

Fowler USD 225 Certified Staff / Faculty Handbook 2026-2027

Fowler USD 225 recognizes that the teaching staff is instrumental in the success of our students. The Board of Education, Administration, and community appreciates the time, dedication, and efforts of the faculty. It is because of the dedication of the staff that Fowler Schools is a positive learning environment and a home away from home for many students.

Instructional Handbook Disclaimer

The purpose of this instructional handbook is to provide faculty and staff information for the academic operation of USD 225. It is not the purpose of this handbook to duplicate materials which might be found in the Student Handbook or Negotiated Agreement. Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents and this document will undergo ongoing review as deemed necessary. If any discrepancies exist between this handbook and the approved district policies of the Board of Education, the provisions of the Board's Policy Book will prevail. The district reserves the right to modify the information within this handbook without notice.

Notice of Non-discrimination

USD 225 is committed to a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, age, and disability as required by applicable laws and regulations under the Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX regulations of 1972, Section 504 of the Social Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Commitment to Instruction

The district expects high quality instruction from all faculty. A high level of commitment to our students from faculty helps maintain that reputation. Faculty who demonstrate a high level of commitment are prepared for each class, arrive promptly, and use the entire instructional period. In addition, they communicate problems, concerns, and successes to the appropriate administrator; demonstrate concern for each student's progress; maintain discipline in all areas; and respond to communications, suggestions, etc. from peers and administration.

General Duties and Responsibilities

1. Delivering and facilitating instruction that provides and assesses learning opportunities and student progress.
2. Informing students and parents of class requirements by providing a class syllabus including specific objectives, outcomes, methods of instruction, and grading.
3. Communicating with students on a continuing basis to allow them to be aware of their own progress.
4. Conducting all scheduled classes for the entire allotted time, maintaining discipline, and providing learning opportunities in accordance with the philosophy and objectives of the district.
5. Using teaching methods, media, and technology designed to reach students of varying educational and experiential backgrounds to allow each student the opportunity to master the objectives of the class.
6. Maintaining and submitting records as required by policy and procedures, and meeting announced deadlines.
7. Maintaining required credentials, licenses, certifications as appropriate, preserve and increase instructional proficiency, and remain current in knowledge of the subject area.

8. Recommending instructional materials, textbooks, appropriate equipment, and technology.
9. Aligning curriculum with the state standards.
10. Serving on various committees.
11. Volunteering for various school activities and events.
12. In addition the following items will be points of emphasis when being evaluated:
 - a. Rigorous and appropriate instruction related to state standards. Teachers will be expected to provide instruction and learning based activities from “bell to bell;” free time is not an acceptable practice.
 - b. Creating educational experiences for students which require active student involvement and activate higher order thinking skills.
 - c. Professionalism: All staff will be expected to present themselves in a professional manner in all areas, particularly dress, speech, and punctuality.

Absences

When teachers are absent, it takes away from your overall instructional effectiveness. Teachers are strongly encouraged to use Fridays for appointments.

- It is the responsibility of the absent teacher to contact the building principal to make arrangements for a substitute teacher. The teacher will provide lesson plans for the day by 7:00 a.m. or earlier to the office.
- Teachers are required to be present by 7:30 a.m. A teacher arriving past 7:35 is considered to be late and will be addressed by the principal. Contract time concludes at 4:15 p.m.
- In addition to personal leave, bereavement leave is available in the case of an immediate family member's passing. Immediate family is defined as spouse, parent, child, or sibling.

Lesson Planning

Teachers are expected to be fully prepared for class at all times. Daily lesson plans will be left in a designated location on the teacher's desk. Lesson plans may be required to be turned in to the principal. Paper copies for students should be made in advance.

Teachers are asked to prepare a three-day emergency lesson folder to be kept in a designated location for occasions when the teacher is unable to prepare substitute plans. Both regular sub plans and emergency sub plans should contain rosters, seating charts, emergency/drill procedures and other routine tasks in addition to detailed lessons that will keep students occupied and engaged for the entire period. Sub plans should not rely on the use of movies.

