

Southwest Kansas Area Cooperative
District 613

2010-2011

**Licensed Staff
Handbook**

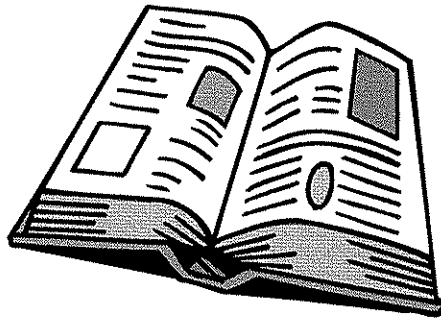
Ensign, KS

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FOREWORD

The Southwest Kansas Area Cooperative District 613 Licensed Staff Handbook includes policies and procedures approved by the SKACD Board. It is the responsibility of SKACD licensed staff to read and abide by the contents of this handbook. This handbook is not to be considered a contract. The Board reserves the right to change policies and procedures that are not part of the bargaining agreement.



**SOUTHWEST KANSAS AREA COOPERATIVE DISTRICT #613
MISSION STATEMENT**

To Meet the Educational Needs of All Children with Disabilities, SKACD strives to:

- ❖ Provide high quality special education services in a Least Restrictive Environment to allow access to the general curriculum.

- ❖ Identify and provide early intervention services for children.

- ❖ Provide appropriate special education services to meet post secondary outcomes.

- ❖ Provide highly qualified and well-trained licensed and classified staff.

- ❖ Implement fully Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and Kansas Special Regulations and Guidelines.

- ❖ Maintain a high level of fiscal integrity to member districts.

COMMUNICATION

All staff members are expected to check their e-mail daily and the SKACD Website on a regular basis. Any changes of e-mail addresses should be sent to the SKACD Central office.

CERTIFICATION OF HEALTH

All staff members must have a Certification of Health form on file in the Coop office.

TEACHING LICENSE

Every professional must have a current license on file in the Coop office. Application forms are available at www.ksde.org. The licensure process can be lengthy, so it is advisable to send the application in as early as possible. Licenses may be renewed 18 months in advance of expiration.

If any professional's license is canceled, lapses, is non-renewed, suspended, or otherwise modified so they are not qualified to perform duties under the contract, that staff member is responsible for reimbursement to the Coop for any and all losses, costs or damages sustained including legal fees. (See the Negotiated Agreement Article #18).

TRANSCRIPTS

Placement on the salary schedule is based partly on college coursework. OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS—are the only recognized certification of courses taken. Be sure to have the college registrar send the SKACD office official transcripts as soon as possible after courses are taken. It is advised that you request a set for yourself to be sent at the same time. **If you do not receive a set, then it is fairly certain that our office did not receive a set as well.** (See the Negotiated Agreement Article #5).

REIMBURSEMENT EXPENSE

Tuition Reimbursement

Any full-time licensed employee may be entitled to partial tuition reimbursement after completion of approved college coursework. The Application for approval and reimbursement for college hours should be submitted before taking the class, and then resubmitted with appropriate paperwork immediately following completion of the class. Forms are available on the SKACD website. (See the Negotiated Agreement Article #11).

Long-term Substitutes

Long-term substitutes may be entitled to partial tuition reimbursement pending approval by the Board of Directors and under the following conditions; 1) 50% of the average cost of tuition at public state institutions of Kansas, 2) only college hours indicated in the official program of study for an education degree, 3) payment made at the end of each semester the employee completes a long-term substitute assignment for SKACD, 4) payment made for a semester credit (12 Hours) at the end of each semester employed by SKACD, 5) hours passed only {no incompletes fails and or withdrawals}.

PAY PERIOD

Paychecks are issued on the 25th of each month. If the 25th falls on Saturday or Sunday, checks will be issued on the proceeding Friday. Automatic deposit is encouraged. Forms are available on the SKACD website.

BENEFIT ELECTION

SKACD participates in Section 125. This refers to the part of the Internal Revenue Code that allows certain deductions be made from paychecks before taxes thus reducing the amount of taxes employees pay. All employees are required to complete the form.

Part of the 125 Plan is the Flexible Benefit Plan (FLEX). This allows for certain planned expenses to be deducted from paychecks before taxes. Expenses must be listed on the form. A large amount of planning and analysis of your personal finance situation is required.

