

# Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement

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**Midstate Special Education Coop**

**SECTION 1 - ORGANIZATION**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **1:10 District Legal Status**

The Illinois Constitution requires the State to provide for an efficient system of high-quality public educational institutions and services in order to achieve the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capabilities.

The General Assembly has implemented this constitutional mandate through the creation of joint agreements of various types for the purpose of providing special education services to children with disabilities. The Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement is governed by such mandates.

Special education programs and/or services shall be developed in accordance with The Illinois Rules and Regulations to Govern the Organization and Administration of Special Education as promulgated under the constitutional authority of the State of Illinois and the Office of the Illinois State Board of Education.

Consistent with 105 ILCS 5/10-22.31, the Mid-State Special Education Governing Board shall serve as the administrative and legal entity for the Special Education District.

The Governing Board constitutes a body corporate that possesses all the usual powers of a corporation for public purposes, and in that name may sue and be sued, purchase, hold and sell personal property and real estate, and enter into such obligations as are authorized by law.

CROSS REF.: 2:10 (District Governance), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Governing Board)

Adopted: September 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **1:20 Organization**

The District is organized under the "Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement."

Adopted: September 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## 1:30 Cooperative Philosophy

Mid-State Special Education believes that our overall mission is to foster positive outcomes for children with disabilities, focusing upon student achievement and well-being. The high quality, effective and equitable services and programs provided to the member districts shall meet the needs of each child in the least restrictive environment while equipping students to function independently in school, local and world communities.

To this end, we are committed to service delivery that encompasses the following standards:

**Service:** accessibility, integrity, technical assistance, collaboration

**Resources:** staff, parents, materials, technology, facilities, finances

**Quality:** accountability, best practices, professional development, performance indicators, evaluation

**Financial Stewardship:** fiscal responsibility, equitable services

Adopted: September 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

**SECTION 2 - GOVERNING BOARD**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:10 Joint Agreement Governance**

The Mid-State Joint Agreement is governed by the Mid-State Joint Agreement Governing Board composed of one duly designated member of the Board of Education of each Member District. The Superintendent of each member district shall be an ex officio member of the Governing Board and their presence or absence shall not be determinative of whether a quorum of the Governing Board exists. The Board's powers and duties include the broad authority to adopt and enforce all necessary policies for the management and government of the Joint Agreement.

Official action by the Governing Board may only occur at a duly called and legally conducted meeting. Except as otherwise provided by the Open Meetings Act, a quorum must be physically present at the meeting.

Governing Board members, as individuals, have no authority over school affairs, except as provided by law or as authorized by the Board.

CROSS REF.: 1:10 (Joint Agreement Legal Status), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Governing Board), 2:200 (Types of Board Meetings), 2:220 (Board Meeting Procedures)

Adopted: September 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:20 Powers and Duties of the Governing Board

### Powers and Duties of the Governing Board

The powers and duties of the Governing Board generally include:

- a. Recommend or approve amendments to the Articles of Joint Agreement.
- b. Hold an annual budget hearing and approve the final budget, which shall be by a majority vote of the entire Governing Board membership.
- c. Ratify the employment and appointment of employees, including a Special Education Director; the Board shall also ratify the dismissal or suspension of employees as provided by law. Such authority to hire and/or dismiss employees shall only be exercised with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee.
- d. Ratify contracts in accordance with applicable federal and State law, including any collective bargaining agreement regarding employees of this Joint Agreement, with the advise and consent of the Executive Committee.
- e. Provide for administration, staff, programs, financing, housing and transportation for the benefit of the students served by the Joint Agreement.
- f. Take any action which by law may only be taken by the Governing Board.
- g. Consider any other matters placed upon the agenda by the Governing Board, the Executive Committee or the Special Education Director.
- h. Consider additions to or deletions of delegation of authority to the Executive Committee.
- i. Complying with requirements in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA). Specifically, each individual Board member must, if an allegation is raised to the member during an open or closed Board meeting that a student is an abused child as defined in ANCRA, direct or cause the Board to direct the Special Education Director or other equivalent school administrator to comply with ANCRA's requirements concerning the reporting of child abuse.
- j. Establish yearly, any meetings to be held by the Governing Board.
- k. Authorize the incurring of indebtedness within the annual budget for the Joint Agreement.
- l. Ratify, annually, the annual delegation and definition of duties to the Executive Committee.
- m. Notifying the State Superintendent of Education promptly and in writing of the name of a licensed teacher who was convicted of a felony, along with the conviction and the name and location of the court where the conviction occurred.
- n. Notifying the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) of the State of Ill. Board of Trustees promptly and in writing when it learns that a teacher as defined in the Ill. Pension Code was convicted of a felony, along with the name and location of the court where the conviction occurred, and the case number assigned by that court to the conviction.
- o. Ratify, annually, the annual delegation and definition of the duties to the Special Education Director.

### Indemnification

To the extent allowed by law, the Governing Board shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless Governing Board members, Executive Committee Members, employees, volunteer personnel (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-22.34, 10-22.34a and 10-22.34b), mentors of certified staff (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a, 2-3.53b, and 105 ILCS 5/21A-5 et seq.), and student teachers who, in the course of discharging their official duties imposed or authorized by law, are sued as parties in a legal proceeding. Nothing herein, however, shall be construed as obligating the Governing Board and/or Executive Committee to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless any person who engages in criminal activity, official misconduct, fraud, intentional or willful and wanton misconduct, or acts beyond the authority properly vested in the individual.

CROSS REF.: 1:10 (District Legal Status), 2:10 (Joint Agreement Governance), 2:80 (Board Member Oath and Conduct), 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board), 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:70 (Resource Conservation), 4:100 (Insurance Management), 4:110 (Transportation), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:210 (Resignations), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:200 (Suspension Procedures), 8:10 (Connection with the Community), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

## **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:22 Executive Committee

The Governing Board shall appoint an Executive Committee which shall serve as an advisory body to the Governing Board, and which shall have the authority to direct the ongoing operations of the Joint Agreement within the annual budget, the directives, policies and rules of the Governing Board, and in accordance with the terms of the Joint Agreement. The Executive Committee shall also have such other and further authorities as may be delegated by the Governing Board to the Executive Committee from time to time.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the appointed Superintendents of Member Districts (or his/her authorized designee), and the Regional Superintendents of Schools of such regions as cover, from time-to-time, the Counties of Montgomery, Bond, Fayette, Christian and Macoupin. The Regional Superintendents shall be ex officio members of the Executive Committee, and therefore, be non-voting, advisory members. Further, their presence or absence from such a meeting shall not be determinative of whether or not a quorum exists.

The Executive Committee shall meet regularly, and at least monthly, and shall elect its own officers and establish procedures for the conduct of its meeting and business. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Committee. Except as otherwise provided by the Open Meetings Act, a quorum must be physically present at the meeting. Measures shall be deemed passed when approved by a majority of those Executive Committee members present who vote on an issue. Each member shall have one vote. An abstention shall not be considered a vote. A member of the Executive Committee may act at a meeting through a designee, if authorized, in writing, by the Executive Committee member. The attendance of a designee at a meeting shall not be counted in determining whether a quorum of members is present.

Annually, the Executive Committee shall appoint, by a majority vote of those attending a duly called meeting, a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson's term shall be for one year and coincide with MSSSED's fiscal year. The Executive Secretary of the Joint Agreement shall serve as the Secretary of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the general supervision and operation of the Joint Agreement for and on behalf of the Governing Board, and may, in the absence of action by the Governing Board to the contrary:

- a. Recommend to the Governing Board the employment of an Special Education Director.
- b. Employ other professional employees of the Joint Agreement subject to ratification by the Governing Board.
- c. Provide for administration, staff, programs, financing, housing, and transportation for the benefit of the students served by the Joint Agreement.
- d. Operate the Joint Agreement in accordance with the budget approved by the District.
- e. Efficiently and effectively render special education services to students residing in the Joint Agreement territory.
- f. Negotiate, subject to ratification by the Governing Board, on behalf of the Joint Agreement, collective bargaining agreements with sole and exclusive bargaining agents, as certified by the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board in respect to all persons employed by the Joint Agreement if applicable.

The foregoing notwithstanding, The Governing Board shall retain all authority for the operation of the Joint Agreement, and shall have the power to over-rule actions taken by the Executive Committee.

The Special Education Director shall have a responsibility for the over-all operation and direction of the Joint Agreement as directed by the Governing Board and the Executive Committee.

The Joint Agreement shall provide such professional services and other services and technical

support to Member Districts from time to time as is established by the Executive Committee from such locations as it may determine is in the best interests of the Joint Agreement.

Adopted: September 15, 2021

### **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:70 Vacancies on the Governing Board**

A vacancy may occur on the Governing Board by an elected Governing Board member's ceasing to be a member of his or her local School Board. The member district affected shall nominate another representative and notify the Special Education Director and the President of the Governing Board of the nomination.

Adopted: June 17, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## **2:80 Board Member Ethics**

The Governing Board adopts the Illinois Association of School Boards' "Code of Conduct for Members of School Boards". A copy of the Code shall be displayed in the regular Board meeting room.

CROSS REF.: 1:30 (School District Philosophy), 2:100 (Board Member Conflict of Interest), 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban)

Adopted: September 20, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:80-E Exhibit - Board Member Code of Conduct**

As a member of the Governing Board, I will do my utmost to represent the public interest in education by adhering to the following standards and principles:

1. I will represent all Joint Agreement constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender my responsibilities to special interest or partisan political groups.
2. I will avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety which could result from my position, and will not use my Board membership for personal gain or publicity.
3. I will recognize that a Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a Board meeting.
4. I will take no private action that might compromise the Board or administration and will respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
5. I will abide by majority decisions of the Board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels.
6. I will encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow Board members and will participate in Board discussions in an open, honest and respectful manner, honoring differences of opinion or perspective.
7. I will prepare for, attend and actively participate in Board meetings.
8. I will be sufficiently informed about and prepared to act on the specific issues before the Board, and remain reasonably knowledgeable about local, State, national, and global special education issues.
9. I will respectfully listen to those who communicate with the Board, seeking to understand their views, while recognizing my responsibility to represent the interests of the entire community.
10. I will strive for a positive working relationship with the Special Education Director, respecting the Director's authority to advise the Board, implement Board policy, and administer the Joint Agreement.
11. I will model continuous learning and work to ensure good governance by taking advantage of Board member development opportunities, such as those sponsored by my State and national school board associations, and encourage my fellow Board members to do the same.
12. I will strive to keep my Board focused on its primary work of clarifying the Joint Agreement purpose, direction and goals, and monitoring Joint Agreement performance.

DATED : September 20, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:100 Governing Board Member Conflict of Interest**

No Governing Board member shall: (1) have a beneficial interest directly or indirectly in any contract, work, or business of the Joint Agreement unless permitted by State or federal law; or (2) solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to agreements or contracts with the Joint Agreement. Situations in which the interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value must comply with State law and Board policy 2:105, Ethics and Gift Ban.

Governing Board members must annually file a *Statement of Economic Interests* as required by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. Each Governing Board member is responsible for filing the statement with the county clerk of the county in which his or her District's principle office is located by May 1.

### Federal and State Grant Awards

No Governing Board member shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award or State award governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/) if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when a Governing Board member or any of the following individuals has a financial or other interest in or a tangible benefit from the entity selected for the contract:

1. A member of the Governing Board member's immediate family;
2. The Governing Board member's partner; or
3. An entity that employs or is about to employ the Governing Board member or one of the individuals listed in one or two above.

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:105 Ethics and Gift Ban

### Prohibited Political Activity

The following precepts govern political activities being conducted by Joint Agreement employees and Board members:

1. No employee shall intentionally perform any "political activity" during any "compensated time," as those terms are defined herein.
2. No Board member or employee shall intentionally use any Joint Agreement property or resources in connection with any political activity.
3. At no time shall any Board member or employee intentionally require any other Board member or employee to perform any political activity: (a) as part of that Board member's or employee's duties, (b) as a condition of employment, or (c) during any compensated time off, such as, holidays, vacation, or personal time off.
4. No Board member or employee shall be required at any time to participate in any political activity in consideration for that Board member or employee being awarded additional compensation or any benefit, whether in the form of a salary adjustment, bonus, compensatory time off, continued employment or otherwise; nor shall any Board member or employee be awarded additional compensation or any benefit in consideration for his or her participation in any political activity.

A Board member or employee may engage in any activity that: (1) is otherwise appropriate as part of his or her official duties, or (2) is undertaken by the individual on a voluntary basis that is not prohibited by this policy.

### Limitations on Receiving Gifts

Except as permitted by this policy, no Board member or employee, and no spouse of or immediate family member living with a Board member or employee shall intentionally solicit or accept any "gift" from any "prohibited source," as those terms are defined herein, or that is otherwise prohibited by law or policy. No prohibited source shall intentionally offer or make a gift that violates this policy.

The following are exceptions to the ban on accepting gifts from a prohibited source:

1. Opportunities, benefits, and services that are available on the same conditions as for the general public.
2. Anything for which the Board member or employee, or his or her spouse or immediate family member, pays the fair market value.
3. Any: (a) contribution that is lawfully made under the Election Code, or (b) activities associated with a fundraising event in support of a political organization or candidate.
4. Educational materials and missions.
5. Travel expenses for a meeting to discuss business.
6. A gift from a relative, meaning those people related to the individual as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, great aunt, great uncle, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, and including the father, mother, grandfather, or grandmother of the individual's spouse and the individual's fiancé or fiancée.
7. Anything provided by an individual on the basis of a personal friendship unless the recipient has reason to believe that, under the circumstances, the gift was provided because of the official position or employment of the recipient or his or her spouse or immediate family member and not because of the personal friendship. In determining whether a gift is provided on the basis of

personal friendship, the recipient shall consider the circumstances under which the gift was offered, such as: (a) the history of the relationship between the individual giving the gift and the recipient of the gift, including any previous exchange of gifts between those individuals; (b) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift; and (c) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift also at the same time gave the same or similar gifts to other Board members or employees, or their spouses or immediate family members.

8. Food or refreshments not exceeding \$75 per person in value on a single calendar day; provided that the food or refreshments are: (a) consumed on the premises from which they were purchased or prepared; or (b) catered. "Catered" means food or refreshments that are purchased ready to consume which are delivered by any means.
9. Food, refreshments, lodging, transportation, and other benefits resulting from outside business or employment activities (or outside activities that are not connected to the official duties of a Board member or employee), if the benefits have not been offered or enhanced because of the official position or employment of the Board member or employee, and are customarily provided to others in similar circumstances.
10. Intra-governmental and inter-governmental gifts. "Intra-governmental gift" means any gift given to a Board member or employee from another Board member or employee, and "inter-governmental gift" means any gift given to a Board member or employee from an officer or employee of another governmental entity.
11. Bequests, inheritances, and other transfers at death.
12. Any item or items from any one prohibited source during any calendar year having a cumulative total value of less than \$100.

Each of the listed exceptions is mutually exclusive and independent of every other.

A Board member or employee, his or her spouse or an immediate family member living with the Board member or employee, does not violate this policy if the recipient promptly takes reasonable action to return a gift from a prohibited source to its source or gives the gift or an amount equal to its value to an appropriate charity that is exempt from income taxation under 26 U.S.C. §501(c)(3).

### Enforcement

The Board President and Special Education Director shall seek guidance from the Board attorney concerning compliance with and enforcement of this policy and State ethics laws. Written complaints alleging a violation of this policy shall be filed with the Special Education Director or Board President. If attempts to correct any misunderstanding or problem do not resolve the matter, the Special Education Director or Board President shall, after consulting with the Board attorney, either place the alleged violation on a Board meeting agenda for the Board's disposition or refer the complainant to Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A Board member who is related, either by blood or by marriage, up to the degree of first cousin, to the person who is the subject of the complaint, shall not participate in any decision-making capacity for the Board. If the Board finds it more likely than not that the allegations in a complaint are true, it shall notify the State's Attorney and/or consider disciplinary action for the employee.

### Definitions

Unless otherwise stated, all terms used in this policy have the definitions given in the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/1-5.

"Political activity" means:

1. Preparing for, organizing, or participating in any political meeting, political rally, political demonstration, or other political event.

2. Soliciting contributions, including but not limited to the purchase of, selling, distributing, or receiving payment for tickets for any political fundraiser, political meeting, or other political event.
3. Soliciting, planning the solicitation of, or preparing any document or report regarding anything of value intended as a campaign contribution.
4. Planning, conducting, or participating in a public opinion poll in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.
5. Surveying or gathering information from potential or actual voters in an election to determine probable vote outcome in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.
6. Assisting at the polls on Election Day on behalf of any political organization or candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
7. Soliciting votes on behalf of a candidate for elective office or a political organization or for or against any referendum question or helping in an effort to get voters to the polls.
8. Initiating for circulation, preparing, circulating, reviewing, or filing any petition on behalf of a candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
9. Making contributions on behalf of any candidate for elective office in that capacity or in connection with a campaign for elective office.
10. Preparing or reviewing responses to candidate questionnaires.
11. Distributing, preparing for distribution, or mailing campaign literature, campaign signs, or other campaign material on behalf of any candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
12. Campaigning for any elective office or for or against any referendum question.
13. Managing or working on a campaign for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
14. Serving as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention.
15. Participating in any recount or challenge to the outcome of any election.

With respect to an employee whose hours are not fixed, "compensated time" includes any period of time when the employee is on premises under the control of the Joint Agreement and any other time when the employee is executing his or her official duties, regardless of location.

"Prohibited source" means any person or entity who:

1. Is seeking official action by: (a) a Board member, or (b) an employee, or by the Board member or another employee directing that employee;
2. Does business or seeks to do business with: (a) a Board member, or (b) an employee, or with the Board member or another employee directing that employee;
3. Conducts activities regulated by: (a) a Board member, or (b) an employee or by the Board member or another employee directing that employee;
4. Has an interest that may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of the official duties of the Board member or employee;
5. Is registered or required to be registered with the Secretary of State under the Lobbyist Registration Act, except that an entity does not become a prohibited source merely because a registered lobbyist is one of its members or serves on its board of directors; or
6. Is an agent of, a spouse of, or an immediate family member living with a prohibited source.

"Gift" means any gratuity, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other tangible or intangible item having monetary value including but not limited to, cash, food and drink, and honoraria for speaking engagements related to or attributable to government employment or the official position of a Board member or employee.

## Complaints of Sexual Harassment Made Against Board Members by Elected Officials

Pursuant to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/70-5), members of the Board and other elected officials are encouraged to promptly report claims of sexual harassment by a Board member. Every effort should be made to file such complaints as soon as possible, while facts are known and potential witnesses are available. If the official feels comfortable doing so, he or she should directly inform the individual that the individual's conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.

Board members and elected officials should report claims of sexual harassment against a member of the Board to the Board President or Special Education Director. If the report is made to the Special Education Director, the Special Education Director shall promptly notify the President, or if the President is the subject of the complaint, the Vice President. Reports of sexual harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable.

When a complaint of sexual harassment is made against a member of the Board by another Board member or other elected official, the Special Education Director shall appoint a qualified outside investigator who is not a Joint Agreement employee or Board member to conduct an independent review of the allegations. The investigator shall prepare a written report and submit it to the Board.

If a Board member has engaged in sexual harassment, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board.

The Special Education Director will post this policy on the Joint Agreement website and/or make this policy available in the Joint Agreement's administrative office.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Governing Board Member Conflict of Interest), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:110 Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Governing Board Officers**

The Governing Board officers are: President, Vice President, and Secretary.

The board member representative of the Executive Board Chairperson's district shall serve as the President of the Governing Board. The President shall have all duties and responsibilities as provided by the laws of the State of Illinois. The President's term shall be for one year and coincide with MSSSED's fiscal year. In the event the President cannot continue to serve, the Executive Board Chairperson's district shall appoint a successor member from its district's Board of Education. Such member will assume the duties of President of the Governing Board.

The board member representative of the Executive Board Vice-Chairperson's district shall serve as the Vice-President of the Governing Board. The Vice-President shall have all duties and responsibilities as provided by the laws of the State of Illinois. The Vice-President's term shall be for one year and coincide with MSSSED's fiscal year.

The Governing Board shall appoint the Executive Secretary of the Joint Agreement to serve as the secretary of the Governing Board.

The Governing Board shall meet at least annually, and at such other times as it may be called by the President or any two (2) Governing Board Members.

Annually, the Executive Committee shall appoint, by a majority vote of those attending a duly called meeting, a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons' term shall be for one year and coincide with MSSSED's fiscal year. The Executive Secretary of the Joint Agreement shall serve as the Secretary of the Executive Committee.

CROSS REF.: 2:80 (Board Member Ethics ), 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:150 (Committees), 2:220 (Board Meeting Procedure), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria)

Adopted: May 17, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## **2:125 Board Member Compensation; Expenses**

### Board Member Compensation Prohibited

Board members provide volunteer service to the community and may not receive compensation for services, except that a Board member serving as the Board Secretary may be paid an amount up to the statutory limit if the Board so provides.

### Roll Call Vote

All Board member expense requests for travel, meals, and/or lodging must be approved by roll call vote at an open meeting of the Board.

### Regulation of Cooperative Expenses

The Board regulates the reimbursement of all travel, meal, and lodging expenses in the Cooperative by resolution. No later than approval of the annual budget and when necessary, the Director will recommend a maximum allowable reimbursement amount for expenses to be included in the resolution. The recommended amount should be based upon the Cooperative's budget and other financial considerations.

Money shall not be reimbursed or purchase orders issued for: (1) the expenses of any person except the Board member, (2) anyone's personal expenses, or (3) entertainment expenses. Entertainment includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless the entertainment is ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.

### Exceeding the Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Amount(s)

All requests for expense reimbursements and/or purchase orders that exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement amount set by the Board may only be approved by it when:

1. The Board's resolution to regulate expenses allows for such approval;
2. An emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists; and
3. The request is approved by a roll call vote at an open Board meeting.?

### Reimbursements and Purchase Orders

Expense reimbursement is not guaranteed and, when possible, Board members should seek pre-approval of expenses by providing an estimation of expenses on the Board's standardized estimated expense approval form, except in situations when the expense is diminutive. When pre-approval is not sought, Board members must seek reimbursement on the Board's standardized expense reimbursement form. Expense reimbursements and purchase orders shall be presented to the Board in its regular bill process.

### Standardized Expense Form(s) Required

All requests for expense reimbursement and/or purchase orders in the Cooperative must be submitted on the appropriate itemized, signed standardized form(s). The form(s) must show the following information:

1. The amount of the estimated or actual expense, with attached receipts for actual incurred expenses.
2. The name and office of the Board member who is requesting the expense reimbursement. Receipts from group functions must include the names, offices, and job titles of all participants.
3. The date(s) of the official business on which the expense will be or was expended.

4. The nature of the official business conducted when the expense will be or was expended.

#### Types of Official Business for Expense Reimbursements and Purchase Orders

1. Registration. When possible, registration fees will be paid by the Cooperative in advance.
2. Travel. The least expensive method of travel will be used, providing that no hardship will be caused to the Board member. Board members will be reimbursed for:
  - a. Air travel at the coach or economy class commercial airline rate. First class or business class air travel will be reimbursed only if emergency circumstances warrant. The emergency circumstances must be explained on the expense form and Board approval of the additional expense is required. Fees for the first checked bag will be reimbursed. Copies of airline tickets and baggage receipts must be attached to the expense form.
  - b. Rail or bus travel at actual cost. Rail or bus travel costs may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Copies of tickets must be attached to the expense form to substantiate amounts.
  - c. Use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service for income tax purposes. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Mileage for use of personal automobiles in trips to and from transportation terminals will also be reimbursed. Toll charges and parking costs will be reimbursed.
  - d. Automobile rental costs when the vehicle's use is warranted. The circumstances for such use must be explained on the expense form.
  - e. Taxis, airport limousines, ride sharing or other local transportation costs.
3. Meals. Board members will be reimbursed for meal costs and tips up to the current IRS reimbursement rate consistent with the maximum allowable reimbursement amount(s) set by the Board. Tips are included with meal charges. Expense forms must explain the meal charges incurred. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.
4. Lodging. Board members should request conference rate or mid-fare room accommodations. A single room rate will be reimbursed. Board members should pay personal expenses at checkout. If that is impossible, deductions for the charges should be made on the expense form.
5. Miscellaneous Expenses. Board members may seek reimbursement for other expenses incurred while attending a meeting sponsored by organizations described herein by fully describing the expenses on the expense form, attaching receipts.

#### Additional Requirements for Travel Expenses Charged to Federal and State Grants

All Board member expenses for travel charged to a federal grant or State grant governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/) must comply with Board policy 5:60, *Expenses*, and its implementing procedures. Travel expenses include costs for transportation, lodging, meals, and related items.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Board Member Conflict of Interest), 2:120 (Board Member Development), 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards), 5:60 (Expenses)

Adopted: June 17, 2020

## 2:125-E1 Exhibit - Board Member Expense Reimbursement Form

Submit to the Superintendent, who will include this request in the monthly list of bills presented to the School Board. Please print and attach receipts for all expenditures. **Use of this form is required by 2:125-E3, Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements.** Please print.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title/Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Destination: \_\_\_\_\_ Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Return Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Receipts attached** Request Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated expenses attached** (Completed 2:125-E2, Board Member Estimated Expense Approval Form)(pre-approval is required for federal and State grants).

**Approved expense advancement (voucher) attached, if applicable\*** (Completed 2:125-E2, Board Member Estimated Expense Approval Form.)

### Actual Expense Report

\* Board members will be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses that exceed the amount advanced, but must refund any expense advancement that exceeds the actual and necessary expenses incurred. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32. For federal and State grants, board members will be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses that exceed estimated expenses as permitted by Board policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*.

Auto Travel Allowance: \_\_\_\_\_ per mile

Date	Auto Mileage		Transp. Expenses	Lodging	Meals or Per Diem			Other		Daily Total
	Miles	Cost			Bkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Item	Cost	
<b>Subtotal</b>										
<b>Advances</b>									-	
<b>TOTAL</b> (a negative amount indicates refund due from Board member)									\$	

Submitting Board Member's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**School Board Action:**

**Approved**

**Denied**

**Approved in Part**

**Exceeds Maximum Allowable Amount**

**Grant Funding Source** (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATED : May 8, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



<b>Total</b>										<b>\$</b>

Submitting Board Member's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_

**School Board Action:**

**Approved**       **Denied**

**Approved in Part**    **Exceeds Maximum Allowable Amount**

**Grant Funding Source** (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATED : May 8, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:125-E3 Exhibit - Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements

WHEREAS, Section 10-20 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20) grants boards other powers that are not inconsistent with their duties;

WHEREAS, Section 10 of the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act (50 ILCS 150/) provides that the Board shall by resolution regulate the reimbursement of all travel, meal, and lodging expenses of officers and employees, including, but not limited to: (1) the types of official business for which travel, meal, and lodging expenses are allowed; (2) maximum allowable reimbursement for travel, meal, and lodging expenses; and (3) a standardized form for submission of travel, meal, and lodging expenses supported with minimum documentation;

WHEREAS, the Board regulates the types of expenses that are allowed in Board Policies 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses* and 5:60, *Expenses*;

WHEREAS, based upon the School District's budget and other financial considerations, the Superintendent has recommended to the Board a maximum allowable reimbursement amount of \$1,500.00 for Board members and District staff;

WHEREAS, the Board requires submission of appropriate standardized expense forms supported with required written minimum documentation (50 ILCS 150/10 and 20);

WHEREAS, submitted expenses that exceed the Board's maximum allowable reimbursement amount may be approved by a roll call vote at an open meeting of the Board when an emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists (50 ILCS 150/10 and 15);

WHEREAS, all Board member expenses must be approved by a roll call vote at an open meeting of the Board (50 ILCS 150/15);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby:

1. Defines and sets the types of allowable expenses through Board policies 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses* and 5:60, *Expenses*.
2. Sets the maximum allowable reimbursement for travel, meal, and lodging expenses to an amount not to exceed \$1,500.00, effective on January 18, 2017 until the Resolution is rescinded or replaced by the Board.
3. Supersedes its previously adopted *Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements* as of the effective date in paragraph two above.
4. Requires use of Board exhibits 2:125-E1, *Board Member Expense Reimbursement Form*; 2:125-E2, *Board Member Estimated Expense Approval Form*; 5:60-E1, *Employee Expense Reimbursement Form*; and 5:60-E2, *Employee Estimated Expense Approval Form*.
5. May approve expenses that exceed the Board's maximum allowable reimbursement amount by a roll call vote at an open meeting when an emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists.
6. Must approve its members' expenses by a roll call vote at an open meeting.

Attested by: \_\_\_\_\_, Board President

Attested by: \_\_\_\_\_, Board Secretary

DATED : September 15, 2021

## 2:140 Communications To and From the Board

The Governing Board and Executive Committee (Board) welcomes communications from staff members, parents/guardians, students, and community members. Individuals may submit questions or communications for the Board's consideration to the Director or may use the electronic link to the Executive Committee Member's email address(es) posted on the Cooperative's website.

The Director or designee shall:

1. Ensure that the home page for the Cooperative's website contains an active electronic link to the email address(es) for the Executive Committee, and
2. During the Board's regular meetings, report for the Board's consideration all questions or communications submitted through the active electronic link along with the status of the Cooperative's response in the Board meeting packet.

If contacted individually, Board members will refer the person to the appropriate level of authority, except in unusual situations. Board members' questions or communications to staff or about programs will be channeled through the Director's office. Board members will not take individual action that might compromise the Board or Cooperative. There is no expectation of privacy for any communication sent to the Board or its members, whether sent by letter, email, or other means.

### Board Member Use of Electronic Communications

For purposes of this section, *electronic communications* includes, without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, instant messaging, texting, and any form of social networking. Electronic communications among a majority or more of a Board-quorum shall not be used for the purpose of discussing Cooperative business. Electronic communications among Board members shall be limited to: (1) disseminating information, and (2) messages not involving deliberation, debate, or decision-making. The following list contains examples of permissible electronic communications:

- Agenda item suggestions
- Reminders regarding meeting times, dates, and places
- Board meeting agendas or information concerning agenda items
- Individual emails to community members, subject to the other limitations in this policy

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Oath of Office taken by Board members, individual Board members will not (a) reply to an email on behalf of the entire Board, or (b) engage in the discussion of Cooperative business through electronic communications with a majority of a Board-quorum.

CROSS REF.: 2:220 (Board Meeting Procedure), 3:30 (Chain of Command), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

Adopted: May 15, 2024



## 2:140-E Exhibit - Guidance for Board Member Communications, Including Email Use

The Open Meetings Act (OMA) requires the Governing Board and/or Executive Committee (Board) to discuss Cooperative business only at a properly noticed Board meeting. 5 ILCS 120/. Other than during a Board meeting, a majority or more of a Board-quorum may not engage in contemporaneous interactive communication, whether in person or electronically, to discuss Cooperative business. This *Guidance* assumes a Board has seven members and covers issues arising from Board policy 2:140, *Communications To and From the Board*.

### Communications Between or Among Board Members and/or the Director Outside of a Properly Noticed Board Meeting

1. The Director or designee is permitted to email information to Board members. For example, the Director may email Board meeting agendas and supporting information to Board members. When responding to a single Board member's request, the Director should copy all other Board members and include a *do not reply/forward* alert to the group, such as: "**BOARD MEMBER ALERT: This email is in response to a request. Do not reply or forward to the group but only to the sender.**"
2. Board members are permitted to discuss any matter except Cooperative business with each other, whether in person or by telephone or email, regardless of the number of members participating in the discussion. For example, they may discuss league sports, work, or current events.
3. Board members are permitted to provide information to each other, whether in person or by telephone or email, that is non-deliberative and non-substantive. Examples of this type of communication include scheduling meetings and confirming receipt of information.
4. A Board member is not permitted to discuss Cooperative business with more than one other Board member at a time, whether in person or by telephone or email. Stated another way, a Board member may discuss Cooperative business in person or by telephone or email with only one other Board member at a time. However, a Board member should not facilitate interactive communication by discussing Cooperative business in a series of visits with, or telephone calls or emails to, Board members individually.
5. A Board member should include a *do not reply/forward* alert when emailing a message concerning Cooperative business to more than one other Board member. The following is an example of such an alert: "**BOARD MEMBER ALERT: This email is not for interactive discussion purposes. The recipient should not reply to it or forward it to any other individual.**"
6. Board members should not forward email received from another Board member.

### When Must the Electronic Communications Sent or Received by Individual Board Members Be Disclosed Pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request?

An electronic communication must be disclosed if it is a *public record* as defined by FOIA, unless a specific exemption applies. A public record is any recorded information "pertaining to the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics, having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of any public body." 5 ILCS 140/2. Email sent or received by an individual Board member may be, depending on the content and circumstances, subject to disclosure as a *public record* (unless a FOIA exemption is applicable).

If a Board member uses a Cooperative-provided device or email address to discuss public business, the email is subject to disclosure under FOIA, barring an applicable exemption. If a Board member uses a private device and email address, the communication is subject to FOIA if it satisfies this test:

**First**, the communication pertains to the transaction of public business, and

**Second**, the communication was: (1) prepared by a public body, (2) prepared for a public body, (3) used by a public body, (4) received by a public body, (5) possessed by a public body, and/or (6) controlled by a public body.

This test is from the appellate court decision in City of Champaign v. Madigan, 992 N.E.2d 629 (Ill. App. Ct. 2013).

The following *examples* describe FOIA's treatment of electronic communications:

1. If an electronic communication does not pertain to public business, it is not a public record and is not subject to a FOIA request.
2. An electronic communication pertaining to public business that is:
  - a. Sent and/or received by an individual Board member using a personal electronic device and personal email address while he or she is at home or work **would not be a public record**. Individual Board members, alone, cannot conduct school Cooperative business. As stated earlier, emails among a majority or more of a Board-quorum violate OMA and, thus, are subject to disclosure during proceedings to enforce OMA.
  - b. Sent and/or received by an individual Board member on a Cooperative-issued device or Cooperative-issued email address **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is under the control of the Cooperative.
  - c. Received by an individual Board member on a personal electronic device and then forwarded by the Board member to a Cooperative-owned device or server **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is under the control of the Cooperative.
  - d. Received by an individual Board member using a personal electronic device and personal email address, and then forwarded by the Board member to enough members to constitute a majority or more of a Board-quorum **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is in the Cooperative's possession.
  - e. Either sent to or from a Board member's personal electronic device during a Board meeting **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is in the Cooperative's possession because Board members were functioning collectively as a public body.

The Cooperative's Freedom of Information Officer and/or Board Attorney will help determine when a specific communication must be disclosed pursuant to a FOIA request.