Movies

Prior approval is needed. Movies must be instructionally related. Movie clips rather than full movies are preferred. Hollywood style movies require administrative approval before being shown in the classroom. In addition, parent permission is required for any movies rated PG and above. Students who do not view the movie should be provided with an alternative activity with

the same educational purpose.

Dress Code

See Negotiated Agreement

Purchasing

Purchases must be pre-approved by administration. Requests should be made 2-3 weeks in advance. Once approved, administration will communicate the process for completing the purchase.

Fundraising

Each class and organization (including cheerleading and athletic teams) will have the opportunity to fundraise. The principal must approve each fundraiser to ensure multiple groups are not overlapping.

Handbooks

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the Student Handbook for each building they work in. Teachers are expected to enforce the rules and regulations as outlined in these handbooks.

Confidentiality

Do not have confidential conversations around students. Any discussions about students that may be protected under FERPA should be on a “need-to-know” basis. Teachers do not have the right to ask students questions about their health.

Confidentiality of educational records is a basic right shared by all students in public schools and their parents. These fundamental rights are described in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended (2009). The federal regulations relating to FERPA are available at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> and <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Office-of-the-Commissioner/Office-of-General-Counsel/FERPA-and-PPRA>.

Confidentiality regulations apply to the State, to all public schools and private schools that accept federal funds. In addition, all school personnel (including contracted employees) are governed by confidentiality requirements of FERPA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which apply to students with disabilities.

Issues of confidentiality are not restricted to written record. Teachers and all school personnel should be cautious sharing information gained through employment in USD 225. Student’s attendance, academics, discipline, or well-being is not the business of the general public. Teachers and other school personnel should refrain from discussions about students outside the school setting.

Family and Medical Leave Act

USD 225 will follow all applicable laws as it relates to the FMLA.

Internet, Email, and Acceptable Use Policy

Teachers are to abide by and enforce the acceptable use policy as printed in the student

handbook.

The email and internet system is a business tool owned and paid for by the District; therefore, it is the District's property. All email messages are the property of the District and are subject to office policy, procedures and control. As such, the District has the right to view them at any time, as well as monitor internet usage. The district respects the individual privacy of its employees. However, that privacy does not extend to the employee's work-related conduct or to the use of District provided technical resources or supplies. Therefore, employees have no right to privacy as to any information transmitted or stored through the District's system. To ensure proper use, the District may monitor its technological resources at any time without advance notice or consent.

Employees shall use the internet and email system for purposes related to their employment. Use of the system that promotes unethical practices, or any activity prohibited by law, the Education Code and/or any other statutes, or District policy is strictly prohibited. Except as otherwise indicated in this policy, commercial or political use of the mail system and internet is also strictly prohibited. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities are strictly prohibited and will be reported to District authorities and may be reported to legal authorities.

Communication with Students via Cell Phone

This practice is prohibited on an individual basis. Coaches, sponsors, etc. will communicate via a group message providing the information as needed for leave times, game times, etc. Classroom teachers are not to communicate with students individually or give their cell phone number out to them.

STUDENT RELATED EXPECTATIONS

Supervision of Students

All employees are responsible for the supervision of students at school and school sponsored activities. It is everyone's responsibility to enforce code of conduct and behavioral guidelines to keep our students safe. It is not acceptable for teachers to leave students unsupervised in the classroom to run errands, make copies, etc.

Student Attendance

It is critical that you take accurate attendance daily.

- It is the responsibility of every teacher to take attendance during each class period each day for high school.
- Elementary teachers need to record attendance the first five minutes of class on EduStar.
- Lunch count needs to be recorded by 8:15 a.m. on EduStar daily for first hour high school teachers and for each elementary teacher.

Teachers are expected to make contact with parents when attendance or tardiness are hindering the student's progress.

