

WEST NOBLE SCHOOL CORPORATION
CERTIFIED STAFF HANDBOOK
2015 - 2016

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Please note: The Certified Master Contract and handbooks can be found on the corporation’s website at www.westnoble.k12.in.us/centralofice/employeeinfo.html

Board policies can be found at www.westnoble.k12.in.us/centralofice/employeeinfo.html

West Noble School Core Values

(The West Noble School Board is still reviewing this page as part of their strategic planning)

Vision

Who we want to become – West Noble School Corporation is an academic institution that promotes respects, fosters pride, and inspires excellence; a Corporation that other educational institutions desire to emulate.

Mission

To prepare students for their next stage step in learning and in life; helping every student to be successful.

Philosophy and Values

Our students are treasures entrusted to us for a limited time. It is our responsibility to use the time well and help each student make as much progress as is possible in that time. We accept students at whatever levels they are at and with whatever skills they possess; and we commit to doing everything reasonably possible to help them grow. We will continually ask ourselves, “What is the best I can do for my students today?” and then proceed to do it.

Educators are tremendous givers. They give their time, their money, their talents and their hearts to impact the future of the communities’ children. While the topics/curriculum is decided by the state and district, it is the teacher who uses his/her imagination, creativity, and knowledge of the students to design thoughtful and engaging lessons. Teaching is both a science and a craft. Good teachers and the supporting staff should be highly esteemed for their contributions to the lives of so many.

The language used in this handbook is not intended to create, nor is it to be construed to constitute a contract between WNSC and any one or all of its employees.

Job Description and Expectations

The duties and facets of a teacher's job are too numerous for any one list to encompass, but this list conveys the essence of the responsibility and the expectations of the Board:

1. Plan, organize, and provide meaningful learning experiences including using a variety of materials and methods.
2. Establish and maintain a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. An important step to getting appropriate behavior is the development of an engaging lesson.
3. Provide a safe, secure, and supervised learning environment.
4. Continually assess and interpret student learning. Modify instruction – based on these assessments - as is necessary to meet the needs for the student.
5. Collaborate with your peers in order to contribute to the continuous development of curriculum and improvement of instruction.
6. Identify unique needs and seek help as appropriate. Recognize and provide for individual differences of students.
7. Be respectful to all – students, staff and patrons. Your words and actions are watched and judged by students and the community. Be an appropriate role model to the students in all public arenas, including social media.
8. Insist that all be respectful. Bullying behavior will not be tolerated.
9. Maintain and submit necessary records and reports on time.
10. Participate in faculty meetings, workshops, staff development programs, back-to-school night, parent/teacher conferences, and other school-sponsored activities.
11. Assist in general building supervision and discipline control, including hall duty before school, after school, and during passing times.
12. Adhere to the moral and ethical standards that are consistent with community values.
13. Be flexible, consistent, and fair. Give praise and encouragement.
14. Be creative, innovative, enthusiastic, and put the students first.
15. Encourage students to develop a good self-image and form positive relationships with the students through eye contact, body posture, and voice tone and pitch.
16. Work to raise student achievement by expecting learning to take place. Develop effective classroom management and instruction plans.
17. Communicate effectively with parents and/or guardians of the students.
18. Be punctual both in your attendance and in completing your work.
19. Maintain a good attendance record.
20. Support students by attending extracurricular events including but not limited to athletics, music, drama, and academic contests.
21. Adhere to the West Noble policy.
22. Be empathetic for people from different cultures and allow this to reflect in your classroom instruction.
23. Immediately report the suspected abuse or bullying of any child/student to your principal.

EVALUATIONS

The purpose of evaluation is three fold; to communicate expectations, to acknowledge excellence and enable improvement. Certified personnel will be evaluated using the WNSC RISE tool. It is the expectation of the School Board and administration that teachers will maintain a “Highly Effective” or “Effective” ratings.

Alternate evaluation tools, specific to their positions, will be used to evaluate the following certificated personnel:

1. Counselors
2. School Services Professionals (Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, School Psychologists, Speech Clinicians and Teachers in Supervisory Positions, Special Education Staff)
3. Principals, Asst Principals, Certified Directors
4. Instructional coaches

West Noble Certified Evaluation Scoring

Each staff member will be evaluated using the rubric appropriate for their position.