#### When Must Electronic Communications Be Retained?

Email that qualifies under FOIA as a *public record* will need to be stored pursuant to the Local Records Act (LRA), only if it is evidence of the Cooperative's organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities or contains informational data appropriate for preservation. 50 ILCS 205/. An example is any email from a Board officer concerning a decision made in his or her capacity as an officer. If a Board member uses his or her personal email, he or she must copy this type of email to the appropriate Cooperative office where it will be stored. If made available, Board members should use their email accounts provided by the Cooperative, and the Cooperative will automatically store the official record messages. The Cooperative will delete these official record messages as provided in an applicable, approved **retention schedule**. Of course, email pertaining to public business that is sent or received by a Board Member using a Cooperative-issued device or email address will be subject to FOIA, even if the email does not need to be retained under the LRA.

**Important:** Do not destroy any email concerning a topic that is being litigated without obtaining the

Board attorney's direction. In federal lawsuits, there is an automatic discovery of virtually all types of electronically created or stored data that might be relevant. Attorneys will generally notify their clients at the beginning of a legal proceeding not to destroy any electronic records that might be relevant. This is referred to as a *litigation hold*. For more discussion of a litigation hold, see 2:250-AP2, *Protocols for Record Preservation and Development of Retention Schedules*. In addition, any person who knowingly with the intent to defraud any party destroys, removes, or conceals any public record commits a Class 4 felony. 50 ILCS 205/4.

Adopted: May 15, 2024

DATED : May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:150 Committees**

The Governing Board may establish committees to assist with the Board's governance function and, in some situations, to comply with State law requirements. These committees are known as Board committees and report directly to the Board. Committee members may include both Board members and non-Board members depending on the committee's purpose. The Board President makes all Board committee appointments unless specifically stated otherwise. Board committee meetings shall comply with the Open Meetings Act. A Board committee may not take final action on behalf of the Board – it may only make recommendations to the Board.

Nothing in this policy limits the authority of the Director or designee to create and use committees that report to him or her or to other staff members.

CROSS REF.: 2:110 (Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers), 2:200 (Types of School Board Meetings), 2:240 (Board Policy Development)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:160 Board Attorney**

The Executive Committee may retain legal services with one or more attorneys or law firms to be the Board Attorney(s). The Board Attorney represents the Executive Committee in its capacity as the governing body for the Executive Committee. The Board Attorney serves on a retainer or other fee arrangement as determined in advance. The Board Attorney will provide services as described in the agreement for legal services or as memorialized by an engagement letter. The Cooperative will only pay for legal services that are provided in accordance with the agreement for legal services, as memorialized by and engagement letter, or that are otherwise authorized by this policy or a majority of the Board.

The Director, his or her designee, and the Executive Committee President, are each authorized to confer with and/or seek the legal advice of the Board Attorney. The Executive Committee may also authorize a specific Board member to confer with the Board Attorney on its behalf

The Director may authorize the Board Attorney to represent the Cooperative in any legal matter until the Executive Committee Board has an opportunity to be informed of and/or consider the matter.

The Executive Committee Board retains the right to consult with or employ other attorneys and to terminate the service of any attorney.

Adopted: June 17, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **2:170 Procurement of Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Services**

The Governing Board selects architects, engineers, and land surveyors to provide professional services to the District on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications, and in accordance with State law.

LEGAL REF.:

40 U.S.C. §1101 et seq.

50 ILCS 510/, Local Government Professional Services Selection Act.

Shively v. Belleville Twp. High Sch. Dist. 201, 329 Ill.App.3d 1156 (5th Dist. 2002), *appeal denied*.

Adopted: September 20, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:200 Types of Board Meetings

### General

For all meetings of the Governing Board and/or Executive Committee and its committees, the Special Education Director or designee shall satisfy all notice and posting requirements contained herein, as well as the Open Meetings Act. This shall include mailing meeting notifications to news media that have officially requested them, and to others as approved by the Governing Board. Unless otherwise specified, all meetings are held in the Joint Agreement's administrative offices. Board policy 2:220, *Board Meeting Procedure*, governs meeting quorum requirements.

Board members may attend meetings via a telephone conference call and speaker telephone.

The Director is designated on behalf of the Board and each Board committee to receive the training on compliance with the Open Meetings Act that is required by Section 1.05(a) of that Act. The Director may identify other employees to receive the training. In addition, each Board member must complete a course of training on the Open Meetings Act as required by Section 1.05(b) or (c) of that Act.

### Regular Meetings

The Governing Board and/or Executive Committee announces the time and place for its regular meetings at the beginning of each fiscal year. The Special Education Director shall prepare and make available the calendar of regular Board meetings in accordance with the School Code. The regular meeting calendar may be changed with 10 days' notice in accordance with State law.

A meeting agenda shall be posted at the administrative office and on the website or other location where the meeting is to be held, at least 48 hours before the meeting.

### Closed Meetings

The Governing Board and/or Executive Committee, and its committee's may meet in a closed meeting to consider the following subjects:

1. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with [the Open Meetings Act]. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).
2. Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).
3. The selection of a person to fill a public office, as defined in this Act, including a vacancy in a public office, when the public body is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the public body is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).
4. Evidence or testimony presented in open hearing, or in closed hearing where specifically authorized by law, to a quasi-adjudicative body, as defined in this Act, provided that the body prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4).
5. Evidence or testimony presented to the Board regarding denial of admission to school events or

property pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-24, provided that the Board prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5).

6. The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).
7. The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(6).
8. The sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(7).
9. Security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(8).
10. Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).
11. The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10).
12. Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).
13. The establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the public body or any intergovernmental risk management association or self insurance pool of which the public body is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(12).
14. Self-evaluation, practices and procedures, or professional ethics, when meeting with a representative of a statewide association of which the public body is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16).
15. Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21).
16. Meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involves internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(29).

The Board may hold a closed meeting, or close a portion of a meeting, by a majority vote of a quorum, taken at an open meeting. The vote of each Board member present, and the reason for the closed meeting, will be publicly disclosed at the time of the meeting and clearly stated in the motion and the meeting minutes.

A single motion calling for a series of closed meetings may be adopted by a Governing Board and/or Executive Committee quorum when such meetings will involve the same particular matters and are scheduled to be held within three months of the vote.

No final Board action will be taken at a closed meeting.

#### Reconvened or Rescheduled Meetings

A meeting may be rescheduled or reconvened. Public notice of a rescheduled or reconvened meeting shall be given in the same manner as that for a special meeting, except that no public notice is required when the original meeting is open to the public and: (1) is to be reconvened within 24 hours, or (2) an announcement of the time and place of the reconvened meeting was made at the original meeting and there is no change in the agenda.



## Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President, the Special Education Director, or the Executive Committee by giving notice thereof, in writing, stating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting to remaining Board members by mail at least 48 hours before the meeting, or by personal service at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Public notice of a special meeting is given by posting a notice at the Joint Agreement's administration office at least 48 hours before the meeting and by notifying the news media that have filed a written request for notice. A meeting agenda shall accompany the notice.

All matters discussed by the Governing Board and/or Executive Committee at any special meeting must be related to a subject on the meeting agenda.

## Emergency Meetings

Public notice of emergency meetings shall be given as soon as practical, but in any event, before the meeting to news media that have filed a written request for notice.

## Posting on the District's Website

In addition to the other notices specified in this policy, the Special Education Director or designee shall post the following on the website: (1) the annual schedule of regular meetings, which shall remain posted until the Board approves a new schedule of regular meetings; (2) a public notice of all Board meetings; and (3) the agenda for each meeting which shall remain posted until the meeting is concluded.

CROSS REF.: 2:220 (Board Meeting Procedure), 2:230 (Public Participation at Governing Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 8:30 (Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220 Board Meeting Procedure

### Agenda

The Board President or Chairperson is responsible for focusing the Board meetings' agendas on appropriate content. The Special Education Director shall prepare agendas in consultation with the Board President or Chairperson.

Each Board meeting agenda shall contain the general subject matter of any item that will be the subject of final action at the meeting. Items submitted by Governing Board/Executive Board members to the Special Education Director shall be placed on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. District residents may suggest inclusions for the agenda. Discussion items may be added to the agenda at the beginning of a regular meeting. The Board will take final action only on items contained in the posted agenda; items not on the agenda may still be discussed.

The Special Education Director or designee shall provide a copy of the agenda, with adequate data and background information, to each Governing Board/Executive Committee member at least 48 hours before each meeting, except a meeting held in the event of an emergency.

The Board President or Chairperson shall determine the order of business at regular Governing Board/Executive Committee meetings. Upon consent of a majority of members present, the order of business at any meeting may be changed.

### Voting Method

Unless otherwise provided by law, when a vote is taken upon any measure before the Governing Board/Executive Committee, with a quorum being present, a majority of the votes cast shall determine its outcome. A vote of "abstain" or "present," or a vote other than "yea" or "nay," or a failure to vote, is counted for the purposes of determining whether a quorum is present. A vote of "abstain" or "present," or a vote other than "yea" or "nay," or a failure to vote, however, is not counted as a "yea" or "nay" in determining whether a measure has been passed by the Board. However, an "abstain" or "present," or a vote other than "yea" or "nay," or a failure to vote, is counted as a negative vote when: (1) an "affirmative vote" of a majority is required by statute for passage, or (2) the Board is acting in a quasi-judicial manner and a member's participation would be unfair, such as, when the member was not present for the entire hearing. The sequence for casting votes shall be rotated.

On all questions involving the expenditure of money and on all questions involving the closing of a meeting to the public, a roll call vote shall be taken and entered in the Board's minutes. An individual Board member may request that a roll call vote be taken on any other matter; the President or other presiding officer may approve or deny the request but a denial is subject to being overturned by a majority vote of the members present.

### Minutes

The Board Secretary shall keep written minutes of all Governing Board/Executive Committee meetings (whether open or closed), which shall be signed by the President/Chairperson and the Secretary. The minutes include:

1. The meeting's date, time, and place;
2. Governing Board/Executive Committee members recorded as either present or absent;
3. A summary of the discussion on all matters proposed, deliberated, or decided, and a record of any votes taken;
4. On all matters requiring a roll call vote, a record of who voted "yea" and "nay";
5. If the meeting is adjourned to another date, the time and place of the adjourned meeting;
6. The vote of each member present when a vote is taken to hold a closed meeting or portion of a

meeting, and the reason for the closed meeting with a citation to the specific exception contained in the Open Meetings Act (OMA) authorizing the closed meeting;

7. A record of all motions, the members making the motion and the second;
8. Upon request by a Board member, a record of how he or she voted on a particular motion; and
9. The type of meeting, including any notices and, if a reconvened meeting, the original meeting's date.

The minutes shall be submitted to the Governing Board/Executive Committee for approval or modification at its next regularly scheduled open meeting. Minutes for open meetings must be approved within 30 days after the meeting or at the second subsequent regular meeting, whichever is later.

Every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, in an open meeting, the Governing Board/Executive Committee: (1) reviews minutes from all closed meetings that are currently unavailable for public release, and (2) determines which, if any, no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection. This is also referred to as a *semi-annual review*. The Governing Board or Executive Committee may meet in a prior closed session to review the minutes from closed meetings that are currently unavailable for public release, but it reports its determination in open session.

The official minutes are in the custody of the Board Secretary. Open meetings minutes are available for inspection during regular office hours within 10 days after the Board's approval, in the office of the Special Education Director or designee, in the presence of the Secretary, the Special Education Director or designee, or any Governing Board/Executive Committee member.

Minutes from closed meetings are likewise available, but only if the Board has released them for public inspection, except that Board members may access closed session minutes not yet released for public inspection (1) in the office of the Special Education Director or designee or their official storage location, and (2) in the presence of the records secretary, an administrative official of the public body, or any official of the public body. The minutes, whether reviewed by members of the public or the Board, shall not be removed from in the office of the Special Education Director or designee or their official storage location except by vote of the Board or by court order.

#### Verbatim Record of Closed Meetings

The Special Education Director or designee, or the Board Secretary when the Special Education Director or designee is absent, shall audio record all closed meetings. If neither is present, the Board President, Chairperson or presiding officer shall assume this responsibility. After the closed meeting, the person making the audio recording shall label the recording with the date and store it in a secure location. The Special Education Director shall ensure that: (1) an audio recording device and all necessary accompanying items are available to the Board for every closed meeting, and (2) a secure location for storing closed meeting audio recordings is maintained within the central administrative office.

After 18 months have passed since being made, the audio recording of a closed meeting is destroyed provided the Board approved: (1) its destruction, and (2) minutes of the particular closed meeting.

Individual Board members may access verbatim recordings in the presence of the records secretary, an administrative official of the public body, or any official of the public body. Access to the verbatim recordings is available at the office of the Special Education Director or designee or the verbatim recording's official storage location. Requests shall be made to the Special Education Director or designee or Board President. While a Board member is listening to a verbatim recording, it shall not be re-recorded or removed from the office of the Special Education Director or designee or official storage location, except by vote of the Board or by court order.

Before making such requests, Board members should consider whether such requests are germane to their responsibilities or service to the Joint Agreement. In the interest of encouraging free and open expression by Board members during closed meetings, the recordings of closed meetings should not be used by Board members to confirm or dispute the accuracy of recollections.

### Quorum

A majority of the full membership of the Governing Board/Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

### No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video; Disaster Declaration

The ability of the Board to meet in person with a quorum physically present at its meeting location may be affected by the Governor or the Director of the Ill. Dept. of Public Health issuing a disaster declaration related to a public health emergency. The Director determines that an in-person meeting or a meeting conducted under the **Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video Means** subhead above, is not practical or prudent because of the disaster declaration; if the Director is not present or able to perform this determination, the President or Chairperson of the Board or Committee shall serve as the duly authorized designee for purposes of making this determination.

The individual who makes this determination for the Board shall put it in writing, include it on the Board's published notice and agenda for the audio or video meeting and in the meeting minutes, and ensure that the Board meets every OMA requirement for the Board to meet by video or audio conference without the physical presence of a quorum.

### Rules of Order

Unless State law or Board-adopted rules apply, the Board President or Chairperson, as the presiding officer, will use Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, as a guide when a question arises concerning procedure.

### Broadcasting and Recording Board Meetings

Any person may record or broadcast an open Board meeting. Special requests to facilitate recording or broadcasting an open Board meeting, such as seating, writing surfaces, lighting, and access to electrical power, should be directed to the Special Education Director or designee at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Recording meetings shall not distract or disturb Board members, other meeting participants, or members of the public. The Board President or Chairperson may designate a location for recording equipment, may restrict the movements of individuals who are using recording equipment, or may take such other steps as are deemed necessary to preserve decorum and facilitate the meeting.

CROSS REF.: 2:200 (Types of Board Meetings), 2:230 (Public Participation at Governing Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

## 2:220-E1 Exhibit - Board Treatment of Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings and Minutes

The following procedures govern the verbatim audio recordings and minutes of Board meetings that are closed to the public.

Actor	Action
<p><i>Before any Board meeting:</i></p> <p>Special Education Director or designee</p>	<p>Arranges to have an audio recording device with adequate storage capacity and a back-up audio recording device in the Board meeting room during every Board meeting regardless of whether a closed meeting is scheduled.</p> <p>The Board may close a portion of a public meeting without prior notice; it cannot, however, have a closed meeting unless it can record the session.</p>
<p><i>Before a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Board President or presiding officer (#3 and #4 may be delegated to the Board Secretary or Recording Secretary)</p>	<p>On the closed meeting date: (1) convenes an open meeting, (2) requests a motion to adjourn into closed meeting making sure the reason for the meeting is identified in the motion, (3) takes a roll call vote, (4) ensures that the minutes record the vote of each member present and the reason for the closed meeting with a citation to the specific exception contained in the Open Meetings Act authorizing the closed meeting (5 ILCS 120/2a), and (5) adjourns the open meeting.</p>
<p><i>Before a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Special Education Director or Board Secretary</p>	<p>Immediately before a closed meeting, tests and activates the audio recording device.</p>
<p><i>During a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Board President or presiding officer</p>	<p>Convenes the closed meeting stating:</p> <p>Seeing a quorum of the Governing Board gathered today, ___ date, at ___ o'clock, at ___ location, for the purpose of holding a closed meeting in order to confidentially discuss ___, I call the meeting to order. In order to record who is present, I request that each individual state his or her name and position with the Joint Agreement.</p> <p>Limits discussion to the topics that were included in the motion to go into a closed meeting.</p> <p>The failure to immediately call a person out-of-order who strays from the purposes included in the motion may result in an appearance of acquiescence. This responsibility to call a person out-of-order falls on each Board member in the event of the President's failure.</p> <p>Once the closed meeting is finished, announces a return to an open meeting or adjournment, and states the time.</p>

<p><i>After a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Special Education Director, Recording Secretary, or Board Secretary</p>	<p><b>For Verbatim Recordings:</b></p> <p>Takes possession of the audio recording of the closed meeting and labels it with identification information, specifically the date and items discussed.</p> <p>Adds the identification information contained on the audio recording's label to a cumulative list of closed meeting recordings.</p> <p>As soon as possible, puts the recording of the closed meeting in the previously identified secure location for storing recordings of closed meetings.</p> <p>Upon request of a Board member:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides access to the verbatim recordings minutes at a reasonable time and place without disrupting Joint Agreement operations;</li> <li>2. Supervises the access to the closed session minutes or delegates it to one of the following individuals in the Joint Agreement: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A records secretary,</li> <li>b. An administrative official of the public body, or</li> <li>c. Any elected official of the public body; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Logs the access to the recordings in 2:220-E7, <i>Access to Closed Meeting Minutes and Verbatim Recordings</i>.</li> </ol> <p><b>For Closed Meeting Minutes:</b></p> <p>Prepares written closed meeting minutes that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The date, time, and place of the closed meeting</li> <li>• The Board members present and absent</li> <li>• A summary of discussion on all matters proposed or discussed</li> <li>• The time the closed meeting was adjourned</li> </ul> <p>Upon request of a Board member:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides access to the closed session minutes at a reasonable time and place without disrupting District operations;</li> <li>2. Supervises the access to the closed session minutes or delegates it to one of the following individuals in the District: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A records secretary,</li> <li>b. An administrative official of the public body, or</li> <li>c. Any elected official of the public body; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Logs the access in 2:220-E7, <i>Access to Closed Meeting Minutes and Verbatim Recordings</i>.</li> </ol>
<p><i>After a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Governing Board</p>	<p>Approves the previous closed meeting minutes at the next open meeting.</p>
	<p>Every six months, prepares a recommendation concerning the continued need</p>

<p><i>In preparation for the semi-annual review.</i></p> <p>Special Education Director or designee</p>	<p>Every six months, prepares a recommendation concerning the continued need for confidential treatment of all of the Board's closed meeting minutes; includes this recommendation in the packet for the meeting in which the Board will conduct its semi-annual review.</p> <p>This step is in preparation of the Board's meeting to decide whether the need for confidential treatment of specific closed meeting minutes continues to exist.</p> <p>If the Board wants to discuss closed meeting minutes in closed session, places "review of unreleased closed meeting minutes" on a closed meeting agenda.</p> <p>Places "result of Board's review of unreleased closed meeting minutes" on a subsequent open meeting agenda.</p>
<p><i>In preparation for the semi-annual review.</i></p> <p>Individual Board members</p>	<p>Before the meetings in which the Board will conduct its semi-annual review, examines the material supplied by the Special Education Director.</p> <p>Individual Board members should consider: (1) the Special Education Director's recommendation, (2) the recommendation of the attorney representing the District, (3) other Board members' opinions, (4) the minutes themselves, and/or (5) whether the minutes would be exempted from public disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act.</p>
<p><i>During the semi-annual review.</i></p> <p>Governing Board</p>	<p>During an open meeting, decides whether the need for confidential treatment of specific closed meeting minutes continues to exist.</p> <p>The Board may have an earlier meeting in closed session to discuss the continued need for confidential treatment.</p> <p>During the semi-annual review, the Board decides in open session whether: (1) the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of closed meeting minutes, or (2) the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.</p>
<p><i>After the semi-annual review.</i></p> <p>Special Education Director or designee</p>	<p>Re-labels and re-files closed meeting minutes as appropriate.</p>
<p><i>Monthly, beginning July 2005:</i></p> <p>Board President</p>	<p>Adds "destruction of closed meeting audio recording" as an agenda item to an upcoming open meeting.</p>
<p><i>Monthly, beginning July 2005:</i></p> <p>Governing Board</p>	<p>Approves the destruction of particular closed meeting recording(s) that are at least 18 months old and for which approved minutes of the closed meeting already exist.</p>

# Midstate Special Education Coop



## 2:220-E2 Exhibit - Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting

### Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Location:**

\_\_\_\_\_

A motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_, and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_, to adjourn to closed meeting to discuss:

- The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors, or specific volunteers of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor, or a volunteer of the District or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).
- Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).
- The selection of a person to fill a public office, including a vacancy in a public office, when the District is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the District is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).
- Evidence or testimony presented in open hearing, or in closed hearing where authorized by law, to a quasi-adjudicative body, as defined in this Act, provided that the body prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision with its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4).
- Evidence or testimony presented to the Board regarding denial of admission to school events or property pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-24, provided that the Board prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5), added by P.A. 103-311.
- The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the District, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).
- The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(6).
- The sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(7).
- Security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(8).
- Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).
- The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10).
- Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed

meeting minutes. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

- The establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Government and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the District or any intergovernmental risk management association or self insurance pool of which the District is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(12).
- Self-evaluation, practices and procedures, or professional ethics, when meeting with a representative of a statewide association of which the District is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16).
- Discussion of lawfully closed meeting minutes, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21).
- Meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involves internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(29).

**Closed Meeting Roll Call:**

<b>"Yeas"</b>	<b>"Nays"</b>
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**Motion carried.**

DATED : December 13, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220-E3 Exhibit - Closed Meeting Minutes

### Closed Meeting Minutes

Items in bold are required by 5 ILCS 120/2.06(a)(1)-(3). Non-bolded items align with best practices.

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Location:</b>	
Name of person taking the minutes:	
Name of person recording the closed meeting:	
<b>Names of members present:</b>	<b>Names of members absent:</b>
<b>Summary of the discussion on all matters (as specified in the vote to close the meeting):</b>	
<b>Basis for the finding that litigation is probable or imminent, if applicable (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)):</b>	
Time of adjournment or return to open meeting:	
<i>The Board, during its semi-annual review of closed session minutes, has decided these minutes no longer need confidential treatment. Semi-annual means every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the board. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>These minutes are available for public inspection as of:</b> _____ . (Date)	

DATED : March 16, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220-E4 Exhibit - Open Meeting Minutes

### Meeting Minutes Protocol

1. Meeting minutes are the permanent record of the proceedings during a Board meeting. All Board action must be recorded in the minutes; thus, the minutes focus on Board action.
2. The minutes only include information provided at the meeting. Information may not be corrected or updated in the minutes unless it was discussed at the meeting.
3. Minutes include a summary of the Board's discussion on an agenda topic; the minutes do not state what is said verbatim. The minutes do not repeat the same point made by different individuals. If appropriate, the minutes include a brief background and an explanation of the circumstances surrounding an issue discussed. The minutes do not include the names of members making specific points during discussion. Requests from individual Board members to include their vote or an opinion are handled according to Board policy 2:220, *School Board Meeting Procedure*.
4. The minutes include the topic of reports that are made to the Board including reports from the Special Education Director or a Board committee. Written reports are filed with the minutes but do not become part of the minutes.
5. The minutes note when a member is not present for the entire meeting due to late arrival and/or early departure.
6. Although items may be considered by the Board in a different order than appeared on the agenda, items in the minutes are generally recorded in the same order as they appeared on the agenda. When a meeting is reconvened on a different date, the minutes must describe what happened on each meeting date.
7. The minutes should be recorded in an objective but positive/constructive tone. Answers and explanations, rather than questions, are recorded. Writing style, including choice of words and sentence structure, is at the discretion of the individual recording the minutes.
8. The minutes include individuals' names who speak during the meeting's public participation segment as well as the topics they address. All written documents presented at a Board meeting are filed with the minutes but do not become part of the minutes.
9. The following template generally governs meeting minutes.

### Open Meeting Minutes

Date:	Time:
Location:	
Type of meeting: <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Special <input type="checkbox"/> Reconvened or rescheduled <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency	
Name of person taking the minutes:	
Name of person presiding:	

<p>Members in attendance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> </ol>	<p>Members absent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol> <p>Members in attendance remotely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>
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**Approval of Agenda**

<p>List any items removed from the consent agenda:</p>
<p>Motion made by:</p>
<p>Motion: <input type="checkbox"/> To approve</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> To add items as follows: <i>(No action may be taken on new agenda items.)</i></p>
<p>Motion seconded by: _____</p>
<p>Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Passed <input type="checkbox"/> Failed</p>

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes** *(Needed only if this item is not on the consent agenda.)*

<p>Minutes from the Board meeting held on:</p>
<p>Motion made by:</p>
<p>Motion: <input type="checkbox"/> To approve</p>

To approve subject to incorporation of the following amendment(s):

Motion seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

Action:  Passed  Failed

**Public Comments** *(Reproduce this section for each individual making a comment.)*

The following individual appeared and commented on the topic noted below: *(Include the title of any documents presented to the Board.)*

Name:

Topic:

**Remaining Agenda Items** *(Reproduce this section for each agenda item.)*

Agenda item:

Summary of discussion:

Motion made by:

Motion to:

Motion seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

Action:  Passed  Failed

*(If a roll call vote occurred, record the vote of individual Board members.)*

"Yeas"

"Nays"

**If Applicable, Approval of Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting** (*Insert 2:220-E2, Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting.*)

**Approval of Motion to Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by:

Motion seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

Action:  Passed  Failed

Time of adjournment:

**Post-Meeting Action**

Date minutes approved:

Date minutes were available for public inspection:

Date minutes were posted on Joint Agreement website:

DATED : September 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220-E5 Exhibit - Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

### Logging and Review Process

Step 1. The Board Secretary or Recording Secretary maintains a log of the closed meeting minutes that are unavailable for public inspection. The meeting minutes are logged according to the reason the Board held the closed meeting. 2:220-E6, *Log of Closed Meeting Minutes*.

Step 2. The Board meets in closed session to review the log of unreleased closed meeting minutes. The Board or Recording Secretary brings a copy of all unreleased closed meeting minutes and, if requested, allows Board members to review the actual minutes. The Board identifies which closed meeting minutes or portions thereof no longer need confidential treatment. Use *Report Following the Board's Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes*, below.

Step 3. At least semi-annually (every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the Board), in an open meeting, the Board takes action to release for public inspection those minutes, or portions thereof, no longer needing confidential treatment. Use *Action to Accept*, below. Closed meeting minutes will not be released for public inspection if confidential treatment is needed to protect the public interest or the privacy of an individual, including: (1) student disciplinary cases or other matters relating to an individual student, and (2) personnel files and employees' and Board members' personal information. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.

Step 4. The Board or Recording Secretary: (1) updates the log of unreleased closed meeting minutes to remove any minutes that the Board made available for public inspection; (2) makes a notation on any applicable closed meeting minutes of the Board's action to release it or a portion of it for public inspection; (3) continues to log new closed meeting minutes that the Board has not released for public inspection (2:220-E6, *Log of Closed Meeting Minutes*), and (4) maintains logs for access to closed session minutes pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e).

### Report Following the Board's Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

The Board met on \_\_\_\_\_ in closed session to conduct its semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes that have not been released for public inspection.

The closed meeting minutes, or portions thereof, from the following dates no longer require confidential treatment: *(insert closed meeting dates)*

--	--	--	--	--

The need for confidentiality still exists as to all remaining closed meeting minutes to protect an individual's privacy or the District's interests.

### Action to Accept the Board's Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

Open meeting date:
Motion to approve the Board's semi-annual review of unreleased closed meeting minutes and to release for public inspection those minutes, or portions thereof, that the Board identified as no longer needing confidential treatment made by:
Motion seconded by:
Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Passed <input type="checkbox"/> Failed



Action:  Passed  Failed

DATED : March 16, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220-E6 Exhibit - Log of Closed Meeting Minutes

The purpose of this log is to facilitate the Board's semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes. *Semi-annual* means every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the board. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653. See 2:220-E5, *Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes*.

The Board Secretary or Recording Secretary shall maintain a list of closed meeting minutes, arranged according to the reason for the closed meeting, that have not been released for public inspection.

Closed Session Held to Discuss:	Dates of Closed Sessions		
Specific employee(s), specific independent contractors, specific volunteers, or District legal counsel; however, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with [the Open Meetings Act]. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).			
Collective negotiating matters or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).			
Selection of a person to fill a vacancy on the Board. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).			
Evidence or testimony presented in a hearing where authorized by law. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4).			
Evidence or testimony presented to the Board regarding denial of admission to school events or property pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-24, provided that the Board prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5), added by P.A. 103-311.			
Purchase or lease of real property. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).			
Setting of a price for sale or lease of Cooperative property. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(6).			
Sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(7).			
Security procedures and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(8).			
Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9). <i>Minutes of meetings held for this reason shall never be released to protect the individual student's privacy.</i>			
Any matter involving an individual student. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10). <i>Minutes of meetings held for this reason shall never be released to protect the individual student's privacy.</i>			
Litigation, when an action against, affecting, or on behalf of the Cooperative has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the Board finds that an action is probable or imminent. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).			

<p>Establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Government and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the Cooperative or any intergovernmental risk management association or self insurance pool. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(12).</p>			
<p>Self-evaluation, practices and procedures or professional ethics, when meeting with an IASB representative. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16).</p>			
<p>Minutes of meetings lawfully closed, whether for purposes of approval or semi-annual review. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21).</p>			
<p>Meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involves internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(29).</p>			

DATED : December 13, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220-E7 Exhibit - Access to Closed Meeting Minutes and Verbatim Recordings

The Board must allow its duly elected officials or appointed officials filling a vacancy of an elected office access to closed session minutes and verbatim recordings. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e). The following subheads implement the logistics of granting this access.

### Access to Closed Meeting Minutes

*Duplicate this section for each grant of access to closed meeting minutes.*

Date:		Time:		Storage Location:
Name of person(s) responsible for storing the closed meeting minutes:				
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Access granted</b>				
Date access occurred:		Start time:		
Requesting Board member's name <i>(Please print)</i>				
In the presence of: <i>(Check appropriate box and insert name on line.)</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Records secretary				
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative official of the public body				
<input type="checkbox"/> Any elected official of the public body				

**For requesting Board member:** *(Read the following and sign below.)*

While the Open Meetings Act does not provide a cause of action against me or the Board for disclosing closed session discussions (Swanson v. Bd. of Police Commissioners, 197 Ill.App.3d 592 (2nd Dist. 1990)), I acknowledge and understand that any disclosures by me of information in the closed session minutes not yet released to the public could subject me to a possible civil action alleging that I created harm to another, i.e., an intentional tort(s).

Requesting Board Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Verbatim Recording Access

*Duplicate this section for each grant of access to verbatim recordings.*

Date:		Time:		Storage Location:
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Name of person(s) responsible for storing the verbatim recording:				
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Access granted</b>				
Date access occurred:		Start time:		End time:
Requesting Board member's name <i>(Please print)</i>				
In the presence of: <i>(Check appropriate box and insert name on line.)</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Records secretary				
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative official of the public body				
<input type="checkbox"/> Any elected official of the public body				
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Access denied</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Access unavailable.</b> Verbatim recording requested is older than 18 months and was destroyed pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c).				

**For requesting Board member:** *(Read the following and sign below.)*

While the Open Meetings Act does not provide a cause of action against me or the Board for disclosing closed session discussions (Swanson v. Bd. of Police Commissioners, 197 Ill.App.3d 592 (2nd Dist. 1990)), I acknowledge and understand that any disclosures by me of information in the closed session verbatim recordings could subject me to a possible civil action alleging that I created harm to another, i.e., an intentional tort(s).

Requesting Board Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED: September 15, 2021

DATED : September 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220-E8 Exhibit - School Board Records Maintenance Requirements and FAQs

### Open Meetings Act

The Open Meetings Act (OMA) requires public bodies to “keep written minutes of all their meetings, whether open or closed, and a verbatim record of all their closed meetings in the form of an audio or video recording.” 5 ILCS 120/2.06(a). Minutes must include, but are not limited to: (1) the date, time, and place of the meeting; (2) the members of the public body recorded as either present or absent and whether the members were physically present or present by means of video or audio conference; and (3) a summary of discussion on all matters proposed, deliberated, or decided, and record of any votes taken. Id.

The remainder of Section 2.06 addresses the approval of open meeting minutes, the treatment of verbatim recordings of closed meetings, the semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes, the confidential nature of closed meeting minutes, and the right of persons to address public officials under rules established and recorded by the public body. The requirements of Section 2.06, as well as OMA requirements pertaining to Board agendas, are included in policy 2:220, *School Board Meeting Procedure*.

Exhibit 2:220-E3, *Closed Meeting Minutes*, provides a sample template for keeping closed meeting minutes that incorporates the requirements of Section 2.06 of OMA. It also includes an area to designate if the Board has determined, pursuant to Section 2.06(d), that the closed meeting minutes no longer need confidential treatment.

Exhibit 2:220-E4, *Open Meeting Minutes*, contains a protocol for open meeting minutes that incorporates the requirements of Section 2.06 of OMA. It also provides a sample template for keeping open meeting minutes.

Exhibit 2:220-E5, *Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes*, contains a process for implementing the semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes, and exhibit 2:220-E6, *Log of Closed Meeting Minutes*, is designed to facilitate this semi-annual review

(every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the Board). 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.

Exhibit 2:220-E9, *Requirements for No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video During Disaster Declaration*, contains a process for compliance with 105 ILCS 120/7(e), added by P.A. 101-640, when a board is meeting without a physical quorum present at the meeting location during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns.

### Local Records Act

The Local Records Act (LRA) provides that public records, including “any book, paper, map, photograph, digitized electronic material, or other official documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made, produced, executed or received by any agency or officer pursuant to law or in connections with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by such agency or officer” must be preserved unless the State Local Records Commission has given permission to destroy those records. 50 ILCS 205/3 and 7. Board records, including agendas, meeting packets and meeting minutes, fall into this definition.

Public bodies located in Cook County must work with the Local Records Commission of Cook County to determine how long they must retain public records. Public bodies located outside of Cook County must work with the Downstate Local Records Commission to determine how long they must retain public records.

Policy 2:250, *Access to District Public Records*, contains a subhead entitled **Preserving Public Records** which provides as follows:

Public records, including email messages, shall be preserved and cataloged if: (1) they are evidence of the District’s organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities, (2) they contain informational data appropriate for preservation, (3) their retention is required by State or federal law, or (4) they are subject to a retention request by the Board Attorney (e.g., a litigation hold), District auditor, or other individual authorized by the School Board or State or federal law to make such a request. Unless its retention is required as described in items numbered 3 or 4 above, a public record, as defined by the Illinois Local Records Act, may be destroyed when authorized by the Local Records Commission.

