

Paw Paw Public Schools



Early Childhood Center Associate Employee Handbook

v 2024-08-18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE	3
I. PURPOSE	3
II. WORKING HOURS & SCHEDULES	3
III. EVALUATION.....	4
IV. LEAVE OF ABSENCE	4
V. PAID HOLIDAYS.....	6
VI. INSURANCE.....	6
VII. MISCELLANEOUS.....	8
VIII. WAGES	9



Our Vision: United with our community to build success.

Our Mission: We develop, support, challenge and inspire every child for life-long success.

Our Core Values: Integrity; Community; Success; Innovation and Kindness

PREAMBLE

This Handbook is intended to be a general reference guide addressing the terms and conditions of employment of the Associate Employees of the Paw Paw Public Schools Early Childhood Center. This Handbook supersedes any and all prior practices of the Paw Paw Public Schools, oral or written, and rescinds prior handbooks, general rules or Collective Bargaining Agreements previously in effect.

Any and all statements and policies herein are subject to unilateral change in whole or in part by the Paw Paw Public Schools at any time. The Paw Paw Public Schools retains the right to change, modify, suspend, interpret or cancel in whole or in part any of its published or unpublished personnel policies or procedures, without advance notice, in its sole discretion, without having to give cause or justification or consideration to any employee. Recognition of these rights and prerogatives of the Paw Paw Public Schools is a term and condition of employment and of continued employment.

I. PURPOSE

This handbook does not restrict the right of Paw Paw Public Schools to establish rules and regulations governing the conduct and terms and conditions of employment of employees.

The general purpose of this handbook is to set forth working conditions and fringe benefits and to promote orderly labor relations for the mutual interest of the employer and the Associate Employees of the Early Childhood Program of Paw Paw Public Schools.

II. WORKING HOURS & SCHEDULES

- A. Associate Employees shall work on scheduled PPEA teacher days, scheduled PPEA professional development days during the school year, and up to three days as scheduled by the Director prior for additional ISD training.
- B. The administration may adjust the work year and days to meet the needs of the district by position.
- C. Full-time Associate Employees will generally work between a 7.5 hour day. Starting and ending times will be scheduled by the Director, and may be changed, or altered, at his/her discretion.
- D. Employees shall submit accurate hours worked, through the portal program as instructed by the payroll office. Associate Employees shall be paid at the rate of time and one-half of the regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours worked in any one week, Thursday through Wednesday. If other positions within the district account for the accumulation of working beyond forty (40) hours, the overtime rate will be calculated by using the blended overtime pay method, incorporating the different wage amounts paid for the different positions.

III. EVALUATION

A written performance evaluation may be done by the Early Childhood Director on or before the last day worked of the school working year. A recommendation of continued employment, an improvement plan, or termination may be part of this evaluation. Associate Employees may choose to submit a response to the final evaluation within ten (10) days of receipt of the evaluation, which can be included in the employee's personnel file.

IV. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

A. Sick Leave

1. Regular and reliable attendance is an essential function for all Associate Teacher positions. Ten (10) days of sick leave per year with full pay shall be credited to each Associate Employees at the start of the school year, not to exceed ten (10) days in any one year. For the purposes of bookkeeping, the days will be converted to hours, based on the number of hours worked in a scheduled day. Associate Employees leaving employment with Paw Paw Public Schools prior to the completion of the working year, or those working less than the full contractual days of the school year, will have their sick days prorated for the amount of days worked. The District's crediting of sick days satisfies its obligation to provide paid leave as provided by the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act.
2. Sick leave may be used by Associate Employees in case of necessary absence due to:
 - Personal illness/medical appointments of the secretary or clerk. Secretaries and Clerks are asked to make their best effort to try to schedule appointments at times that do not conflict with working duties.
 - Illness/medical appointments of the Secretary or Clerk's immediate family, to include spouse, children, step-children, mother, stepmother, father, stepfather, mother-in-law, or father-in-law which necessitates the Secretary or Clerk's presence. The purpose of this Section is to provide the Secretary or Clerk an opportunity to care for illness in the employee's immediate family, in case of emergency.
 - Care of a newborn child, or for the adoption or foster placement of a child, in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act.
 - Any other qualifying reasons in compliance with the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act
3. The district may require a physician's statement when employee is absent before sick leave credit is granted or upon return from sick leave.
4. Unused sick leave shall be allowed to accumulate to a maximum of 110 days.

B. Personal Business

1. Two (2) days per year may be used for personal business which the employee cannot conduct at any time outside working hours. Associate Employees leaving employment with Paw Paw Public Schools prior to the completion of the working year, or those working less than the full contractual days of the school year, will have their personal days prorated for the amount of days worked. Use of a personal day is subject to the following rules:
 - (a) The Associate Employee must notify his/her immediate supervisor at least three (3) days in advance of his/her intent to use a personal day, except in cases of an emergency.