Accidents

If an employee is injured or involved in an accident, it must be reported to the administration immediately. At that time the employee may be required to go to the doctor for follow up. Delayed reporting of an accident or injury or refusal to seek medical treatment when requested by administration could affect an employee's eligibility for workman's compensation benefits, if applicable.

When a student under the supervision of a teacher or coach is injured or involved in an accident, the student must immediately report the injury to the supervising teacher or coach. The teacher or coach should then report the accident to the principal.

Child Abuse and Neglect

As an employee of a public school, you are a mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect which means if you suspect a child under your supervision is being abused or neglected it must be reported to the principal and must be reported to DCF or the sheriff's department. It is not your responsibility to verify your suspicions but simply to report. The agency to whom you report is responsible for investigating. You may contact DCF at 1-800-922-5330 or via the online portal at <https://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/Mandated-Reporter-Portal.aspx>. Both your principal and the agency to whom you report are obligated to keep the information confidential.

Field Trips

Field trips with educational value that expose our students to new experiences are encouraged. Field trips must be approved by the administration.

Electronic Devices

Students:

Students are only allowed to use electronic devices issued by the district, including headphones, during class time as part of an instructional activity.

See Electronic Device Policy regarding student personal devices.

Staff:

Staff should use only district provided devices during instruction times.

STAFF CELL PHONE USE:

Cell phone use should be restricted to times when students are not present or in emergency situations only.

CULTURE

A positive school staff culture is essential for fostering a supportive, collaborative, and effective learning environment for both students and educators. When staff members work together with respect, professionalism, and shared goals, the entire school community benefits from increased morale, productivity, and student success. A culture of positivity promotes teamwork, encourages innovation, and strengthens relationships among colleagues, ultimately creating a more enjoyable and effective workplace. Negativity, gossip, and unprofessional behavior will not be permitted, as they undermine the school's mission, create unnecessary stress, and hinder progress. Instead, staff members are expected to support one another, communicate openly and constructively, and model the values we strive to instill in our students. By fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement, we ensure that our school remains a place where everyone feels valued, motivated, and committed to excellence.

Notice of Non-Discrimination:

U.S.D. #225, does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap.

Emergency Safety Intervention Policy

The board of education is committed to limiting the use of Emergency Safety Intervention (“ESI”), such as seclusion and restraint, with all students. Seclusion and restraint shall be used only when a student’s conduct necessitates the use of an emergency safety intervention as defined below. The board of education encourages all employees to utilize other behavioral management tools, including prevention techniques, de-escalation techniques, and positive behavioral intervention strategies.

This policy shall be made available on the district website with links to the policy available on any individual school pages. In addition, this policy shall be included in at least one of the following: each school’s code of conduct, school safety plan, or student handbook. Notice of the online availability of this policy shall be provided to parents during enrollment each year.

Definitions:

“Area of purposeful isolation” means any separate space, regardless of any other use of that space, other than an open hallway or similarly open environment.

“Campus police officer” means a school security officer designated by the board of education of any school district pursuant to K.S.A. 72-6146, and amendments thereto.

“Chemical Restraint” means the use of medication to control a student’s violent physical behavior or restrict a student’s freedom of movement.

“Emergency Safety Intervention” is the use of seclusion or physical restraint but does not include physical escort or the use of time-out.

“Incident” means each occurrence of the use of an emergency safety intervention.

“Law enforcement officer” and “police officer” mean a full-time or part-time salaried officer or employee of the state, a county, or a city, whose duties include the prevention or detection of crime and the enforcement of criminal or traffic law of this state or any Kansas municipality. This term includes a campus police officer.

“Legitimate law enforcement purpose” means a goal within the lawful authority of an officer that is to be achieved through methods or conduct condoned by the officer’s appointing authority.

“Mechanical Restraint” means any device or object used to limit a student’s movement.

“Parent” means:

- a natural parent;
- an adoptive parent;
- a person acting as a parent as defined in K.S.A. 72-3122(d)(2), and amendments thereto;
- a legal guardian;
- an education advocate for a student with an exceptionality;
- a foster parent, unless the student is a child with an exceptionality; or

- a student who has reached the age of majority or is an emancipated minor.