See the sample policy, 2:220, *School Board Meeting Procedure*, for all relevant footnotes. Also see administrative procedure 2:250-AP2, *Protocols for Record Preservation and Development of Retention Schedules*, for recommendations regarding school district records retention protocols and links to web-based record management resources.

Open Meeting Minutes

Are we required to approve them?	Must they be semi-annually reviewed?	May we release them to the public?	May we destroy them?
<p>Yes, within 30 days or at the next subsequent meeting, whichever is later.</p> <p><i>A public body shall approve the minutes of its open meeting within 30 days after that meeting or at the public body’s second subsequent regular meeting, whichever is later. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(b).</i></p>	<p>No.</p> <p>Unlike the closed meeting requirement, OMA does not contain semi-annual review requirements for open meeting minutes.</p>	<p>Yes, must within 10 days after minutes are approved.</p> <p><i>The minutes of meetings open to the public shall be available for public inspection within 10 days after the approval of such minutes by the public body. Beginning July 1, 2006, at the time it complies with other requirements of this subsection, a public body that has a website that the full-time staff of the public body maintains shall post the minutes of a regular meeting of its governing body open to the public on the public body’s website within 10 days after the approval of the minutes by the public body. Beginning July 1, 2006, any minutes of meetings open to the public posted on the public body’s website shall remain posted on</i></p>	<p>No.</p> <p>There is no OMA provision permitting the destruction of open meeting minutes, and <b>they must be preserved unless the State Local Records Commission has given permission to destroy them.</b></p> <p>If a public body would like to destroy open meeting minutes, then it must comply with the LRA and work with its Local Records Commission. It is highly unlikely, however, that the Local Records Commission would approve of their destruction.</p>

		<i>the website for at least 60 days after their initial posting. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(b).</i>	
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Open Meeting Verbatim Recordings

<b>Are we required to approve them?</b>	<b>Must they be semi-annually reviewed?</b>	<b>May we release them to the public?</b>	<b>May we destroy them?</b>
No.  OMA does not require public bodies to approve verbatim recordings of open meetings.	No.  Unlike the closed meeting requirement, OMA does not require public bodies to keep verbatim recordings of open meetings, <i>unless</i> the public body is meeting without the physical presence of a quorum during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns. 5 ILCS 120/7(e). OMA does not contain semi-annual review requirements for open meeting verbatim recordings.	Yes.  Unlike the closed meeting requirement, OMA does not require public bodies to keep verbatim recordings of open meetings, <i>unless</i> the public body is meeting without the physical presence of a quorum during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns. 5 ILCS 120/7(e). If a public body makes verbatim recordings of open meetings, then such recordings are subject to public disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. 5 ILCS 140/.	Open meeting verbatim recordings made of meetings held without the physical presence of a quorum of a public body during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns may be destroyed after 18 months if prerequisites are met. (See <u>Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings</u> subhead, below).  <i>[P]ublic bodies holding open meetings under this subsection (e) must also keep a verbatim record of all their meetings in the form of an audio or video recording. Verbatim records made under this paragraph (9) shall be made available to the public under, and are otherwise subject to, the provisions of Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9).</i>  In all other cases, if a public body would like to destroy open meeting verbatim recordings, then it must comply with the LRA and work with its Local Records Commission.

Closed Meeting Minutes

<b>Are we required to approve them?</b>	<b>Must they be semi-annually reviewed?</b>	<b>May we release them to the public?</b>	<b>May we destroy them?</b>
Yes	Yes	Yes if prerequisites are	No



<p>OMA does not directly state public bodies are required to approve closed meeting minutes, nor does it set a time frame for such approval. However, OMA Section 2.06(d) requires public bodies to meet at least semi-annually to “review minutes of all closed meetings.” 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d).</p> <p>Moreover, OMA Section 2.06(c) specifically allows the destruction of closed meeting verbatim recordings only if certain conditions are met, one of which is that “the public body approves minutes of the closed meeting that meet the written minutes requirements of subsection (a) of this Section.” 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c)(2). Both of these tasks would be difficult to achieve if closed meeting minutes were not first approved.</p> <p>One practice is to approve closed meeting minutes within the same time frame that open meeting minutes are approved – within 30 days of the meeting or at the next subsequent meeting, whichever is later.</p>	<p><i>Each public body shall periodically meet to review all existing minutes of all prior closed meetings (this includes records from all time that the board has been in existence). Meetings to review minutes shall occur every 6 months, or as soon thereafter as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the public body. At such meetings a determination shall be made, and reported in an open session that (1) the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes or (2) that the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.</i> 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.</p>	<p>Yes, if prerequisites are met.</p> <p><i>Minutes of meetings closed to the public shall be available only after the public body determines that it is no longer necessary to protect the public interest or the privacy of an individual by keeping them confidential.</i> 5 ILCS 120/2.06(f).</p>	<p>There is no OMA provision permitting the destruction of closed meeting minutes, and <b>they must be preserved unless the State Local Records Commission has given permission to destroy them.</b></p> <p>In addition:</p> <p><i>No minutes of meetings closed to the public shall be removed from the public body’s main office or official storage location, except by vote of the public body or by court order.</i> 5 ILCS 120/2.06(f).</p> <p>If a public body would like to destroy closed meeting minutes, then it must comply with the LRA and work with its Local Records Commission. It is highly unlikely, however, that the Local Records Commission would approve of their destruction.</p>
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Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings

Are we required to approve them?	Must they be semi-annually reviewed?	May we release them to the public?	May we destroy them?
<p>No.</p> <p>OMA does not require approval of closed meeting verbatim recordings.</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>OMA does not require semi-annual review of closed meeting verbatim recordings.</p>	<p>Possibly but unlikely.</p> <p><i>Unless the public body has made a determination that the verbatim recording no</i></p>	<p>Yes, after 18 months if prerequisites are met.</p> <p><i>The verbatim record may be destroyed without notification to or</i></p>

		<p><i>longer requires confidential treatment or otherwise consents to disclosure, the verbatim record of a meeting closed to the public shall not be open for public inspection or subject to discovery in any administrative or judicial proceeding other than one brought to enforce this Act. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e).</i></p> <p>But see <u>Kodish v. Oakbrook Terrace Fire Protection Dist.</u> (235 F.R.D. 447 (N.D. Ill. 2006), where a federal district court ordered that closed meeting verbatim recordings be disclosed to the Plaintiff in discovery because his primary claim was brought under federal law.</p>	<p><i>the approval of a records commission or the State Archivist under the Local Records Act or the State Records Act no less than 18 months after the completion of the meeting recorded but only after: 1.) the public body approves the destruction of a particular recording; and 2.) the public body approves minutes of the closed meeting that meet the written minutes requirements of subsection (a) of this Section. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c).</i></p> <p>In addition:</p> <p><i>No verbatim recordings shall be recorded or removed from the public body's main office or official storage location, except by vote of the public body or by court order. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e).</i></p>
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DATED : March 16, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:220-E9 Exhibit - Requirements for No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video During Disaster Declaration

### Documentation of OMA Requirements for Board Members to Participate in a Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum

The Governor or the Director of the Ill. Dept. of Public Health has issued a disaster declaration related to a public health emergency because of a disaster as defined in 20 ILCS 3305/4, and all or part of the jurisdiction of the Board is covered by the disaster area. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(1), amended by P.A. 101-640. **Note:** OMA uses “public health concerns,” but the Ill. Emergency Management Act (IEMA) uses “public health emergency;” this exhibit matches the IEMA term because it governs disaster declarations.

*Insert Disaster Declaration or Executive Order number [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] or attach to this document.*

The Director or if unable to make the determination, the President or Chairperson, (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(2), amended by P.A. 101-640, and 140/2(e)) signs below that the following three **Steps** were executed by:

**Step 1.** Determining whether the meeting is a bona fide emergency (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(7), amended by P.A. 101-640) (*check Yes or No, below*):

Yes; it is an emergency meeting, and I:

- A. Notified the Board members and the public, including any news medium which has filed an annual request for notice of meetings as soon as practicable, but in any event prior to the holding of such meeting pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.02(a) and 120/7(e)(7)(A), amended by P.A. 101-640;
- B. Stated the nature of the emergency at the beginning of the meeting; and
- C. Provided the Board Secretary the resources necessary during the meeting to keep a verbatim record of the meeting, **for both open and closed**, and managed it the same way that the Board complies with the verbatim recording requirements for closed meetings (see exhibit 2:220-E1, *Board Treatment of Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings and Minutes*). **Note:** In this situation, a verbatim recording is not limited to closed meetings only.
- D. Move to Step 2, below.

No; it is a regular or special meeting, and I:

- A. Ensured that the Board provided 48 hours’ notice of the meeting to all Board members, to any news medium on file in the Cooperative that have requested notice of meetings pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.02(a), and to members of the public by posting it on the Joint Agreement’s website. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(7), amended by P.A. 101-640. **Note:** 5 ILCS 120/7(e), amended by P.A. 101-640 does not have the “if any” exception for school boards that do not have websites. Consult the board attorney regarding alternate ways to communicate notice of a meeting when the district does not have a website and a Disaster Declaration or Executive Order has been issued.

*Insert meeting date and time, and a link to the meeting notice or attach a copy of the notice to this document.*

B. Moves to Step 2, below.

**Step 2.** Determining whether it is practical, prudent, or feasible for any in-person attendance at the regular meeting location (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(2), amended by P.A. 101-640). (*check Yes or No, below*):

Yes; in-person attendance is practical, prudent, or feasible, and I:

- A. Ensured that at least one Board member, the Board Attorney, or the Director was physically present at the regular meeting location (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(5), amended by P.A. 101-640), and
- B. Verified that members of the public who were present could hear all discussion and testimony and all votes of the members of the Board. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(4), amended by P.A. 101-640.
- C. Move to Step 3, below.

No; in-person attendance is not practical, prudent, or feasible, and I:

- A. Made a written determination referring to the specific Executive Order or Disaster Declaration citing the public health concern/emergency that applies to the Board and the meeting. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(1) and (2), amended by P.A. 101-640.
- B. Included the written determination made in letter A., above, on the Board's published notice and agenda for the alternative arrangements for the meeting. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(7)(A)-(B), amended by P.A. 101-640.
- C. Offered the alternative arrangements to the public by offering a telephone number or a web-based link. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(4), amended by P.A. 101-640.

*Insert a link to the meeting notice or attach a copy of the notice or refer to above if already attached to this document (see above).*

*Include this written determination on the Board/Committee's published notice and agenda for the audio or video meeting, and in the meeting minutes.*

D. Move to Step 3, below.

**Step 3.** During the meeting, I:

Directed the Recording Secretary to, in addition to the requirements for open meetings under OMA, also keep verbatim record of the open meeting by recording it and making it open and available to the public under all provisions of OMA. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9), amended by P.A. 101-640. *Sample text follows below in the subhead below **Report to the Public Following the Board's Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum.***

Read my written determination referring to the specific Executive Order or Disaster Declaration citing the public health concern/emergency that applies to the Board and the meeting and directed the Recording Secretary to include it in the meeting minutes.

Ensured that any interested member of the public has access to contemporaneously hear all discussion, testimony, and roll call votes. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(4), amended by P.A. 101-640.

Requested the Recording Secretary to enter into the appropriate minutes of the Board that each Board member participating in the meeting, wherever their physical locations, announced:

1. Themselves present (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(3), amended by P.A. 101-640), and
2. A verification that they could hear one another and all discussion and testimony. Id.

See 2:220-E3, *Closed Meeting Minutes* and/or 2:220-E4, *Open Meeting Minutes*.

*Attach to this document copies or information about where these minutes may be found.*

Announced and considered each Board member participating in the meeting present at the meeting for purposes of determining a quorum and participating in all proceedings (5 ILCS 120/7(e)

(8), amended by P.A. 101-640) and directed the Recording Secretary to reflect it in the minutes (best practice for transparency).

Conducted all votes by roll call, so each Board member’s vote on each issue could be identified and recorded (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(6), amended by P.A. 101-640), and ensured that the Recording Secretary entered all votes as **Roll Call Votes** (Use exhibit 2:220-E4, Open Meeting Minutes but ensure all votes are recorded as roll call votes pursuant to the example below):

“Yeas”	“Nays”
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**Motion:**  Carried     Failed

Executed or directed execution of the subhead below **Report to the Public Following the Board’s Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum.**

Report to the Public Following the Board’s Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum

*The text below may be used for the actual report.*

The Board or Committee met on [insert date] with no physical presence of quorum to conduct its business.

The verbatim [circle one] audio | video recording of this meeting is available to the public under all provisions of OMA and will be destroyed pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c)(no less than 18 months after the completion of the meeting recorded but only after: (1) the Board approves the destruction of the particular recording; and (2) the Board approves minutes of the meeting that meet the written minutes requirements of OMA). 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9), amended by P.A. 101-640.

*Insert links to the verbatim recording of meeting here or attach to this document.*

**Note:** Consult the board attorney for guidance on the destruction of a verbatim recording of an open meeting without the physical presence of a quorum. While 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c) refers to the process for destroying closed session verbatim recordings, 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9), amended by P.A. 101-640, applies that process for destroying closed session verbatim recordings to the destruction of the verbatim open session recordings that are required when a board determines it is necessary for it to meet without the physical presence of a quorum due to a public health emergency.

Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

DATED : August 19, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:230 Public Participation at Governing Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board

This policy applies to Governing Board and Executive Committee Board meetings. For a maximum of 60 minutes during each regular and special open Governing Board and/or Executive Committee meeting, any person may comment to or ask questions of the Board (*public participation*), subject to the reasonable constraints established and recorded in this policy's guidelines below. The time limit for public participation at a meeting may be extended upon the majority vote of the Board members at the regular or special meeting. The Board listens to comments or questions during public participation; responses to comments to or questions of the Board are most often managed through policy 3:30, *Chain of Command*.

To preserve sufficient time for the Board to conduct its business, any person appearing before the Board is expected to follow these guidelines:

1. Address the Board only at the appropriate time as indicated on the agenda and when recognized by the Board President or Chairperson. This includes following the directives of the Board President or Chairperson to maintain order and decorum for all.
2. Use a sign-in sheet, if requested.
3. Identify oneself and be brief. Ordinarily, the time for any one person to address the Board during public participation shall be limited to five minutes. In unusual circumstances, and when an individual has made a request to speak for a longer period of time, the Board President or Chairperson may allow a person to speak for more than five minutes. If multiple individuals wish to address the Board on the same subject, the group is encouraged to appoint a spokesperson.
4. Observe, when necessary and appropriate, the Board President or Chairperson's authority to:
  - a. Shorten the time for each person to address the Board during public participation to conserve time and give the maximum number of people an opportunity to speak; and/or
  - b. Determine procedural matters regarding public participation not otherwise covered in Board policy.
5. Conduct oneself with respect and civility toward others and otherwise abide by Board policy 8:30, *Conduct on School Property*.

Petitions or written correspondence to the Board shall be presented to the Governing Board and/or Executive Committee in the next regular Board packet.

### LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-6 and 5/10-16.

5 ILCS 120/2.06, Open Meetings Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:220 (Board Meeting Procedure), 8:10 (Public Relations/Media Inquiries), 8:30 (Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: June 22, 2022

## **2:240 Board Policy Development**

Board governance requires written policies. Written policies ensure legal compliance, establish board processes, delegate authority, and define operating limits. The Governing Board may delegate board policy responsibilities to the Executive Committee Board.

### Policy Development

Anyone may propose new policies, changes to existing policies, or elimination of existing policies. Staff suggestions should be processed through the Special Education Director. Suggestions from all others may be made to the Executive Committee Chairperson or the Special Education Director.

The Special Education Director is responsible for: (1) providing relevant policy information and data to the Board, (2) notifying those who will be affected by a proposed policy and obtaining their advice and suggestions, and (3) having policy recommendations drafted into written form for Board deliberation. The Special Education Director shall seek the counsel of the school attorney when appropriate.

### Policy Adoption and Dissemination

Policies or policy revisions shall be first presented for reading and consideration by the Executive Board or Policy Committee at a duly called meeting. After a policy(ies) or revision(s) is presented for reading and consideration, by the Executive Board, the policy(ies) or revision(s) may be approved by the Executive Committee Board and implemented. Annually, the Governing Board will review and approve MSSE Policies.

The Board policies are available for public inspection on the Mid-State Special Education website and in the administrative office during regular office hours. Copy requests should be made under the Access to Public Records Policy.

### Board Policy Review and Evaluation

The Executive Committee Board will monitor MSSE policies and consider whether any modifications are required.

### Words Importing Gender

Throughout this policy manual, words importing the masculine and/or feminine gender include all gender neutral/inclusive pronouns.

### Special Education Director Implementation

The Board will support any reasonable interpretation of policy made by the Special Education Director and the Policy Committee. If reasonable minds differ, the Board will review policy and consider the need for further clarification.

In the absence of policy, the Special Education Director and Executive Committee are authorized to take appropriate action.

### Suspension of Policies

The Board, by a majority vote of members present at any meeting, may temporarily suspend a Board policy not established by law or contract. The failure to suspend with a specific motion does not invalidate the Board action.

CROSS REF.: 2:250 (Access to Joint Agreement Public Records), 3:40 (Special Education Director)

Adopted: September 15, 2021

# Midstate Special Education Coop



## 2:250 Access to Joint Agreement Public Records

Full access to the Joint Agreement's *public records* is available to any person as provided in the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), this policy, and implementing procedures. The Special Education Director or designee shall: (1) provide the Board with sufficient information and data to permit the Board to monitor the Joint Agreement's compliance with FOIA and this policy, and (2) report any FOIA requests during the Board's regular meetings along with the status of the Joint Agreement's response.

### Freedom of Information Officer

The Director shall serve as the Joint Agreement's Freedom of Information Officer and assumes all the duties and powers of that office as provided in FOIA and this policy. The Director may delegate these duties and powers to one or more designee's, but the delegation shall not relieve the Director of the responsibility for the action that was delegated.

### Definition

The Joint Agreement's *public records* are defined as records, reports, forms, writings, letters, memoranda, books, papers, maps, photographs, microfilms, cards, tapes, recordings, electronic data processing records, electronic communications, recorded information and all other documentary material pertaining to the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics, having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of the School Joint Agreement.

### Requesting Records

A request for inspection and/or copies of public records must be made in writing and may be submitted by personal delivery, mail, telefax, or email directed to the Joint Agreement's Freedom of Information Officer. Individuals making a request are not required to state a reason for the request other than to identify when the request is for a commercial purpose or when requesting a fee waiver. The Special Education Director or designee shall instruct Joint Agreement employees to immediately forward any request for inspection and copying of a public record to the Joint Agreement's Freedom of Information Officer or designee.

### Responding to Requests

The Freedom of Information Officer shall approve all requests for public records unless:

1. The requested material does not exist;
2. The requested material is exempt from inspection and copying by the Freedom of Information Act; or
3. Complying with the request would be unduly burdensome.

Within five business days after receipt of a request for access to a public record, the Freedom of Information Officer shall comply with or deny the request, unless the time for response is extended as specified in Section 3 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer may extend the time for a response for up to five business days from the original due date. If an extension is needed, the Freedom of Information Officer shall: (1) notify the person making the request of the reason for the extension, and (2) either inform the person of the date on which a response will be made, or agree with the person in writing on a compliance period.

The time periods are extended for responding to requests for records made for a *commercial purpose*, requests by a *recurrent requester*, or *voluminous requests*, as those terms are defined in Section 2 of FOIA. The time periods for responding to those requests are governed by Sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.6 of FOIA.

When responding to a request for a record containing both exempt and non-exempt material, the Freedom of Information Officer shall redact exempt material from the record before complying with the request.

### Fees

Persons making a request for copies of public records must pay any and all applicable fees. The Freedom of Information Officer shall establish a fee schedule that complies with FOIA and this policy and is subject to the Board's review. The fee schedule shall include copying fees and all other fees to the maximum extent they are permitted by FOIA, including without limitation, search and review fees for responding to a request for a *commercial purpose* and fees, costs, and personnel hours in connection with responding to a *voluminous request*.

Copying fees, except when fixed by statute, shall be reasonably calculated to reimburse the Joint Agreement's actual cost for reproducing and certifying public records and for the use, by any person, of its equipment to copy records. In no case shall the copying fees exceed the maximum fees permitted by FOIA. If the Joint Agreement's actual copying costs are equal to or greater than the maximum fees permitted by FOIA, the Freedom of Information Officer is authorized to use FOIA's maximum fees as the Joint Agreement's fees. No copying fees shall be charged for: (1) the first 50 pages of black and white, letter or legal sized copies, or (2) electronic copies other than the actual cost of the recording medium, except if the response is to a *voluminous request*, as defined in FOIA.

A fee reduction is available if the request qualifies under Section 6 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer shall set the amount of the reduction taking into consideration the amount of material requested and the cost of copying it.

### Provision of Copies and Access to Records

A public record that is the subject of an approved access request will be available for inspection or copying at the Joint Agreement's administrative office during regular business hours, unless other arrangements are made by the Freedom of Information Officer.

Many public records are immediately available from the Joint Agreement's website including, but not limited to, the process for requesting a public record. The Freedom of Information Officer shall direct a requester to the Joint Agreement's website if a requested record is available there. If the requester is unable to reasonably access the record online, he or she may resubmit the request for the record, stating his or her inability to reasonably access the record online, and the Joint Agreement shall make the requested record available for inspection and copying as otherwise provided in this policy.

### Preserving Public Records

Public records, including email messages, shall be preserved and cataloged if: (1) they are evidence of the Joint Agreement's organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities, (2) they contain informational data appropriate for preservation, (3) their retention is required by State or federal law, or (4) they are subject to a retention request by the Board Attorney (e.g., a litigation hold), Joint Agreement auditor, or other individual authorized by the School Board or State or federal law to make such a request. Unless its retention is required as described in items numbered 3 or 4 above, a public record, as defined by the Illinois Local Records Act, may be destroyed when authorized by the Local Records Commission.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

# Midstate Special Education Coop

## 2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure

Students, parents/guardians, employees, or community members should notify any Complaint Manager if they believe that the Governing Board, its employees, or its agents have violated their rights guaranteed by the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, or Board policy, or have a complaint regarding any one of the following:

1. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.
2. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., excluding Title IX sexual harassment complaints governed by policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*
3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §791 et seq.
4. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq.
5. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq.
6. Sexual harassment prohibited by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a); Illinois Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/; and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq. (Title IX sexual harassment complaints are addressed under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*)
7. Breastfeeding accommodations for students, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60
8. Bullying, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7
9. The misuse of funds received for services to improve educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged or deprived children
10. Curriculum, instructional materials, and/or programs
11. Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, 820 ILCS 180/
12. Illinois Equal Pay Act of 2003, 820 ILCS 112/
13. Provision of services to homeless students
14. Illinois Whistleblower Act, 740 ILCS 174/
15. Misuse of genetic information prohibited by the Illinois Genetic Information Privacy Act, 410 ILCS 513/; and Titles I and II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000ff et seq.
16. Employee Credit Privacy Act, 820 ILCS 70/

The Complaint Manager will first attempt to resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure. If a formal complaint is filed under this policy, the Complaint Manager will address the complaint promptly and equitably. A student and/or parent/guardian filing a complaint under this policy may forego any informal suggestions and/or attempts to resolve it and may proceed directly to this grievance procedure. The Complaint Manager will not require a student or parent/guardian complaining of any form of harassment to attempt to resolve allegations directly with the accused (or the accused's parents/guardians); this includes mediation.

### Right to Pursue Other Remedies Not Impaired

The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed under this policy shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies, e.g., criminal complaints, civil actions, etc. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies. If a person is pursuing another remedy subject to a complaint under this policy, the Joint Agreement will continue with a simultaneous investigation under this policy.

### Deadlines

All deadlines under this policy may be extended by the Complaint Manager as he or she deems

appropriate. As used in this policy, *school business days* means days on which the Joint Agreement's main office is open.

### Filing a Complaint

A person (hereinafter Complainant) who wishes to avail him or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any Complaint Manager. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same sex. The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student. The Complaint Manager shall assist the Complainant as needed.

For any complaint alleging bullying and/or cyberbullying of students, the Complaint Manager shall process and review the complaint according to Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy. For any complaint alleging sexual harassment or other violation of Board policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, the Complaint Manager shall process and review the complaint according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy.

### Investigation Process

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf. The Complaint Manager shall ensure both parties have an equal opportunity to present evidence during an investigation. If the Complainant is a student, under 18 years of age, the Complaint Manager will notify his or her parents/guardians that they may attend any investigatory meetings in which their child is involved. The complaint and identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the Complainant.

The identity of any student witnesses will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the parent/guardian of the student witness, or by the student if the student is 18 years or age or older.

The Complaint Manager will inform, at regular intervals, the person(s) filing a complaint under this policy about the status of the investigation. Within 30 school business days after the date the complaint was filed, the Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Special Education Director. The Complaint Manager may request an extension of time.

The Special Education Director will keep the Executive Committee informed of all complaints. If the complaint involves the Special Education Director or Governing Board member(s), the chairperson of the Executive Committee will keep the Governing Board informed of the complaint and its status.

### Decision and Appeal

Within five school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's report, the Special Education Director shall mail his or her written decision to the Complainant and the accused by registered mail, return receipt requested, and/or personal delivery as well as to the Complaint Manager. All decisions shall be based upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.

Within 10 school business days after receiving the Special Education Director's decision, the Complainant or the accused may appeal the decision to the Executive Committee by making a written request to the Complaint Manager. The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Executive Committee.

Within 30 school business days after an appeal of the Special Education Director's decision, the

Executive Committee shall affirm, reverse, or amend the Special Education Director's decision or direct the Special Education Director to gather additional information. Within five school business days after the Executive Committee's decision, the Special Education Director shall inform the Complainant and the accused of the Executive Committee's action.

For complaints containing allegations involving the Special Education Director or Governing Board member(s), within 30 school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's or outside investigator's report, the Governing Board shall mail its written decision to the Complainant and the accused by registered mail, return receipt requested, and/or personal delivery as well as to the Complaint Manager.

This policy shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Special Education Director, Executive Committee or Governing Board. The failure to strictly follow the timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.

### Appointing a Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers

Annually, by July 1<sup>st</sup>, a Nondiscrimination Coordinator and a male and a female Complaint Manager shall be appointed by the Executive Committee for the Joint Agreement. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator may serve as one of the Complaint Managers. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator also serves as the Joint Agreement's Title IX Coordinator.

The Special Education Director shall insert into this policy and keep current the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and the Complaint Managers. The Special Education Director or designee shall ensure that students, parents/guardians, employees, and members of the community are informed of the contact information for the Joint Agreement's Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers on an annual basis.

### **Nondiscrimination Coordinator:**

#### **Mid-State Special Education**

Name: Bobbi Fisher , Director

Address: 202 Prairie St., PO Box 46, Morrisonville, IL 62546

Email: bobbi.fisher@midstatespec.org

Telephone: 217-526-8121

### **Complaint Managers:**

Name: Bobbi Fisher , Director

Address: 202 Prairie St., PO Box 46,  
Morrisonville, IL 62546

Email: bobbi.fisher@midstatespec.org

Telephone: 217-526-8121

Name: Executive Committee Member: David  
Powell, Superintendent

Address: 1311 Vandalia Rd., Hillsboro, IL 62049

Email: dpowell@hillsboroschools.net

Telephone: 217-532-2942

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 5:10 (Equal

Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 8:95 (Parental Involvement), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

## **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 2:265 Title IX Grievance Procedure

Sexual harassment affects a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to work. Providing an educational and workplace environment free from sexual harassment is an important Joint Agreement goal. The Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities, and it complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106) concerning everyone in the Joint Agreement's education programs and activities, including applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and third parties.

### Title IX Sexual Harassment Prohibited

Sexual harassment as defined in Title IX (Title IX Sexual Harassment) is prohibited. Any person, including a Joint Agreement employee or agent, or student, engages in Title IX Sexual Harassment whenever that person engages in conduct on the basis of an individual's sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A Joint Agreement employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the Joint Agreement's educational program or activity; or
3. *Sexual assault* as defined in 20 U.S.C. §1092(f)(6)(A)(v), *dating violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(11), *domestic violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(12), or *stalking* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(36).

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities, rape, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

### Definitions from 34 C.F.R. §106.30

*Complainant* means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

*Education program or activity* includes locations, events, or circumstances where the Joint Agreement has substantial control over both the *Respondent* and the context in which alleged sexual harassment occurs.

*Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* means a document filed by a *Complainant* or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a *Respondent* and requesting that the Joint Agreement investigate the allegation.

*Respondent* means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of the conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

*Supportive measures* mean non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the *Complainant* or the *Respondent* before or after the filing of a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* or where no *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* has been filed.

### Title IX Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response

The Special Education Director or designee will ensure that the Joint Agreement prevents and responds to allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment as follows:



1. Incorporates education and training for school staff pursuant to policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, and as recommended by the Special Education Director, Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, or a Complaint Manager.
2. Notifies applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and collective bargaining units of this policy and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator by, at a minimum, prominently displaying them on the Joint Agreement's website, if any, and in each handbook made available to such persons.

### Making a Report

A person who wishes to make a report under this Title IX Sexual Harassment grievance procedure may make a report to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the person is comfortable speaking. A person who wishes to make a report may choose to report to a person of the same gender.

Joint Agreement employees shall respond to incidents of sexual harassment by promptly making or forwarding the report to the Title IX Coordinator. An employee who fails to promptly make or forward a report may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

The Special Education Director shall insert into this policy and keep current the name, office address, email address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator.

### **Title IX Coordinator:**

Director Mid-State Special Education

Angela K. Armour

202 Prairie St., PO Box 46, Morrisonville, IL 62546

angie.armour@midstatespec.org

217-526-8121

### Processing and Reviewing a Report or Complaint

Upon receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator and/or designee will promptly contact the *Complainant* to: (1) discuss the availability of supportive measures, (2) consider the *Complainant's* wishes with respect to *supportive measures*, (3) inform the *Complainant* of the availability of *supportive measures* with or without the filing of a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint*, and (4) explain to the *Complainant* the process for filing a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint*.

Further, the Title IX Coordinator will analyze the report to identify and determine whether there is another or an additional appropriate method(s) for processing and reviewing it. For any report received, the Title IX Coordinator shall review Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; and 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*; to determine if the allegations in the report require further action.

Reports of alleged sexual harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the Joint Agreement's duty to investigate and maintain an educational program or activity that is productive, respectful, and free of sexual harassment.

### Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Grievance Process

When a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will investigate it or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation.

The Director or designee shall implement procedures to ensure that all *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaints* are processed and reviewed according to a Title IX grievance process that fully complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45. The Joint Agreement's grievance process shall, at a minimum:

1. Treat *Complainants* and *Respondents* equitably by providing remedies to a *Complainant* where the *Respondent* is determined to be responsible for sexual harassment, and by following a grievance process that complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45 before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions against a *Respondent*.
2. Require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and provide that credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a *Complainant*, *Respondent*, or witness.
3. Require that any individual designated by the Joint Agreement as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated by the Joint Agreement to facilitate an informal resolution process:
  - a. Not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual *Complainant* or *Respondent*.
  - b. Receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the Joint Agreement's *s education program or activity*, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process (including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable), and how to serve impartially.
4. Require that any individual designated by the Joint Agreement as an investigator receiving training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.
5. Require that any individual designated by the Joint Agreement as a decision-maker receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the *Complainant's* sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.
6. Include a presumption that the *Respondent* is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
7. Include reasonably prompt time frames for conclusion of the grievance process.
8. Describe the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies the Joint Agreement may implement following any determination of responsibility.
9. Base all decisions upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.
10. Include the procedures and permissible bases for the *Complainant* and *Respondent* to appeal.
11. Describe the range of *supportive measures* available to *Complainants* and *Respondents*.
12. Not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

### Enforcement

Any Joint Agreement employee who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Executive Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the Joint Agreement t, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any Joint Agreement student who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance

process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with student behavior policies of the student's district, as determined by the student's district. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding sexual harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy does not increase or diminish the ability of the Joint Agreement or the parties to exercise any other rights under existing law.

### Retaliation Prohibited

The Joint Agreement prohibits any form of retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, has made a report or complaint, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in a proceeding under this policy. Any person should report claims of retaliation using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Any person who retaliates against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in any manner under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion, with regard to students.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

**SECTION 3 - GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

### **3:30 Line and Staff Relations**

The Special Education Director shall develop an organizational chart indicating the channels of authority and reporting relationships for school personnel. These channels should be followed, and no level should be by-passed except in unusual situations.

All personnel should refer matters requiring administrative action to the responsible administrator, and may appeal a decision to a higher administrative officer. Whenever possible, each employee should be responsible to only one immediate supervisor. Where this is not possible, the division of responsibility must be clear.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

Adopted: September 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **3:40 Special Education Director**

### Duties and Authority

The Special Education Director is the Joint Agreement's executive officer and is responsible for the administration and management of the Joint Agreement programs in accordance with Governing Board policies and directives, and State and federal law. District management duties include, without limitation, preparing, submitting, publishing, and posting reports and notifications as required by State and federal law, including the special reporting responsibilities in policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. The Special Education Director is authorized to develop administrative procedures to implement Governing Board policy.

The Special Education Director may delegate to other Joint Agreement staff members the exercise of any powers and the discharge of any duties imposed upon the Special Education Director by Governing Board policies or by Board vote. The delegation of power or duty, however, shall not relieve the Special Education Director of responsibility for the action that was delegated.

### Qualifications and Appointment

The Special Education Director must be of good character and of unquestionable morals and integrity. The Special Education Director shall have the experience and the skills necessary to work effectively with the Governing Board, Executive Committee, Joint Agreement employees, students, and the community. The Special Education Director shall have proper licensure/State approval.

When the office of the Special Education Director becomes vacant, the Executive Committee will conduct a search to find the most capable person for the position and make a recommendation to the Governing Board for ratification. Qualified staff members who apply for the position will be considered for the vacancy.

### Evaluation

The Executive Committee will evaluate, annually, by February 1<sup>st</sup> the Special Education Director's performance, using standards and objectives developed by the Special Education Director and Committee that are consistent with State law and the Joint Agreement's mission and goal statements. A specific time should be designated for a formal evaluation session with all Executive Committee members present. The evaluation should include a discussion of professional strengths as well as performance areas needing improvement.

### Compensation and Benefits

The Governing Board and the Special Education Director shall enter into a contract that conforms to this policy and State law. This contract shall govern the employment relationship between the Governing Board and the Special Education Director. The terms of the Special Education Director's employment agreement, when in conflict with this policy, will control.