BUILDING ASSIGNMENT

As an employee of the Southwest Kansas Area Cooperative District 613, staff is assigned a district(s) and/or schools. Staff is responsible to attend all building meetings/in-services as determined by the expectations of the district. It is further expected that all staff follow the assigned district's Work Day schedule. Since start and end times vary even within a district, staff is responsible for checking with the building principal. Itinerate staff who are assigned more than one district are to follow the expectations of the home based district unless conflicts arise at which they need to discuss the issues with their building administration.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Evaluations shall be made in writing of every licensed employee in accordance with the minimum requirements of K.S.A. 72-9001 et.seq. and in accordance to SKACD Board Policy. Evaluations beyond, those required by law, may be requested by the evaluating administrator or the teacher.

The building principal will use the evaluation instrument and process in accordance with each district's policy for all licensed SKACD staff that are assigned to their buildings. The evaluation schedule is the same for all licensed staff members. Staff should meet with their evaluator(s) prior to the formal evaluation to set up dates for the evaluation and to discuss any problem areas. Itinerate staff with an assigned building base will be evaluated by the building principal. Coop wide itinerate staff will be evaluated by the SKACD administration.

Once the cycle is complete a tenured professional is evaluated at least once every three years. Administrators may choose to evaluate certified staff more frequently.

All official evaluations shall be made in writing. A copy of the evaluation will be maintained in the SKACD personnel file. Nothing shall be added to the district personnel file so far as such pertains to evaluation without the knowledge of the teacher.

Except by order of a court of competent jurisdiction, evaluation documents and responses thereto shall be available only to the evaluated employee, the appropriate administrative staff members designated by the board, the school attorney upon request of the board, the state board of education as provided in K.S. 72-7515, the board and the administrative staff of any school to

which such employee applies for employment, and other persons specified by the employee in writing to his/her board. (K.S.A. 72-9005)

A teacher shall be allowed access to his/her evaluation file at any time during regular business hours. All requests for access to the evaluation documents shall be through his/her immediate supervisor.

SCHEDULES/CHANGES FOR ITINERANT PROGRAMS

Each itinerant staff member must send a completed schedule to the SKACD central office as soon as it is developed including locations and time.

Changes in scheduling are equally important and these changes must be sent to the SKACD central office as soon as possible. If the changes are only temporary, it is important to notify each school involved as well as the SKACD office, noting when the original schedule resumes.

INSERVICE

All members of the Southwest Kansas Area Cooperative District will attend an in-service planned by the SKACD Administration and/or Professional Development Council.

All other in-service days are to be followed as per the district you are assigned. In-service days are considered contract days and attendance is mandatory.

Licensed staff must have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) on file as part of the Kansas State licensure requirements. (See the PDC Plan for further information).

TYPES OF LEAVE

All types of leave must be accompanied by the appropriate paper work. Each nine (9) or ten (10) month licensed staff member is given nine (09) days of sick leave and three (3) days of personal leave a year. Licensed twelve (12) month staff is given ten (10) days of sick leave per year and holidays and vacation per the SKACD benefit schedule. Sick leave may be accumulated up to a total of ninety (90) days. Staff that are less than full time or less than a full contract year have sick leave accrue on a proportionate basis. Unused personal leave will be credited to the sick leave at the end of the year. All absences must be reported to the respective building administration. All licensed staff assigned to Dodge City USD 443 must call in absences using the Substitute Information System. Itinerant staff must call the building to which they are assigned for that day and the SKACD Central office. (See the Negotiated agreement, Article #6 for a complete description of the types of leave.) Forms are available on the SKACD website in addition to calling the SKACD office. Failure to notify SKACD of absences may be grounds for disciplinary action including dismissal.

SICK LEAVE

Sick leave is granted for personal illness or injury, immediate family illness, medical appointments and pregnancy or childbirth.

DEATH LEAVE

No deduction from salary or sick leave shall be made for absence as a result of the death in the immediate family unless the absence exceeds five (5) school days. Requests for leave to attend the funeral of a non-family member shall be handled on a case-by-case basis by SKACD

administration and may be granted under personal emergency leave. Forms are available on the SKACD website.

ACADEMIC LEAVE

One day is allowed for licensed staff to take academic examinations for or to receive an academic degree with no deduction from salary or sick leave.

