

Syringa Professional Responsibilities Handbook

DISTRICT POLICIES: All staff members are responsible for reading and following Syringa Mountain School Governing Board policies. The policy manual is located on the school's web site.

TEACHER WORK HOURS: As a minimum standard, teachers are expected to be on campus and available to students, parents, and colleagues at least 8 hours per day. Syringa starts at 8:00 and dismissal time is 2:45. Certified employees should anticipate working beyond these minimum hours at school to attend meetings, engage in professional development, be well prepared for students and other duties as assigned.

In general, teachers are expected to be on campus from 7:45 am to 3:45 pm. Exceptions to these hours should be discussed with the administration. If you need to leave Syringa early, please see the section below titled **STAFF LEAVING SYRINGA DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.**

MEETINGS/AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES: Employees are expected to attend scheduled meetings, unless excused for school business by administration. When planning after-school activities such as parent conferences, other meetings, or personal business, please avoid making plans during scheduled meetings and professional collaboration times (such as faculty meetings on Wednesday).

TEAMWORK: Employees are expected to regularly meet on Wednesdays from 3:00-4:00pm and collaborate with colleagues, be informed on school issues and events and discuss curriculum and festivals. All are expected to interact in a positive and proactive manner.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: All staff members are expected to be familiar with emergency procedures for Syringa and to provide appropriate leadership during emergency drills and actual events.

STUDENT SUPERVISION: All staff members share responsibility for supervision of all students on campus. Students are not to be left unsupervised in classrooms, and all staff are expected to follow their school's procedures for student supervision in hallways and on recess. Thank you for being a presence on the blacktop in the morning and afterschool as you collect your class and see them off at the end of the day.

STAFF LEAVING SYRINGA DURING THE SCHOOL DAY: If a staff member needs to leave Syringa on school business or emergency personal business, please discuss your absence with administration before leaving the campus. Employees should sign out in the

office on the sheet in front. It is necessary that we know if employees are off campus for a number of reasons, including emergency contact, liability, and workman's compensation coverage.

STAFF ABSENCES: Syringa has sick leave and provides personal days of leave on top of scheduled holidays and breaks. Sick days are primarily for unexpected illness and should be used wisely. Teachers should request a guest teacher as soon as possible or as soon as an unexpected illness occurs. Please be sure to inform administration prior to an absence. Employees requesting to use a personal day need to let administration a minimum of 3 days in advance. Personal days should not be taken on the day before or after a school holiday, or the first or last week of school, unless approved by administration.

Staff who miss work in excess of their earned time off are subject to a dock in pay for being absent without leave.

COMMUNICATION: All Syringa employees are expected to engage in professional and respectful communication with students, parents and other staff members at all times. Employees should refrain from the use of profanity or topics sexual in nature. Topics of discussion with students should be appropriate for the age and experiences of the students.

EMAIL AND PHONE MESSAGES: Syringa email is an important tool that is used for school business purposes. All staff should check email during non-student-contact times at least once during the day. Teachers are expected to respond to parent emails and phone calls within a 24-hour period (excluding weekends and holidays) and to colleagues within 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays). Please think carefully before using the "Reply All" feature for any email, or when responding in frustration.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), staff must use discretion regarding what information can be shared with students, parents, colleagues, and others. Student academic, health, discipline, and other personal information may only be shared with their own parents/guardians. Consider student confidentiality, the age of your students, known facts, and common sense when sharing information about incidents at school. When in doubt, ask the administration for direction.

SOCIAL MEDIA: Staff are strongly discouraged from associating with all minors and current Syringa students on social media and gaming platforms. Parents should be copied on any two-way electronic communication between teachers and students.

Staff should never post anything on personal sites related to individual students, including student work. Do not post work-related information on personal sites that is negative with respect to colleagues, students or parents, or work circumstances. Social media should not be used during work times.

REPRESENTATIVE OF SYRINGA: From the community's perspective, Syringa staff are representatives of the school at all times, on and off duty. Therefore, it is important to refrain from negative comments and inappropriate behavior in public. Whether intentional or not, the public may relate your behavior or comments to the school. Since funding for our school district is based on student enrollment, staff should professionally promote the positive aspects of Syringa and encourage families to consider enrolling in our schools. Please note - If you have a concern about your work environment, school policy dictates that you should discuss this with the administration.

CELL PHONES: Staff are expected to model appropriate cell phone use to their students. Cell phones used for personal reasons should be utilized moderately and at appropriate times such as breaks.