CROSS REF: 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Governing Board), 2:240 (Governing Board Policy Development), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:210 (Resignations), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

# Midstate Special Education Coop

## 3:40-E Exhibit - Checklist for the Special Education Director Employment Contract Negotiation Process

The Governing Board hires and employs the Special Education Director. The Director shall be in charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the Board, through its policies. See 105 ILCS 5/10-21.4 and 105 ILCS 5/10-16.7. As an effective employer, the Board must develop and maintain a productive relationship with the Director. See IASB's *Foundational Principles of Effective Governance*, **Principle 3. The board employs a superintendent, at:** [www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/training-resources/foundational-principles-of-effective-governance/](http://www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/training-resources/foundational-principles-of-effective-governance/).

The foundation for a productive employment relationship begins when the Board identifies the most qualified director candidate (*successful director candidate*) after an established interview process. The Board then extends an offer of employment to the successful director candidate. The employment search process and resulting relationship should consist of mutual respect and a clear understanding of respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This relationship should begin with the Board's policy, a thoughtfully crafted employment contract and job description, and procedures for communications and ongoing assessment. See *Principles* at the link above.

Below, the *Checklist for the Director Employment Contract Negotiation Process (Checklist)* provides a column entitled **Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board**. It lists common director employment contract terms and points of consideration for boards to prepare for during the contract formation process. Another column entitled **Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources** provides extra information about these common director employment contract terms.

The *Checklist* is intended to serve as a resource to educate and guide the Board through the employment contract negotiation process with its successful director candidate. Board members who are educated about the content within the *Checklist* are crucial to successful negotiation processes. An educated contract formation and negotiation process, along with a well-written contract and job description for the Director, all set the foundation for mutual respect and a clear understanding of the Board and Director's respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations. **Important:** This *Checklist* is a resource for contract formation; it is not a list of must have items for a director's employment contract or a basis for a board to re-open contracts currently in effect.

Prior to providing the successful director candidate an offer for employment and contract for review, consideration, and negotiation, consult the Board Attorney about the *Checklist* and the scope of the terms the Board wishes to offer the successful director candidate. The Board and the successful director candidate should expect and encourage the other to seek the advice of their respective attorneys during the employment contract formation process.

Many attorneys agree and best practices suggest that boards and successful director candidates work with their own separate attorneys in an amicable and cooperative manner to complete the employment contract negotiation process.

**Board Attorney.** Prior to providing any successful director candidate with an offer for employment and a contract for review, consideration, and negotiation, best practices suggest consulting the Board Attorney about the *Checklist*. Note: Boards should view a successful director candidate retaining his or her own attorney as a best practice (as opposed to a warning sign). Each party is beginning the employment relationship in a cooperative manner to set an appropriate foundation to the future working relationship.

**Power and Duties of the Director**

Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
	Does the Board enumerate the duties of the Director



Duties	<p>Does the Board enumerate the duties of the Director in the employment contract?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are the statutory duties of the Director listed?</li> <li>2. Has the Board incorporated policy references to the other duties related to the Director's employment?</li> </ol> <p>See 105 ILCS 5/10-21.4 and 105 ILCS 5/10-16.7.</p>
Full-time, Attention and Energy Clause	<p>How will the Board address outside activities of the Director?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How will the Board define <i>outside activities</i>?</li> <li>2. Will the Board restrict the Director from engaging in outside activities during the term of the employment contract?</li> <li>3. Will the Board require approval/notification before the Director engages in outside activities?</li> </ol>

**Employment and Compensation**

<b>Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board</b>	<b>Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources</b>
Duration of Contract	<p>A director's employment contract may not exceed five years. If its duration is two to five years, the contract must reference goals and suspension of tenure.</p> <p>No performance-based contract shall be extended or rolled over prior to its scheduled expiration unless all the performance and improvement goals contained in the contract have been met. See 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8.</p> <p>If the duration is one year or less, then the contract need not reference goals or suspension of tenure.</p>
Salary	<p>Special Considerations for the Board may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the estimated Board contribution to the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) for any raises above six percent (40 ILCS 5/15-155(g)) prior to retirement?</li> <li>2. What is the <i>cost shift</i> implication for the District if the Board offers or later agrees to a salary that is equal to or greater than the governor's statutory salary? School districts are responsible for paying the actuarial cost of the pension benefits earned on the portion of a TRS member's salary that exceeds the governor's statutory salary. The governor's annual salary is published by TRS at: <a href="http://www.trsil.org/employers/payments/contribution-rates_earnings-limitations">www.trsil.org/employers/payments/contribution-rates_earnings-limitations</a>.</li> <li>3. Do any administrative cost cap triggers exist (105 ILCS 5/17-1.5)?</li> </ol>

	<p>Items the Board may see the successful director candidate request of it:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A fixed salary for each year of the contract.</li> <li>2. A guaranteed minimum salary.</li> <li>3. Compensation increases.</li> </ol>
Severance Agreements	<p>Any contract that contains a condition of severance pay must include the following provisions required by the Government Severance Pay Act (GSPA), 5 ILCS 415/10:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A restriction to an amount not exceeding 20 weeks of compensation; and</li> <li>2. A prohibition for any severance if the Director is fired for <i>misconduct</i> by the Board. See the <i>Severance Pay</i> row under the Changes to the Director's Employment Contract subhead below for a definition of what misconduct means in the context of this law.</li> </ol>
Teachers Retirement System (TRS) & Teacher Health Insurance (THIS)	<p>How does the Board want to address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pension contributions (TRS-THIS)?</li> <li>2. Inclusion of salary and other compensation in the payment of TRS and THIS? Or, will TRS and THIS be in addition to salary and other compensation?</li> <li>3. Unforeseen pension reform issues?</li> </ol>

**Conditions of Employment**

<b>Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board</b>	<b>Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources</b>
Administrative License	Does the Board want to require the successful director candidate to guarantee that as the future Director of the District, he or she has and will maintain the appropriate licensure throughout the employment contract?
Criminal Background Check Law	105 ILCS 5/10-21.9. See also PRESS sample policy 5:30, <i>Hiring Process and Criteria</i> , and the subhead entitled Fingerprint-based Criminal History Records Information Check in administrative procedure 5:30-AP2, <i>Investigations</i> .
Sexual Misconduct Related Employment History Review Law	105 ILCS 5/22-94, added by P.A. 102-702, eff. 7-1-23. See also PRESS sample policy 5:30, <i>Hiring Process and Criteria</i> and PRESS sample administrative procedure 5:30-AP3, <i>Sexual Misconduct Related Employment History Review (EHR)</i> .
	Does the Board want to require additional background inquiries beyond the fingerprint-based criminal history records information check required by

Other Background Check Laws

105 ILCS 5/10-21.9 and sexual misconduct related employment history review required by 105 ILCS 5/22-94, added by P.A. 102-702, eff. 7-1-23 and discussed above? If yes, consult the Board Attorney and consider the following laws:

15 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq., Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), is a federal law that regulates the gathering and use of information about consumers by third party *consumer reporting agencies*, including credit information, criminal background, driving record, personal characteristics/reputation, etc. The law requires consumer reporting agencies to comply with certain procedural notice requirements when gathering information from a consumer.

820 ILCS 75/, Ill. Job Opportunities for Qualified Applicants Act, prohibits employers from inquiring about an applicant's criminal history until the application has been determined qualified and notified that he/she has been selected for an interview (*a/k/a ban the box law*).

820 ILCS 55/, Ill. Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act (RPWA), prohibits employers from:

1. Requesting, coercing, or requiring any employee or prospective employee to provide a user name and password for any personal online account;
2. Requesting, coercing, or requiring an employee or applicant to invite the employer to have access to that individual's personal online account; and
3. Taking an adverse employment action against an individual (including refusal to hire) based on that individual's use of a lawful product off District property during nonworking hours, i.e., tobacco, cannabis, or alcohol. (Note: RPWA allows employers to regulate employees' use of those lawful products that impair an employee's ability to perform the employee's assigned duties. See policy 5:50, *Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition*, and its f/ns).

820 ILCS 70/, Ill. Employee Credit Privacy Act, prohibits employers from inquiring into an individual's credit history or taking action against an employee based such history unless a satisfactory credit history is a *bona fide occupational requirement*, which is further defined in the statute. The job descriptions of directors generally meet this standard because they: (1) describe a managerial position that involves direction of school districts; (2) include signatory

	power over more than \$100; and (3) involve having access to confidential and financial information. Note: Any one of these grounds alone is sufficient.
Medical Examination	<p>105 ILCS 5/24-5 requires new employees to submit evidence of physical fitness to perform assigned duties and freedom from communicable diseases.</p> <p>The Americans with Disabilities Act allows medical inquiries of current employees only when they are job-related and consistent with business necessity or part of a voluntary employee wellness program. 42 U.S.C. §12112(d)(4). Districts may deny jobs to individuals with disabilities who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others in the workplace, provided that a reasonable accommodation would not either eliminate the risk or reduce it to an acceptable level. 42 U.S.C. §12113; 29 C.F.R. §1630.2(r).</p> <p>See also PRESS sample policy 5:30, <i>Hiring Process and Criteria</i>, specifically f/ns 25 and 26.</p>
Tenure	<p><u>Suspension of Tenure</u></p> <p>With multi-year contracts and multi-year extensions, directors waive their rights to tenure in a school district, but no previously acquired tenure may be lost.</p> <p><u>Continued Tenure</u></p> <p>Directors serving multiple one year contracts may still accrue service toward and acquire tenure.</p> <p>See 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8 and the <i>Duration of Contract</i> row in the Employment and Compensation checkbox, above.</p>

**Evaluations and Goals**

<b>Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board</b>	<b>Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources</b>
	<p>105 ILCS 5/10-23.8 requires each performance-based contract to include the goals and indicators of student performance and academic improvement determined and used by the Board to measure the performance and effectiveness of the Director and other information as the Board may determine.</p> <p>Regarding its goals and indicators, has the Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At minimum, addressed student performance and academic achievement (105 ILCS 5/10-23.8 states “and other information as the Board may determine”)?</li> <li>2. Included them in the body of the employment contract? Or as an exhibit to it?</li> <li>3. Set them to be:</li> </ol>

Board Goals and Indicators of Student Performance and Academic Achievement for the Director

- a. Measurable and achievable, i.e., are they within the Director's control?
- b. Objective, subjective or a combination of both?
4. Set a timeline for achievement, and if so is it on an:
  - a. Annual basis?
  - b. Prior to completion of the employment contract?
5. Set them as procedural, substantive, or a combination of both?

For more information about setting goals and indicators for directors regarding student performance and academic achievement, see:

[www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/workshops/](http://www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/workshops/)

Contact a Field Services Director regarding the following IASB workshops and/or offerings that may set the stage for school boards to hold their directors accountable for district performance, including academic achievement:

*Setting District Goals and Direction* (leads a board and director to develop their own district language for specific measurable, and attainable goals and indicators)

*The Superintendent Evaluation Process* (describes an effective method of holding the director accountable)

Superintendent Evaluation

Once the Board has developed its goals and indicators (as discussed immediately above), 105 ILCS 5/10-20, 5/10-23, and 5/10-23.8 require the Board to:

1. "Direct, through policy, its superintendent in his or her charge of the administration of the school district;" and
2. Evaluate the director in his or her "administration of school board policies and his or her stewardship of the assets of the district."

How will the Board evaluate the successful director candidate upon its outlined goals and indicators?

Does the Board state when it will evaluate the successful director candidate upon the goals and indicators that it set? Note: Some districts do not consider the director evaluation to be a *one-time event* and put an on-going process into place. Contrast other districts, which depending upon their preferences, generally find the best time of year to evaluate is in the winter or early springtime.

Is the Board or the successful director candidate responsible to trigger the components of the Director's evaluation process?

What evaluation instrument will be used? How will the evaluation be documented?

Will an evaluation instrument be outlined by the Board in its employment contract with the successful director candidate?

Is the evaluation instrument the Board will use tied to its goals and indicators of student performance and academic improvement and other information as the Board may determine?

For more information about best practices when planning for and evaluating the Director, see:

*The Superintendent Evaluation Process* at:  
[www.iasb.com/iasb/media/documents/superintendent-evaluation-process.pdf](http://www.iasb.com/iasb/media/documents/superintendent-evaluation-process.pdf);

IASB's *Foundational Principles of Effective Governance*, **Principle 3. The board employs a superintendent**, at:  
[www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/training-resources/foundational-principles-of-effective-governance/](http://www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/training-resources/foundational-principles-of-effective-governance/); stating "the board employs and evaluates one person — the superintendent — and holds that person accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy."

**Expenses and Benefits**

Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
Expenses and Allowances	<p>How will the Board address expenses and allowances in its employment contract negotiations with the successful director candidate?</p> <p><u>Business</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What standard will the Board use, e.g., reasonable, itemized, etc.?</li> <li>2. Will the Board designate the Board President or another individual to review and/or approve the Director's expenses?</li> </ol> <p><u>Transportation</u></p> <p>Will the Board reimburse travel? If yes, what types of travel will the board reimburse? Some transportation topics that successful director candidates request discussion about include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vehicle insurance reimbursement(s)</li> <li>2. Vehicle repair reimbursement(s)</li> <li>3. A travel allowance only at either a set amount or the District's per mile rate</li> <li>4. A vehicle</li> <li>5. Out-of-district travel</li> </ol>
	<p>Will the Board address insurance in its employment contract negotiations with the successful director candidate?</p>

Insurance	<p>Some items successful director candidates request include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Insurance contributions as part of a Cafeteria Plan, or in the alternative, the Board paying the premiums.</li> <li>2. Specific insurance coverages from the Board, such as health, dental, vision, life, disability, etc.</li> </ol>
Vacation	<p>Will the Board address vacation days in its employment contract negotiations with the successful director candidate? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How many days?</li> <li>2. Will vacation days accumulate? And, if so, how?</li> <li>3. Will the Board designate itself, the Board President, or a Board officer to approve or receive notification from the Director prior to taking a vacation? If yes, describe the process.</li> <li>4. Will the Board address reimbursement for unused days?</li> <li>5. Will vacation days need to be used for days off during winter or spring breaks?</li> </ol>
Sick Leave/Days	<p>Will the Board address sick days in its employment contract negotiations with the successful director candidate? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will sick leave be limited to annual sick leave days in the District's teachers' contract or will a different amount be provided?</li> <li>2. How will sick day accumulation be addressed?</li> <li>3. Will the Board designate itself, the Board President, or a Board officer to approve or receive notification from the Director prior to taking or upon returning from a sick day? If yes, describe the process.</li> </ol>
Professional Activities and Organizations   Memberships in Community Organizations	<p>Will the Board address memberships in professional activities/organizations and/or community organizations its employment contract negotiations with the successful director candidate? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How many organizations will the Board allow the Director to join?</li> <li>2. Which organizations will be allowed?</li> <li>3. What is the Board's limit for the cost of dues to professional organizations?</li> </ol>
	<p>Will the Board address any type of payment(s) upon the Director's retirement? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has the Board thoroughly examined and</li> </ol>

Retirement	<p>addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Any consequences or other penalties to it?</li> <li>b. The impact of any prior salary increases?</li> <li>c. Potential pension reform issues?</li> </ol> <p>2. Often, a successful director candidate's attorney has interest in the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Available post-retirement options available, e.g., payments for sick/vacation days, post-retirement insurance, longevity annuity payment, etc.</li> <li>b. Whether a potential retirement payment will be properly creditable for TRS purposes. Note: Ultimately, only TRS has the authority to determine creditability.</li> </ol>
Annuities and Other Deferred Compensation	<p>Will the Board address any type of annuities and other deferred compensation issues? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will it offer such compensation in addition to the Director's agreed-upon salary?</li> <li>2. Will it contribute creditable earnings for TRS purposes?</li> </ol>

**Changes to the Director's Employment Contract**

<b>Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board</b>	<b>Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources</b>
Non-Renewal at End of Contract	<p>How will the Board and successful director candidate agree to address orderly end to the employment contract when the Board chooses not to renew it?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will there be a non-renewal notification date? Do both parties' attorneys find it reasonable?</li> <li>2. Will the Board require the Director to remind it of the non-renewal date?</li> <li>3. Will there be any agreement to a clause for an automatic one-year renewal if the Board fails to provide end-of-contract non-renewal notification?</li> <li>4. Will the Board agree to language in the employment contract that would provide the Director with a hearing upon non-renewal?</li> </ol>
Renewal at End of Contract	<p>Will the Board agree to a procedure for renewing the employment contract at its end? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What date would be the earliest that the Board could renew its employment contract with the Director?</li> <li>2. What criteria will the Board base its renewal upon? For example, some boards base renewal upon directors achieving their stated goals and indicators of student performance and academic improvement</li> </ol>



	and other information they required.
Contract Extensions	<p>Will the Board agree to allow for an extension of its employment contract during its term? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will the Board agree to extend it during its term if the Board determines that the Director successfully met all of the Board's stated goals and indicators of student performance and academic improvement and other information it required?</li> <li>2. Will the Board agree to extend a one-year contract when the Director is not required to meet any goals?</li> </ol> <p>See 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8.</p>
Terminations	<p>If the successful director candidate accepts employment with the Board and becomes the Director, how will the Board outline the grounds and procedures for terminating the Director's employment during the contract's term?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will the Board and the successful director candidate agree to terminate it upon mutual agreement?</li> <li>2. Will the Board allow retirement to be an appropriate reason for terminating its employment contract with the Director? And if so, will the Board require reasonable notice from its Director?</li> <li>3. Could either the Board or Director terminate the employment contract without cause by providing notice to the other?</li> <li>4. Will the Board terminate the employment contract for permanent disability of the Director? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How will the Board define permanent disability in the contract?</li> <li>b. Will the Board require the Director to obtain a permanent disability determination through physician certification, and/or</li> <li>c. Will the Board consider duration of absence; e.g., 90-days after exhaustion of available leave, whichever is greater?</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>See PRESS sample policy 5:180, <i>Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. What standard will the Board use to terminate the employment contract for cause? Items to consider include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Any conduct detrimental/prejudicial to the District;*</li> <li>b. Just cause;</li> <li>c. Sufficient to dismiss a tenured teacher;</li> <li>d. Material breach of contract; or</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<p>e. Not arbitrary and capricious.</p> <p>*50 ILCS 205/3c, requires a school district to post on its website and make available to news media specific information about severance agreements that it enters into because an employee or contractor was found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual discrimination, as defined by the Ill. Human Rights Act or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. See Severance Pay row directly below.</p> <p>6. Will the Board agree to provisions for hearing and due process for the Director?</p> <p>7. How will the Board address death of its Director during the duration of the employment contract?</p>
Severance Pay	<p>Any renewal or renegotiation that adds a condition of severance pay must include the following provisions of GSPA, 5 ILCS 415/10(a)(1):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A restriction to an amount not exceeding 20 weeks of compensation; and</li> <li>2. A prohibition for any severance if the Director is fired for <i>misconduct</i> by the Board. This law defines misconduct to include sexual harassment and/or discrimination. But 50 ILCS 205/3c limits sexual harassment or discrimination to instances when an employee is “found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual discrimination, as defined by the Ill. Human Rights Act or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.” For more discussion about these laws, see f/n 6 in policy 2:260, <i>Uniform Grievance Procedure</i>.</li> </ol>
Liquidated Damages	<p>Will the Board agree to liquidate damages with its Director if one or the other terminates the employment contract?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have both the Board and the successful director candidate discussed the practical consequences of a liquidated damages clause with their respective attorneys?</li> <li>2. If the Board terminates the contract, has it discussed with the Board Attorney how it can avoid litigation with its former Director?</li> </ol>
Amendments	<p>How will the Board and Director agree to allow for amendments to the employment contract?</p>

**What technical clauses need to be in the Director’s employment contract?**

Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
	If the employment contract contains any of the

<p>Technical clauses (common in contracts)</p>	<p>following technical provisions, have the Board Attorney and Director's attorney reviewed them?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Notice</li> <li>2. Applicable law</li> <li>3. Headings and numbers</li> <li>4. Complete understanding, i.e., do the Board members and Director share the same understanding of the various provisions written in the employment contract?</li> <li>5. Counterparts</li> <li>6. Effect of Policy Amendments</li> <li>7. Severability</li> <li>8. Advice of Counsel</li> </ol>
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**Miscellaneous Issues**

<b>Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board</b>	<b>Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources</b>
<p>Board Obligations Under the Employment Contract</p>	<p>Do all members of the Board understand the District's obligations under the employment contract and what not complying with them will mean to the District?</p> <p>Specifically, are Board members aware of the Board's specific obligations regarding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Director Evaluation</li> <li>2. Goal setting</li> <li>3. Required notifications/actions by each party prior to termination of the employment contract</li> </ol>
<p>Ongoing Monitoring of Each Party's Compliance with the Contract</p>	<p>Are the Board and Director actually complying with the terms of the employment contract? Has the Board Attorney explained how the Board should monitor compliance with the employment contract?</p>
<p>Legislative Issues</p>	<p>How might pending pension reform legislation or other trending legislation affect the employment contract?</p>

DATED : May 17, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **3:50 Administrative Personnel Other Than the Special Education Director**

### Duties and Authority

Joint Agreement administrative and supervisory positions are established by the Executive Committee in accordance with State law. This policy applies to all administrators other than the Special Education Director. The general duties and authority of each administrative or supervisory position are approved by the Governing Board, upon the Special Education Director's recommendation, and contained in the respective position's job description.

### Qualifications

All administrative personnel shall have a valid administrative license and appropriate endorsements issued by the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board and such other qualifications as specified in the position's job descriptions.

### Evaluation

The performance of all administrative personnel will be evaluated by the Special Education Director or designee; the Special Education Director shall make employment and salary recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Administrators shall annually present evidence to the Special Education Director of professional growth through attendance at educational conferences, additional schooling, in-service training and through participation in the general development and improvement of the Joint Agreement's programs.

### Administrative Work Year

The administrators' work year shall be the same as the fiscal year, July 1 through June 30, unless otherwise stated in the employment agreement. All administrators shall be available for work when their services are necessary.

### Compensation and Benefits

The Board and each administrator shall enter into an employment agreement that complies with Board policy and State law. The terms of an individual employment contract, when in conflict with this policy, will control.

The Executive Committee will consider the Special Education Director's recommendations when setting compensation for individual administrators.

Unless stated otherwise in individual employment contracts, all benefits and leaves of absence available to teaching personnel are available to administrative personnel.

CROSS REF: 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:210 (Resignations and Retirement), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

### **3:70 Succession of Authority**

If the Special Education Director, Assistant Director, or other administrator is temporarily absent, the succession of authority and responsibility of the respective office shall follow a succession plan, developed by the Special Education Director and approved by the Executive Committee.

Adopted: June 22, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

**SECTION 4 - OPERATIONAL SERVICES**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **4:10 Fiscal and Business Management**

The Special Education Director is responsible for the Joint Agreement's fiscal and business management. This responsibility includes annually preparing and presenting the Joint Agreement's statement of affairs to the Governing Board and publishing it before December 1, as required by State law.

The Special Education Director shall ensure the efficient and cost-effective operation of the Joint Agreement's business management using computers, computer software, data management, communication systems, and electronic networks, including electronic mail, the Internet, and security systems. Each person using the Joint Agreement's electronic network shall complete an *Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Network*.

### Budget Planning

The Joint Agreement's fiscal year is from July 1 until June 30. The Special Education Director shall present a tentative budget to the Executive Committee at a regular or special meeting on or before the regularly scheduled meeting in July in order that the Executive Committee may make recommendations to the Governing Board for a final budget. The final budget shall be adopted by the Governing Board no later than September 1st of each calendar year. This budget shall represent the culmination of an ongoing process of planning for the fiscal support needed for the Joint Agreement's programs.

### Preliminary Adoption Procedures

After receiving the Special Education Director's proposed budget, the Governing Board sets the date, place, and time for:

1. A public hearing on the proposed budget, and
2. The proposed budget to be available to the public for inspection.

The Special Education Director shall arrange to publish a notice in a local newspaper stating the date, place, and time of the proposed budget's availability for public inspection and the public hearing. The proposed budget shall be available for public inspection at least 30 days before the time of the budget hearing.

At the public hearing, the proposed budget shall be reviewed, including the cash reserve balance of all funds held by the Joint Agreement related to its operational funds and, if applicable, any obligations secured by those funds, and the public shall be invited to comment, question, or advise the Governing Board.

### Final Adoption Procedures

The Governing Board adopts a budget no later than September 1st of each fiscal year, or by such alternative procedure as State law may define.

The Governing Board adopts the budget by roll call vote. The budget resolution shall be incorporated into the meeting's official minutes. Board members' names voting yea and nay shall be recorded in the minutes.

The Special Education Director or designee shall provide a copy of the budget to the ROE.

The special education director or her designee will also post the Joint Agreement's final annual budget, itemized by receipts and expenditures, on the Joint Agreement's website.

### Budget Amendments

The Governing Board may amend the budget by the same procedure as provided for in the original adoption.

Implementation

The Special Education Director or designee shall implement the Joint Agreement's budget and provide the Executive Committee with a monthly financial report that includes all current fund balances.

CROSS REF.: 4:40 (Incurring Debt), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## 4:15 Identity Protection

The collection, storage, use, and disclosure of social security numbers by the Joint Agreement shall be consistent with State and federal laws. The goals for managing the Joint Agreement's collection, storage, use, and disclosure of social security numbers are to:

1. Limit all activities involving social security numbers to those circumstances that are authorized by State or federal law.
2. Protect each social security number collected or maintained by the Joint Agreement from unauthorized disclosure.

The Director is responsible for ensuring that the Joint Agreement complies with the Identity Protection Act, 5 ILCS 179/. Compliance measures shall include each of the following:

1. All employees having access to social security numbers in the course of performing their duties shall be trained to protect the confidentiality of social security numbers. Training should include instructions on the proper handling of information containing social security numbers from the time of collection through the destruction of the information.
2. Only employees who are required to use or handle information or documents that contain social security numbers shall have access to such information or documents.
3. Social security numbers requested from an individual shall be provided in a manner that makes the social security number easily redacted if the record is required to be released as part of a public records request.
4. When collecting a social security number or upon request by an individual, a statement of the purpose(s) for which the Joint Agreement is collecting and using the social security number shall be provided. The stated reason for collection of the social security number must be relevant to the documented purpose.
5. All employees must be advised of this policy's existence and a copy of the policy must be made available to each employee. The policy must also be made available to any member of the public, upon request.
6. If this policy is amended, employees will be advised of the existence of the amended policy and a copy of the amended policy will be made available to each employee.

No Joint Agreement employee shall collect, store, use, or disclose an individual's social security number unless specifically authorized by the Director. An employee who has substantially breached the confidentiality of social security numbers may be subject to disciplinary action or sanctions up to and including dismissal in accordance with Joint Agreement policy and procedures. This policy shall not be interpreted as a guarantee of the confidentiality of social security numbers and/or other personal information. The Joint Agreement will use best efforts to comply with this policy, but this policy should not be construed to convey any rights to protection of information not otherwise afforded by law.

### Treatment of Personally Identifiable Information Under Grant Awards

The Director ensures that the Joint Agreement takes reasonable measures to safeguard: (1) *protected personally identifiable information*, (2) other information that a federal awarding agency, pass-through agency or State awarding agency designates as sensitive, such as *personally identifiable information* (PII) and (3) information that the Joint Agreement considers to be sensitive consistent with applicable laws regarding privacy and confidentiality (collectively, *sensitive information*), when administering federal grant awards and State grant awards governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/).

The Director shall establish procedures for the identification, handling, storage, access, disposal and overall confidentiality of sensitive information. The Director shall ensure that employees and

contractors responsible for the administration of a federal or State award for the Joint Agreement receive regular training in the safeguarding of sensitive information. Employees mishandling sensitive information are subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

CROSS REF: 2:250 (Access to Joint Agreement Public Records), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: January 22, 2020

## **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 4:30 Revenue and Investments

### Revenue

The Special Education Director or designee is responsible for making all claims for assessments to Member Joint Agreements, State Aid, special State funds for specific programs, federal funds, and categorical grants.

### Investments

The Special Education Director shall either appoint a Chief Investment Officer or serve as one. The Chief Investment Officer shall invest money that is not required for current operations, in accordance with this policy and State law.

The Chief Investment Officer shall use the standard of prudence when making investment decisions. They shall use the judgment and care, under circumstances then prevailing, that persons of prudence, discretion, and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the safety of their capital as well as its probable income.

### Investment Objectives

The objectives for the Joint Agreement's investment activities are:

1. Safety of Principal - Every investment is made with safety as the primary and over-riding concern. Each investment transaction shall ensure that capital loss, whether from credit or market risk, is avoided.
2. Liquidity - The investment portfolio shall provide sufficient liquidity to pay Joint Agreement obligations as they become due. In this regard, the maturity and marketability of investments shall be considered.
3. Rate of Return - The highest return on investments is sought, consistent with the preservation of principal and prudent investment principles.
4. Diversification - The investment portfolio is diversified as to materials and investments, as appropriate to the nature, purpose, and amount of the funds.

### Authorized Investments

The Chief Investment Officer may invest any Joint Agreement funds in any investment as authorized in 30 ILCS 235/2, and Acts amended thereto.

Except as provided herein, investments may be made only in banks, savings banks, savings and loan associations, or credit unions that are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or other approved share insurer.

The Chief Investment Officer and Special Education Director shall regularly consider material, relevant, and decision-useful sustainability factors in evaluating investment decisions, within the bounds of financial and fiduciary prudence. Such factors include, but are not limited to: (1) corporate governance and leadership factors, (2) environmental factors, (3) social capital factors, (4) human capital factors, and (5) business model and innovation factors, as provided under the Ill. Sustainable Investing Act, 30 ILCS 238/.

### Selection of Depositories, Investment Managers, Dealers, and Brokers

The Chief Investment Officer shall establish a list of authorized depositories, investment managers, dealers and brokers based upon the creditworthiness, reputation, minimum capital requirements, qualifications under State law, as well as a long history of dealing with public fund entities. The Board will review and approve the list at least annually.

In order to be an authorized depository, each institution must submit copies of the last two sworn statements of resources and liabilities or reports of examination, that the institution is required to furnish to the appropriate State or federal agency. Each institution designated as a depository shall, while acting as such depository, furnish the Joint Agreement with a copy of all statements of resources and liabilities or all reports of examination, that it is required to furnish to the appropriate State or federal agency.

The above eligibility requirements of a bank to receive or hold public deposits do not apply to investments in an interest-bearing savings account, interest-bearing certificate of deposit, or interest-bearing time deposit if: (1) the Joint Agreement initiates the investment at or through a bank located in Illinois, and (2) the invested public funds are at all times fully insured by an agency or instrumentality of the federal government.

The Joint Agreement may consider a financial institution's record and current level of financial commitment to its local community when deciding whether to deposit funds in that financial institution. The Joint Agreement may consider factors including:

1. For financial institutions subject to the federal Community Reinvestment Act of 1977, the current and historical ratings that the financial institution has received, to the extent that those ratings are publicly available, under the federal Community Reinvestment Act of 1977;
2. Any changes in ownership, management, policies, or practices of the financial institution that may affect the level of the financial institution's commitment to its community;
3. The financial impact that the withdrawal or denial of Joint Agreement deposits might have on the financial institution;
4. The financial impact to the Joint Agreement as a result of withdrawing public funds or refusing to deposit additional public funds in the financial institution; and
5. Any additional burden on the Joint Agreement's resources that might result from ceasing to maintain deposits of public funds at the financial institution under consideration.

### Collateral Requirements

All amounts deposited or invested with financial institutions in excess of any insurance limit shall be collateralized in accordance with the Public Funds Investment Act, 30 ILCS 235/. The Special Education Director or designee shall keep the Board informed of collateral agreements.

### Safekeeping and Custody Arrangements

The preferred method for safekeeping is to have securities registered in the Joint Agreement's name and held by a third-party custodian. Safekeeping practices should qualify for the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 3, Deposits with Financial Institutions, Investments (including Repurchase Agreements), and Reverse Repurchase Agreements, Category I, the highest recognized safekeeping procedures.

### Controls and Report

The Chief Investment Officer shall establish a system of internal controls and written operational procedures to prevent losses arising from fraud, employee error, misrepresentation by third parties, or imprudent employee action.

The Chief Investment Officer shall provide a quarterly investment report to the Board. The report will: (1) assess whether the investment portfolio is meeting the Joint Agreement's investment objectives, (2) identify each security by class or type, book value, income earned, and market value, (3) identify those institutions providing investment services to the Joint Agreement, and (4) include any other relevant information. The investment portfolio's performance shall be measured by appropriate and creditable industry standards for the investment type.

The Executive Committee will determine, after receiving the Special Education Director's recommendation, which fund is in most need of interest income and the Special Education Director shall execute a transfer. This provision does not apply when the use of interest earned on a particular fund is restricted.

### Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

The Governing Board and Joint Agreement officials will avoid any investment transaction or practice that in appearance or fact might impair public confidence. Board members are bound by the Board policy 2:100, *Board Member Conflict of Interest*. No Joint Agreement employee having influence on the Joint Agreement's investment decisions shall:

1. Have any interest, directly or indirectly, in any investments in which the Joint Agreement is authorized to invest,
2. Have any interest, directly or indirectly, in the sellers, sponsors, or managers of those investments, or
3. Receive, in any manner, compensation of any kind from any investments in that the agency is authorized to invest.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Board Member Conflict of Interest), 4:10 (Fiscal and Business Management), 4:80 (Accounting and Audits)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 4:40 Incurring Debt

The Joint Agreement may borrow up to 50% of any State categorical or grant payments due and payable to the Joint Agreement, if a hardship exists. Principal and interest shall be repaid from the categorical or grant payments within the fiscal year, unless amended by the Governing Board/Executive Committee.

### Bond Issue Obligations

In connection with the Governing Board/Executive Committee's issuance of bonds, the Special Education Director shall be responsible for ensuring the Joint Agreement's compliance with federal securities laws, including the anti-fraud provisions of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended and, if applicable, the continuing disclosure obligations under Rule 15c2-12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Additionally, in connection with the Governing Board/Executive Committee's issuance of bonds, the interest on which is excludable from *gross income* for federal income tax purposes, or which enable the Joint Agreement or bond holder to receive other federal tax benefits, the Governing Board/Executive Committee authorizes the Special Education Director to establish written procedures for post-issuance compliance monitoring for such bonds to protect their tax-exempt (or tax-advantaged) status.

The Governing Board/Executive Committee may contract with outside professionals, such as bond counsel and/or a qualified financial consulting firm, to assist it in meeting the requirements of this subsection.

Adopted: May 17, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 4:45 Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery

### Insufficient Fund Checks

The Special Education Director is responsible for collecting up to the maximum fee authorized by State law for returned checks written to the Joint Agreement which are not honored upon presentation to the respective bank or other depository institution for any reason. The Special Education Director is authorized to contact the Joint Agreement's attorney whenever necessary to collect the returned check amount, fee, collection costs and expenses, and interest.