“Physical Escort” means the temporary touching or holding the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back of a student who is acting out for the purpose of inducing the student to walk to a safe location.

“Physical Restraint” means bodily force used to substantially limit a student’s movement, except that consensual, solicited, or unintentional contact and contact to provide comfort, assistance, or instruction shall not be deemed to be physical restraint.

“Purposefully isolate” when used regarding a student, means that school personnel are not meaningfully engaging with the student to provide instruction and any one of the following occurs:

1. Removal of the student from the learning environment by school personnel;
2. Separation of the student from all or most peers and adults in the learning environment by school personnel; or
3. Placement of the student within an area of purposeful isolation by school personnel.

“School resource officer” means a law enforcement officer or police officer employed by a local law enforcement agency who is assigned to a district through an agreement between the local law enforcement agency and the district.

“School security officer” means a person who is employed by a board of education of any school district for the purpose of aiding and supplementing state and local law enforcement agencies in which the school district is located but is not a law enforcement officer or police officer.

“Seclusion” means placement of a student for any reason other than for in-school suspension, detention, or any other appropriate disciplinary measure in a location where both of the following conditions are met:

- School personnel purposefully isolate the student; and
- the student is prevented from leaving or has reason to believe that the student will be prevented from leaving the area of purposeful isolation.

“Time-out” means a behavioral intervention in which a student is temporarily removed from a learning activity without being secluded.

Prohibited Types of Restraint

All staff members are prohibited from engaging in the following actions with all students:

- Using face-down (prone) physical restraint;
- Using face-up (supine) physical restraint;
- Using physical restraint that obstructs the student’s airway;
- Using physical restraint that impacts a student’s primary mode of communication;
- Using chemical restraint, except as prescribed treatments for a student’s medical or psychiatric condition by a person appropriately licensed to issue such treatments; and

- Use of mechanical restraint, except:
 - Protective or stabilizing devices required by law or used in accordance with an order from a person appropriately licensed to issue the order for the device;
 - Any device used by a certified law enforcement officer to carry out law enforcement duties; or
 - Seatbelts and other safety equipment when used to secure students during transportation.

Use of Emergency Safety Intervention - ESI shall be used only when a student presents a reasonable and immediate danger of physical harm to such student or others with the present ability to affect physical harm. Less restrictive alternatives to ESI, such as positive behavior interventions support, shall be deemed inappropriate or ineffective under the circumstances by the school employee witnessing the student's behavior prior to the use of any ESI. The use of ESI shall cease as soon as the immediate danger of physical harm ceases to exist. Violent action that is destructive of property may necessitate the use of an ESI. Use of an ESI for purposes of discipline, punishment, or for the convenience of a school employee shall not meet the standard of immediate danger of physical harm.

ESI Restrictions - A student shall not be subjected to ESI if the student is known to have a medical condition that could put the student in mental or physical danger as a result of ESI. The existence of such medical condition shall be indicated in a written statement from the student's licensed health care provider, a copy of which has been provided to the school and placed in the student's file.

Such written statement shall include an explanation of the student's diagnosis, a list of any reasons why ESI would put the student in mental or physical danger, and any suggested alternatives to ESI. In spite of the provisions of this subsection, a student may be subjected to ESI if not subjecting the student to ESI would result in significant physical harm to the student or others.

Use of Seclusion - When a student is placed in seclusion, a school employee shall see and hear the student at all times. The presence of another person in the area of purposeful isolation or observing the student from outside the area of purposeful isolation shall not create an exemption from otherwise reporting the incident as seclusion. When a student is placed in or otherwise directed to an area of purposeful isolation, the student shall have reason to believe that the student is prevented from leaving.

If the area of purposeful isolation is equipped with a locking door designed to prevent a student from leaving the area of purposeful isolation, the door shall be designed to ensure that the lock automatically disengages when the school employee viewing the student walks away from the area of purposeful isolation, or in case of emergency, such as fire or severe weather.