Extended study leave with reimbursement may be made pending approval by the Board of Directors and under the following conditions: 1) 50% of the average cost of tuition at public state institutions of Kansas, 2) tuition would be reimbursed for no more than 12 hours per semester and only one semester at a time, 3) payment will be made on completion of each semester worked after returning to employment with SKACD and only after completion of courses from the approved program of study and, 5) hours passed only {no incompletes, fails or withdrawal.} An official program of study must be provided to SKACD.

EMERGENCY LEAVE

Leave of an emergency nature other than sickness or injury may be granted if it is unavoidable that the employee be absent. This leave must be made and approved by the Director at least two (2) days in advance. The circumstances of the situation shall be the determining factor as to full deduction of salary, substitute pay, or no deductions shall be made. A form must be completed. Forms are available on the SKACD website.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Each nine (9) and ten (10) month licensed staff is allowed two (2) days of personal leave per contract year, which is not accumulative. Personal leave may be used, as the employee deems fit. All personal leave must be requested and approved at least two days in advance of use. Classroom teachers must file a form of notification with the building principal and itinerant teachers shall notify the Director or his designee. Personal leave may not be used the first and last week of school nor preceding or following a school vacation or holiday. Personal leave may be denied if such leave would adversely affect the delivery of services to students. Unused personal leave will be added to and become a part of the teacher's cumulative sick leave days. Forms are available on the SKACD website.

OTHER LEAVE

Other types of leave covered under the negotiated agreement include Approved School Business, School Related Absence with Financial Benefit, Elected Office, Organizational Memberships, Jury Duty or Subpoena, Professional Improvement, Adoptive or Maternity, and Extended. (See the Negotiated Agreement Article #6 for further details and contingencies.)

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides certain employees with up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave a year and requires group health benefits to be maintained during the leave as if employees continued to work instead of taking leave.

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee *must work for a covered employer and:*

1. have worked for that employer for at least 12 months; and
2. have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 months prior to the start of the FMLA leave; and
3. work at a location where at least 50 employees are employed at the location or within 75 miles of the location.

Reasons for FMLA leave are:

1. birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child;
2. for the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care, and to care for the newly placed child;
3. to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent- but not a parent "in-law") with a serious health condition; and
4. when one employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

When requesting FMLA leave, the eligible employee must receive the appropriate form from the office and must be returned within 15 days. Further questions concerning FMLA should be addressed to the SKACD office.

TRIP REQUESTS

All trip requests must be submitted on the Trip Request Form. **All trip requests must be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to the proposed trip and approved before the trip occurs.** Anyone requesting a trip must have an IDP on file. SKACD Administration may deny any trip request. Trip requests will be granted based upon budget and needs of SKACD.

Allowable expenses are:

- Travel to and from (current state rate when one of the school vehicles is not available)
- Taxi-tips
- Parking/Tolls
- Lodging, registration, banquet
- Meals (\$7.50 per meal)

Trip reimbursements must be filed on the claim form, which lists itemized expenditures. Itemized receipts for all expenditures must be included and claims must be filed as soon as possible. No reimbursements will be made without receipts and will be paid following the next SKACD board meeting.

TRIP REQUEST FORM

When permission for a conference is requested, the request form must be completed by one special education staff member per building for all staff requesting leave for a particular conference. The request form should be completed, signed by the building principal, and returned to the SKACD office two weeks in advance of the leave. The Registration Forms also must be completed and sent with the Travel Form. The business office, prior to the leave, may send in the registration fee if requested far enough in advance with a two (2) week minimum. The person who completed the request form is responsible for completing the first page, including gathering the necessary receipts, and returning the form to the SKACD central office. SKACD will make room arrangements after the trip has been approved.

Use of the SKACD vehicles should always be considered first and scheduled through the coop office as soon as possible. The driver should call the office the day prior to departure to make arrangements to pick up the SKACD fuel credit card and keys. The credit card, gas receipts, and keys must be returned the day you return. If using your own vehicle and claiming mileage, you may not claim mileage again on the monthly mileage report. All Actual expenses must be filled out on the white copy of the travel form using the Actual column and sent to the SKACD Business Office for reimbursement.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER VOUCHER

It is the responsibility of all substitute teachers to fill out their own Substitute Voucher Form and mail it to the SKACD office. It is suggested that a copy be made prior to sending the voucher to the SKACD office. (See Appendix)

MILEAGE

Mileage will be paid to licensed staffs that use their personal vehicles to travel between school assignments, in-services at Ensign, or student related meetings at a school other than the home school. Mileage is paid at the approved state rate and subject to change as said rate changes.