### Delinquent Debt Recovery

The Special Education Director is authorized to seek collection of delinquent debt owed the Joint Agreement to the fullest extent of the law.

A Local Debt Recovery Program may be available through the Illinois Office of the Comptroller (IOC). To participate in it, an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between the District and the IOC must be in existence. The IGA establishes the terms under which the District may refer a delinquent debt to the IOC for an offset (deduction). The IOC may execute an offset, in the amount of the delinquent debt owed to the District, from a future payment that the State makes to an individual or entity responsible for paying the delinquent debt.

The Special Education Director or designee shall execute the requirements of the IGA. While executing the requirements of the IGA, the Special Education Director or designee is responsible, without limitation, for each of the following:

1. Providing a Joint Agreement-wide, uniform, method of notice and due process to the individual or entity against whom a claim for delinquent debt payment (*claim*) is made. Written notice and an opportunity to be heard must be given to the individual or entity responsible for paying a delinquent debt before the claim is certified to the IOC for offset. The notice must state the claim's amount, the reason for the amount due, the claim's date or time period, and a description of the process to challenge the claim.
2. Certifying to the IOC that the debt is past due and legally enforceable, and notifying the IOC of any change in the status of an offset claim for delinquent debt.
3. Responding to requests for information from the IOC to facilitate the prompt resolution of any administrative review requests received by the IOC.

### LEGAL REF.:

15 ILCS 405/10.05 and 10.05d, State Comptroller Act.  
105 ILCS 123/, Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act.  
810 ILCS 5/3-806, Uniform Commercial Code.

Adopted: September 20, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **4:50 Payment Procedures**

The Treasurer shall prepare a list of all due and payable bills, indicating vendor name and amount, and shall present it to the Executive Committee in advance of the Committee's first regular monthly meeting or, if necessary, a special meeting. These bills shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee, after which they may be approved for payment by Executive Committee order. Approval of all bills shall be given by a roll call vote and the votes shall be recorded in the minutes. The Treasurer shall pay the bills after receiving an Executive Committee order or pertinent portions of the Committee minutes, even if the minutes are unapproved, provided the order or minutes are signed by the President and Secretary, or a majority of the Committee.

The Treasurer is authorized, without further Executive Committee approval, to pay Social Security taxes, wages, pension contributions, utility bills, and other recurring bills. These disbursements shall be included in the listing of bills presented to the Executive Committee.

Revolving funds may be used, provided such funds are maintained in accordance with Board policy 4:80, *Accounting and Audits*, and remain in the custody of an employee who is properly bonded according to State law.

CROSS REF.: 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:80 (Accounting and Audits)

Adopted: June 17, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## 4:55 Use of Credit and Procurement Cards

The Special Education Director and employees designated by the Special Education Director are authorized to use Joint Agreement credit and procurement cards to simplify the acquisition, receipt, and payment of purchases and travel expenses incurred on the Joint Agreement's behalf. Credit and procurement cards shall only be used for those expenses that are for the Joint Agreement's benefit and serve a valid and proper public purpose; they shall not be used for personal purchases. Cardholders are responsible for exercising due care and judgment and for acting in the Joint Agreement's best interests.

The Special Education Director or designee shall manage the use of Joint Agreement credit and procurement cards by employees. It is the Board's responsibility, through the audit and approval process, to determine whether Joint Agreement credit and procurement card use by the Special Education Director is appropriate.

In addition to the other limitations contained in this and other Board policies, Joint Agreement credit and procurement cards are governed by the following restrictions:

1. Credit and/or procurement cards may only be used to pay certain job-related expenses or to make purchases on behalf of the Board or Joint Agreement or any student activity fund, or for purposes that would otherwise be addressed through a conventional revolving fund.
2. The Special Education Director or designee shall instruct the issuing bank to block the cards' use at unapproved merchants.
3. Each cardholder, other than the Special Education Director, may charge no more than \$500 in a single purchase and no more than \$1000 within a given month without prior authorization from the Special Education Director.
4. The Special Education Director or designee must approve the use of a Joint Agreement credit or procurement card whenever such use is by telephone, fax, and the Internet. Permission shall be withheld when the use violates any Board policy, is from a vendor whose reputation has not been verified, or would be more expensive than if another available payment method were used.
5. The consequences for unauthorized purchases include, but are not limited to, reimbursing the Joint Agreement for the purchase amount, loss of cardholding privileges, and, if made by an employee, discipline up to and including discharge.
6. All cardholders must sign a statement affirming that they are familiar with this policy.
7. The Special Education Director shall implement a process whereby all purchases using a Joint Agreement credit or procurement card are reviewed and approved by someone other than the cardholder or someone under the cardholder's supervision.
8. Cardholders must submit the original, itemized receipt to document all purchases.
9. No individual may use a Joint Agreement credit or procurement card to make purchases in a manner contrary to State law, including, but not limited to, the bidding and other purchasing requirements in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21, or any Board policy.
10. The Director or designee shall account for any financial or material reward or rebate offered by the company or institution issuing the District credit or procurement card and shall ensure that it is used for the District's benefit.

CROSS REF.: 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:80 (Accounting and Audits), 4:90 (Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds), 5:60 (Expenses)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

## 4:60 Purchases and Contracts

The Special Education Director shall manage the Joint Agreement's purchases and contracts in accordance with the law, the standards set forth in this policy, and other applicable Board policies.

### Standards for Purchasing and Contracting

All purchases and contracts shall be entered into in accordance with applicable federal and State law. The Board Attorney shall be consulted as needed regarding the legal requirements for purchases or contracts. All contracts shall be approved or authorized by the Board.

All purchases and contracts should support a recognized Joint Agreement function or purpose as well as provide for good quality products and services at the lowest cost, with consideration for service, reliability, and delivery promptness, and in compliance with State law. No purchase or contract shall be made or entered into as a result of favoritism, extravagance, fraud, or corruption.

Adoption of the annual budget authorizes the Special Education Director or designee to purchase budgeted supplies, equipment, and services, provided that State law is followed. Purchases of items outside budget parameters require prior Board approval, except in an emergency.

When presenting a contract or purchase for Board approval, the Special Education Director or designee shall ensure that it complies with applicable federal and State law, including but not limited to, those specified below:

1. Supplies, materials, or work involving an expenditure in excess of \$35,000 must comply with the State law bidding procedure, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21, unless specifically exempted.
2. Construction, lease, or purchase of school buildings must comply with State law and Board policy.
3. Guaranteed energy savings must comply with 105 ILCS 5/19b-1 et seq.
4. Third party non-instructional services must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-22.34c.
5. The purchase of paper and paper products must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.19c and Board policy 4:70, *Resource Conservation*.
6. Any contract to purchase food with a bidder or offeror must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21(b-10).
7. Each contractor with the Joint Agreement is bound by each of the following:
  - a. In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(f): (1) prohibit any of its employees who is or was found guilty of a criminal offense listed in 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(c) and 5/21B-80(c) to have direct, daily contact at a Joint Agreement school or school-related activity with one or more student(s); (2) prohibit any of the contractor's employees from having direct, daily contact with one or more students if the employee was found guilty of any offense in 5/21B-80(b) (certain drug offenses) until seven years following the end of the employee's sentence for the criminal offense; and (3) require each of its employees who will have direct, daily contact with student(s) to cooperate during the Joint Agreement's fingerprint-based criminal history records check on him or her.
  - b. In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/22-94: (1) prohibit any of its employees from having *direct contact with children or students* if the contractor has not performed a sexual misconduct related employment history review (EHR) of the employee or if the Joint Agreement objects to the employee's assignment based on the employee's involvement in an instance of sexual misconduct as provided in 105 ILCS 5/22-94(j)(3), which the contractor is required to disclose; (2) discipline, up to and including termination or denial of employment, any employee who provides false information or willfully fails to disclose information required by the EHR; (3) maintain all records of EHRs and provide the Joint Agreement access to such records upon request; and (4) refrain from entering into any

agreements prohibited by 105 ILCS 5/22-94(g).

- c. In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/24-5: (1) concerning each new employee of a contractor that provides services to students or in schools, provide the Joint Agreement with evidence of physical fitness to perform the duties assigned and freedom from communicable disease; and (2) require any new or existing employee who provides services to students or in schools to complete additional health examinations as required by the Joint Agreement and be subject to additional health examinations, including tuberculosis screening, as required by the Ill. Dept. of Public Health rules or order of a local health official.
8. Any pavement engineering project using a coal tar-based sealant product or high polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon sealant product for pavement engineering-related use must comply with the Coal Tar Sealant Disclosure Act.
9. Design-build contracts must comply with 105 ILCS 5/15A-1 et seq.
10. Any new contract for a district-administered assessment must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.85.
11. Purchases made with federal or State awards must comply with 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and 30 ILCS 708/, as applicable, and any terms of the award.

The Special Education Director or designee shall: (1) execute the reporting and website posting mandates in State law concerning Joint Agreement contracts, and (2) monitor the discharge of contracts, contractors' performances, and the quality and value of services or products being provided.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Board Member Conflict of Interest), 4:70 (Resource Conservation), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **4:70 Resource Conservation**

The Joint Agreement will conserve energy resources by:

1. Periodic review of procurement procedures and specifications to ensure that purchased products and supplies are reusable, durable, or made from recycled materials, if economically and practically feasible.
2. Purchasing recycled paper and paper products in amounts that will, at a minimum, meet the specifications in the School Code, if economically and practically feasible.
3. Periodic review of procedures on the reduction of solid waste generated by academic, administrative, and other institutional functions. These procedures shall: (a) require recycling the Joint Agreement's waste stream, including landscape waste, computer paper, and white office paper, if economically and practically feasible; (b) include investigation of the feasibility of potential markets for other recyclable materials that are present in the Joint Agreement's waste stream; and (c) be designed to maintain at least a 50% reduction in the amount of solid waste that is generated by the Joint Agreement that was previously achieved.
4. Adherence to energy conservation measures.

CROSS REF: 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts)

Adopted: June 22, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 4:80 Accounting and Audits

The Joint Agreement's accounting and audit services shall comply with the *Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing*, as adopted by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), State and federal laws and regulations, and generally accepted accounting principles. Determination of liabilities and assets, prioritization of expenditures of governmental funds, and provisions for accounting disclosures shall be made in accordance with government accounting standards as directed by the auditor designated by the Board. The Special Education Director, in addition to other assigned financial responsibilities, shall report monthly on the Joint Agreement's financial performance, both income and expense, in relation to the financial plan represented in the budget.

### Annual Audit

At the close of each fiscal year, the Director shall arrange an audit of the Joint Agreement funds, accounts, statements, and other financial matters. The audit shall be performed by an independent certified public accountant designated by the Board and be conducted in conformance with prescribed standards and legal requirements. A complete and detailed written audit report shall be provided to each Board member and to the Director.

The Director shall annually, on or before October 15, submit an original and one copy of the audit to the Regional Superintendent of Schools.

### Annual Financial Report

The Director or designee shall annually prepare and submit the Annual Financial Report on a timely basis using the form adopted by the ISBE. The Director shall review and discuss the Annual Financial Report with the Board before it is submitted.

### Inventories

The Director or designee is responsible for establishing and maintaining accurate inventory records. The inventory record of supplies and equipment shall include a description of each item, quantity, location, purchase date, and cost or estimated replacement cost, unless the supplies and equipment are acquired by the Joint Agreement pursuant to a federal or State grant award, in which case the inventory record shall also include the information required by 2 C.F.R. §200.313, if applicable. The Director shall establish procedures for the management of property acquired by the Joint Agreement under grant awards that comply with federal and State law.

### Capitalization Threshold

To be considered a capital asset for financial reporting purposes, a capital item must be at or above a capitalization threshold of \$5,000 and have an estimated useful life greater than one year.

### Disposition of Joint Agreement Property

The Director or designee shall notify the Board, as necessary, of the following so that the Board may consider its disposition: (1) District personal property (property other than buildings and land) that is no longer needed for school purposes, and (2) school site, building, or other real estate that is unnecessary, unsuitable, or inconvenient. Notwithstanding the above, the Director or designee may unilaterally dispose of personal property of a diminutive value. The Director shall establish procedures for the disposition of property acquired by the Joint Agreement under grant awards that comply with federal and State law.

### Taxable Fringe Benefits

The Director or designee shall: (1) require that all use of Joint Agreement property or equipment by

employees is for the Joint Agreement's convenience and best interests unless it is a Board-approved fringe benefit, and (2) ensure compliance with the Internal Revenue Service regulations regarding when to report an employee's personal use of Joint Agreement property or equipment as taxable compensation.

#### Controls for Revolving Funds and Petty Cash

Revolving funds and the petty cash system are established in Board policy 4:50, *Payment Procedures*. The Director shall: (1) designate a custodian for each revolving fund and petty cash fund, (2) obtain a bond for each fund custodian, and (3) maintain the funds in compliance with this policy, State law, and ISBE rules. Each revolving fund shall be maintained in a bank that has been approved by the Board and established in an amount approved by the Director consistent with the annual budget. All expenditures from these bank accounts must be directly related to the purpose for which the account was established and supported with documentation, including signed invoices or receipts. All deposits into these bank accounts must be accompanied with a clear description of their intended purpose. The Director or designee shall include checks written to reimburse revolving funds on the Board's monthly listing of bills indicating the recipient and including an explanation.

#### Control Requirements for Checks

The Board must approve all bank accounts opened or established in the Joint Agreement's or a Joint Agreement school's name or with the Joint Agreement's Federal Employer Identification Number. All checks issued by the Joint Agreement must be signed by either the Treasurer or Business Manager, except that checks from accounts containing student activity funds or fiduciary funds and checks from revolving accounts may be signed by their respective account custodians.

#### Internal Controls

The Director is primarily responsible for establishing and implementing a system of internal controls for safeguarding the Joint Agreement's financial condition; the Board, however, will oversee these safeguards. The control objectives are to ensure efficient business and financial practices, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with State law and Board policies, and to prevent losses from fraud, waste, and abuse, as well as employee error, misrepresentation by third parties, or other imprudent employee action.

The Director or designee shall annually audit the Joint Agreement's financial and business operations for compliance with established internal controls and provide the results to the Board. The Board may from time-to-time engage a third-party to audit internal controls in addition to the annual audit.

CROSS REF.: 4:10 (Fiscal and Business Management), 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards)

Adopted: January 20, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 4:100 Insurance Management

The Special Education Director shall recommend and maintain all insurance programs that provide the broadest and most complete coverage available at the most economical cost, consistent with sound insurance principles.

The insurance program shall include:

1. Liability coverage to insure against any loss or liability of the Joint Agreement and the listed individuals against civil rights damage claims and suits, constitutional rights damage claims and suits, and death and bodily injury and property damage claims and suits, including defense costs, when damages are sought for negligent or wrongful acts allegedly committed in the scope of employment or under the Governing Board's direction or related to any mentoring services provided to the District's licensed staff members; Board members; employees; volunteer personnel authorized by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.34, 5/10-22.34a, and 5/10-22.34b; mentors of licensed staff members authorized in 105 ILCS 5/21A-5 et seq. (new teacher), 105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a (new principal), and 2-3.53b (new superintendents); and student teachers.
2. Comprehensive property insurance covering a broad range of causes of loss involving building and personal property. The coverage amount shall normally be for the replacement cost or the insurable value.
3. Workers' Compensation to protect the individual employees against financial loss in case of a work-related injury, certain types of disease, or death incurred in an employee-related situation.
4. Employee insurance programs.

LEGAL REF.:

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, Pub. L. 99-272, §10001, 26 U.S.C. §4980B(f), 42 U.S.C. §300bb-1 et seq.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a, 5/2-3.53b, 5/10-20.20, 5/10-22.3, 5/10-22.3a, 5/10-22.3b, 5/10-22.3f, 5/10-22.34, 5/10-22.34a, 5/10-22.34b, and 5/21A-5 et seq.

215 ILCS 5/, Ill. Insurance Code.

750 ILCS 75/, Ill. Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act.

820 ILCS 305/, Workers' Compensation Act.

Adopted: September 20, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **4:110 Transportation**

No employee may transport students in school or private vehicles unless authorized by the administration. Mid-State staff will follow the district policy and procedures.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:280 (Duties and Qualifications), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## **4:160 Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds**

The Special Education Director shall take all reasonable measures to protect: (1) the safety of Joint Agreement personnel, students, and visitors on Joint Agreement premises from risks associated with hazardous materials and (2) the environmental quality of the Joint Agreement's buildings and grounds.

### Pesticides

Pesticides will not be applied on the paved surfaces, playgrounds, or playing fields of any school serving grades K-8 during a school day or partial school day when students are in attendance for instructional purposes. Additionally, the application of any restricted use pesticides is prohibited on or within 500 feet of Joint Agreement property during normal school hours. Before pesticides are used on Joint Agreement premises, the Director or designee shall notify employees and parents/guardians of students as required by the Structural Pest Control Act, 225 ILCS 235/, and the Lawn Care Products Application and Notice Act, 415 ILCS 65/.

### Coal Tar Sealant

Before coal tar-based sealant products or high polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon sealant products are used on Joint Agreement premises, the Special Education Director or designee shall notify employees and parents/guardians of students in writing or by telephone as required by the Coal Tar Sealant Disclosure Act.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 4:165 Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors

Child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors harm students, their parents/guardians, the Joint Agreement's environment, its school communities, and the community at large, while diminishing a student's ability to learn. The Board has a responsibility and obligation to increase awareness and knowledge of: (1) issues regarding child sexual abuse, (2) likely warning signs that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse, (3) grooming behaviors related to child sexual abuse and grooming, (4) how to report child sexual abuse, (5) appropriate relationships between Joint Agreement employees and students based upon State law, and (6) how to prevent child sexual abuse.

To address the Board's obligation to increase awareness and knowledge of these issues, prevent sexual abuse of children, and define prohibited grooming behaviors, the Director or designee shall implement an Awareness and Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors Program. The Program will:

1. Train District employees about child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors by January 31 of each school year with materials that include:
  - a. A definition of prohibited grooming behaviors and employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*;
  - b. Evidence-informed content on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; 5:100, *Staff Development Program*; and 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; and
  - c. How to report child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and/or employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **4:170 Safety**

The policies and procedures for the individual member districts shall be followed.

Adopted: January 20, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **4:175 Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications**

### Persons Prohibited on School Property without Prior Permission

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender meets either of the following two exceptions:

1. The offender is a parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or
2. The offender received permission to be present from the Governing Board, Executive Committee, Special Education Director, or Director's designee. If permission is granted, the Special Education Director or Board President shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal.

In all cases, the Special Education Director or designee shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity. If a student is a sex offender, the Special Education Director or designee shall develop guidelines for managing his or her presence in school.

### Screening

The Special Education Director or designee shall perform fingerprint-based criminal history records information checks and/or screenings required by State law or Board policy for employees; student teachers; students doing field or clinical experience other than student teaching; contractors' employees who have direct, daily contact with one or more children; and resource persons and volunteers. The Board President shall ensure that these checks are completed for the Special Education Director. He or she shall take appropriate action based on the result of any criminal background check and/or screen.

### Notification to Parents/Guardians

The Special Education Director shall develop procedures for the distribution and use of information from law enforcement officials under the Sex Offender Community Notification Law and the Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Community Notification Law. The Special Education Director or designee shall serve as the Career Center contact person for purposes of these laws. The Special Education Director and Building Principal shall manage a process for schools to notify the parents/guardians during school registration that information about sex offenders is available to the public as provided in the Sex Offender Community Notification Law. This notification must occur during school registration and at other times as the Special Education Director or Building Principal determines advisable.

### LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7926, Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

20 ILCS 2635/, Uniform Conviction Information Act.

720 ILCS 5/11-9.3, Criminal Code of 2012.

730 ILCS 152/, Sex Offender Community Notification Law.

730 ILCS 154/75-105, Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Community Notification Law.

CROSS REF.: 2:110 (Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers), 3:40 (Special Education Director), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Special Education Director), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:260 (Student Teachers), 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

### **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **4:180 Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery**

The Governing Board and Executive Committee Board recognize that the Cooperative will play an essential role along with the local health department and emergency management agencies in protecting the public's health and safety during a pandemic.

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect individuals and, because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads sustainably.

To prepare the Cooperative community for a pandemic, the Director or designee shall: (1) learn and understand how the roles that the federal, State, and local government function; (2) develop and implement practices consistent with health department protocols for businesses and (3) obtain and build awareness of the final district plans among staff.

### Emergency School Closing

In the case of a pandemic, the Governor may declare a disaster due to a public health emergency that may affect any decision for an emergency school closing. Decisions for an emergency school closing will be made by the Cooperative Superintendents in consultation with and, if necessary, at the direction of the Governor, Ill. Dept. of Public Health, District's local health department, emergency management agencies, and/or Regional Office of Education.

During an emergency school closing, the Board Chairperson and the Director may, to the extent the emergency situation allows, examine existing Board policies pursuant to Policy 2:240, *Board Policy Development*, and recommend to the Board for consideration any needed amendments or suspensions to address mandates that the Cooperative may not be able to accomplish or implement due to a pandemic.

### Board Meeting Procedure: No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video

A disaster declaration related to a public health emergency may affect the Board's ability to meet in person and generate a quorum of members who are physically present at the location of a meeting. Policy 2:220, *School Board Meeting Procedure*, governs Board meetings by video or audio conference without the physical presence of a quorum.

### Payment of Employee Salaries During Emergency School Closures

The Director shall consult with the Executive Committee Board to determine the extent to which continued payment of salaries and benefits will be made to the Cooperative's employees, pursuant to Board policies 3:40, Special Education Director, 3:50, *Administrative Personnel Other Than the Special Education Director*, 5:35, *Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act*, 5:200, *Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal*, and 5:270, *Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment*, and consistent with: (1) applicable laws, regulations, federal or State or local emergency declarations, executive orders, and agency directives; (2) collective bargaining agreements and any bargaining obligations; and (3) the terms of any grant under which an employee is being paid.

CROSS REF.: 1:20 (District Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the School Board; Indemnification), 2:220 (School Board Meeting Procedure), 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 3:40 (Superintendent), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Superintendent), 3:70 (Succession of Authority), 4:170 (Safety), 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements)

Adopted: September 16, 2020

# Midstate Special Education Coop

**SECTION 5 - PERSONNEL**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



**General Personnel**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:10 Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment

Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement shall provide equal employment opportunities to all persons regardless of their race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, marital status, arrest record, military status, order of protection status, unfavorable military discharge, citizenship status, provided the individual is authorized to work in the United States, work authorization status; use of lawful products while not at work; being a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence; genetic information; physical or mental handicap or disability, if otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodation; pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; credit history, unless a satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a particular position; conviction record, unless authorized by law; or other legally protected categories. No one will be penalized solely for his or her status as a registered qualifying patient or a registered designated caregiver for purposes of the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act, 410 ILCS 130/.

Persons who believe they have not received equal employment opportunities should report their claims to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or a Complaint Manager under policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. These individuals are listed below. No employee or applicant will be discriminated or retaliated against because he or she: (1) requested, attempted to request, used, or attempted to use a reasonable accommodation as allowed by the Illinois Human Rights Act, or (2) initiated a complaint, was a witness, supplied information, or otherwise participated in an investigation or proceeding involving an alleged violation of this policy or State or federal laws, rules or regulations, provided the employee or applicant did not make a knowingly false accusation nor provide knowingly false information.

### Administrative Implementation

Annually, by July 1<sup>st</sup>, a male and female Nondiscrimination Coordinator shall be appointed by the Executive Committee for the Joint Agreement.

The Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers identified in policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, will also serve as the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers for administration of this policy.

The Nondiscrimination Coordinator also serves as the Joint Agreement's Title IX Coordinator.

### Minority Recruitment

The Joint Agreement will attempt to recruit and hire minority employees. The implementation of this policy may include advertising openings in minority publications, participating in minority job fairs, and recruiting at colleges and universities with significant minority enrollments. This policy, however, does not require or permit the Joint Agreement to give preferential treatment or special rights based on a protected status without evidence of past discrimination.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:40 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 5:50 (Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition), 5:70 (Religious Holidays), 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment), 5:300, (Schedules and Employment Year), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 8:70 (Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

# Midstate Special Education Coop

## 5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited

Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement expects the workplace environment to be productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment. Joint Agreement employees shall not engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, citizenship status, work authorization status, disability, pregnancy, marital status, order of protection status, military status, or unfavorable discharge from military service, nor shall they engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's other protected status identified in Board policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*. Harassment of students, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, is prohibited by Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*; and 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*.

The Joint Agreement will take remedial and corrective action to address unlawful workplace harassment, including sexual harassment.

### Sexual Harassment Prohibited

The Joint Agreement shall provide a workplace environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law. The Joint Agreement provides annual sexual harassment prevention training in accordance with State law.

Joint Agreement employees shall not make unwelcome sexual advances or request sexual favors or engage in any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical, or other conduct. The terms intimidating, hostile, or offensive include, but are not limited to, conduct which has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment or discomfort. Sexual harassment will be evaluated in light of all the circumstances.

### Making a Report or Complaint

Employees and *nonemployees* (persons who are not otherwise employees and are directly performing services for the Joint Agreement pursuant to a contract with the Joint Agreement, including contractors, and consultants) are encouraged to promptly report information regarding violations of this policy. Individuals may choose to report to a person of the individual's same gender. Every effort should be made to file such reports or complaints as soon as possible, while facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

Aggrieved individuals, if they feel comfortable doing so, should directly inform the person engaging in the harassing conduct or communication that such conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.

### Whom to Contact with a Report or Complaint

An employee should report claims of harassment, including making a confidential report, to any of the following: his/her immediate supervisor, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager. An employee may also report claims using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. If a claim is reported using Board policy 2:260, then the Complaint Manager

shall process and review the claim according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy.

The Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers identified in Policy 2:260 will also serve as the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers for administration of this policy. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator also serves as the Joint Agreement's Title IX Coordinator.

### Investigation Process

Any Joint Agreement employee who receives a report or complaint of harassment must promptly forward the report or complaint to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager. Any employee who fails to promptly forward a report or complaint may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Reports and complaints of harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the Joint Agreement's duty to investigate and maintain a workplace environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

For any report or complaint alleging sexual harassment that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.), the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or designee shall consider whether action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, should be initiated.

For any other alleged workplace harassment that does not require action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall consider whether an investigation under policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, should be initiated, regardless of whether a written report or complaint is filed.

### Reports That Involve Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse of a Child by School Personnel

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A(b), that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

Any complaint alleging an incident of sexual abuse shall be processed and reviewed according to policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. In addition to reporting the suspected abuse, the complaint shall also be processed under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

### Enforcement

A violation of this policy by an employee may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. A violation of this policy by a third party will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the Joint Agreement, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action, which for an employee may be up to and including discharge.

### Retaliation Prohibited

An employee's employment, compensation, or work assignment shall not be adversely affected by complaining or providing information about harassment. Retaliation against employees for bringing complaints or providing information about harassment is prohibited (see Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and depending upon the law governing the complaint, whistleblower protection may be available under the State Officials and

Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/), the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), and/or the Ill. Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/).

An employee should report allegations of retaliation to his/her immediate supervisor, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

Employees who retaliate against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in the reporting or complaint process will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

#### Recourse to State and Federal Fair Employment Practice Agencies

The Joint Agreement encourages all employees who have information regarding violations of this policy to report the information pursuant to this policy. The following government agencies are available to assist employees: the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights and the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The Special Education Director shall also use reasonable measures to inform staff members, applicants, and nonemployees of this policy, which shall include posting on the Joint Agreement website and/or making this policy available in the Joint Agreement's administrative office, and including this policy in the appropriate handbooks.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 8:30 (Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:20-E Resolution to Prohibit Sexual Harassment

WHEREAS, Section 10-20 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20) grants school boards other powers that are not inconsistent with their duties;

WHEREAS, Section 1-5 of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-5) includes school districts within the definition of a *governmental entity*;

WHEREAS, Section 5-65 of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/5-65, added by P.A. 100-554) provides that all persons have a right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment;

WHEREAS, Section 70-5 of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/70-5, amended by P.A.s 100-554 and 101-221) requires governmental entities to adopt an ordinance or resolution establishing a policy to prohibit sexual harassment which, at a minimum, includes: (1) a prohibition on sexual harassment; (2) details on how an individual can report an allegation of sexual harassment, including options for making a confidential report to a supervisor, ethics officer, Inspector General, or the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights; (3) a prohibition on retaliation for reporting sexual harassment allegations, including availability of whistleblower protections under the Act, the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), and the Ill. Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/); (4) the consequences: (a) of a violation of the prohibition on sexual harassment; and (b) for knowingly making a false report; and (5) a mechanism for reporting and independent review of allegations of sexual harassment made against a Board member by a fellow Board member or other elected official;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mid-State Special Education Executive Committee, Bond, Christian, Fayette, Macoupin, and Montgomery Counties in Illinois, as follows:

Section 1: The Board adopts Board policies 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*, and 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, attached as Exhibit A, which collectively contain the following: (1) a prohibition on sexual harassment; (2) detail regarding how an individual can report an allegation of sexual harassment, including options for making a confidential report to an immediate supervisor, the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, a Complaint Manager, or the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights; (3) a prohibition on retaliation for reporting sexual harassment allegations and a statement regarding the availability of whistleblower protections under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, the Whistleblower Act, and the Ill. Human Rights Act; and (4) the consequences: (a) of a violation of the prohibition on sexual harassment; and (b) for knowingly making a false report, and (5) a mechanism for reporting and independent review of allegations of sexual harassment made against a Board member by a fellow Board member or other elected official.

Section 2: Any prior versions of Board policies 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*, and 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, adopted by the Board are superseded by this Resolution.

Adopted this 22nd day of January, 2020.

Attested by: Wes Olson, Executive Committee Chairman

Attested by: David Powell, Executive Committee Vice-Chairman

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:30 Hiring Process and Criteria

The Joint Agreement hires the most qualified personnel consistent with budget and staffing requirements and in compliance with Board policy on equal employment opportunities and minority recruitment. The Special Education Director and/or Assistant Director is responsible for recruiting personnel and making hiring recommendations to the Executive Committee. No individual will be employed who has been convicted of a criminal offense listed in 105 ILCS 5/21B-80(c).

The Special Education Director and/or Assistant Director may select personnel on a short-term basis for a specific project or emergency condition before the Executive Committee's approval and the Governing Board's ratification.

All applicants must complete an application form in order to be considered for employment.

### Job Descriptions

The Board maintains the Special Education Director's job description and directs, through policy, the Special Education Director, in his or her charge of the Joint Agreement's administration.

The Special Education Director and/or Assistant Director shall develop and maintain a current, comprehensive job description for each position; however, a provision in a collective bargaining agreement or individual contract will control in the event of a conflict.

### Investigations

The Special Education Director or designee shall ensure that a fingerprint-based criminal history records check and a check of the Statewide Sex Offender Database and Violent Offender Against Youth Database is performed on each applicant as required by State law. When the applicant is a successful special education director candidate who has been offered employment by the Board, the Executive Committee Chairperson shall ensure that these checks are completed. The Special Education Director or designee, or if the applicant is a successful special education director candidate, then the Executive Committee Chairperson shall notify an applicant if the applicant is identified in either database. The School Code requires the Executive Committee Chairperson to keep a conviction record confidential and share it only with the Special Education Director, Assistant Director, Regional Superintendent, State Superintendent, State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board, any other person necessary to the hiring decision, the Ill. State Police and/or Statewide Sex Offender Database for purposes of clarifying the information, and/or the Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Illinois when required by law. The Board reserves its right to authorize additional background inquiries beyond a fingerprint-based criminal history records check when it deems it appropriate to do so, in accordance with applicable laws.

Each newly hired employee must complete a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Form as required by federal law.

The Joint Agreement retains the right to discharge any employee whose criminal background investigation reveals a conviction for committing or attempting to commit any of the offenses outlined in 105 ILCS 5/21B-80 or who falsifies, or omits facts from, his or her employment application or other employment documents. If an indicated finding of abuse or neglect of a child has been issued by the Ill. Department of Children and Family Services or by a child welfare agency of another jurisdiction for any applicant for student teaching, applicant for employment, or any Joint Agreement employee, then the Board must consider that person's status as a condition of employment.

The Special Education Director shall ensure that the Joint Agreement does not engage in any investigation or inquiry prohibited by law and complies with each of the following:

1. The Joint Agreement uses an applicant's credit history or report from a consumer reporting



agency only when a satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a particular position.

2. The Joint Agreement does not screen applicants based on their current or prior wages or salary histories, including benefits or other compensation, by requiring that the wage or salary history satisfy minimum or maximum criteria.
3. The Joint Agreement does not request or require a wage or salary history as a condition of being considered for employment, being interviewed, continuing to be considered for an offer of employment, an offer of employment, or an offer of compensation.
4. The Joint Agreement does not request or require an applicant to disclose wage or salary history as a condition of employment.
5. The Joint Agreement does not ask an applicant or applicant's current or previous employers about wage or salary history, including benefits or other compensation.
6. The Joint Agreement does not ask an applicant or applicant's previous employers about claim(s) made or benefit(s) received under the Workers' Compensation Act.
7. The Joint Agreement does not request of an applicant or employee access in any manner to his or her personal online account, such as social networking websites, including a request for passwords to such accounts.
8. The Joint Agreement provides equal employment opportunities to all persons. See policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*.

#### Sexual Misconduct Related Employment History Review (EHR)

Prior to hiring an applicant for a position involving *direct contact with children or students*, the Special Education Director shall ensure that an EHR is performed as required by State law. When the applicant is a director candidate, the Board President shall ensure that the EHR is initiated before a successful director candidate is offered employment by the Board.

#### Physical Examinations

Each new employee must furnish evidence of physical fitness to perform assigned duties and freedom from communicable disease. The physical fitness examination must be performed by a physician licensed in Illinois, or any other state, to practice medicine and surgery in any of its branches, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority by his or her supervising physician to perform health examinations. The employee must have the physical examination performed no more than 90 days before submitting evidence of it to the Joint Agreement.

Any employee may be required to have an additional examination by a physician who is licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority by his or her supervising physician to perform health examinations. If the examination is job-related and consistent with business necessity, the Board will pay the expenses of any such examination.

#### Orientation Program

The staff will provide an orientation program for new employees to acquaint them with the Joint Agreement policies and procedures, rules and regulations, and the responsibilities of their position. Before beginning employment, each employee must sign the *Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status* form as provided in policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Special Education Director), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:40 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting),

5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:125 (Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct), 5:280 (Duties and Qualifications)

Adopted: May 17, 2023

## **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:35 Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act

### Job Classifications

The Special Education Director will ensure that all job positions are identified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" according to State law and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and that employees are informed whether they are "exempt" or "non-exempt." "Exempt" and "non-exempt" employee categories may include certificated and non-certificated job positions. All non-exempt employees, whether paid on a salary or hourly basis, are covered by minimum wage and overtime provisions.

