days, with additional days at the discretion of the Superintendent, to attend conferences, meetings, or other professional gatherings in a non-supervisory capacity.

5. **Association Leave** A member of the association may take up to six days to attend conferences, conventions, or other activities of the NEA, ISEA, and the SW UniServ Unit at the discretion of the Association. The Board will pay the substitute for two days and the Association will pay the substitute for four days. Only two members of each building may attend unless prior arrangements are made. Association leaves will be requested at least two weeks in advance.

### 6. Bereavement Leave

- a. Immediate family is to be defined as husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, stepchild, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandfather, grandmother, grandchild, fiancé, spouses grandparents, or domestic partner (as defined in letter of understanding).
- b. Up to five (5) days of bereavement leave shall be granted, at any one time, in the event of an immediate family member's death.

- c. Up to one (1) day to attend funeral services in the event of the death of a friend.
  - d. An extension of bereavement leave may be granted by the Superintendent.
- 7. Maternity Leave**
- a. The first three weeks of maternity leave will be paid leave and will not be a deduction from the sick leave balance.

## Article 7: Employee Work Year

- A. Regular Contract** The contract shall not exceed one hundred and eighty-five days other than new personnel who may be required to attend a maximum of an additional two days of orientation at no extra compensation.
- Extended Contract** Extended contracts shall be paid at the employee's per diem for the length of the contract.
- B. Workday** The workday will be an eight hour day. The beginning and ending time will be determined by each building administrator. Employees may leave the building during their regularly scheduled break periods and lunch. Employees will be provided a duty-free lunch period extending at least (25) minutes in continuous length.
- Preparation Time** Classroom employees shall, in addition to their lunch period, have preparation time that will be no less than 164 minutes per five-day workweek. This preparation time shall not include the time prior to or after the student day. If an employees teaching schedule does not allow for a prep period that employee will be compensated \$5,000 per year.
- Paid Holidays** Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Memorial Day, when they occur during the regular term.
- Overload pay-** The district administration will work to ensure no classroom has over 27 students in the class. If the circumstances require the administration to assign more than 27 students to a room the teacher will be compensated \$1400. This amount will be prorated at the 6-12 level for how many sections that qualify. This shall not apply to Physical Education, Band, Choir, or any class that is taught by two or more certified employees.
- Meetings** The district administration will reserve the right to conduct meetings for informational, student progress, and emergencies. Employees should be notified within 24 hours prior to the start of the meeting when applicable.
- Notification of Absence** The employee shall notify their building administrator by no later than 7:00 a.m. on the day of the absence in order to ensure substitute coverage.

## Article 8: Teaching Assignments, Staff Reductions, Reassignment, Experience in District List

**A. Teaching Assignments** Each employee will be notified in writing of the position they will be assigned for the next school year no later than May 1. Prior to summer vacation, for those employees who might not be teaching the same subject area or grade level, each building principal shall discuss with their respective employee any new anticipated assignments. During summer vacation, if teaching assignments need to be altered, the affected employees will be receiving verbal and written notification.

**B. Reassignment** Vacancies as defined by the District will be posted. Interested employees may apply for reassignment to the vacancy. The decision on who shall fill a vacancy shall be within the absolute discretion of the Superintendent.

Employees may also be reassigned by the Superintendent to a different position whether currently vacant or filled, when the Superintendent deems to do so would be in the best interests of the district.

**Staff Reduction** Administration shall notify any affected employee by April 30 of a recommended staff reduction. The notice shall be in writing and shall specify reasons. The Board of Education will consider the following criteria when reducing staff:

1. Attrition will be considered.
2. Demonstrated performance will be considered including evaluations.
3. The District may also consider additional factors deemed relevant to best serve the needs and interests of the District including, but not necessarily limited to: certification, depth of educational preparation, experience in the district. The final decision on selection for staff reduction shall be within the sole discretion of the School Board.
4. An employee displaced by reduction may request to interview for any open positions they are qualified for in the district. They are guaranteed an interview, but not a position.
5. Should a layoff occur, any employee who does not want to voluntarily move to another position, which may be offered by the Board, may accept a lay-off and shall be accorded the recall rights.

**Experience in District List** On or before September 30 of each school year, the Association upon written request be provided a copy of a list showing experience in district of all certified employees.

## Article 9: Health and Safety Provisions

- A. Health Provision** The district will ensure to the best of their ability that employees are not required to work under unsafe working conditions or to perform tasks that endanger their health and safety.

## Article 10: Certified Employee Evaluation

- A. Formal Evaluations** All first and second year teachers will have a minimum of three formal evaluations yearly in their first two years of employment. A teacher new to the district will be evaluated a minimum of one time in their first year of employment with the district. All certified teachers that have served at least three consecutive years in the district will be evaluated once every three years. All teachers will be notified before the first day of school of a schedule if they are on the evaluation cycle.
- B. Results of Formal Evaluation** A written summary and post-observation conference shall be held between the administrator and employee within seven working days of the observation. Written evaluations will provide feedback to the teacher on their teaching and their compliance with the Iowa Teaching Standards. If a deficiency is recorded, the teacher and administrator should set up a plan to improve the deficiency in a timely manner. All formal evaluations should be signed and dated so the Superintendent knows procedure was followed. A signature does not indicate agreeance on any deficiency, but rather acknowledges the conference was held. A copy of the evaluation will be placed in the employee's personnel file and copy given to the employee. The employee reserves the right to attach a rebuttal to the evaluation that will be included in the file.
- C. Personnel File** Employees have the right to review the contents in the file, but may not remove anything from the file. This file will be maintained in the business office. This will be the only written file for the employee.
- D. Informal Evaluation** Principal's may perform unlimited amount of informal evaluations, but any written notes must be made available to the teacher upon request.

## Article 11: Superintendent's Advisory Committee

- A. Committee Members** The Superintendent will select a committee of teachers to serve on the SAC to ensure employee and administration relations remain transparent and positive. The committee will include two members selected by the association.