The competencies of Planning and Leadership will each be weighted at 10% each.

The Instructional competency will be weighted 60%.

The two Student Learning Objectives will be weighted 10% each.

Failure to meet Core Professionalism will result in a 1 point deduction.

Total points will be the sum of the above components after the weights have been applied.

Teachers will be assigned a rating based on their total points and the following scale:

0.00 – 1.75	or 3 scores with a pre-weighted score below 2 points	ineffective
1.75+ to 2.70	or 3 scores with a pre-weighted score below 3 points	needs improvement
2.71+ to 3.69		effective
3.70+ to 4.00		highly effective

A teacher is determined as having "negative Impact" if both SLOs are rated Ineffective. An improvement plan will be created for a teacher with negative impact. Improvement plans may also be implement to address other concerns.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

WN Administrators, Coop Vocational Directors, Coop Special Education Directors and WN Instructional Coaches may observe any class without prior notice.

Parents, other WN certified staff or visitors from other schools may be allowed to observe with the principal's consent after prior notice has been given to the teacher being observed.

TEACHING DAYS AND HOURS

Section 1 – School Year:

The teaching contract year shall consist of one hundred eighty-four (184) days as identified by the adopted calendar. Canceled instructional days must be made up without additional compensation. The Superintendent will request waivers for make-up days when waivers are offered.

Section 2 – School Day:

A. The length of the regular school day is eight (8) hours including a 30 minute lunch. In extraordinary instances the day might be extended for required supervision of students without prior notice, or be extended due to professional responsibilities with a minimum of 24 hours notice, as reasonably identified by the building principal.

B. Teachers may leave the building during any duty-free period, by signing out prior to departure and signing in upon return. The building principal is responsible for developing a simple, convenient procedure. This privilege may be withdrawn if it becomes a burden on the principal.

C. Classroom teachers will be allowed a minimum of 30 minutes preparation time on each regular day. School delays may interrupt normal scheduling. Principals will work with teachers for a satisfactory compromise on irregular days such as testing or weather interruptions.

Section 3 – Flexible Work Hours for Teachers:

In order to meet the instructional needs of students, and with the principal's approval, flexible work hours may be available.

Section 4 – Social Media Guidelines:

The WNSC websites are a primary means for sharing school-related information and news.

A. As an extension to the classroom, teachers are encouraged to use educational resources such as blogs Google classroom, etc. rather than other open social network sites.

B. Principals will approve social networking sites that are linked off each school's main website with consideration given to the purpose of the page.

Section 5 – Attendance:

West Noble strongly believes that it is our staff that makes the greatest difference in the success of our students. As such students need their teachers to be present every day. Good attendance is expected.

ANNUITIES AND PAYROLL DEDUCTION

Section 1 – 403(b)

Each teacher may elect to make tax deferred contribution to a plan described in section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code up to the maximum limits of the code. The Board approved venders is available from Central office.

Section 2 – TRF

Teachers are allowed to make voluntary payroll deduction contributions to TRF annuity account in 1% increments up to a maximum limit of 10%. Contact Payroll for additional information.

ABSENCES AND LEAVES

Section 1 – Reporting Absence:

A teacher shall report his/her absence in the manner prescribed by the building principal or his/her designee. The teacher, when reporting the absence, shall indicate whether the day of absence is to be recorded as a personal day, a sick leave day, a family illness day, a professional leave day, a bereavement leave day, or as an Association leave day.

Section 2 - Personal Days

Teachers will be given twelve (12) leave days to use for personal business, personal illness, family illness, or for funerals. These are not vacation days.