### Workweek and Compensation

The workweek for Joint Agreement employees will be 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday. Non-exempt employees will be compensated for all hours worked in a workweek including overtime. For non-exempt employees paid a salary, the salary is paid for a 40-hour workweek even if an employee is scheduled for less than 40 hours. "Overtime" is time worked in excess of 40 hours in a single workweek.

### Overtime

A non-exempt employee shall not work overtime without his or her supervisor's express approval. All supervisors of non-exempt employees shall: (1) monitor overtime use on a weekly basis and report such use to the business office, (2) seek the Special Education Director or designee's written pre-approval for any long term or repeated use of overtime that can be reasonably anticipated, (3) ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the FLSA are followed, and (4) ensure that employees are compensated for any overtime worked. Accurate and complete time sheets of actual hours worked during the workweek shall be signed by each employee and submitted to the business office. The business office will review work records of employees on a regular basis, make an assessment of overtime use, and provide the assessment to the Special Education Director. In lieu of overtime compensation, non-exempt employees may receive compensatory time-off, according to Board policy 5:310, *Compensatory Time-Off*.

### Suspension Without Pay

No exempt employee shall have his or her salary docked, such as by an unpaid suspension, if the deduction would cause a loss of the exempt status. Licensed employees may be suspended without pay in accordance with Board policy 5:240, *Suspension*. Non-licensed employees may be suspended without pay in accordance with Board policy 5:290, *Employment Termination and Suspensions*.

### Implementation

The Director or designee shall implement the policy in accordance with the FLSA, including its required notices to employees. In the event of a conflict between the policy and State or federal law, the latter shall control.

CROSS REF.: 5:240 (Suspension), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 5:310 (Compensatory Time-Off)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

## **5:40 Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease**

The Special Education Director or designee shall develop and implement procedures for dealing with known or suspected cases of a communicable and chronic infectious disease involving an employee consistent with State and federal law, rules of the Illinois Department of Public Health, and Governing Board policies.

An employee with a communicable or chronic infectious disease is encouraged to inform the Special Education Director immediately and grant consent to being monitored by the Joint Agreement's Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease Review Team. The Review Team, if used, provides information and recommendations to the Special Education Director concerning the employee's conditions of employment and necessary accommodations. The Review Team shall hold the employee's medical condition and records in strictest confidence, except to the extent allowed by law.

Employees with a communicable or chronic infectious disease will be permitted to retain their positions whenever, after reasonable accommodations and without undue hardship, there is no substantial risk of transmission of the disease to others, provided an employee is able to continue to perform the position's essential functions. An employee with a communicable and chronic infectious disease remains subject to the Board's employment policies including sick and/or other leave, physical examinations, temporary and permanent disability, and termination.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 4:180 (Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:50 Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition

All Joint Agreement and/or Member District workplaces are drug- and alcohol-free workplaces.

All employees are prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities while on Joint Agreement and/or Member District premises or while performing work or being *on call* for the Joint Agreement:

1. Unlawful manufacture, dispensing, distribution, possession, or use of an illegal or controlled substance, or being impaired by or under the influence of any illegal substance or any detectible use of any illegal substance regardless of when or where the use occurred.
2. Distribution, consumption, use, possession, or being impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage; being present on Joint Agreement and/or Member District premises or while performing work for the Joint Agreement when alcohol consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
3. Distribution, consumption, possession, use, or being impaired by or under the influence of cannabis; being present on Joint Agreement and/or Member District premises or while performing work for the Joint Agreement and/or Member District when impaired by or under the influence of cannabis, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred, unless distribution, possession, and/or use is by a school nurse or school administrator pursuant to *Ashley's Law*, 105 ILCS 5/22-33. The Joint Agreement and/or Member District considers employees impaired by or under the influence of cannabis when there is a good faith belief that an employee manifests specific articulable symptoms while working that decrease or lessen the employee's performance of the duties or tasks of the employee's job position.

Upon the Special Education Director or designee's reasonable suspicion of an employee's violation of any of the prohibited activities stated above, the Special Education Director or designee may direct the employee to undergo a drug and/or alcohol test to corroborate or refute the alleged violation. State law protects the Joint Agreement from liability when it takes actions pursuant to a reasonable workplace drug policy, including but not limited to subjecting an employee or applicant to reasonable drug and alcohol testing, reasonable and nondiscriminatory random drug testing, discipline, termination of employment, or withdrawal of a job offer due to a failure of a drug test.

For purposes of this policy a controlled substance means a substance that is:

1. Not legally obtainable,
2. Being used in a manner different than prescribed,
3. Legally obtainable, but has not been legally obtained, or
4. Referenced in federal or State controlled substance acts.

For purposes of this policy, *Joint Agreement* and/or Member District *premises* means workplace as defined in the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (CRTA) in addition to Joint Agreement and/or Member District and school buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for a board meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. *School grounds* means the real property comprising any school, any conveyance used to transport students to school or a school-related activity, and any public way within 1,000 feet of any school ground, designated school bus stops where students are waiting for the school bus, and school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. "Vehicles used for school purposes" means school buses or other school vehicles.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall:

1. Abide by the terms of this Board policy respecting a drug- and alcohol-free workplace; and
2. Notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation

occurring on the Joint Agreement and/or Member District premises or while performing work for the Joint Agreement and/or Member District, no later than five calendar days after such a conviction.

Unless otherwise prohibited by this policy, prescription and over-the-counter medications are not prohibited when taken in standard dosages and/or according to prescriptions from the employee's licensed health care provider, provided that an employee's work performance is not impaired.

To make employees aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, the Director or designee shall perform each of the following:

1. Provide each employee with a copy of this policy.
2. Post notice of this policy in a place where other information for employees is posted.
3. Make available materials from local, State, and national anti-drug and alcohol-abuse organizations.
4. Enlist the aid of community and State agencies with drug and alcohol informational and rehabilitation programs to provide information to Joint Agreement employees.
5. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
  - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace,
  - b. Available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, re-entry, and any employee assistance programs, and
  - c. The penalties that the Joint Agreement may impose upon employees for violations of this policy.

#### E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition

All employees are covered by the conduct prohibitions contained in policy 8:30, *Visitors to and Conduct on School Property*. The prohibition on the use of e-cigarettes, tobacco, and cannabis products applies both (1) when an employee is on school property, and (2) while an employee is performing work for the Joint Agreement and/or Member District at a school event regardless of the event's location.

*Tobacco* has the meaning provided in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b.

*Cannabis* has the meaning provided in the CRTA, 410 ILCS 705/1-10.

*E-Cigarette* is short for electronic cigarette and includes, but is not limited to, any electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS), electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, electronic hookah, vape pen, or similar product or device, and any components or parts that can be used to build the product or device.

#### Joint Agreement Action Upon Violation of Policy

An employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. In addition or alternatively, the Board may require an employee to successfully complete an appropriate drug- or alcohol-abuse rehabilitation program.

The Board shall take disciplinary action with respect to an employee convicted of a drug offense in the workplace within 30 days after receiving notice of the conviction.

Should Joint Agreement employees be engaged in the performance of work under a federal contract or grant, or under a State contract or grant of \$5,000 or more, the Special Education Director shall notify the appropriate State or federal agency from which the Joint Agreement receives contract or grant monies of the employee's conviction within 10 days after receiving notice of the conviction.

## Disclaimer

The Board reserves the right to interpret, revise or discontinue any provision of this policy pursuant to the **Suspension of Policies** subhead in policy 2:240, *Board Policy Development*.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:60 Expenses

Effective July 1, 2021, Joint Agreement Employees assigned to one member district will follow the district procedures related to approval for and reimbursement of expenses including materials, mileage, and professional development in order to maximize district grant funds.

The Board regulates the reimbursement of all travel, meal, and lodging expenses by resolution. Money shall not be reimbursed or purchase orders issued for: (1) the expenses of any person except the employee, (2) anyone's personal expenses, or (3) entertainment expenses. Entertainment includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless the entertainment is ancillary to the purpose of the program or event. The Joint Agreement is not responsible for losses due to an employee's own negligence, losses due to normal wear, or losses due to theft, unless the theft was a result of the Joint Agreement's negligence. Employees must submit the appropriate itemized, signed, standardized form(s) to support any requests for expense reimbursements or purchase orders that show the following:

1. The amount of the estimated or actual expense, with attached receipts for actual incurred expenses.
2. The name and title of the employee who is requesting the expense reimbursement. Receipts from group functions must include the names, offices, and job titles of all participants.
3. The date(s) of the official business on which the expense reimbursement or purchase order will be or was expended.
4. The nature of the official business conducted when the expense reimbursement or purchase order will be or was expended.

### Reimbursements and Purchase Orders

Expense reimbursements and purchase orders may be issued by the Director or designee to employees, along with other expenses necessary for the performance of their duties, provided the expenses fall below the maximum allowed in the Board's expense regulations.

Expense reimbursements and purchase order approvals are not guaranteed and, when possible, employees should seek pre-approval of expenses by providing an estimation of expenses on the Joint Agreement's standardized estimated expense approval form for employees, except in situations when the expense is diminutive. When pre-approval is not sought, employees must seek reimbursement on the Joint Agreement's standardized expense reimbursement form for employees. Expense reimbursements and purchase orders shall be presented to the Board in its regular bill process.

### Exceeding the Maximum Allowable Expense Amount(s)

All requests for expense reimbursements and purchase orders exceeding the maximum allowed in the Board's expense regulations may only be approved when:

1. The Board's resolution to regulate expenses allows for such approval;
2. An emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists; and
3. The request is approved by a roll call vote at an open Board meeting.

### Registration

When possible, registration fees will be paid by the Joint Agreement in advance.

### Travel

The least expensive method of travel will be used, provided that no hardship will be caused to the



employee. Employees will be reimbursed for:

1. Air travel at the coach or economy class commercial airline rate. First class or business class air travel will be reimbursed only if emergency circumstances warrant. The emergency circumstances must be explained on the expense form and Board approval of the additional expense is required. Fees for the first checked bag will be reimbursed. Copies of airline tickets and baggage receipts must be attached to the expense form.
2. Rail or bus travel at actual cost. Rail or bus travel costs may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Copies of tickets must be attached to the expense form to substantiate amounts.
3. Use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service for income tax purposes. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Mileage for use of personal automobiles in trips to and from transportation terminals will also be reimbursed. Toll charges and parking costs will be reimbursed.
4. Automobile rental costs when the vehicle's use is warranted. The circumstances for such use must be explained on the expense form.
5. Taxis, airport limousines, ride sharing services, or other local transportation costs.

### Meals

Meals charged to the Joint Agreement should represent 51-74 depending on geographical location according to IRS Reimbursement Rate selections for the hotel/meeting facility or general area. Tips are included with meal charges. Expense forms must explain the meal charges incurred. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.

### Lodging

Employees should request conference rate or mid-fare room accommodations. A single room rate will be reimbursed. Employees should pay personal expenses at checkout. If that is impossible, deductions for the charges should be made on the expense form.

### Miscellaneous Expenses

Employees may seek reimbursement for other expenses incurred while attending a meeting sponsored by organizations described herein by fully describing the expenses on the expense form, attaching receipts.

### Additional Requirements for Travel Expenses Charged to Federal and State Grants

All grant-related travel expenses must be pre-approved by the Director or designee.

Expenses for travel, including expenses for transportation, lodging, meals, and related items incurred by employees and charged to a federal grant or State grant governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/) must also meet the following requirements:

1. The participation of the employee is necessary to the award, and the costs are specifically related to the award.
2. Expenses must be permissible under the terms and conditions of the award.
3. Expenses must be reasonable and consistent with this policy.
4. The Board does not reimburse actual expenses or pay a per diem allowance unless the employee is on official *travel status* for more than 12 hours. However, employees remain eligible for mileage reimbursement (minus regular commuting mileage/costs) and other transportation expenses if on travel status less than 12 hours.
5. Expenses may be charged based on an actual cost basis or on a per diem basis in lieu of actual costs incurred; however, only one method may be applied per trip.

6. Commercial airfare costs in excess of the least expensive coach or economy class are prohibited except when such accommodations would: (1) require circuitous routing; (2) require travel during unreasonable hours; (3) excessively prolong travel; (4) result in additional costs that would offset transportation savings; or (5) offer accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler's medical needs. Qualifying circumstances must be explained on the expense form, and Board approval of the additional expense is required.
7. Per diem rates and actual reimbursement amounts for mileage, meals, and lodging may not exceed the rates established by the Governor's Travel Control Board or federal travel regulations, whichever is less. These limits do not apply when: (1) an employee stays in the lowest-priced room available at or near a hotel where a conference or seminar is located or in accommodations arranged by the conference/seminar organization, or (2) lodging at or below the established rate is unavailable. In those cases, the employee will be reimbursed for actual lodging expenses with prior approval, but in no case will the reimbursement exceed 300% of the applicable maximum per diem rate. If a conference fee includes a meal, the meal or per diem allowance will be reduced by the actual value of the meal or the applicable meal allowance, whichever is less.
8. Employees must use the least expensive compact car available when using a rental car for travel, unless an exception is approved. The Board does not reimburse employees for collision damage waiver or theft insurance.
9. The Board will reimburse travel expenses not chargeable to an award from other Joint Agreement funds consistent with this policy.

CROSS REF.: 2:125 (Board Member Compensation; Expenses), 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:60-E1 Exhibit - Employee Expense Reimbursement Form

Submit to the Superintendent. Use of this form is required by 2:125-E3, Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements. Please print and attach receipts for all expenditures.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Return Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Receipts attached

Request Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated expenses attached (Completed 5:60-E2, Employee Estimated Expense Approval Form)(pre-approval is required for federal and state grants).

Approved expense advancement (voucher) attached, if applicable\* (Completed 5:60-E2, Employee Estimated Expense Approval Form.)

### Actual Expense Report

\*Employees will be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses that exceed the amount advanced, but must refund any expense advancement that exceeds the actual and necessary expenses incurred. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32. For federal and State grants, employees will be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses that exceed estimated expenses as permitted by Board policy 5:60, Expenses.

Auto Travel Allowance: \_\_\_\_\_ per mile

Date	Auto Mileage		Transp. Expenses	Lodging	Meals or Per Diem			Other Item Cost	Daily Total
	Miles	Cost			Bkfst	Lunch   Dinner			
<b>Subtotal</b>									
<b>Advances</b>									
<b>TOTAL</b> (A negative amount indicates refund due from employee.)									\$

Superintendent or Designee:

Approved

Denied

(below maximum allowable amount)

Approved in Part

Grant Funding Source (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent or Designee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**School Board Action** (*exceeds maximum allowable amount*):  **Approved**  **Denied**

**Approved in Part**

**Grant Funding Source** (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

DATED : May 8, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:60-E2 Exhibit - Employee Estimated Expense Approval Form

*Submit to the Superintendent. Use of this form is required (1) by 2:125-E3, Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements and (2) for pre-approval of expenses to be charged to a federal grant or State grant governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act. Please print.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title/Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Destination: \_\_\_\_\_ Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Expenses Approval Requested** (50 ILCS 150/20 or grant expenditure)

**Travel is grant-related\*** (specify grant): \_\_\_\_\_

**Purchase Order Requested** Purchase Order #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Expense Advancement Voucher Requested** (105 ILCS 5/10-22.32)

Voucher Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Estimated Expense Report</b>										
Departure date: _____					Return date: _____					
Auto Travel Allowance: _____ per mile										
<p><i>*Grant-related travel only: Except for mileage and other transportation expenses, expense reimbursement/per diem is only allowed if on official travel status for 12 hours or more. If lodging at or below the applicable rate cannot be identified, please indicate below and attach at least three quotes for review.</i></p>										
Date	Auto Mileage		Transp. Expenses	Lodging	Meals or Per Diem			Other		Daily Total
	Miles	Cost			Bkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Item	Cost	
<b>Total</b>										\$

**Superintendent or Designee:**  Approved  Denied

(below maximum allowable amount)  Approved in Part

Grant Funding Source (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent or Designee Signature

Date

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**School Board Action** (*exceeds maximum allowable amount*):  **Approved**  **Denied**

**Approved in Part**

**Grant Funding Source** (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

DATED : May 8, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:70 Religious Holidays**

Supervisors shall grant an employee's request for time off to observe a religious holiday if the employee gives at least five days' prior notice and the absence does not cause an undue hardship.

Employees may use earned vacation time, or personal leave to make up the absence, provided such time is consistent with the Joint Agreement's operational needs. A per diem deduction may also be requested by the employee.

Adopted: June 22, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:80 Court Duty**

The Joint Agreement will deduct any fees that an employee receives for court duty, less mileage and meal expenses, from the employee's compensation, or make arrangements for the employee to endorse the fee check to the Joint Agreement.

An employee should give at least five days' prior notice of pending court duty to the Joint Agreement.

### Witness Duty

The Joint Agreement will pay full salary during the time an employee is absent due to a subpoena to serve as a witness in a trial or have a deposition taken in any school-related matter pending in court.

### Jury Duty

The Joint Agreement will pay full salary during the time an employee is absent due to jury duty.

Adopted: June 22, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## 5:90 Abused and Neglected Child Reporting

Any Joint Agreement employee who suspects or receives knowledge that a student may be an abused or neglected child or, for a student aged 18 through 22, an abused or neglected individual with a disability, shall: (1) immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on its Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)(within Illinois); 1-217-524-2606 (outside of Illinois); or 1-800-358-5117 (TTY), and (2) follow directions given by DCFS concerning filing a written report within 48 hours with the nearest DCFS field office.

The report shall include, if known:

1. The name and address of the child, parent/guardian names, or other persons having custody;
2. The child's age;
3. The child's condition, including any evidence of previous injuries or disabilities; and
4. Any other information that the reporter believes may be helpful to DCFS for its investigation.

Any Joint Agreement employee who believes a student is in immediate danger of harm, shall first call 911. The employee shall also promptly notify the Superintendent or Building Principal of the resident district that a report has been made. The Special Education Director or Building Principal shall immediately coordinate any necessary notifications to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) with DCFS, the applicable school resource officer (SRO), and/or local law enforcement.

Negligent failure to report occurs when a Joint Agreement employee personally observes an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect and reasonably believes, in his or her professional or official capacity, that the instance constitutes an act of child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) and he or she, without willful intent, fails to immediately report or cause a report to be made of the suspected abuse or neglect to DCFS.

Any Joint Agreement employee who discovers child pornography on electronic and information technology equipment shall immediately report it to local law enforcement, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or online at <https://report.cybertip.org/> or [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org). The Special Education Director or Building Principal shall also be promptly notified of the discovery and that a report has been made.

Any Joint Agreement employee who observes any act of hazing that does bodily harm to a student must report that act to the Building Principal in the district where the student attends, Special Education Director, or designee who will investigate and take appropriate action. If the hazing results in death or great bodily harm, the employee must first make the report to law enforcement and then to the Special Education Director or Building Principal. Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed to or required of a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any group, organization, club, or athletic team whose members are or include other students.

### Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA), School Code, and *Erin's Law* Training

The Special Education Director or designee shall provide staff development opportunities for Joint Agreement employees in the detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

All Joint Agreement employees shall:

1. Before beginning employment, sign the *Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status* form provided by DCFS. The Special Education Director or designee shall ensure that the signed forms are retained.
2. Complete mandated reporter training as required by law within three months of initial employment and at least every three years after that date.

3. Complete an annual evidence-informed training related to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors (including *sexual misconduct* as defined in *Faith's Law*), and boundary violations as required by law and policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*.

#### Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse; Investigations

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A, that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

If a Joint Agreement employee reports an alleged incident of sexual abuse to DCFS and DCFS accepts the report for investigation, DCFS will refer the matter to the local Children's Advocacy Center (CAC). The Special Education Director or designee will implement procedures to coordinate with the CAC.

DCFS and/or the appropriate law enforcement agency will inform the Joint Agreement when its investigation is complete or has been suspended, as well as the outcome of its investigation. The existence of a DCFS and/or law enforcement investigation will not preclude the Joint Agreement from conducting its own parallel investigation into the alleged incident of sexual abuse in accordance with policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.

#### Special Special Education Director Responsibilities

The Special Education Director shall execute the requirements in Board policy 5:150, *Personnel Records*, whenever another employer requests a reference concerning an applicant who is or was a Joint Agreement employee and was the subject of a report made by a Joint Agreement employee to DCFS.

When the Special Education Director has reasonable cause to believe that a license holder (1) committed an intentional act of abuse or neglect with the result of making a child an abused child or a neglected child under ANCRA or an act of sexual misconduct under *Faith's Law*, and (2) that act resulted in the license holder's dismissal or resignation from the Joint Agreement, the Special Education Director shall notify the State Superintendent and the Regional Superintendent in writing, providing the Ill. Educator Identification Number as well as a brief description of the misconduct alleged. The Special Education Director must make the report within 30 days of the dismissal or resignation and mail a copy of the notification to the license holder.

The Special Education Director shall develop procedures for notifying a student's parents/guardians when a Joint Agreement employee, contractor, or agent is alleged to have engaged in sexual misconduct with the student as defined in *Faith's Law*. The Special Education Director shall also develop procedures for notifying the student's parents/guardians when the Board takes action relating to the employment of the employee, contractor, or agent following the investigation of sexual misconduct. Notification shall not occur when the employee, contractor, or agent alleged to have engaged in sexual misconduct is the student's parent/guardian, and/or when the student is at least 18 years of age or emancipated.

The Special Education Director shall execute the recordkeeping requirements of *Faith's Law*.

#### Special Board Member Responsibilities

Each individual Board member must, if an allegation is raised to the member during an open or closed Board meeting that a student is an abused child as defined in ANCRA, direct or cause the Board to direct the Special Education Director or other equivalent school administrator to comply with ANCRA's requirements concerning the reporting of child abuse.

If the Board determines that any Joint Agreement employee, other than an employee licensed under 105 ILCS 5/21B, has willfully or negligently failed to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by ANCRA, the Board may dismiss that employee immediately.

When the Board learns that a licensed teacher was convicted of any felony, it must promptly report it to the State agencies listed in policy 2:20, *Powers and Duties of the Governing Board*.

CROSS REF.: 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Governing Board), 3:40 (Special Education Special Education Director), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Special Education Special Education Director), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:290 (Employment Terminations and Suspensions), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:150 (Agency and Police Interviews)

Adopted: May 17, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:100 Staff Development Program

The Superintendent or designee shall implement a staff development program. The goal of the program shall be to update and improve the skills and knowledge of staff members in order to achieve and maintain a high level of job performance and satisfaction.

### Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) and *Erin's Law* Training

The staff development program shall include the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) mandated reporter training and training on the awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors (*Erin's Law*) as follows (see Board policies 4:165, *Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors*, and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*):

1. Within three months of employment, each staff member must complete mandated reporter training from a provider or agency with expertise in recognizing and reporting child abuse. Mandated reporter training must be completed again at least every three years.
2. By January 31 of every year, all school personnel must complete evidence-informed training on preventing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors (including *sexual misconduct* as defined in *Faith's Law*), and boundary violations.

### In-Service Training Requirements

The staff development program shall provide, at a minimum, within six months of employment and renewed at least once every five years thereafter (unless required more frequently by other State or federal law), the in-service training of all District staff who work with pupils on:

1. Health conditions of students, including but not limited to training on:
  - a. Chronic health conditions of students;
  - b. Anaphylactic reactions and management, conducted by a person with expertise on anaphylactic reactions and management;
  - c. Management of asthma, prevention of asthma symptoms, and emergency response in the school setting;
  - d. The basics of seizure recognition and first aid and emergency protocols, consistent with best practice guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
  - e. The basics of diabetes care, how to identify when a diabetic student needs immediate or emergency medical attention, and whom to contact in case of emergency;
  - f. Current best practices regarding identification and treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and
  - g. How to respond to an incident involving life-threatening bleeding, including use of a school's trauma bleeding control kit, if applicable.
2. Social-emotional learning. Training may include providing education to all school personnel about the content of the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards, how they apply to everyday school interactions, and examples of how social emotional learning can be integrated into instructional practices across all grades and subjects.
3. Developing cultural competency, including but not limited to understanding and reducing implicit bias, including *implicit racial bias* as defined in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.61 (implicit bias training).
4. Identifying warning signs of mental illness, trauma, and suicidal behavior in youth, along with appropriate intervention and referral techniques, including resources and guidelines as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/2-3.166 (*Ann Marie's Law*).
5. Domestic and sexual violence and the needs of expectant and parenting youth, conducted by persons with expertise in domestic and sexual violence and the needs of expectant and

parenting youth. Training shall include, but is not limited to:

- a. Communicating with and listening to youth victims of domestic or sexual violence and expectant and parenting youth;
  - b. Connecting youth victims of domestic or sexual violence and expectant and parenting youth to appropriate in-school services and other agencies, programs, and services as needed;
  - c. Implementing the District's policies and procedures regarding such youth, including confidentiality; and
  - d. Procedures for responding to incidents of teen dating violence that take place at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation as outlined in 105 ILCS 110/3.10 (see Board policy 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*).
6. Protections and accommodations for students, including but not limited to training on:
- a. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act as it pertains to the school environment; and
  - b. Homelessness.
7. Educator ethics and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming behavior (see Board policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*); including but not limited to training on:
- a. Teacher-student conduct;
  - b. School employee-student conduct; and
  - c. Evidence-informed training on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13 (*Erin's Law*).
8. Effective instruction in violence prevention and conflict resolution, conducted in accordance with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.4 (violence prevention and conflict resolution education).

### Additional Training Requirements

In addition, the staff development program shall include each of the following:

1. Ongoing professional development for teachers, administrators, school resource officers, and staff regarding the adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates.
2. Annual continuing education and/or training opportunities (professional standards) for school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff. Each school food authority's director shall document compliance with this requirement by the end of each school year and maintain documentation for a three-year period.
3. All high school coaching personnel, including the head and assistant coaches, and athletic directors must obtain online concussion certification by completing online concussion awareness training in accordance with 105 ILCS 25/1.15. Coaching personnel and athletic directors hired on or after 8-19-14 must be certified before their position's start date.
4. The following individuals must complete concussion training as specified in the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act: coaches and assistant coaches (whether volunteer or employee) of an interscholastic athletic activity; nurses, licensed and/or non-licensed healthcare professionals serving on the Concussion Oversight Team; athletic trainers; game officials of an interscholastic athletic activity; and physicians serving on the Concussion Oversight Team.
5. For school personnel who work with hazardous or toxic materials on a regular basis, training on the safe handling and use of such materials.
6. For delegated care aides performing services in connection with a student's seizure action plan,

training in accordance with 105 ILCS 150/, the Seizure Smart School Act.

7. For delegated care aides performing services in connection with a student's diabetes care plan, training in accordance with 105 ILCS 145/, the Care of Students with Diabetes Act.
8. For all District staff, annual sexual harassment prevention training.
9. Title IX requirements for training as follows (see Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*):
  - a. For all District staff, training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the District's education program or activity, all relevant District policies and procedures, and the necessity to promptly forward all reports of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator.
  - b. For school personnel designated as Title IX coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, or informal resolution facilitators, training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the District's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process (including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable), and how to serve impartially.
  - c. For school personnel designated as Title IX investigators, training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.
  - d. For school personnel designated as Title IX decision-makers, training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about a complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.
10. Training for all District employees on the prevention of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, and national origin in school as part of new employee training and at least once every two years.
11. Training for at least one designated employee at each school about the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) database and steps required to register students for it.

The Superintendent shall develop protocols for administering youth suicide awareness and prevention education to staff consistent with Board policy 7:290, *Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention*.

#### LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

42 U.S.C. §1758b, Pub. L. 111-296, Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010; 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 and 235.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.62, 5/2-3.166, 5/3-11, 5/10-20.17a, 5/10-20.61, 5/10-22.6(c-5), 5/10-22.39, 5/10-23.12, 5/10-23.13, 5/22-80(h), 5/22-95, and 5/24-5.

105 ILCS 25/1.15, Interscholastic Athletic Organization Act.

105 ILCS 145/25, Care of Students with Diabetes Act

105 ILCS 150/25, Seizure Smart School Act.

105 ILCS 110/3, Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act.

325 ILCS 5/4, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

745 ILCS 49/, Good Samaritan Act.

775 ILCS 5/2-109 and 5/5A-103, Ill. Human Rights Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 22.20, 226.800, and Part 525.

77 Ill.Admin.Code §527.800.

CROSS REF.: 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 3:40 (Superintendent), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Superintendent), 4:160 (Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 6:15 (School Accountability), 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:50 (School Wellness), 6:160 (English Learners), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 7:285 (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program), 7:290 (Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention), 7:305 (Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:120 Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest

All District employees are expected to maintain high standards in their job performance, demonstrate integrity and honesty, be considerate and cooperative, and maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents/guardians, staff members, and others.

The Director of Special Education or designee shall provide this policy to Joint Agreement employees and students and/or parents/guardians in their respective handbooks, and ensure its posting on the Joint Agreement's website, if any.

### Professional and Appropriate Conduct

Professional and appropriate employee conduct are important Board goals that impact the quality of a safe learning environment and the school community, increasing students' ability to learn and the District's ability to educate. To protect students from sexual misconduct by employees, and employees from the appearance of impropriety, State law also recognizes the importance for District employees to constantly maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students by following established expectations and guidelines for employee-student boundaries. Many breaches of employee-student boundaries do not rise to the level of criminal behavior but do pose a potential risk to student safety and impact the quality of a safe learning environment. Repeated violations of employee-student boundaries may indicate the grooming of a student for sexual abuse. As bystanders, employees may know of concerning behaviors that no one else is aware of, so their training on: (1) preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming behavior; (2) this policy; and (3) federal and state reporting requirements is essential to maintaining the Board's goal of professional and appropriate conduct.

The Director of Special Education or designee shall identify employee conduct standards that define appropriate employee-student boundaries, provide training about them, and monitor the Joint Agreement's employees for violations of employee-student boundaries. The employee conduct standards will require that, at a minimum:

1. Employees who are governed by the *Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators*, adopted by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), will comply with its incorporation by reference into this policy.
2. Employees are trained on educator ethics, child abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee-student boundary violations as required by law and policies 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 4:165, *Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; and 5:100, *Staff Development Program*.
3. Employees maintain professional relationships with students, including maintaining employee-student boundaries based upon students' ages, grade levels, and developmental levels and following Joint Agreement and Member District(s)-established guidelines for specific situations, including but not limited to:
  - a. Transporting a student;
  - b. Taking or possessing a photo or video of a student; and
  - c. Meeting with a student or contacting a student outside the employee's professional role.
4. Employees report prohibited behaviors and/or boundary violations pursuant to Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.
5. Discipline up to and including dismissal will occur for any employee who violates an employee conduct standard or engages in any of the following:
  - a. Violates expectations and guidelines for employee-student boundaries.



- b. Sexually harasses a student.
- c. Willfully or negligently fails to follow reporting requirements of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7926).
- d. Engages in *grooming* as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25.
- e. Engages in grooming behaviors. Prohibited grooming behaviors include, at a minimum, *sexual misconduct*. *Sexual misconduct* is any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, by an employee with direct contact with a student, that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - i. A sexual or romantic invitation.
  - ii. Dating or soliciting a date.
  - iii. Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog.
  - iv. Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student.
  - v. Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature.
  - vi. A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student.

### Statement of Economic Interests

The following employees must file a *Statement of Economic Interests* as required by the Ill. Governmental Ethics Act:

1. Director of Special Education;
2. Administrators including; Assistant Director and Program Coordinators;
3. Head of any department;
4. Any employee who, as the District's agent, is responsible for negotiating one or more contracts, including collective bargaining agreement(s), in the amount of \$1,000 or greater;
5. Hearing officer;
6. Any employee having supervisory authority for 20 or more employees; and
7. Any employee in a position that requires an administrative or a chief school business official endorsement.

### Ethics and Gift Ban

Board policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*, applies to all Joint Agreement employees. Students shall not be used in any manner for promoting a political candidate or issue.

### Prohibited Interests; Conflict of Interest; and Limitation of Authority

In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/22-5, "no school officer or teacher shall be interested in the sale, proceeds, or profits of any book, apparatus, or furniture used or to be used in any school with which such officer or teacher may be connected," except when the employee is the author or developer of instructional materials listed with ISBE and adopted for use by the Board. An employee having an interest in instructional materials must file an annual statement with the Board Secretary.

For the purpose of acquiring profit or personal gain, no employee shall act as an agent of the Joint Agreement nor shall an employee act as an agent of any business in any transaction with the Joint Agreement. This includes participation in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award or State award governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/) when the employee has a real or apparent conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when an employee or any of the following individuals has a financial or other interest in

or a tangible benefit from the entity selected for the contract:

1. A member of the employee's immediate family;
2. An employee's partner; or
3. An entity that employs or is about to employ the employee or one of the individuals listed in one or two above.

Employees shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to agreements or subcontracts. Situations in which the interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value must comply with State law and Board policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*.

#### Guidance Counselor Gift Ban

Guidance counselors are prohibited from intentionally soliciting or accepting any gift from a *prohibited source* or any gift that would be in violation of any federal or State statute or rule. For guidance counselors, a *prohibited source* is any person who is (1) employed by an institution of higher education, or (2) an agent or spouse of or an immediate family member living with a person employed by an institution of higher education. This prohibition does not apply to:

1. Opportunities, benefits, and services available on the same conditions as for the general public.
2. Anything for which the guidance counselor pays market value.
3. A gift from a relative.
4. Anything provided by an individual on the basis of a personal friendship, unless the guidance counselor believes that it was provided due to the official position or employment of the guidance counselor and not due to the personal friendship. In determining whether a gift is provided on the basis of personal friendship, the guidance counselor must consider the circumstances in which the gift was offered, including any of the following:
  - a. The history of the relationship between the individual giving the gift and the guidance counselor, including any previous exchange of gifts between those individuals.
  - b. Whether, to the actual knowledge of the guidance counselor, the individual who gave the gift personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift.
  - c. Whether, to the actual knowledge of the guidance counselor, the individual who gave the gift also, at the same time, gave the same or a similar gift to other school district employees.
5. Bequests, inheritances, or other transfers at death.
6. Any item(s) during any calendar year having a cumulative total value of less than \$100.
7. Promotional materials, including, but not limited to, pens, pencils, banners, posters, and pennants.

A guidance counselor does not violate this prohibition if he or she promptly returns the gift to the prohibited source or donates the gift or an amount equal to its value to a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity.

#### Outside Employment

Employees shall not engage in any other employment or in any private business during regular working hours or at such other times as are necessary to fulfill appropriate assigned duties.