An area of purposeful isolation shall be a safe place with proportional and similar characteristics as those of rooms where students frequent. Such area shall be free of any condition that could be a danger to the student, well-ventilated, and sufficiently lighted.

Training - All staff members shall be trained regarding the use of positive behavioral intervention strategies, de-escalation techniques, and prevention techniques. Such training shall be consistent with nationally recognized training programs on ESI. The intensity of the training provided will depend upon the employee's position. Administrators, licensed staff members, and other staff deemed most likely to need to restrain a student will be provided more intense training than staff who do not work directly with students in the classroom. District and building administration shall make the determination of the intensity of training required by each position.

Each school building shall maintain written or electronic documentation regarding the training that was provided and a list of participants, which shall be made available for inspection by the state board of education upon request.

Notification and Documentation

The principal or designee shall notify the parent the same day as an incident. The same-day notification requirement of this subsection shall be deemed satisfied if the school attempts at least two methods of contacting the parent. A parent may designate a preferred method of contact to receive the same-day notification. Also, a parent may agree, in writing, to receive only one same-day notification from the school for multiple incidents occurring on the same day.

Documentation of the ESI used shall be completed and provided to the student's parents no later than the school day following the day of the incident. Such written documentation shall include:

- A. The events leading up to the incident;
- B. student behaviors that necessitated the ESI;
- C. steps taken to transition the student back into the educational setting;
- D. the date and time the incident occurred, the type of ESI used, the duration of the ESI, and the school personnel who used or supervised the ESI;
- E. space or an additional form for parents to provide feedback or comments to the school regarding the incident;
- F. a statement that invites and strongly encourages parents to schedule a meeting to discuss the incident and how to prevent future incidents; and
- G. email and phone information for the parent to contact the school to schedule the ESI meeting. Schools may group incidents together when documenting the items in subparagraphs (A), (B) and (C) if the triggering issue necessitating the ESIs is the same.

The parent shall be provided the following information after the first and each subsequent incident during each school year:

- A copy of this policy which indicates when ESI can be used;
- a flyer on the parent's rights;
- information on the parent's right to file a complaint through the local dispute resolution process (which is set forth in this policy) and the complaint process of the state board

- of education; and
- information that will assist the parent in navigating the complaint process, including contact information for Families Together and the Disability Rights Center of Kansas.

Upon the first occurrence of an incident of ESI, the foregoing information shall be provided in printed form or, upon the parent's written request, by email. Upon the occurrence of a second or subsequent incident, the parent shall be provided with a full and direct website address containing such information.

Law Enforcement, School Resource, and Campus Security Officers - Campus police officers and school resource officers shall be exempt from the requirements of this policy when engaged in an activity that has a legitimate law enforcement purpose. School security officers shall not be exempt from the requirements of this policy.

If a school is aware that a law enforcement officer or school resource officer has used seclusion, physical restraint, or mechanical restraint on a student, the school shall notify the parent the same day using the parent's preferred method of contact. A school shall not be required to provide written documentation to a parent, as set forth above, regarding law enforcement use of an emergency safety intervention, or report to the state department of education any law enforcement use of an emergency safety intervention. For purposes of this subsection, mechanical restraint includes, but is not limited to, the use of handcuffs.

Documentation of ESI Incidents

Except as specified above with regard to law enforcement or school resource officer use of emergency safety interventions, each building shall maintain documentation any time ESI is used with a student. The documentation shall include all of the following:

- Date and time of the ESI,
- Type of ESI,
- Length of time the ESI was used,
- School personnel who participated in or supervised the ESI,
- Whether the student had an individualized education program at the time of the incident,
- Whether the student had a section 504 plan at the time of the incident, and
- Whether the student had a behavior intervention plan at the time of the incident.