- (b) A personal business day may not be used to lengthen a holiday or vacation period. An employee may submit a written request for an exception to the Superintendent for consideration at his/her discretion. In reviewing the request for an exception, the Superintendent may consider whether the request is for an unplanned emergency/circumstance or the request is a “once in a lifetime event.”
- 2. At the end of the school year, unused personal business day hours will roll into accumulated sick days for the subsequent work year.

C. Bereavement Leave

In the event there is a death of a listed relative of an employee, such employee shall be allowed up to two (2) days of bereavement leave. The first two (2) days shall be paid by the Board. A request for more bereavement leave days may be made to the Supervisor, if approved, up to three (3) more days may be taken out of sick leave, if available. The bereavement leave would apply to the following eligible family members: spouse, partner, children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law, grandparents-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, step children, step parents, step brother, step sister.

A leave of one (1) day, deducted from sick leave, shall be granted for other relatives and close friends. A maximum of five (5) days per year is allowed under this section. Appeals to this maximum may be made to the Superintendent.

D. Unpaid Leave

Leaves of absence without pay and without benefits, up to 30 days in one (1) school year, must be requested in advance and in writing from the Associate employee. Such requests must be made to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and the request must be copied to the Associate’s supervisor. In emergency situations advanced notice may be waived, however, the employee must make a request as soon as possible. The Superintendent may grant extensions, on an individual basis, upon written request by the employee.

Leaves of Absence will not be given for the purpose of enabling the employee to work for another employer, except as authorized in Section (G) below, or to engage in any form of self-employment. Any employee who obtains a leave of absence by misrepresenting the purposes thereof may be discharged.

E. Jury Duty

Paid leave shall be granted to an employee who is required to serve on a jury provided any pay, said employee receives for such service, is tendered to the District. Further, if the employee is not selected to serve on a jury or is relieved of such obligation prior to the end of the work day, the employee shall immediately report for work.

F. Court Subpoena

Employees may be so assigned to appear, upon being subpoenaed to testify, as a court witness in a school related matter but not against the district. Any witness fees, in such event, would be tendered to the District.

G. Military Leaves

Military leaves shall be granted to employees in accordance with the Federal Uniformed

Services and Reemployments Rights Act of 1994 and Michigan Public Employees Entering Armed Forces Act. Questions and/or challenges regarding the application or interpretation of this section are expressly limited to the courts.

H. Family Medical Leave Act

Eligible employees may take FMLA as authorized by law. Paid leave where applicable shall be concurrent with FMLA. The employee's leave will be calculated by the 12-month period measured backward from the date the staff member uses FMLA Leave. If an employee on his/her own violation fails to return from FMLA the employee shall reimburse the district for the health insurance premiums paid by the district.

I. Inclement Weather/ Act of God Days/ School Closings

On days when school is closed due to Inclement Weather, Acts of God, School Threats, or other school closing reasons, and those days are counted for purposed of state aid, up to six (6), Associate Employees will be paid at their hourly rate for their regularly scheduled hours of that day.

J. Abuse of Leave Time

Leave time is granted to help the employee through unforeseen circumstances. Employees may be asked to have a doctor's note with return to work instructions if absent for more than three (3) consecutive days. It is required that you make any leave request in a timely manner that does not interfere with the daily routine of the district. Abuse of leave time is cause for discipline up to, and including, discharge.

V. PAID HOLIDAYS

Associate Employees will be paid for the below holidays, as they occur for the corresponding work week pay period. If the listed holiday falls on a weekend, the District will inform the Associate Employees when the holiday will be "observed" with as much notice as possible.

1. Labor Day (if the first day of students is scheduled prior to the holiday)
2. Thanksgiving Day
3. Day After Thanksgiving Day
4. The day before Christmas
5. Christmas Day
6. New Year's Eve Day
7. New Year's Day
8. The Friday During Spring Break Week
9. Memorial Day

VI. INSURANCE

A. General Information

1. Insurance benefits shall be provided through the Van Buren County Consortium. Associate Employees may choose any available consortium health insurance plan, subject to the Board premium contribution limits as defined below. Insurance benefits must comply with current state and federal law.
2. Any premium cost, for benefits selected by the employee, which are beyond the health medical employer contribution, the employee will pay via payroll deductions.
3. Employees who elect to purchase health insurance will be allowed to do so with a pre-

tax deduction as allowed by the Internal Revenue Service.

4. To be eligible for insurance benefits stated below, Associate Employees must be employed and work for the Board on average at least thirty (30) hours per week. The employee must apply for insurance at the business office upon hire the or during the Open Enrollment period.
5. For staff employed at the start of the school year and through the end of the current school year, a full 12 months of benefits will be earned. These benefits will be from September 1st of the current calendar year through August of the next calendar year. Insurance benefits for employees hired during the year will be effective the first of the month following their date of hire, and will go through August.
6. All benefits, definitions and terms shall be in accordance with the master policy between the Board and the insurance carrier.