Incorporated

by reference: 5:120-E (Code of Ethics for Ill. Educators)

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:125 (Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:122 Professional Standards**

All Mid-State Special Education employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and appropriate manner. These expected standards of behavior, while not an exhaustive list, serve to provide for the safety and welfare of students and staff and to promote the education of children.

All Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement employees shall:

1. Demonstrate regular attendance, punctuality and compliance with established policy, routine or procedures related to an employee's time on duty.
2. Display honesty and integrity in the workplace.
3. Exhibit conduct that is respectful of the business conducted by the cooperative, and of the rights of others as related to interactions with students, staff, parents/guardians, and community members.
4. Maintain a safe and healthy environment in which students and staff are not subject to harassment, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, violence and/or substance abuse.
5. Uphold confidentiality as related to student, personnel, financial records and closed session board meeting discussions/minutes.
6. Exhibit truthfulness and responsibility in dealing with public records, funds, and property.
7. Demonstrate conduct that is reflective of recognized professional standards or a "reasonable personal standard."
8. Comply with legitimate directives given by supervisors.
9. Abide by all state and federal laws and rules/regulations and MSSE policies and procedures.

ADOPTED: November 15, 2011; (Reviewed May 19, 2021)

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:125 Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct

### Definitions

**Includes** - Means "includes without limitation" or "includes, but is not limited to."

**Social media** - Media for social interaction, using highly accessible web-based and/or mobile technologies that allow users to share content and/or engage in interactive communication through online communities. This includes, but is not limited to, services such as *Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and YouTube*.

**Personal technology** - Any device that is not owned or leased by the Joint Agreement or otherwise authorized for Joint Agreement use and: (1) transmits sounds, images, text, messages, videos, or electronic information, (2) electronically records, plays, or stores information, or (3) accesses the Internet, or private communication or information networks. This includes computers, tablets, smartphones and other devices.

### Usage and Conduct

All Joint Agreement employees who use personal technology and/or social media shall:

1. Adhere to the high standards for **Professional and Appropriate Conduct** required by policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest* at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes Joint Agreement employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students and other employees that is inappropriate as defined by policies 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:100, *Staff Development Program*; 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*; and 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
2. Choose a Joint Agreement-provided or supported method whenever possible to communicate with students and their parents/guardians.
3. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
4. Inform their immediate supervisor if a student initiates inappropriate contact with them via any form of personal technology or social media.
5. Report instances of suspected abuse or neglect discovered through the use of social media or personal technology pursuant to a school employee's obligations under policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.
6. Not disclose confidential information, including but not limited to school student records (e.g., student work, photographs of students, names of students, or any other personally identifiable information about students) or personnel records, in compliance with policy 5:130, *Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information*. For Joint Agreement employees, proper approval may include implied consent under the circumstances.
7. Refrain from using the Joint Agreement's logos without permission and follow policy 5:170, *Copyright*, and all Joint Agreement copyright compliance procedures.
8. Unless specifically instructed by administrators, employees are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Joint Agreement. Employees are expected to protect the privacy of the Joint Agreement and its employees and students and are prohibited from disclosing personal employee and nonemployee information and any other proprietary and nonpublic information to which employees have access in their capacity as an employee of Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement. Such information includes but is not limited to student information.

9. Use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Any duty-free use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.
10. Assume all risks associated with the use of personal technology and social media at school or school-sponsored activities, including students' viewing of inappropriate Internet materials through the Joint Agreement employee's personal technology or social media. The Board expressly disclaims any responsibility for imposing content filters, blocking lists, or monitoring of its employees' personal technology and social media.
11. Be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy ranging from prohibiting the employee from possessing or using any personal technology or social media at school to dismissal and/or indemnification of the Joint Agreement for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the Joint Agreement relating to, or arising out of, any violation of this policy.
12. Adhere to the personal technology and social media policies and procedures of the individual member districts.

#### Employee Monitoring:

Employees are cautioned that they should have no expectation of privacy while using the Internet and technology provided by the Joint Agreement. The Joint Agreement uses blog-search tools and software to monitor forums such as blogs and other types of personal journals, diaries, personal and business discussion forums, and social networking sites.

Employees are cautioned that they should have no expectation of privacy while using Joint Agreement equipment or facilities for any purpose, including authorized blogging.

The Joint Agreement reserves the right to use content management tools to monitor, review or block content on Joint Agreement blogs that violate Joint Agreement blogging rules and guidelines.

#### Special Education Director Responsibilities

The Special Education Director shall:

1. Inform Joint Agreement employees about this policy during the in-service on educator ethics, teacher-student conduct, and school employee-student conduct required by policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*.
2. Annually:
  - a. Provide staff with a copy of this policy.
  - b. Inform staff about the importance of maintaining high standards in their school relationships.
  - c. Remind about the importance of maintaining high standards in their school relationships.
  - d. Remind staff that those who violate this policy will be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
3. Build awareness of this policy with students, parents, and the community.
4. Ensure that neither the Joint Agreement, nor anyone on its behalf, commits an act prohibited by the Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act, 820 ILCS 55/10; i.e., the *Facebook Password Law*.
5. Periodically review this policy and any implementing procedures with Joint Agreement employee representatives and electronic network system administrator(s) and present proposed changes to the Board.

CROSS REF.: 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:100 (Staff

Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:130 (Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:170 (Copyright), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: May 17, 2023

## **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:130 Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information**

Joint Agreement employees are responsible for maintaining: (1) the integrity and security of all internal information, and (2) the privacy of confidential records, including but not limited to: student school records, personnel records, and the minutes of, and material disclosed in, a closed Governing Board meeting. Internal information is any information, oral or recorded in electronic or paper format, maintained by the Joint Agreement or used by the Joint Agreement or its employees. The Director or designee shall manage procedures for safeguarding the integrity, security, and, as appropriate, confidentiality of internal information.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board), 2:250 (Access to District Public Records), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: January 22, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## **5:140 Solicitations By or From Staff**

Joint Agreement employees shall not solicit donations or sales, nor shall they be solicited for donations or sales, on school grounds without prior approval from the Special Education Director.

Adopted: June 22, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:150 Personnel Records

### Maintenance and Access to Records

The Special Education Director or designee shall manage the maintenance of personnel records in accordance with State and federal law and Governing Board policy. Records, as determined by the Special Education Director are retained for all employment applicants, employees, and former employees given the need for the Joint Agreement to document employment-related decisions, evaluate program and staff effectiveness, and comply with government record keeping and reporting requirements. Personnel records shall be maintained in the Joint Agreement's administrative office, under the Special Education Director's direct supervision.

Access to personnel records is available as follows:

1. An employee will be given access to his or her personnel records according to State law and guidelines developed by the Special Education Director.
2. An employee's supervisor or other management employee who has an employment or business-related reason to inspect the record is authorized to have access.
3. Anyone having the respective employee's written consent may have access.
4. Access will be granted to anyone authorized by State or federal law to have access.
5. All other requests for access to personnel information are governed by Board policy 2:250, *Access to District Public Records*.

### Prospective Employer Inquiries Concerning a Current or Former Employee's Job Performance

The Special Education Director or designee shall manage a process for responding to inquiries by a prospective employer concerning a current or former employee's job performance. The Special Education Director shall:

1. Execute the requirements in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act whenever another school district asks for a reference concerning an applicant who is or was a Joint Agreement employee and was the subject of a report made by a Joint Agreement employee to Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS); and
2. Comply with the federal law prohibiting the Joint Agreement from providing a recommendation of employment for an employee, contractor, or agent that Joint Agreement knows, or has probable cause to believe, has engaged in sexual misconduct with a student or minor in violation of the law, but the Special Education Director or designee may follow routine procedures regarding the transmission of administrative or personnel files for that employee.
3. Manage the Joint Agreement's responses to employer requests for sexual misconduct related employment history review (EHR) information in accordance with *Faith's Law*.

When requested for information about an employee by an entity other than a prospective employer, the Joint Agreement will only confirm position and employment dates unless the employee has submitted a written request to the Special Education Director or designee.

CROSS REF.: 2:250 (Access to District Public Records), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: May 17, 2023

## **5:170 Copyright**

### Works Made for Hire

The Special Education Director shall manage the development of instructional materials and computer programs by employees during the scope of their employment in accordance with State and federal laws and Governing Board policies. Whenever an employee is assigned to develop instructional materials and/or computer programs, or otherwise performs such work within the scope of his or her employment, it is assumed the Joint Agreement shall be the owner of the copyright.

### Copyright Compliance

While staff members may use appropriate supplementary materials, it is each staff member's responsibility to abide by the Joint Agreement's copyright compliance procedures and to obey the copyright laws. The Joint Agreement is not responsible for any violations of the copyright laws by its staff or students. A staff member should contact the Special Education Director or designee whenever the staff member is uncertain about whether using or copying material complies with the Joint Agreement's procedures or is permissible under the law, or wants assistance on when and how to obtain proper authorization. No staff member shall, without first obtaining the permission of the Special Education Director or designee, install or download any program on a Joint Agreement-owned computer. At no time shall it be necessary for a Joint Agreement staff member to violate copyright laws in order to properly perform his or her duties.

CROSS REF.: 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:180 Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity**

A temporary illness or temporary incapacity is an illness or other capacity of ill-being that renders an employee physically or mentally unable to perform assigned duties. During such a period, the employee can use accumulated sick leave benefits. However, income received from other sources (worker's compensation, Joint Agreement-paid insurance programs, etc.) will be deducted from the Joint Agreement's compensation liability to the employee. The Board's intent is that in no case will the employee, who is temporarily disabled, receive more than 100 percent of gross salary.

Those insurance plans privately purchased by the employee and to which the Joint Agreement does not contribute, are not applicable to this policy.

If illness, incapacity, or any other condition causes an employee to be absent in one school year, after exhaustion of all available leave, for more than 90 consecutive work days, such absence may be considered a permanent disability and the Board may consider beginning dismissal proceedings subject to State and federal law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. This paragraph shall not be considered a limitation on the Board's authority to take any action concerning an employee that is authorized by State and federal law.

Any employee may be required to have an examination, at Joint Agreement expense, by a physician who is licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed physician assistant if the examination is job-related and consistent with business necessity.

CROSS REF.: 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:40 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

ADOPTED: January 22, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:185 Family and Medical Leave

### Leave Description

An eligible employee may use unpaid family and medical leave (FMLA leave), guaranteed by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, The U.S. Department of Labor's rules (federal rules) implementing FMLA, as they may be amended from time to time, control FMLA leave.

An eligible employee may take FMLA leave for up to a combined total of 12 weeks each year, using a rolling 12-month FMLA period 12-month period.

During a single 12-month period, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement may be extended to a total of 26 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a covered servicemember (defined in the federal rules) with a serious injury or illness. The "single 12-month period" is measured forward from the date the employee's first FMLA leave to care for the covered servicemember begins.

While FMLA leave is normally unpaid, the Joint Agreement will substitute an employee's accrued compensatory time-off and/or paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave, provided such leave is available for use in accordance with Board policies and rules. In addition, all policies and rules regarding the use of paid leave apply when paid leave is substituted for unpaid FMLA leave. Any substitution of paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave will count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Use of FMLA leave shall not preclude the use of other applicable unpaid leave that will extend the employee's leave beyond 12 weeks, provided that the use of FMLA leave shall not serve to extend such other unpaid leave. Any full workweek period during which the employee would not have been required to work, including summer break, winter break and spring break, is not counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

FMLA leave is available in one or more of the following instances:

1. The birth and first-year care of a son or daughter.
2. The adoption or foster placement of a son or daughter, including absences from work that are necessary for the adoption or foster care to proceed and expiring at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the placement date.
3. The serious health condition of an employee's spouse, child, or parent.
4. The employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job.
5. The existence of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, child, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, as provided in federal rules.
6. To care for the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, as provided by federal rules.

If spouses are employed by the Joint Agreement, they may together take only 12-weeks for FMLA leaves when the reason for the leave is 1 or 2, above, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition, or a combined total of 26 weeks for item 6 above.

An employee may be permitted to work on an intermittent or reduced-leave schedule in accordance with federal rules.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must be employed at a worksite where at least 50 employees are employed within 75 miles. In addition, one of the following provisions must describe the employee:

1. The employee is employed at a worksite where at least 50 employees are employed within 75 miles; and
2. The employee has been employed by the Joint Agreement for at least 12 months and has been employed for at least 1,000 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately before the beginning of the leave. The 12 months an employee must have been employed by the Joint Agreement need not be consecutive. However, the Joint Agreement will not consider any period of previous employment that occurred more than seven years before the date of the most recent hiring, except when the service break is due to fulfillment of a covered service obligation under the employee's Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301, *et seq.*, or when a written agreement exists concerning the Joint Agreement's intention to rehire the employee.

### Requesting Leave

If the need for the FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee must provide the Director or designee with at least 30 days' advance notice before the leave is to begin. If 30 days' advance notice is not practicable, the notice must be given as soon as practicable. The employee shall make a reasonable effort to schedule a planned medical treatment so as not to disrupt the Joint Agreement's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider administering the treatment. The employee shall provide at least verbal notice sufficient to make the Director or designee aware that he or she needs FMLA leave, and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Failure to give the required notice for a foreseeable leave may result in a delay in granting the requested leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice.

### Certification

Within 15 calendar days after the Director or designee makes a request for certification for a FMLA leave, an employee must provide one of the following:

1. When the leave is to care for the employee's covered family member with a serious health condition, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by the family member's health care provider.
2. When the leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by the employee's health care provider.
3. When the leave is to care for a covered servicemember with a serious illness or injury, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by an authorized health care provider for the covered servicemember.
4. When the leave is because of a qualified exigency, the employee must provide: (a) a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating that the military member is on active duty or call to active duty status, and the dates of the covered military member's active duty service, and (b) a statement or description, signed by the employee, of appropriate facts regarding the qualifying exigency for which FMLA leave is requested.

The Joint Agreement may require an employee to obtain a second and third opinion at its expense when it has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification.

The Joint Agreement may require recertification at reasonable intervals, but not more often than once every 30 days. Regardless of the length of time since the last request, the Joint Agreement may request recertification when the, (1) employee requests a leave extension, (2) circumstances described by the original certification change significantly, or (3) Joint Agreement receives information that casts doubt upon the continuing validity of the original certification. Recertification is at the employee's expense and must be provided to the Joint Agreement within 15 calendar days after the request. The Joint Agreement may request recertification every six months in connection with any absence by an employee needing an intermittent or reduced schedule leave for conditions with a

duration in excess of six months.

Failure to furnish a complete and sufficient certification on forms provided by the Joint Agreement may result in a denial of the leave request.

### Continuation of Health Benefits

During FMLA leave, employees are entitled to continuation of health benefits that would have been provided if they were working. Any share of health plan premiums being paid by the employee before taking the leave, must continue to be paid by the employee during the FMLA leave. A Joint Agreement's obligation to maintain health insurance coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late and the Joint Agreement notifies the employee at least 15 days before coverage will cease.

### Changed Circumstances and Intent to Return

An employee must provide the Director or designee reasonable notice of changed circumstances (i.e., within two business days if the changed circumstances are foreseeable) that will alter the duration of the FMLA leave. The Director or designee, taking into consideration all of the relevant facts and circumstances related to an individual's leave situation, may ask an employee who has been on FMLA leave for eight consecutive weeks whether he or she intends to return to work.

### Return to Work

If returning from FMLA leave occasioned by the employee's own serious health condition, the employee is required to obtain and present certification from the employee's health care provider that he or she is able to resume work.

An employee returning from FMLA leave will be given an equivalent position to his or her position before the leave, subject to: (1) permissible limitations the Joint Agreement may impose as provided in the FMLA or implementing regulations, and (2) the Joint Agreement's reassignment policies and practices.

Classroom teachers may be required to wait to return to work until the next semester in certain situations as provided by the FMLA regulations.

### Implementation

The Director or designee shall ensure that: (1) all required notices and responses to leave requests are provided to employees in accordance with the FMLA; and (2) this policy is implemented in accordance with the FMLA. In the event of a conflict between the policy and the FMLA or its regulations, the latter shall control. The terms used in this policy shall be defined as in the FMLA regulations.

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:310 (Compensatory Time-Off), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

**Professional Personnel**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## **5:190 Professional Personnel Qualifications**

### Professional Personnel Qualifications

Professional Personnel, refers to a Joint Agreement employee who is required to be licensed under State law and includes teachers, pupil personnel staff, therapists, and administrators. The following qualifications apply:

1. Each professional personnel must:
  - a. Have a valid Illinois Professional Educator License issued by the State Superintendent of Education with the required endorsements as provided in the School Code.
  - b. Provide the Joint Agreement Office with a complete transcript of credits earned in institutions of higher education on or before September 1 of each year.
  - c. Monitor compliance with State and federal law requirements that teachers be appropriately licensed;

The Special Education Director or designee shall:

1. Monitor compliance with State and federal law requirements that personnel be appropriately licensed; and
2. Through incentives for voluntary transfers, professional development, recruiting programs, or other effective strategies, ensure that minority students and students from low-income families are not taught at higher rates than other students by unqualified, out-of-field, or inexperienced personnel.

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:200 Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal**

### Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal

The Board delegates authority and responsibility to the Special Education Director to manage the terms and conditions for the employment of professional personnel. The Special Education Director shall act reasonable and comply with State and federal law as well as any applicable individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement in effect. The Special Education Director is responsible for making dismissal recommendations to the Board consistent with the Board's goal of having a highly qualified, high performing staff.

### School Year

Professional Personnel shall work the number of days for which they are employed prioritizing school days in the member districts where assigned. Professional Personnel are not required to work on legal school holidays unless a Member District has followed applicable State law that allows it to hold school or schedule teachers' institutes, parent-teacher conferences, or staff development.

### School Day

Professional Personnel are required to be present the standard work day of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with adjustments to accommodate district and school needs. Professional Personnel employed for at least four hours per day shall receive a duty-free lunch equivalent to the student lunch period, or 30 minutes, whichever is longer.

### Salary

Professional Personnel shall be paid according to the salaries fixed by the Board, but in no case less than the minimum salary provided by the School Code. Bachelor degree level teachers and specialists will receive a \$500.00 increase to base salary per 8 hours of coursework completion toward a master's degree relevant to service to the cooperative if approved by the Director. Determination and adjustment will be made annually based upon unofficial transcripts submitted by August 30th each year. At no time will the increase exceed more than 6% from year to year when an employee is 5 years or less from eligibility for a TRS annuity. Professional Personnel shall be paid at least monthly on a 12-month basis.

### Assignments and Transfers

The Special Education Director is authorized to make assignments. In order of consideration, except as otherwise provided by law, assignments shall be made based upon the Joint Agreement and Member District's needs and best interests, employee qualifications, and employee desires.

### School Social Worker Services Outside of Joint Agreement Employment

School social workers may not provide services outside of their Joint Agreement employment to any student(s) attending school in a member district school the school social worker serves. School social worker has the meaning stated in 105 ILCS 5/14-1.09a.

### Dismissal

The Joint Agreement will follow State law when dismissing a Professional Personnel.

### Evaluation

The Joint Agreements evaluation system will be conducted under the plan developed pursuant to State law.

CROSS REF.: 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest),  
5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

## **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:210 Resignations and Retirement

Teachers may resign at any time with consent of the Executive Committee. No teacher or licensed employee may resign during the school term in order to accept another teaching or licensed position without the consent of the Executive Committee. A teacher may resign outside of a school term if the teacher provides written notice to the Special Education Director, at least 30 calendar days prior to the first student attendance day of the following school year. Teachers who resign with less than 30 days' notice prior to the first student attendance day of the following school term will be deemed to have resigned during the school term.

Probationary teachers and licensed employees may resign during their contract period only with the Executive Committee's consent.

### Retirement Incentive

This incentive is available for certain professional staff members retiring under the Illinois Teacher Retirement System, including Assistant Directors, Program Coordinators, Itinerant Teachers, Transition Specialist, Psychologist, Social Workers, as provided for below.

1. During the term hereof, eligible employees may elect to participate in the Retirement Bonus Plan (the "Plan"). Under the Plan, "eligible employees" shall mean employees who:

- Are eligible to receive non-discounted retirement funds from TRS without penalty or accelerated payment (as defined by then-current TRS rules).
- Have at least 15 years of employment with Mid-State Special Education at the time a letter of intent to retire is submitted.
- Have submitted an irrevocable letter of resignation for retirement to the Director on or before January 1 of the year in which the plan will commence. In addition, the employee shall provide proof from TRS that he/she has applied and been accepted for an annuity under the TRS rules and regulations.

2. Eligible employees may elect a one, two, three, or four-year retirement incentive program under the Plan. Election shall be made by submitting an irrevocable letter of resignation for retirement to the Director identifying the fiscal year in which the Plan shall commence (which may not include the current fiscal year and shall not exceed four consecutive years) and identifying the effective date of resignation. The employee shall be removed from the salary schedule and the Retirement Bonus shall equal the difference between the participant's base compensation during the Plan year and 104% of the previous year's base compensation. Base compensation is defined as the salary amount prior to the addition of the payment to TRS. For the second, third and fourth years of the Plan, the previous year's base compensation shall include the Retirement Bonus paid during such previous year.

In addition, the irrevocable letter of resignation for retirement must include, as consideration for participation in the earnings increase under this Policy, that if any law is enacted or not re-enacted that results in a greater cost to the Board of an employee to retire (including costs imposed by legislatively enacted or not re-enacted early retirement program), then the provisions related to the retirement plan shall be suspended such that the Board's cost is not greater than anticipated at the time of accepting the employee's participation in the retirement plan.

The irrevocable letter of resignation for retirement must also include, as consideration for participation in the earnings increase under this Policy, that when an employee is five (5) or less years from eligibility for a TRS annuity, the employee's nonexempt creditable TRS earnings from employment in the District, irrespective of form and no matter how arising, shall not exceed an increase of more than six percent (6%) from year to year, no matter how arising.

Adopted: December 13, 2023

# Midstate Special Education Coop

## **5:230 Maintaining Student Discipline**

Maintaining an orderly learning environment is an essential part of the instructional & support of professional personnel responsibilities. The ability to foster appropriate student behavior is an important factor in educational effectiveness. The Director shall ensure that all professional personnel, other certificated [licensed] educational employees (except for individuals employed as paraprofessional educators), and persons providing a student's related service(s): (1) maintain discipline in the schools as required in the School Code, and (2) follow the Board policies and administrative procedures on student conduct, behavior, and discipline.

When a student's behavior is unacceptable, the matter should first be discussed with the student, if appropriate. If the unacceptable behavior continues, personnel should consult with the Building Principal of the Member District and/or discuss the problem with the parent(s)/guardian(s). A student may be removed from the learning setting whose behavior interferes with the lessons or participation of fellow students; a student's removal must be in accordance with Board policy and administrative procedures.

Personnel shall not use disciplinary methods which may be damaging to students, such as ridicule, sarcasm, or excessive temper displays. Corporal punishment (including slapping, paddling or prolonged maintenance of a student in physically painful positions, and intentional infliction of bodily harm) may not be used. Personnel may use reasonable force as needed to keep students, school personnel, and others safe, or for self-defense or defense of property.

CROSS REF.: 7:190 (Student Behavior)

Adopted: September 20, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:240 Suspension

### Suspension Without Pay

The Executive Committee may suspend without pay: (1) a professional employee pending a dismissal hearing, or (2) a teacher as a disciplinary measure for misconduct that is detrimental to the Joint Agreement. Administrative staff members may not be suspended without pay as a disciplinary measure.

Misconduct that is detrimental to the Joint Agreement includes:

- Insubordination, including any failure to follow an oral or written directive from a supervisor
- Violation of Board policy or Administrative Procedure
- Conduct that disrupts or may disrupt the educational program or process
- Conduct that violates any State or federal law that relates to the employee's duties
- Other sufficient causes

The Special Education Director or designee is authorized to issue a pre-suspension notification to a professional employee. This notification shall include the length and reason for the suspension as well as the deadline for the employee to exercise his or her right to appeal the suspension to the Executive Committee before it is imposed. At the request of the professional employee made within five calendar days of receipt of a pre-suspension notification, the Executive Committee will conduct a pre-suspension hearing. The Executive Committee shall notify the professional employee of the date and time of the hearing. At the pre-suspension hearing, the professional employee or his/her representative may present evidence. If the employee does not appeal the pre-suspension notification, the Executive Director or designee shall report the action to the Executive Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

### Employees Under Investigation by Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

Upon receipt of a DCFS recommendation that the Joint Agreement remove an employee from his or her position when he or she is the subject of a pending DCFS investigation that relates to his or her employment with the Joint Agreement, the Board or Special Education Director or designee, in consultation with the Board Attorney, will determine whether to:

1. Let the employee remain in his or her position pending the outcome of the investigation; or
2. Remove the employee as recommended by DCFS, proceeding with:
  - a. A suspension with pay; or
  - b. A suspension without pay.

### Repayment of Compensation and Benefits

If a professional employee is suspended with pay, either voluntarily or involuntarily, pending the outcome of a criminal investigation or prosecution, and the employee is later dismissed as a result of his or her criminal conviction, the employee must repay to the Joint Agreement all compensation and the value of all benefits received by him or her during the suspension. The Executive Director will notify the employee of this requirement when the employee is suspended.

CROSS REF.: 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions)

Adopted: June 22, 2022

# Midstate Special Education Coop



## 5:250 Leaves of Absence

### Sick and Bereavement Leave

Each full-time professional staff member is granted 15 sick leave days per fiscal year. Any unused days will accumulate for use as sick leave in subsequent years. Sick leave is defined in State law as personal illness, mental or behavioral health complications, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or the acceptance of a child in need of foster care.

As a condition for paying sick leave after three days absence for personal illness or as the Board or Special Education Director deem necessary in other cases, the Board or Special Education Director may require that the staff member provide a certificate from: (1) a physician licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, (2) a mental health professional licensed in Illinois providing ongoing care or treatment to the staff member, (3) a chiropractic physician licensed under the Medical Practice Act, (4) a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, (5) a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority to perform health examinations by his or her supervising physician, or (6) if the treatment is by prayer or spiritual means, a spiritual adviser or practitioner of the employee's faith. If the Board or Special Education Director requires a certificate during a leave of less than three days for personal illness, the Joint Agreement shall pay the expenses incurred by the employee.

Staff members are entitled to use up to 30 days of paid sick leave because of the birth of a child that is not dependent on the need to recover from childbirth. Such days may be used at any time within the 12-month period following the birth of the child. Intervening periods of nonworking days or school not being in session, such as breaks and holidays, do not count towards the 30 working school days. As a condition of paying sick leave beyond the 30 working school days, the Board or Special Education Director may require medical certification.

For purposes of adoption, placement for adoption, or acceptance of a child in need of foster care, paid sick leave may be used for reasons related to the formal adoption or the formal foster care process prior to taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care, and for taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care. Such leave is limited to 30 days, unless a longer leave is provided in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, and need not be used consecutively once the formal adoption or foster care process is underway. The Board or Special Education Director may require that the employee provide evidence that the formal adoption or foster care process is underway.

Sick leave may be taken in a minimum of one-hour increments.

### Family Bereavement Leave

State law allows a maximum of 10 unpaid work days for eligible employees (Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, 20 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.) to take family bereavement leave. The purpose, requirements, scheduling, and all other terms of the leave are governed by the Family Bereavement Leave Act. Eligible employees may use family bereavement leave, without any adverse employment action, for: (1) attendance by the bereaved staff member at the funeral or alternative to a funeral of a covered family member, which includes an employee's child, stepchild, domestic partner, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or stepparent (2) making arrangements necessitated by the death of the covered family member, (3) grieving the death of the covered family member, or (4) absence from work due to a Significant Event, which includes: (i) miscarriage, (ii) an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure, (iii) a failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party, (iv) a failed surrogacy agreement, (v) a diagnosis that negatively impacts pregnancy or fertility, or (vi) a still birth. An employee qualifying for leave due to a Significant Event will not be required to

identify which specific reason applies to the employee's request.

The leave must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the employee received notice of the death of the covered family member or the date on which an event under item (4) above occurs. However, in the event of the death of more than one covered family member in a 12-month period, an employee is entitled to up to a total of six weeks of bereavement leave during the 12-month period, subject to certain restrictions under State and federal law. Other existing forms of leave may be substituted for the leave provided in the Family Bereavement Leave Act. This policy does not create any right for an employee to take family bereavement leave that is inconsistent with the Family Bereavement Leave Act.

### Personal Leave

All full-time employees are granted three personal leave days per fiscal year. Any unused days will rollover into sick days the following fiscal year.

Part-time employees will receive pro-rated personal leave.

### Leave of Absence Without Pay

The Executive Committee may grant a leave of absence without pay to tenured professional staff members who have rendered satisfactory service and desire to return to employment in a similar capacity at a time determined by the Executive Committee.

Each leave of absence shall be of the shortest possible duration required to meet the leave's purpose consistent with a reasonable continuity of instruction for students.

### Child-Rearing Leave

The Executive Committee shall consider a professional staff member's request for a non-paid, child-rearing leave. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a professional staff member from using paid sick days as provided in this policy.

A professional staff member should request, if possible, a child-rearing leave by notifying the Special Education Director in writing no later than 90 days before the requested leave's beginning date. The request should include the proposed leave dates.

Subject to the insurance carrier's approval, the professional staff member may maintain insurance benefits at his or her own expense during a child-rearing leave.

A professional staff member desiring to return before the leave's expiration should contact the Special Education Director as soon as possible.

### Leaves for Service in the Military

Leaves for service in the U.S. Armed Services or any of its reserve components and the National Guard, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in military service does not acquire tenure.

### General Assembly

Leaves for service in the General Assembly, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in the General Assembly does not acquire tenure.

### School Visitation Leave

An eligible professional staff member is entitled to eight hours during any school year, no more than four hours of which may be taken on any given day, to attend school conferences, behavioral meetings, or academic meetings related to the teacher's child, if the conference or meeting cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. Professional staff members must first use all accrued vacation leave, personal leave, compensatory leave, and any other leave that may be granted to the professional staff member, except sick, and disability leave.

The Special Education Director or Designee shall develop administrative procedures implementing this policy consistent with the School Visitation Rights Act.

#### Leaves for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Gender Violence, or Other Crime of Violence

An unpaid leave from work is available to any staff member who: (1) is a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence or (2) has a family or household member who is a victim of such violence whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence. The unpaid leave allows the employee to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance, and to grieve and attend to matters necessitated by the death of a family or household member who is killed in a crime of violence, without suffering adverse employment action.

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) governs the purpose, requirements, scheduling, and continuity of benefits, and all other terms of the leave. Accordingly, if the Joint Agreement employs at least 50 employees, and subject to any exceptions in VESSA, an employee is entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period. Neither the law nor this policy creates a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under, or is in addition to the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.).

#### Leaves to Serve as an Officer, Trustee, or Representative of a Specific Organization

Upon request, the Executive Committee will grant: (1) an unpaid leave of absence to an elected officer of a State or national teacher organization that represents teachers in collective bargaining negotiations, (2) up to twenty days of paid leave of absence per year to a trustee of the Teachers' Retirement System in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/24-6.3, (3) a paid leave of absence for the local association president of a State teacher association that is an exclusive bargaining agent in the Joint Agreement, or his or her designee, to attend meetings, workshops, or seminars as described in 105 ILCS 5/24-6.2, and (4) up to 10 days of paid leave per school term for teachers elected to represent a statewide teacher association in federal advocacy work in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/24-3.5.

#### Leave to Serve as an Election Judge

Any staff member who was appointed to serve as an election judge under State law may, after giving at least 20-days' written notice to the Joint Agreement, be absent without pay for the purpose of serving as an election judge. The staff member is not required to use any form of paid leave to serve as an election judge. No more than 10% of the Joint Agreement employees may be absent to serve as election judges on the same Election Day.

#### COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave

When applicable, paid administrative leave related to COVID-19 will be granted to eligible employees in accordance with State law.

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

# Midstate Special Education Coop

## 5:260 Student Teachers

The Special Education Director is authorized to accept students from university-approved training programs to complete an internship or to student teach in the Joint Agreement. No individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense that would subject him or her to license suspension or revocation pursuant to Section 5/21B-80 of the School Code or who has been found to be the perpetrator of sexual or physical abuse of a minor under 18 years of age pursuant to proceedings under Article II of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 is permitted to intern or student teach.

Before permitting an individual to intern, student teach, or participate in any field experience in the Joint Agreement, the Special Education Director or designee shall ensure that:

1. The Joint Agreement performed a *105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(g) Check* as described below; and
2. The individual furnished evidence of physical fitness to perform assigned duties and freedom from communicable disease pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-5.

A *105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(g) Check* shall include:

1. Fingerprint-based checks through (a) the Illinois State Police (ISP) for criminal history records information (CHRI) pursuant to the Uniform Conviction Information Act (20 ILCS 2635/1), and (b) the FBI national crime information databases pursuant to the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (P.L. 109-248);
2. A check of the Illinois Sex Offender Registry (see the Sex Offender Community Notification Law (730 ILCS 152/101 et seq.); and
3. A check of the Illinois Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry (Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registration Act (730 ILCS 154/75-105).

The School Code requires each individual student teaching or beginning a required internship to provide the Joint Agreement with written authorization for, and pay the costs of, his or her 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(g) check (including any applicable vendor's fees). Upon receipt of this authorization and payment, the Special Education Director or designee will submit the student teacher's name, sex, race, date of birth, social security number, fingerprint images, and other identifiers, as prescribed by the Ill. State Police (ISP), to the ISP. The Special Education Director or designee will provide each student teacher with a copy of his or her report.

### Assignment

The Special Education Director or designee shall be responsible for coordinating placements of all interns and student teachers within the Joint Agreement. Interns and student teachers will be assigned to supervisors whose qualifications are acceptable to the Joint Agreement and the students' respective colleges or universities.

CROSS REF.: 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:190 (Teacher Qualifications)

Adopted: May 17, 2023

**Educational Support Personnel**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:270 Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment**

### Employment At-Will

Unless otherwise specifically provided, Joint Agreement employment is at-will, meaning that employment may be terminated by the Joint Agreement or employee at any time for any reason, other than a reason prohibited by law, or no reason at all. Nothing in Governing Board policy is intended or should be construed as altering the employment at-will relationship.

Exceptions to employment at-will may include employees who are employed annually, have an employment contract, or are otherwise granted a legitimate interest in continued employment. The Special Education Director is authorized to make exceptions to employing nonlicensed employees at-will but shall maintain a record of positions or employees who are not at-will.