All such documentation shall be provided to the building principal, who shall be responsible for providing copies of such documentation to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee on at least a biannual basis. At least once per school year, each building principal or designee shall review the documentation of ESI incidents with appropriate staff members to consider the appropriateness of the use of ESI in those instances.

Reporting Data - District administration shall report ESI data to the state department of education as required.

Parent Right to Meeting on ESI Use - After each incident, a parent may request a meeting with

the school to discuss and debrief the incident. A parent may request such meeting verbally, in writing, or by electronic means. A school shall hold a meeting requested under this subsection within 10 school days of the parent's request. The focus of any such meeting shall be to discuss proactive ways to prevent the need for emergency safety interventions and to reduce incidents in the future.

For a student with an IEP or a Section 504 plan, such student's IEP team or Section 504 plan team shall discuss the incident and consider the need to conduct a functional behavioral assessment, develop a behavior intervention plan, or amend the behavior intervention plan if already in existence.

For a student with a section 504 plan, such student's section 504 plan team shall discuss and consider the need for a special education evaluation. For students who have an individualized education program and are placed in a private school by a parent, a meeting called under this subsection shall include the parent and the private school, who shall consider whether the parent should request an individualized education program team meeting. If the parent requests an individualized education program team meeting, the private school shall help facilitate such meeting.

For a student without an IEP or Section 504 plan, the school staff and the parent shall discuss the incident and consider the appropriateness of a referral for a special education evaluation, the need for a functional behavioral assessment, or the need for a behavior intervention plan. Any such meeting shall include the student's parent, a school administrator for the school the student attends, one of the student's teachers, a school employee involved in the incident, and any other school employees designated by the school administrator as appropriate for such meeting.

The student who is the subject of such meetings shall be invited to attend the meeting at the discretion of the parent. The time for calling such a meeting may be extended beyond the 10-day limit if the parent of the student is unable to attend within that time period. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the development and implementation of a functional behavior assessment or a behavior intervention plan for any student if such student would benefit from such measures.

Local Dispute Resolution Process - If a parent believes that an emergency safety intervention has been used on the parent's child in violation of state law or board policy, the parent may file a complaint as specified below.

The board of education encourages parents to attempt to resolve issues relating to the use of ESI informally with the building principal and/or the superintendent before filing a formal complaint with the board. Once an informal complaint is received, the administrator handling such complaint shall investigate such matter, as deemed appropriate by the administrator. In the event that the complaint is resolved informally, the administrator must provide a written report of the informal resolution to the superintendent and the parents and retain a copy of the report at the school. The superintendent will share the informal resolution with the board of

education and provide a copy to the state department of education.

If the issues are not resolved informally with the building principal and/or the superintendent, the parents may submit a formal written complaint to the board of education by providing a copy of the complaint to the clerk of the board and the superintendent within thirty (30) days after the parent is informed of the incident.

Upon receipt of a formal written complaint, the board president shall assign an investigator to review the complaint and report findings to the board as a whole. Such investigator may be a board member, a school administrator selected by the board, or a board attorney. Such investigator shall be informed of the obligation to maintain confidentiality of student records and shall report the findings of fact and recommended corrective action, if any, to the board in executive session.

Any such investigation must be completed within thirty (30) days of receipt of the formal written complaint by the board clerk and superintendent. On or before the 30th day after receipt of the written complaint, the board shall adopt written findings of fact and, if necessary, appropriate corrective action. A copy of the written findings of fact and any corrective action adopted by the board shall only be provided to the parents, the school, and the state department of education and shall be mailed to the parents and the state department within 30 days of the board's receipt of the formal complaint.

If desired, a parent may file a complaint under the state board of education administrative review process within thirty (30) days from the date a final decision is issued pursuant to the local dispute resolution process.

Acknowledgement

_____ I have been given a copy of the Certified Staff /Faculty Handbook.

_____ I have been given the opportunity to read and understand the contents of the Faculty Handbook.

_____ I have been made aware of the fact that the handbook is also available on the district website at <https://www.usd225.org/>.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please sign this page and return to the Superintendent.