Mileage for in-service/conferences is to be reported on the Travel Form. All other school related travel must be submitted on either the Student Related Activities or the Non-Student Related Activities form. For mileage to be reported as Student Related, the student must be present otherwise it is Non-Student Related.

Mileage forms are due at the SKACD office by 4 P.M. the fifth day of the month after which mileage is being claimed. Mileage forms received after the fifth of the month will not be processed until the next month. Checks for mileage will be mailed after approval at the monthly board meeting. If the board meeting is delayed or re-scheduled, checks will still be mailed on the third Wednesday of the month.

The allowable mileage for travel is based on the Mileage Chart. Staff members are responsible for accurate reporting of mileage. Mileage will be checked for discrepancies regarding holidays, snow days, and absences. It is suggested that staff make a copy of their mileage sheets prior to sending them to the SKACD office. Misrepresentation of mileage may be grounds for disciplinary action including dismissal.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLY PURCHASES

Each licensed teacher is allocated an instructional budget amount each year and may be used to purchase items anytime during the school year prior to April 15. Before purchasing items, check with other staff members or the IMC library for such items. As budgets become tight we all need to be good fiscal managers. It is also the responsibility of the staff to stay within the limit given. Shipping charges are considered part of the budgeted amount and not extra. In some cases, overruns are necessary. In those cases a complete explanation must accompany the purchase request, but does not insure that the request will be approved.

Purchases can only be made through a Request for Purchase form. No orders can be made on an approval basis without a purchase order. **Due to the Kansas' Cash Basis Law, no reimbursement can be given for items bought without a purchase order.** Request for Purchase forms are on the SKACD website.

Forms must be completed fully and accurately. Incomplete requests will be returned. If there are special instructions, they should be clearly stated on the request. Check to verify that the catalog is current as an out of date catalog and prices may cause delays. Upon completion of the request form, building principals must sign the form prior to sending it to the SKACD central office. The SKACD office will check the amount against the amount allowed each individual and approve or reject the purchase followed by the approval of the SKACD administration. All orders are shipped to the Ensign office to be checked off before sending them on to the buildings.

COMPUTERS

Each classroom should have available a minimum of one computer available to the teacher. It is each district's responsibility to provide and maintain the upkeep of said computers.

Teachers in Dodge City USD 443 must check with the TECH department before ordering any student software and follow the policies and procedures regarding installation of software on computers. All other teachers should verify, with their administration as to policies and procedures regarding installation of software on classroom computers.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER (IMC)

The Southwest Kansas Area Cooperative District 613 provides a large library of resource materials to both regular and special education teachers. The library is located in the Ensign office. Teachers may request items that will be sent to them. Materials are checked out just as one would check out items from any library.

Licensed staff is responsible for all materials they and/or their paraeducators check out. It is discouraged to allow paraeducators to take materials home that have been checked out through the IMC. Due to the large number of materials that have been lost or stolen, replacement costs may come from the instructional budget of the licensed teacher to which the items were checked out.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PAPERWORK

As changes continue to occur in Special Education, there is an increase in the amount of forms that must be completed for each student identified as a child with exceptionality. While academic instruction is of the utmost importance for each student, so is the importance of being compliant under the law concerning appropriate paperwork.

Not only is it the responsibility of the licensed staff to educate a child with exceptionalities, but also to insure that all necessary paperwork is completed thoroughly, accurately, and in a timely manner. SKACD Administrators will periodically review paperwork and work with individual staff that may be having difficulty with completing the appropriate paperwork. Continued failure to complete paperwork in a timely and legal manner may result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

EXTENDED SCHOOL TERM (SUMMER SCHOOL)

The provision of Extended School Term (EST) for students is a decision made by the student's IEP Team and must be made prior to April 1. Once the decision is made that the student requires EST and verified by the EST Checklist, the following steps must be completed.

1. If the current year's teacher is not available for EST, a teacher must be located and be a part of the EST IEP team.
2. Program need/location information and bus information must be determined at the IEP and sent to the appropriate office.