### Compensation and Assignment

The Executive Committee will approve salary and wages for educational support personnel. Increments are dependent on evidence of continuing satisfactory performance. An employee covered by the overtime provisions in State or federal law shall not work overtime without prior authorization from the employee's immediate supervisor. Educational support personnel are paid twice a month. The Special Education Director is authorized to make assignments and transfers of educational support personnel.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment) 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 5:310 (Compensatory Time-Off)

Adopted: January 20, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:280 Duties and Qualifications

All support staff: (1) must meet qualifications specified in job descriptions, (2) must be able to perform the essential tasks listed and/or assigned, and (3) are subject to Board policies as they may be changed from time-to-time at the Board's sole discretion.

### Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals provide supervised instructional support. Service as a paraprofessional requires an educator license with stipulations endorsed for a paraprofessional educator unless a specific exemption is authorized by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE).

Individuals with only non-instructional duties (e.g., providing technical support for computers, providing personal care services, or performing clerical duties) are not paraprofessionals, and the requirements in this section do not apply. In addition, individuals completing their clinical experiences and/or student teaching do not need to comply with this section, provided their service otherwise complies with ISBE rules.

### Nonlicensed Personnel Working with Students and Performing Non-Instructional Duties

Nonlicensed personnel performing non-instructional duties may be used:

1. For supervising study halls, long distance teaching reception areas used incident to instructional programs transmitted by electronic media (e.g., computers, video, and audio), detention and discipline areas, and school-sponsored extracurricular activities;
2. As supervisors, chaperones, or sponsors for non-academic school activities or for school activities connected to the academic program during any time in which the Governor has declared a disaster due to a public health emergency, in accordance with ISBE rule; or
3. For non-teaching duties not requiring instructional judgment or student evaluation.

Nothing in this policy prevents a nonlicensed person from serving as a guest lecturer or resource person under a certificated teacher's direction and with the administration's approval.

CROSS REF.: 4:110 (Transportation), 4:170 (Safety), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## **5:290 Employment Termination and Suspensions**

### Resignation and Retirement

An employee is requested to provide at least two weeks' notice of a resignation. A resignation notice cannot be revoked once given. An employee planning to retire should notify his or her supervisor at least two months before the retirement date.

### Non-RIF Dismissal

The Joint Agreement may terminate an at-will employee at any time for any reason, subject to State and federal law. The Special Education Director or supervisor may recommend an employee's discharge subject to the Executive Committee and Governing Board's approval.

Employees who are employed annually or have a contract, or who otherwise have a legitimate expectation of continued employment, may be dismissed: (1) at the end of the school year or at the end of their respective contract after being provided appropriate notice and after compliance with any applicable contractual provisions, or (2) mid-year or mid-contract provided appropriate due process procedures are provided.

The Special Education Director is responsible for making dismissal recommendations to the Executive Committee and Governing Board consistent with the Board's goal of having a highly qualified, high performing staff. This includes recommending a non-licensed employee for immediate dismissal for willful or negligent failure to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by 325 ILCS 5/.

### Reduction in Force and Recall

The Executive Committee may, as necessary or prudent, decide to decrease the number of educational support personnel or to discontinue some particular type of educational support service and, as a result of that action, dismiss or reduce the hours of one or more educational support employees. When making decisions concerning reduction in force and recall, the Executive Committee will follow Sections 10-22.34c (outsourcing non-instructional services) and 10-23.5 (procedures) of the School Code, to the extent they are applicable and not superseded by legislation or an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

### Final Paycheck

A terminating employee's final paycheck will be adjusted for any unused, earned vacation credit. Employees are paid for all earned vacation. Terminating employees will receive their final pay on the next regular payday following the date of termination, except that an employee dismissed due to a reduction in force shall receive his or her final paycheck on or before the next regular pay date following the last day of employment.

### Suspension

Except as provided below, the Special Education Director or Assistant Director is authorized to suspend an employee without pay as a disciplinary measure, during an investigation into allegations of misconduct, or pending a dismissal hearing whenever, in the Special Education Director's or Assistant Director's judgment, the employee's presence is detrimental to the Joint Agreement. A disciplinary suspension shall be with pay: (1) when the employee is exempt from the overtime provisions of the federal wage and hour laws, or (2) until an employee with an employment contract for a definite term is provided a notice and hearing according to the suspension policy for professional employees. Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Ill. Dept. Children and Family Services (DCFS) that the Joint Agreement remove an employee from his or her position when he or she is the subject of a pending DCFS investigation that relates to his or her employment with the Joint

Agreement, the Executive Committee or Special Education Director or designee, in consultation with the Board Attorney, will determine whether to:

1. Let the employee remain in his or her position pending the outcome of the investigation; or
2. Remove the employee as recommended, proceeding with:
  - a. A suspension with pay; or
  - b. A suspension without pay.

Any criminal conviction resulting from the investigation or allegations shall require the employee to repay to the Joint Agreement all compensation and the value of all benefits received by the employee during the suspension. The Special Education Director will notify the employee of this requirement when the employee is suspended.

CROSS REF.: 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:240 (Suspension), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment)

ADOPTED: January 22, 2020

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:300 Schedules and Employment Year**

The Special Education Director or designee shall supervise a process for setting work schedules and an employment year for educational support employees in accordance with State and federal law, School Board policy, and applicable agreements and shall:

1. Assign each employee one supervisor who will establish a work schedule, including breaks, as required by building or District needs, work load, and the efficient management of human resources;
2. Allow for the ability to respond to changing circumstances by altering work schedules as needed; and
3. Consider the well-being of the employee. The Special Education Director or designee's approval is required to establish a flexible work schedule or job-sharing.

An employee who works at least 7.5 continuous hours shall receive a 30-minute duty-free meal break that begins within the first five hours of the employee's workday. The District accommodates employees who are nursing mothers according to State and federal law.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:310 Compensatory Time-Off

This policy governs the use of compensatory time-off by employees who: (1) are covered by the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. §201 et seq., and (2) are not represented by an exclusive bargaining representative.

Employees may be given 1 hour of compensatory time-off in lieu of cash payment for each hour of approved work beyond the normal workweek up to 40 hours and 1-1/2 hours of compensatory time-off in lieu of cash payment for each hour of overtime worked greater than 40 hours in the workweek. Compensatory time-off must be used in the pay period earned unless approved by the Director.

An employee who has accrued compensatory time-off shall be permitted to use such time provided such requests do not unduly disrupt the Cooperative's operations. The employee's supervisor must approve a request to use compensatory time-off.

Upon termination of employment, an employee will be paid for unused compensatory time.

### Implementation

The Director or designee shall implement this policy in accordance with the FLSA. In the event of a conflict between the policy and the FLSA, the latter shall control.

CROSS REF.: 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment)

Adopted: May 19, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **5:320 Evaluation**

The Special Education Director is responsible for designing and implementing a program for evaluating the job performance of each educational support staff member according to standards contained in Governing Board policies as well as in compliance with State law and any applicable employee handbook and/or collective bargaining agreement.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:150 (Personnel Records)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 5:330 Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves

### Sick Leave and Bereavement Leave

Each full-time employee is granted 15 sick leave days per fiscal year. Any unused days will accumulate for use as sick leave in subsequent years. Sick leave is defined in State law as personal illness, mental or behavioral complications, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or the acceptance of a child in need of foster care.

Part-time employees will receive sick leave pay equivalent to their regular workday. This policy is the Joint Agreement's written plan allowing eligible employees to convert eligible accumulated sick leave to service credit upon a Joint Agreement employee's retirement under the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund.

Sick leave may be taken in a minimum of one-hour increments.

As a condition for paying sick leave after three days absence for personal illness or as the Board or Special Education Director deem necessary in other cases, the Board or Special Education Director may require that the staff member provide a certificate from: (1) a physician licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, (2) a mental health professional licensed in Illinois providing ongoing care or treatment to the staff member, (3) a chiropractic physician licensed under the Medical Practice Act, (4) a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, (5) a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority to perform health examinations by his or her supervising physician, or (6) if the treatment is by prayer or spiritual means, a spiritual adviser or practitioner of the employee's faith. If the Board or Special Education Director requires a certificate during a leave of less than three days for personal illness, the Joint Agreement shall pay the expenses incurred by the employee.

Employees are entitled to use up to 30 days of paid sick leave because of the birth of a child that is not dependent on the need to recover from childbirth. Such days may be used at any time within the 12-month period following the birth of the child. Intervening periods of nonworking days or school not being in session, such as breaks and holidays, do not count towards the 30 working school days. As a condition of paying sick leave beyond the 30 working school days, the Board or the Director may require medical certification.

For purposes of adoption, placement for adoption, or acceptance of a child in need of foster care, paid sick leave may be used for reasons related to the formal adoption or the formal foster care process prior to taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care, and for taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need to foster care. Such leave is limited to 30 days, unless a longer leave is provided in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, and need not be used consecutively once the formal adoption or foster care process is underway. The Board or Special Education Director may require that the employee provide evidence that the formal adoption or foster care process is underway.

### Personal Leave

All employees are granted three personal leave days per fiscal year. Any unused days will rollover into sick days the following fiscal year.

Part-time employees are entitled to personal days on the same basis as full-time employees, but the pay/hours will be based on the employee's average number of part-time hours per week during the year.

Personal leave may be taken in one-hour increments.

### Leave of Absence Without Pay

The Executive Committee may grant a leave of absence without pay to employees who have rendered satisfactory service and desire to return to employment in a similar capacity at a time determined by the Executive Committee.

### Vacation

All 12-month, non-exempt employees, shall be eligible for paid vacation days according to the following schedule:

<u>Length of Employment</u>	<u>Maximum Vacation Leave Earned Per Year</u>
After 1 year of employment	10 days
After 10 years of employment	15 days
After 20 years of employment	20 days

Part-time employees who work at least half-time are entitled to vacation days on the same basis as full-time employees, but the pay will be based on the employee's average number of part-time hours per week during the last vacation accrual year.

Vacation days will be requested and approved in advance by the Special Education Director or Designee to ensure Joint Agreement operations are not disrupted. Vacation time may be taken in a minimum of quarter-day, half-day and/or full-day increments.

Vacation days earned are to be used within the year of the employees anniversary. Employees resigning or whose employment is terminated are entitled to the monetary equivalent of all earned vacation.

### Holidays

All MSSE Office staff will follow the school year calendar as determined by the Special Education Director.

A holiday will not cause a deduction from an employee's time or compensation. The Joint Agreement may require educational support personnel to work on a legal school holiday during an emergency or for the continued operation and maintenance of facilities or property.

### Leave to Serve as a Trustee of the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund

Upon request, the Board will grant 20 days of paid leave of absence per year to a trustee of the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund in accordance with State law.

### Leaves for Service in the Military and General Assembly

Educational support personnel receive military and General Assembly leaves on the same terms and conditions granted professional staff.

### School Visitation Leave

Educational support personnel receive school visitation leave on the same terms and conditions granted professional staff.

### Leaves for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Gender Violence, or Other Crime of

## Violence

Educational support personnel receive a leave for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or other crime of violence on the same terms and conditions granted professional staff.

## Family Bereavement Leave

Educational support personnel receive family bereavement leave on the same terms and conditions granted professional staff.

## Leave to Serve as an Election Judge

Any staff member who was appointed to serve as an election judge under State law may, after giving at least 20-days' written notice to the Joint Agreement, be absent without pay for the purpose of serving as an election judge. The staff member is not required to use any form of paid leave to serve as an election judge. No more than 10% of the Joint Agreement's employees may be absent to serve as election judges on the same Election Day.

## COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave

Educational support personnel receive COVID-19 paid administrative leave on the same terms and conditions granted professional staff.

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



**SECTION 6 - INSTRUCTION**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **6:40 Program Development**

In order to provide services for the students of Member Districts requiring special education, the Special Education Director shall annually review the Comprehensive Plan of Services for the Joint Agreement. It shall be a plan that is educationally sound and that justifies itself in substantial benefits to the students served.

The Comprehensive Plan shall ensure that Member Districts have available a full continuum of services.

The Special Education Director shall present any updates to the plan, as needed, to the Executive Committee no later than May with each Member District receiving a copy of the updated Comprehensive Plan, if revised.

CROSS REF.: 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 6:235 Access to Electronic Networks

Electronic networks are a part of the Joint Agreement's instructional program and serve to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The term *electronic networks* includes all of the Joint Agreement's technology resources, including, but not limited to:

1. The Joint Agreement's local-area and wide-area networks, including wireless networks (Wi-Fi), Joint Agreement-issued Wi-Fi hotspots, and any Joint Agreement servers or other networking infrastructure;
2. Access to the Internet or other online resources via the Joint Agreement's networks or to any Joint Agreement-issued online account from any computer or device, regardless of location;
3. Joint Agreement-owned or Joint Agreement-issued computers, laptops, tablets, phones, or similar devices.

The Director shall develop an implementation plan for this policy and appoint system administrator(s).

The Joint Agreement is not responsible for any information that may be lost or damaged, or become unavailable when using the network, or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. Furthermore, the Joint Agreement will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

### Curriculum and Appropriate Online Behavior

The use of the Joint Agreement's electronic networks shall: (1) be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the Joint Agreement as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students, and (2) comply with the selection criteria for instructional materials and library resource center materials. Staff members may, consistent with the Special Education Director's implementation plan, use the Internet throughout the curriculum.

The Joint Agreement's electronic network is part of the curriculum and is not a public forum for general use.

### Acceptable Use

All use of the Joint Agreement's electronic networks must be: (1) in support of education and/or research, and be in furtherance of the goals stated herein, or (2) for a legitimate school business purpose. Use is a privilege, not a right. Users of the Joint Agreement's electronic networks have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored on, transmitted, or received via the Joint Agreement's electronic networks. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using electronic networks. The Joint Agreement's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the Joint Agreement's Electronic Networks*, contains the appropriate uses, ethics, and protocol. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account but not erased, may be monitored or read by school officials.

### Internet Safety

Technology protection measures shall be used on each Joint Agreement computer with Internet access. They shall include a filtering device that protects against Internet access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by federal law and as determined by the Director or designee. The Director or designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices. An administrator, supervisor, or other authorized person may disable the filtering device for bona fide research or other lawful purpose, provided the person receives prior permission from the Director or system administrator. The Director or designee shall include measures in this policy's implementation plan to address the following:

1. Ensure staff supervision of student access to online electronic networks,
2. Restrict student access to inappropriate matter as well as restricting access to harmful materials,
3. Ensure student and staff privacy, safety, and security when using electronic communications,
4. Restrict unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities, and
5. Restrict unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information, such as, names and addresses.

### District Electronic Networks

The acceptable use policies and procedures of the individual member districts shall be followed.

### Authorization for Electronic Network Access

Each staff member must sign the *Authorization for Access to the Joint Agreement’s Electronic Network* as a condition for using the Joint Agreement’s electronic network. Each student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign the *Authorization* before being granted unsupervised use.

### Confidentiality

All users of the Joint Agreement’s computers to access the Internet shall maintain the confidentiality of student records. Reasonable measures to protect against unreasonable access shall be taken before confidential student information is loaded onto the network.

### Violations

The failure of any user to follow the terms of the Joint Agreement’s administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the Joint Agreement’s Electronic Networks*, or this policy, will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

### Access to Member District Electronic Networks

For those Joint Agreement employees working in member districts, Joint Agreement employees are also to comply with member district electronic network policies.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:170 (Copyright), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Adopted: December 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

**SECTION 7 - STUDENTS**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to color, race, nationality, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, gender, gender identity (whether or not traditionally associated with the student's sex assigned at birth), gender expression, status of being homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. Further, the Joint Agreement will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status. Any student may file a discrimination grievance by using policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

### Sex Equity

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities. Students shall be supported in a manner consistent with their gender identity. This will include, but not be limited to, use of restrooms, locker rooms, and other facilities that correspond with the student's gender identity.

Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A student may appeal the Board's resolution of the complaint to the Regional Superintendent (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/3-10) and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent of Education (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.8).

### Administrative Implementation

The Special Education Director shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator, who also serves as the Joint Agreement's Title IX Coordinator. The Special Education Director and Member District Administrators shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy and related grievance procedures.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 7:15 Student and Family Privacy Rights

### Surveys

All surveys requesting personal information from students, as well as any other instrument used to collect personal information from students, must advance or relate to the Joint Agreement's educational objectives, or assist students' career choices. This applies to all surveys, regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified or who created the survey.

### Surveys Created by a Third Party

Before an official or staff member administers or distributes a survey or evaluation created by a third party to a student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may inspect the survey or evaluation, upon their request and within a reasonable time of their request.

This section applies to every survey: (1) that is created by a person or entity other than a Joint Agreement official, staff member, or student, (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

### Surveys Requesting Personal Information

Joint Agreement officials and staff members shall not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the Joint Agreement) containing one or more of the following items:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Behavior or attitudes about sex.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may:

1. Inspect the survey or evaluation upon, and within a reasonable time of, their request, and/or
2. Refuse to allow their child to participate in the activity described above. The Joint Agreement shall not penalize any student whose parent(s)/guardian(s) exercised this option.

### Instructional Material

A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may inspect, upon their request, any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum within a reasonable time of their request.

The term "instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the Internet). The term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.

### Physical Exams or Screenings

No Joint Agreement official or staff member shall subject a student to a non-emergency, invasive

physical examination or screening as a condition of school attendance. The term “invasive physical examination” means any medical examination that involves the exposure of private body parts, or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but does not include a hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.

The above paragraph does not apply to any physical examination or screening that:

1. Is permitted or required by an applicable State law, including physical examinations or screenings that are permitted without parental notification.
2. Is administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.).
3. Is otherwise authorized by Board policy.

#### Prohibition on Selling or Marketing Students’ Personal Information

No school official or staff member shall market or sell personal information concerning students (or otherwise provide that information to others for that purpose). The term “personal information” means individually identifiable information including: (1) a student or parent’s first and last name, (2) a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town), (3) a telephone number, (4) a Social Security identification number or (5) driver’s license number or State identification card.

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the above paragraph does not apply: (1) if the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) have consented; or (2) to the collection, disclosure or, use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions, such as the following:

1. College or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment.
2. Book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products.
3. Curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools.
4. Tests and assessments to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments.
5. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities.
6. Student recognition programs.

Under no circumstances may a Joint Agreement official or staff member provide a student’s “personal information” to a business organization or financial institution that issues credit or debit cards.

#### Notification of Rights and Procedures

The Special Education Director, designee, or the Member District shall notify students’ parents/guardians of:

1. This policy as well as its availability upon request from the general administration office.
2. How to opt their child out of participation in activities as provided in this policy.
3. The approximate dates during the school year when a survey requesting personal information, as described above, is scheduled or expected to be scheduled.
4. How to request access to any survey or other material described in this policy.

This notification shall be given to parents/guardians at least annually, at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period after any substantive change in this policy.



## Transfer of Rights

The rights provided to parents/guardians in this policy transfer to the student when the student turns 18 years old, or is an emancipated minor.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure)

Adopted: June 22, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 7:20 Harassment of Students Prohibited

No person, including a Joint Agreement employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender; gender identity (whether or not traditionally associated with the student's sex assigned at birth); gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; physical appearance; socioeconomic status; academic status; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. The Joint Agreement will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

### Sexual Harassment Prohibited

The Joint Agreement shall provide an educational environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law. See policies 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

### Making a Report or Complaint

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidences of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any Joint Agreement or District employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. A student may choose to report to a Joint Agreement or District employee of the student's same gender.

Reports under this policy will be considered a report under Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or Complaint Manager shall process and review the report according to the appropriate grievance procedure.

The Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers identified in policy 2:260 will also serve as the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers for administration of this policy. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator also serves as the Joint Agreement's Title IX Coordinator.

The Special Education Director shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy.

### Investigation Process

Any Joint Agreement employee who receives a report or complaint of harassment must promptly forward the report or complaint to the appropriate Joint Agreement or District Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager. Any employee who fails to promptly comply may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Reports and complaints of harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the Joint Agreement's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

For any report or complaint alleging sexual harassment that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.), the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or designee shall consider whether action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, should be initiated.

For any other alleged student harassment that does not require action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall consider whether an investigation under policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or 7:190, *Student Behavior*, should be initiated, regardless of whether a written report or complaint is filed.

#### Reports That Involve Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse of a Child by School Personnel

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A(b), that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

Any complaint alleging an incident of sexual abuse shall be processed and reviewed according to policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. In addition to reporting the suspected abuse, the complaint shall also be processed under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

#### Enforcement

Any Joint Agreement employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the Joint Agreement, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any Joint Agreement student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the behavior policy. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.

#### Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints or providing information about harassment is prohibited (see policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*).

Students should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

## 7:180 Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important Joint Agreement goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, order of protection status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a nonschool-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the Joint Agreement or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any nonschool-related activity, function, or program.

*Bullying* includes *cyberbullying* and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

*Bullying* may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

*Cyberbullying* means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. *Cyberbullying* includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*. *Cyberbullying* also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates

any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

*School personnel* means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in the Joint Agreement, including without limitation Joint Agreement administrators, teachers, school social workers, and school psychologists.

### Bullying Prevention and Response Plan

The Bullying Prevention and Response Plan of member districts will be followed. Member district students participating in Joint Agreement programs are encouraged to immediately report bullying occurring in the Joint Agreement program, either orally or in writing, to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator identified below, member district building administrator, a Complaint Manager identified below, or any Joint Agreement employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including employees and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to a member district administrator or the Joint Agreement Nondiscrimination Coordinator or one of its Complaint Managers. Anonymous reports are also accepted; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers identified in Policy 2:260 will also serve as the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers for administration of this policy.

If requested by the member district administration, Joint Agreement employees will assist in an investigation into any alleged bullying occurring in a Joint Agreement program. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying **is prohibited**.

The Special Education Director or designee shall post this policy on the Joint Agreement's publicly accessible website, if any. The policy must be distributed annually to Joint Agreement employees (including new employees when hired).

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:170 (Safety), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited)

Adopted: May 15, 2024

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 7:340 Student Records

Official student records are the property of the Joint Agreement Member District. The policies and procedures of the individual member districts shall be followed. To the extent employees of Mid-State create, use, access, store, or possess education records, the following requirements shall apply.

School student records are confidential. Information from them shall not be released other than as provided by law. A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except as provided in State or Federal law as summarized below:

1. Records kept in staff member's sole possession.
2. Records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school.
3. Video and other electronic recordings (including without limitation, electronic recordings made on school buses that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes. The content of these recordings may become part of a school student record to the extent school officials create, use, and maintain this content, or it becomes available to them by law enforcement officials, for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.
4. Any information, either written or oral, received from law enforcement officials concerning a student less than the age of 18 years who has been arrested or taken into custody.

State and federal law grants students, parents/guardians, and when applicable, the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services' Office of Education and Transition Services, certain rights, including the right to inspect, copy, and/or challenge school student records. The information contained in school student records shall be kept current, accurate, clear, and relevant. All information maintained concerning a student receiving special education services shall be directly related to the provision of services to that child. The Member District may release directory information as permitted by law, but a parent/guardian shall have the right to opt-out of the release of directory information regarding his or her child. The Member District will comply with State or federal law with regard to release of a student's school records, including, where applicable, without notice to, or the consent of, the student's parent/guardian or eligible student. Upon request, the Member District discloses school student records without parent consent to the official records custodian of another school in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any other person as specifically required or permitted by State or Federal law.

Each member district Superintendent shall fully implement this policy and designate an official records, custodian for each school who shall maintain and protect the confidentiality of school student records, inform staff members of this policy, and inform students and their parents/guardians of their rights regarding school student records.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:130 (Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Adopted: February 15, 2023

## 7:345 Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security

Educational technologies used by employees of the Joint Agreement shall further the objectives of the educational program, as aligned with the curriculum criteria in policy 6:40, *Curriculum Development*, and/or support efficient operations. The Director shall ensure that the use of educational technologies in the Joint Agreement meets the above criteria.

The Joint Agreement and/or vendors under its control may need to collect and maintain data that personally identifies students in order to use certain educational technologies for the benefit of student learning or Joint Agreement operations.

Federal and State law govern the protection of student data, including school student records and/or *covered information*. The sale, rental, lease, or trading of any school student records or covered information by the Joint Agreement is prohibited. Protecting such information is important for legal compliance, Joint Agreement operations, and maintaining the trust of Joint Agreement stakeholders, including parents, students and staff. The Board designates the Director to serve as Privacy Officer, who shall ensure the Joint Agreement complies with the duties and responsibilities required of it under the Student Online Personal Protection Act, 105 ILCS 85/, amended by P.A. 101-516, eff. 7-1-21.

### Definitions

*Covered information* means personally identifiable information (PII) or information linked to PII in any media or format that is not publicly available and is any of the following: (1) created by or provided to an operator by a student or the student's parent/guardian in the course of the student's or parent/guardian's use of the operator's site, service or application; (2) created by or provided to an operator by an employee or agent of the Cooperative; or (3) gathered by an operator through the operation of its site, service, or application.

*Operators* are entities (such as educational technology vendors) that operate Internet websites, online services, online applications, or mobile applications that are designed, marketed, and primarily used for K-12 school purposes.

*Breach* means the unauthorized acquisition of computerized data that compromises the security, confidentiality or integrity of covered information maintained by an operator or the Cooperative.

### Operator Contracts

The Director or designee designates which Joint Agreement employees are authorized to enter into written agreements with operators for those contracts that do not require separate Board approval. Contracts between the Board and operators shall be entered into in accordance with State law and Board policy 4:60, *Purchases and Contracts*, and shall include any specific provisions required by State law.

### Security Standards

The Director or designee shall ensure the Joint Agreement implements and maintains reasonable security procedures and practices that otherwise meet or exceed industry standards designed to protect covered information from unauthorized access, destruction, use, modification, or disclosure. In the event the Cooperative receives notice from an operator of a breach or has determined a breach has occurred, the Director or designee shall also ensure that the Joint Agreement provides any breach notifications required by State law.

CROSS REF.: 4:15 (Identity Protection), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: March 16, 2022

# Midstate Special Education Coop



**SECTION 8 - COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **8:10 Public Relations/Media Inquiries**

Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement will generally provide a response to media inquiries within 24 hours of receipt. Individuals designated to speak on the organization's behalf are the Director, Assistant Directors, and Mid-State Executive Committee President and/or Vice-President. No one other than these individuals (with the exceptions noted below) should represent Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement's position to the media.

### Exceptions

When inquiries require a detailed technical explanation, a spokesperson may be designated to address a particular issue. That spokesperson will usually be a director, assistant director, legal counsel, or outside expert who is qualified to speak on Mid-State Special Education Joint Agreement's behalf on the issue in question

### Procedure

All media inquiries, whether verbal or written, are to be directed to the Director or specified spokesperson, which will evaluate the request and answer or direct it to the appropriate spokesperson.

All press releases will be issued as deemed necessary and relevant by the Director or specified spokesperson. The Director or Assistant Director will approve all press releases prior to distribution. In addition, the individual quoted will approve press releases that include quotes. All inquiries should be directed to the Director or Assistant Director.

Joint Agreement Employees will follow the procedures of Member District(s) in which he/she works as it pertains to regular new releases concerning classroom activities and district programs.

Adopted: December 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 8:30 Conduct on School Property

The following definitions apply to this policy:

**School property** – Joint Agreement and/or Member District buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for a Board meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.

**Visitor** - Any person other than a Joint Agreement employee.

All visitors to school property are required to report to the main entrance and receive permission to enter and remain on school property. All visitors must sign a visitors' log, show identification, and comply with current health requirements. On those occasions when large groups of parents/guardians, friends, and/or community members are invited onto school property or when community members are attending Board meetings, visitors are not required to sign in but must follow school officials' instructions. Persons on school property without permission will be directed to leave and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Except as provided in the next paragraph, any person wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member to make an appointment.

Requests to access a school building, facility, and/or educational program, or to interview personnel or a student for purposes of assessing the student's special education needs, should be made at the appropriate building. Access shall be facilitated according to guidelines from the Superintendent or designee.

The Joint Agreement and Member Districts expect mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on school property or at a school event. No person on school property or at a school event (including visitors, students, and employees) shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, Board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner, or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law, or town or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectable, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis, unless he or she has complied with policy 7:270, *Administering Medicines to Students*, implementing *Ashley's Law*.
11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the Board.
13. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized Joint Agreement or Member District employee's directive.
14. Engage in any risky behavior, including roller-blading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.

15. Violate other Joint Agreement or Member District policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer, Joint Agreement, or District employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the Joint Agreement, Member District or a School function.

### Convicted Child Sex Offender

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender is:

1. A parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or
2. Has permission to be present from the Board, Director, or Superintendent. If permission is granted, the Director, Superintendent or Board President shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal.

In all cases, the Director, Superintendent, or designee who is a certified employee, shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity.

### Exclusive Bargaining Representative Agent

Upon notifying the Building Principal's office, authorized agents of an exclusive bargaining representative will be provided reasonable access to employees in the bargaining unit they represent in accordance with State law. Such access shall be conducted in a manner that will not impede the normal operations of the Joint Agreement or Member District.

### Enforcement

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school property; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act. The Director or designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who refuses to provide requested identification.

Any person who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy may be ejected from or denied admission to school property in accordance with State law. The person also may be subject to being denied admission to school athletic or extracurricular events for up to one calendar year in accordance with the procedures below.

### Procedures to Deny Future Admission to Athletic or Extracurricular School Events

Before any person may be denied admission to athletic or extracurricular school events, the person has a right to a hearing before the Board. The Director or Superintendent may refuse the person admission pending such hearing. The Director or Superintendent or designee must provide the person with a hearing notice, delivered or sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, at least ten days before the Board hearing date. The hearing notice must contain:

1. The date, time, and place of the Board hearing;
2. A description of the prohibited conduct;
3. The proposed time period that admission to school events will be denied; and
4. Instructions on how to waive a hearing.

CROSS REF.: 2:200 (Types of Board Meetings), 2:230 (Public Participation at Governing Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board), 4:170 (Safety), 5:50 (Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition)

Adopted: December 13, 2023

### **Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **8:70 Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities**

Individuals with disabilities shall be provided an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities and will not be subject to illegal discrimination. When appropriate, the Joint Agreement may provide to persons with disabilities aids, benefits, or services that are separate or different from, but as effective as, those provided to others.

The Joint Agreement will provide auxiliary aids and services when necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in or enjoy the benefits of a service, program, or activity.

Each service, program, website, or activity operated in existing facilities shall be readily accessible to, and useable by, individuals with disabilities. New construction and alterations to facilities existing before January 26, 1992, will be accessible when viewed in their entirety.

The Director or designee is designated the Title II Coordinator and shall:

1. Oversee the Joint Agreement's compliance efforts, recommend necessary modifications to the School Board, and maintain the Joint Agreement's final Title II self-evaluation document, update it to the extent necessary, and keep it available for public inspection for at least three years after its completion date.
2. Institute plans to make information regarding Title II's protection available to any interested party.

Individuals with disabilities should notify the Director if they have a disability that will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far in advance as possible of the school-sponsored function, program, or meeting.

Individuals with disabilities may allege a violation of this policy or federal law by reporting it to the Director or designated Title II Coordinator, or by filing a grievance under the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure)

Adopted: May 17, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## 8:80 Gifts to the Cooperative

The School Board appreciates gifts from any education foundation, other entities, or individuals. All gifts must adhere to each of the following:

1. Be accepted by the Board or, if less than \$500.00 in value, the Director or designee. Individuals should obtain a pre-acceptance commitment before identifying the Cooperative, any school, or school program or activity as a beneficiary in any fundraising attempt, including without limitation, any Internet fundraising attempt.
2. Be given without a stated purpose or with a purpose deemed by the party with authority to accept the gift to be compatible with the Board's educational objectives and policies.
3. Be consistent with the Cooperative's mandate to provide equal educational and extracurricular opportunities to all students in the Cooperative as provided in Board policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*. State and federal laws require the Cooperative to provide equal treatment for members of both sexes to educational programming, extracurricular activities, and athletics. This includes the distribution of athletic benefits and opportunities.
4. Permit the Cooperative to maintain resource equity among its learning centers.
5. Be viewpoint neutral. The Director or designee shall manage a process for the review and approval of donations involving the incorporation of messages into or placing messages upon school property.
6. Comply with all laws applicable to the Cooperative including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Prevailing Wage Act, the Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools, and all applicable procurement and bidding requirements.

The Cooperative will provide equal treatment to all individuals and entities seeking to donate money or a gift. Upon acceptance, all gifts become the Cooperative's property. The acceptance of a gift is not an endorsement by the Board, Cooperative, or school of any product, service, activity, or program. The method of recognition is determined by the party accepting the gift.

CROSS REF.: 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities)

Adopted: December 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **8:95 Parental Involvement**

In order to assure collaborative relationships between students' families and the Governing Board and Joint Agreement personnel, and to enable parent(s)/guardian(s) to become active partners in education, the Special Education Director shall develop administrative procedures to:

1. Keep parent(s)/guardian(s) thoroughly informed about their child's school and education.
2. Encourage involvement in their child's school and education and IEP team.
3. Establish effective two-way communication between all families and the school's personnel providing special services.
4. Seek input from parent(s)/guardian(s) on significant school-related issues.
5. Inform parents/guardians on how they can assist their children's learning.

The Special Education Director shall periodically report to the Board on the implementation of this policy.

Adopted: September 20, 2023

**Midstate Special Education Coop**



## **8:110 Public Suggestions and Concerns**

The Governing Board and Executive Committee are interested in receiving valid concerns and suggestions. Community members who e-mail the Joint Agreement or Joint Agreement employee or board member are expected to abide by the standards in Board policy 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*, and should, to the extent possible, limit their communications to relevant individuals. Public concerns or suggestions shall be referred to the appropriate level staff member or administrator. Each concern or suggestion shall be considered on its merits.

An individual who is not satisfied may file a grievance under Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. The Board encourages, but does not require, individuals to follow the channels of authority prior to filing a grievance. Neither this policy nor the *Uniform Grievance Procedure* create an independent right to a hearing before the Board.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 3:30 (Line and Staff Relations), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks)

Adopted: December 15, 2021

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

## **8:100 Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies**

The Joint Agreement shall cooperate with other organizations and agencies, including but not limited to:

- County Health Department
- Law enforcement agencies
- Fire authorities
- Planning authorities
- Zoning authorities
- Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), local organizations for civil defense, and other appropriate disaster relief organizations concerned with civil defense, and other appropriate disaster relief organizations concerned with civil defense
- Member Districts
- Other cooperatives and other school districts
- State departments including Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Human Services including the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and the Department of Child and Family Services
- Child and Family Connections (CFCs), Illinois community and Residential Services Authority, and the UIC Department of Specialized Care for Children
- Agencies administering Head Start and other county, regional, or state programs

CROSS REF.: 1:20 (District Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements), 4:170 (Safety), 4:180 (Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting)

DATED : March 16, 2022

**Midstate Special Education Coop**