1. Days will not require written request or prior permission except to extend a break or supersede any of the following limitations.
2. Unused PTO days roll over to sick days the following year. Previously accumulated sick days will remain as sick days and cannot be used as PTO days.
3. No more than two (2) PTO days may be used on consecutive school days not related to illness without the approval of the Superintendent prior to the start of the leave
4. Only 1 day per year may be used to extend a break. Any additional consecutive days would be pay loss days.
5. PTO days may be used for to extend bereavement leave.
6. Teachers will schedule absences in substitute system 48 hours in advance whenever possible.
7. No more than one day is to be used in May for non-illness or non-bereavement reasons.
8. Limitations may be waived by Superintendent if deemed appropriate.
9. Language for Paid Time Off, Personal days, Sick leave days, Funeral days and Bereavement days will revert to the 2014-15 contract language after one year unless both parties agree to continue.
10. Principals will conference with individuals who have missed nine (9) days. If poor attendance choices are indicated the employee will receive a written notice that continued poor attendance is likely to result in a one point deduction for core professionalism. The superintendent has the right to deny the use of accumulated sick leave if abuse is evident. CTA representation is available for these conferences.

Personal days may not be used during summer school.

Section 3 – Personal Injury While Employed:

It is the responsibility of the teacher (or the teacher's representative), using procedures posted in each building and using the proper forms, to report immediately any injury during employment. No personal physicians are allowed under Workers' Compensation.

In the event of an emergency, the nearest appropriate facility should be utilized.

Section 4 – Maternity Leave:

Maternity leave and maternity benefit will be defined as follows:

- A. Maternity leave utilizes the teacher's available sick leave days while under a doctor's care.
- B. Maternity leave commences the day following the birth of the child and continues for six (6) weeks. During this 6-week period, the teacher may use up to thirty (30) available sick leave days. If the teacher has fewer than thirty (30) available sick leave days, the teacher may choose to take the remainder of the 6-week period as an uncompensated leave.
- C. If the birth of the child occurs over the summer break, the provisions will not be granted if the maternity leave expire prior to the first day of the school year. If the provision has not expired over the summer break, then the teacher may use any/all of the residual days, beginning with the first day of school and continuing consecutively.
- D. If the teacher is medically disabled, as verified by a physician's statement, beyond the provisions cited in this handbook, the teacher may use more of her available sick leave days to cover the time period of the disability.
- E. Uncompensated leave may continue for up to one (1) year following the birth of the child. The teacher granted such a leave shall have the right to maintain, at her sole expense during the leave, all insurance benefits in which she was enrolled at the time of the request. A teacher on uncompensated leave is required to return within one (1) year following the birth of the child, except the return date may be adjusted beyond the child's first birthday to the first day of the next grading period immediately following the child's first birthday.
- F. The teacher granted such a leave will be returned to the same assignment or one which is comparable and equal in benefits as determined by the administration.

Section 5 – Paternity Leave:

For the purpose of paternity leave, the teacher may request a leave of absence without pay of up to one (1) year, which may be granted at the discretion of the Board, and the following will apply:

- A. The teacher granted such a leave shall have the right to maintain, at his sole expense during the leave, all insurance benefits in which he was enrolled at the time of the request.
- B. Uncompensated leave may continue for up to one (1) year following the birth/adoption of the child.
- C. The teacher granted such a leave will be returned to the same assignment or one which is comparable and equal in benefits as determined by the administration.

Section 6 – Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993:

In accordance with Federal law, the provisions of the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), 29 CFR, shall be incorporated by reference into this handbook. The operative language implementing the FMLA shall conform to the FMLA and shall not reduce a teacher's entitlement to leave, fringe benefits, or reinstatement provided by the Agreement or by the FMLA. The first twelve (12) weeks of any qualifying leave will be recorded as FMLA leave provided the teacher has FMLA leave remaining to cover this time period. The employee shall use their accrued paid leave (personal or sick leave) concurrently before using uncompensated leave.

For FMLA purposes, **the rolling year method** shall be used to determine eligibility for FMLA. FMLA eligibility is established the first time an employee uses FMLA and expires twelve (12) months thereafter. The next year begins the first instance that the employee again uses FMLA. This is called the 12-month measured forward method.

Section 7 – Conferences, Workshops and Travel:

A. The Board of Education will reimburse a teacher for mileage at the rate set by the IRS and approved by the Board of Education for professional travel if the teacher has received prior approval. A teacher may be reimbursed for mileage or travel expenses, for conferences approved by the Superintendent via the approved conference request application. If transportation is offered (school vehicle or car-pooling) and the teacher rejects it, then reimbursement may be denied.