Once EST caseloads are established, program approval must be obtained. Prior to submitting EST program requests, the following information must be sent to the SKACD central office by APRIL 1:

1. Teacher's name

2. Paraeducator requests (if any) and para's name
3. Total program time (hours per day)
4. Number of days for the total program
5. Start and end dates of the program

The EST Justification Checklist is not to be sent to the SKACD office. It must be included with the IEP in the student's file. Students' names/class rosters are not to be sent to the SKACD office. Students' names/class rosters attending EST in Dodge City are to be submitted to the Dodge City Special Education Office by May 1.

EXTENDED SCHOOL TERM PAYCHECKS

Summer paychecks will be issued on the 25th of July for employees who are working an extended school term in June. Any summer school worked after July 1 will be paid August 25th.

HARASSMENT POLICY

While each school district may have their own policy regarding harassment, SKACD is committed to providing a work environment that is pleasant, healthful, comfortable, and free from intimidation, hostility or other offenses which might interfere with work performance. Harassment of any sort-verbal, physical, visual-will not be tolerated. Check with your building principal as to the district policy on harassment.

OTHER POLICIES, PRACTICES, PROCEDURES

Each school district has its own policies, practices, and/or procedures. It is the responsibility of the certified staff working in each district to visit with the building principal concerning the expectations and to follow them.

PROCEDURES FOR HIRING SPECIAL EDUCATION PARAEDUCATORS

Below is outlined the process that certified staff members must use requesting a paraeducator. (See Paraeducator Handbook for more details regarding roles/responsibilities of the paraeducator.

1. If a paraeducator is needed in your Special Education program, fill out a Paraeducator Request and send it to the Paraeducator Coordinator at the SKACD Offices. Fill out the request completely, on the correct form and with the correct authorization signatures. Be specific as to the reason for needing a para.
2. Teachers whose request is approved need to see their Principal or the para facilitator for potential applicants. SKACD will periodically advertise for paras in the local newspapers.
3. Go through the applications and screen 2-5 candidates to interview. Do not contact the applicants yet.
4. Check a minimum of 2 references for the applicant(s) to be interviewed. Set up the interviews with the Principal, applicant, and yourself. If the Principal chooses not to participate, you may go ahead with the interview; however the Principal must approve all paraeducators in their building. The SKACD staff that will be supervising the para must participate in the interviewing to help insure compatibility.
5. Before offering the position, check with the para facilitator. The Board must give final approval for the position and the person filling the position. All offers of employment are conditional pending Board approval.

6. Most of the communication with paras will be through the teacher. If teachers receive any information for paras, it should be passed on to the para(s) working for you. Teachers are the communication link with the paras.
7. NO paraeducator is to start work until all the employment paperwork (except the Cafeteria 125 Plan form) has been completed correctly and returned to the SKACD office. All offers for employment are conditional pending correct completion of all employment paperwork, Board approval, Social Security check, and passing the pre-employment physical. A licensed physician, registered physician's assistant or Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner must sign physicals.

If a candidate is offered employment and accepts the offer, he/she must report to one of the SKACD offices designated below to complete employment paperwork. **All employment paperwork except the physical and Cafeteria 125 Plan form must be filled out in one of the SKACD offices.** The applicants must call for an appointment to make sure someone will be in the office that can assist them. The secretaries will assist the applicants in making sure the paperwork is filled out correctly. All applicants are to bring some form of identification, social security card, and other needed information to complete the standard employment forms. If the applicant has any questions about what to bring, they should ask the secretaries when they call for the appointments.

Offices are located at: Ness City Special Education Satellite Office, located north of the Ness City Elementary School, 785-798-2280, Dodge City Satellite Office, 1000 2nd Ave., 620-227-1661, and Ensign office, 001 Ford Rd, 620-865-2054.

8. If the new para has college hours, or previous paraeducator and/or teaching experience, they need to turn in an up-to-date **Official Transcript** and verification of experience. Everyone will be started on the first step of the paraeducator pay scale unless we have the official transcript and/or record of work experience on file in the SKACD office. Paras have 60 days from their first day of employment to have salary information to the SKACD office. At that time, the para's salary will be set for the year.
9. Paras are encouraged to participate in direct deposit, but those who do will have paychecks mailed to their home address. The checks will be handled in this same manner all year unless the SKACD Board clerk receives **written notice from the para to change the mailing address.**
10. Teachers are responsible for monitoring their para's required in-service hours as specified in the para handbook. **Orientation and Confidentiality must be completed within the first calendar month of employment.**