TOBACCO REGULATIONS: Syringa Mountain School shall be entirely tobacco free. Tobacco use and possession (including e-cigarettes) is prohibited by state law in our building, outside grounds, and in all school vans. This policy applies to all employees, students, and visitors.

SCHOOL KEYS: All keys will be checked out to individual teachers and staff by administration. Keys can be checked back in at the end of the school year, or kept for the summer if desired. To avoid security issues it is critical for staff members to keep their school keys with them and to not allow students to use school keys for any purpose. No teacher or staff member is to have any new keys cut from any school keys. Loss of any key must be reported immediately to the director.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACTS: Sharing a brief, positive email or phone call with parents/guardians about their child goes a long way in establishing a supportive relationship that can benefit you, your students, and their families. Time spent briefly reaching out with a sincere compliment to a student's parent is some of the best time a teacher can spend helping students want to be successful. Syringa is built on community and making small efforts with parents keeps our foundation strong.

If a student begins to struggle with academic or behavior issues, proactive contact with parents/guardians can help both you and your students. Keep the conversation as positive as possible, focused on potential solutions/supports for the student. Make sure to document the conversation(s) so a record is being kept to track academic issues and behavior.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION: Syringa teachers use Idaho Common Core as the backbone of teaching instruction. Waldorf practices are woven into this curriculum to enrich student lessons and support movement and creativity. Dimensions Math is delivered by each grade level for the school's Research Based Math Curriculum. Road to Literacy is one of the resources used by teachers for their Literacy program. Teachers also use

Director (Nigel) is available to observe classes, consult with on specific concerns, offer experience-based advice, and help teachers to create lessons on specific topics.

Syringa teachers are not expected to give homework to students until 3rd grade but teachers encourage parents to set aside time every night for students to read and/or get read to.

USE OF MOVIES IN THE CLASSROOM: The use of appropriate, curriculum-related video clips can be a powerful learning tool for students in grades 5-8. Plans to view a full-length movie in any class should have a specific educational purpose and be discussed with Nigel or Christi a week prior to viewing. G-rated clips/videos can be used without parent permission but PG movies must be okay by Nigel or Christi and permission must be obtained from the parents prior to showing. Students who do not have permission to see the film should be excused from the class to complete an alternate assignment in a discreet manner.

DAILY CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT/RECORD KEEPING:

1. Keep complete and accurate records of student grades and attendance.
 - a. It is expected that teachers turn in daily attendance to the front desk.
 - b. Grade books are expected to be kept by each teacher.
 - c. Accurate and up-to-date seating charts and classroom rosters should be maintained in case a guest teacher is in the classroom.
2. Maintain a “For Guest Teachers” folder in a highly visible place. It should include all elements recommended for the classroom, including one day of emergency/unplanned absence lesson plans for a guest teacher to use.
3. Teachers are responsible for maintaining a classroom which promotes individual learning in a safe and engaging environment.
4. Teachers are responsible for directly supervising students for the entire school day unless the students are in specials. Please remember not to release students before recess begins or at the end of the day at 2:45.

MANDATORY REPORTING: The most important responsibility of every professional educator is protecting the welfare of the students in his/her care. Syringa By-Law states that “any person who reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense or neglect that appears to have been inflicted on the minor by other than accidental means. . .shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of this information” to law enforcement or the Department of Child Safety. If the suspected abuser does not have care, custody or control of the minor, the

report shall be made to law enforcement only. The law requires that a report must be made to DCS within twenty-four hours. Whenever a report is made to DCS, please notify an administrator, who will assist you with this process.

The law does not require educators to have visible evidence of abuse. Educators may form a reasonable belief that abuse has occurred based on their own observations, information provided by the student, or information provided by a third party. It is *not* the responsibility of the educator to investigate in order to determine that abuse has occurred; rather, the educator is responsible to make the report to those agencies that have the legal responsibility to investigate and make such a determination.

STAFF DRESS CODE: It is important to remember that employees serve as role models for the students with whom they work. It is Syringa's expectation that all employees dress professionally and appropriately for their specific duties and responsibilities.

General Dress Code Requirements

An employee's dress or appearance may not be so unusual, provocative, inappropriate or lacking in cleanliness, that it clearly disrupts the learning or working environment. The following attire or appearance, although not all-inclusive, are considered as general guidelines:

- Modest sleeveless shirts are acceptable.
- Bare feet are never acceptable.
- Blue jeans are acceptable as long as they are in good condition.
- Employees will be physically clean, neat and well-groomed.