B. Health Insurance District Contribution

Effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, the District will pay an amount not to exceed **\$450.23** per month for health plan medical benefit costs, which is 70% of the single subscriber hard cap designated by the State Treasurer in compliance with Section 3 of the Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act. Effective with the commencement of the medical benefit plan coverage year starting on January 1, 2026, the district contribution amounts will increase to 80% of the single subscriber hard cap amount designated by the State Treasurer which is **\$529.47** per month for health plan medical benefit costs. If PA 152 is no longer in effect, then the hard cap amounts will be increased by the increase in health insurance premium costs, up to 3% for the single subscriber rate.

To the extent allowed by law, the health insurance caps shall first be applied to medical premiums, then second to any payments made by the Board, if any, during the “medical benefit plan coverage year” toward Board reimbursement of co-pays, deductibles, or payments into health reimbursement arrangements, health savings accounts, flexible spending accounts, or similar accounts for healthcare costs, health insurance related taxes or fees, and any other payments required to be accounted for pursuant to The Publicly Funded Health Contribution Act, 2011 PA 152, MCL 15.561, et seq. At no time will the District pay more than allowed by Michigan law.

Consistent with PA 152 of 2011, the “monthly cost” shall include fees, assessments, commissions, and taxes which come from the insurance carrier company agent, Health Insurance Claims Assessment Act, or the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act, and any other costs required to be accounted for pursuant to PA 152 of 2011.

C. Dual Coverage and False Information

The Employees are not permitted to have dual medical insurance coverage. Any employee who is enrolled in a medical plan through another employer (e.g., a spouse’s employer) is not eligible for medical insurance provided by the Board. If it is determined that an employee has knowingly provided false or misleading information regarding their medical insurance status, the employee will be immediately removed from the Board’s medical plan for the remainder of the fiscal year or lose the Cash in Lieu benefit. Additionally, the employee may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees are responsible for notifying the Board in writing within thirty (30) days of any changes that may affect their insurance eligibility or coverage status.

D. Cash In Lieu of Insurance Benefits

For full-time Associate Employees who are eligible for health insurance but do not elect health insurance, the Board will provide a monthly cash-in-lieu of insurance benefit in the amount of \$175. For those Associate Employees hired prior to March 1, 2023, the cash-in-lieu amount is \$300 per month.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

A. **Personal Vehicles:** Associate Employees shall not be required to use their personal vehicle for school business, however, if the employee is requested by the Board and does voluntarily use his/her personal vehicle for school business, he/she shall be reimbursed at the rate set by Board Policy.

B. **On-the-Job Injury:** If any Associate Employee is injured in any way while on the job, it is imperative to report the incident to his/her supervisor immediately. He/she will then notify the office and notify the injured employee what action to take. If the supervisor is unavailable, the employee should contact the Superintendent and/or his/her secretary.

C. **Attire:** All employees shall present themselves to our schools and to our community in a manner that is appropriate while working with school children. These standards are based upon the need to provide and promote a safe, clean, positive image of the department. Standards are outlined in School Board Policy 4216, Support Staff Dress and Grooming.

D. **Code of Ethics:** An effective educational program requires the services of its employees of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, the Board of Education expects all staff members to maintain high standards in their working relationships, in the performance of their professional duties, and to follow the Michigan Code of Educational Ethics. The Full Michigan Code of Educational Ethics with indicators can be found here:

https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/educator_services/prof_practices/code_of_ethics.pdf

VIII. WAGES

A. Step Advancements will take place at the beginning of each school year. Wage rates are for the general school calendar year; grant funded Associate Employee positions will be compensated the wage rate as approved in applicable grant language. The Board reserves the right to place a newly hired, experienced in the capacity of childcare / early childhood education Associate Employee at an appropriate wage step.

Step	General / Compliance Plan	Associates with CDA Credential	Lead Associate / Compliance Plan	Lead Associate CDA Credential
1	\$ 15.25	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.50	\$ 17.50
2	\$ 15.77	\$ 16.52	\$ 17.02	\$ 18.02
3	\$ 16.08	\$ 16.83	\$ 17.33	\$ 18.33
4	\$ 16.39	\$ 17.14	\$ 17.64	\$ 18.64
5	\$ 16.72	\$ 17.47	\$ 17.97	\$ 18.97
6	\$ 17.05	\$ 17.80	\$ 18.30	\$ 19.30
7	\$ 17.30	\$ 18.05	\$ 18.55	\$ 19.55
8	\$ 17.55	\$ 18.30	\$ 18.80	\$ 19.80

B. **LONGEVITY** – Longevity is calculated based on the length of continuous service within the district since the hire date. Employment in other employee groups within the Paw Paw Public School district shall count towards longevity, as long as there is not a break in employment other than approved Leaves of Absences defined in Section IV.

Longevity does not accumulate from one level to the next. Longevity compensation will be paid in ten (10) equal payments for ten-month secretaries and clerks and paid in twelve (12) equal payments for twelve-month secretaries. The longevity payment will be included in the employee's second paycheck of each month beginning in September. Longevity will be prorated for employees who work less than the contractual year.

Annual Longevity Compensation

Completed Years	Longevity Amount
5-7 years	\$ 500
8-9 years	\$ 925
10+ years	\$ 1,350