B. Requests for permission to attend professional meetings must be made on Leave Request Form (available in school offices) and must be filed and approved at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. If the professional leave is out of state, the Professional Travel form must be completed by the teacher and approved by the Board of Education prior to the professional leave meeting (requires 3 week notice). Any exceptions must be approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

C. Travel & meal reimbursement guide is found at www.westnoble.k12.in.us/centraloffice/employeeinfo.html

Section 8 – Uncompensated Leave:

A teacher may apply for uncompensated leave for the purpose of serving in public office, for professionally related activities. This leave must be requested in writing to the Superintendent or designee no later than April 1 proceeding the school year in which the leave will be taken and approved by the School Board. A suitable replacement must be secured by June 30th proceeding the school year for which the leave is requested. The leave will not exceed a period of one (1) year. Such a leave may not be approved for a teacher that has previously been granted such a leave.

This leave may be used for, but is not limited to, cases of extended personal illnesses or in cases of illness in the immediate family to include spouse, children, and parents. In unusual circumstances, the teacher may request an extension of one (1) year. These requests will be considered for approval.

A teacher may request a leave for other reasons not specified here. Requests will be reviewed by the Board and approved if beneficial to both the employee and the School Corporation.

Section 9 – Sick and Personal Day Accumulation

Recognizing that Sick and Personal days are credited to the teachers account the first day of the Fall term; if necessary, the account will be adjusted the following year for a teacher who was on leave. Each 45 days that the teacher worked will earn 25% of the allotted days.

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

The building principal will set the days/hours for parent/teacher conferences after conferring with staff and other building principals. Should personal/sick or bereavement days be used during parent/teacher conferences the teacher is responsible to complete all conferences within two weeks of their return.

TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Section 2 – CTA Activities:

CTA is authorized reasonable use of school phones, copiers, computers, projectors, fax, email, and meeting space. The CTA is responsible to provide their own consumables (pens, paper, notebooks, etc.) for conducting CTA business. Principals may grant permission for other CTA related activities such as, but not limited to, bulletin boards, announcements, access to mailboxes, etc. Conduct or actions detrimental to efficient operation of school may cause related permission(s) to be withdrawn.

DUE PROCESS

Section 1 – Staff corrective actions:

When events occur that fall short of the acceptable standards the teacher will be informed of the shortfall. The typical sequence for discipline is:

First occurrence – verbal correction

Second occurrence - a written statement will be included in the teacher's file and a notation made in the evaluation. An improvement plan or Corrective Action Plan may be implemented at the principal's discretion

Third occurrence or third write-up for unrelated events – nonrenewal

Some events may be so severe as warrant skipping steps. When a written reprimand is anticipated or a disciplinary conference with the principal is required, a teacher will be notified of the deficiency, allegation, or incident and given the opportunity to request to be accompanied by a representative of their choice. The teacher's representative will be granted the opportunity for a caucus with the teacher during the meeting if the representative deems a caucus to be necessary. The principal may delay the meeting for up to two work days to allow for the schedule of the teacher's representative.

Section 2 – Improvement Plans:

The intent of an Improvement Plan is to improve instructional practice - the science and craft of teaching. As identified through the evaluation process, a teacher identified as Improvement Necessary or Ineffective will be placed on an Improvement Plan. (Note: Part of Appendix G)

A. Building principal will meet with the teacher and a remediation plan will be created in which areas of refinement will be identified by the principal.

B. The length of the initial plan will not be more than 90 school days.

C. Specific support and progress review dates will be identified.

D. The plan may be discontinued based on improvement noted.

E. The plan may be revised and thus extended for an identified time period or the teacher may be recommended for dismissal based on evidence obtained through the progress monitoring process.

A professional deficiency in violation of other areas of IC 20-28-7.5-1 may result in a teacher being placed on a Corrective Action Plan or cancellation of a teacher's contract.

Section 3 – Corrective Action Plan:

The intent of a Corrective Action Plan is to correct or eliminate inappropriate behaviors not typically related to classroom instruction. The administrator will inform the Superintendent when a corrective action plan is initiated.

- A. The administrator will inform the teacher of a meeting to which the teacher may bring a CTA representative or other representative of his/her choice.
- B. The administrator will meet with the teacher to explain the purpose of the Corrective Action Plan and to discuss performance and/or behavioral expectations of the plan.
- C. The administrator will develop a schedule of progress monitoring in which the administrator will meet with the teacher to provide the teacher with recommendations and assistance to aid the teacher in meeting the expectations of the Corrective Action Plan.
- D. The administrator will set the date for review of the Corrective Action Plan. At that time, the administrator will meet with the teacher to determine if the teacher has met the expectations of the Corrective Action Plan.
- E. If the teacher has not successfully met the expectations of the Corrective Action Plan, the administrator may extend the Corrective Action Plan or the teacher may be recommend for dismissal.

Section 4 – Failure to perform to minimum expectations

If it becomes evident to a principal that a teacher is unable or unwilling to meet requirements and expectations then the principal will recommend the non-renewal of the contract to the Board.

REASSIGNMENT, VACANCY, AND TRANSFER

Section 1 – Reassignment within the Same Building:

A teacher can be assigned to teach anything for which the teacher is properly licensed and highly qualified. Should a teacher be given an assignment outside their licensed area their evaluation will not reflect negatively upon them due to their lack of expertise in the area.

A teacher who desires a change in grade level, a movement between teams, between subject areas, and/or a movement between departments for the following school year shall submit a written request of such desire to the building principal or his/her designee. The decision to move the teacher remains the decision of the building principal. The principal will share the change with affected teacher(s).

Section 2 – Postings:

Vacancies in present or in newly-created certified positions shall be posted. The posting will be emailed to all certified personnel. Internal or external candidates may apply. Transfer guidelines- Internal teacher candidates are extended an opportunity to apply for any vacancies for which the teachers qualifies. All internal applicants will be given due consideration. The final candidate will be recommended by the administrator. Interviewed applicants will be notified that the selection process has been concluded.

Section 3 – Involuntary Transfer Guidelines:

Involuntary transfers between buildings will be made based upon instructional needs, financial constraints, enrollment factors and/or other reasons as deemed appropriate by the administrative staff. Teachers will be solicited to volunteer for transfer. The Administration reserves the right to make the final decision.

SUMMER SCHOOL/INTERSESSION HIRING GUIDELINES

Summer school teaching positions will be posted internally. Guidelines for hiring will be dependent upon student needs during that instructional period. Summer school administration and building principals will collaborate in the selection of staff.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

A certified employee that fails to comply with policies and handbooks of the West Noble School Corporation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment with the school corporation.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

West Noble School Corporation is committed to equal opportunity. It is an 'Equal Opportunity Employer' and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, handicapping conditions, disability, or national origin, including limited English proficiency, in any employment opportunity. Policy 40020

West Noble School Corporation has a policy of providing equal opportunity. All courses are open to all students regardless of race, color, sex, handicapping conditions, disability, or national origin, including limited English proficiency. Policy 80020

REDUCTION IN FORCE

After a position is identified for elimination, teachers are identified base on status of teacher.

- Probationary (Non-permanent) working under 1st or 2nd contract
- Professional (Semi-permanent) working under contract number 3-5
- Established (Permanent) working under contract number 6 or greater

Probationary teachers (in appropriate licensed area) will be released before Professional teachers.

Professional teachers (in appropriate licensed area) will be released before Established teachers.

The cancellation of a teacher's contract due to a decrease in the number of teaching positions shall be determined on the basis of performance. In the content area to be reduced, a teacher who is rated less effective will be subject to non-continuance or cancellation before a teacher rated more effective. The order of effectiveness from least to greatest is as follows:

1. Ineffective
2. Improvement Necessary
3. Effective
4. Highly Effective

Teacher effectiveness will be considered over a time frame of the past three consecutive years. If three years of evaluative data is not available, two years or one year of data will be used.

All evaluation information and data used in determining whether or not a teacher is reduced will be the information and data collected while a teacher at this school corporation.

In cases where the teacher's effectiveness categories are the same, the administrator will weigh the following factors before making a determination as to which teacher(s) shall be subject to the non-continuance or cancellation:

1. The numerical rating of the teachers' evaluation
2. The academic needs of the students in the school corporation
3. Current instructional leadership roles
4. Degrees earned
5. Credit hours earned
6. Teaching experience
7. Any other relevant factors

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