

# Fowler USD 225 Classified Handbook 2026-2027

OUR VISION- to provide personalized learning and real-world experiences in a culture focused on leadership opportunities and building relationships.

OUR MISSION- to build relationships that facilitate accountability, responsibility, respect, and enhance academic and social growth for lifelong success.

## USD 225 AREAS OF FOCUS

1. Focus on academics and becoming the best early childhood and elementary school we can be:
  - a. Quality Teachers
  - b. Curriculum Aligned with standards
  - c. Academic Resources
  - d. Structured Interventions
2. Identify criteria for the district to evaluate grade level configuration:
  - a. Enrollment- keeping our students in Fowler
  - b. adding more students via open enrollment
  - c. Projected Student Count
  - d. Financial Resources- future funding as well as potential other revenue sources
  - e. Communication- share the district's focus with our families, community, businesses, and all stakeholders
  - f. Community Input- seek input through surveys and meetings to gather data to assess the needs of our community
3. Maintain our schools:
  - a. Keep our school open for preschool through 6th grade
  - b. Maintain and utilize all our facilities
  - c. Evaluate our ability to add grade levels back to Fowler based on the assessment of key criteria established by the Board of Education

Fowler USD 225 recognizes that support staff are instrumental in the success of our students. The Board of Education, administration, and community appreciate the time, dedication, and efforts of all our employees. 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.

### Handbook Disclaimer

- The purpose of this handbook is to provide classified staff information for the daily operation of USD 225 to prevent misunderstanding about employee duties and privileges. 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.

### **Definitions**

- Classified staff members are defined as employees who are not required to hold a certificate issued by the Kansas State Department of Education. This includes, but is not limited to, office staff, bus drivers, custodians, maintenance, food service, and paraeducators.
- Full-Time employees work a minimum of 32 hours per week and are eligible for benefits.
- Full-time Salaried employees work a minimum of 40 hours per week and are eligible for benefits.
- Part-Time employees work less than 32 hours per week and are not eligible for benefits.
- Temporary employees serve as a substitute or temporary replacement for another employee for up to 90 days. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits.
- All USD 225 classified employees are Employees-at-Will. This means employment may be terminated at any time, with or without cause.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR CLASSIFIED STAFF**

#### **Absences**

- Regular attendance is required of all employees. Excessive absences or tardiness or unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action.
- Classified employees must notify their supervisor and/or the office of an unplanned absence prior to their daily start time.
- Employees must submit an absence form to the front office in advance of a planned absence or the day immediately following the use of leave for illness or emergency.
- Classified employees will earn 12 days of personal leave per year, with one day accumulated per month.
- Upon completion of the fiscal year, any unused personal leave may be sold back to the district at a rate of \$100 per day.
- Full-time, Salaried 12 month employees receive 10 days of paid vacation time annually. Vacation time must be used when school is not in session. Use of vacation must be arranged in advance with the immediate supervisor. The district asks that classified employees coordinate vacation times to ensure basic district operations can be maintained.
- 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.
- USD 225 will follow all applicable laws as it relates to the Family Medical Leave Act.

## **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. A written report of the incident will be required.
- Any accident or injury that may be compensable will be processed according to Workers' Compensation regulations. 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.

## **Certifications & Training**

- All classified employees must complete annual Bloodborne Pathogens training and other training modules as requested. Some positions require participation in monthly safety meetings.
- Some positions require additional certifications. USD 225 will reimburse employees for costs associated with these requirements, including but not limited to, employee physicals, CDL license, Defensive Driving, CPR, First Aid, and daycare licensure.
- If an employee drives a school vehicle as part of their assigned duties, any suspension or revocation of their driver's license must be immediately reported to the superintendent. The driver shall immediately stop driving a school vehicle until otherwise authorized by the superintendent.
- Bus drivers, substitute bus drivers, and route drivers will be subject to pre-employment and random drug and alcohol testing in accordance with current federal law.

## **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. Both your principal and the agency to whom you report are obligated to keep the information confidential.
- 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>.

## **Compensation**

- Employees will be assigned an entry-level salary or hourly wage which reflects the new employee's experience and training as well as the position responsibilities. Salary or wage increases, when granted by the Board of Education, will begin July 1st of each year.
- The pay period ends on the 15th of each month with payday on the 20th of the month.
- Employees will use an electronic timeclock system. In the event that an employee is asked to use a timesheet, the timesheet will be due to the office by the 15th of the

month.

- In the event that payday falls on a weekend or holiday, payment will be distributed on the prior business day.
- Paid holidays are New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. In the event that a paid holiday falls on a weekend, the work day immediately before or after will be observed as the holiday.
- Overtime hours require administrative approval.

### **Confidentiality**

- Confidentiality regulations apply to the State and 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. All school personnel should be cautious sharing information gained through employment in USD 225. Student and personnel information, records, and files should be handled confidentially and discussed with only the appropriate district personnel.

### **Dress Code**

- Employees are expected to present themselves in a manner which reflects positively on the district, including appropriate personal hygiene and attire.
- Dress code is dependent upon an employee's position within the district. Clothing shall be appropriate for the position, in good repair, and clean. Appropriate footwear is required.
- Subjective tattoos need to be covered.

### **Drug Free Workplace**

- USD 225 facilities and grounds are smoke-free. Employees may not smoke, use, or bring tobacco products onto district property.
- The possession, manufacture, or distribution of a controlled substance, including alcohol, is prohibited within the district.

### **Duties & Schedule**

- Work duty assignments and daily schedules for classified employees will be set by administration.
- The work week begins on Monday and ends the following Sunday.
- Workers are expected to report on time and work their assigned schedule. Schedules may be adjusted by the employer, as needed.
- In case of inclement weather, maintenance and grounds employees are to report for duty. In addition, during a two-hour delay, custodians and office staff are encouraged to report to work as usual to prepare the building and manage communications.

## **Employee Discipline**

- Disciplinary action may be necessary to address inappropriate conduct and/or inadequate performance. Disciplinary action may include the following:
  - Verbal reprimand
  - Written reprimand or unsatisfactory performance review
  - Suspension from work with pay
  - Suspension from work without pay
  - Change of position or status
  - Dismissal

## **Employment Paperwork**

- All paperwork and documentation must be submitted before a new employee can begin work.
- Required documents include the following:
  - Employment Application
  - I-9 Employment Verification Form and ID
  - Federal & State W-4 Withholding Certificates
  - Loyalty Oath?
  - Health Certificate? TB Test Results?
  - Technology Acceptable Use Agreement
  - KPERS Enrollment Form, if eligible
  - Health Insurance Enrollment Form, if eligible

## **Health Insurance & Benefits**

- The district provides up to \$660/month toward the cost of the school district's health insurance program for full-time, classified employees who choose to participate.
- The district also provides emergency medical transportation insurance.

## **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.

## **Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

Employees are to abide by the acceptable use policy below:

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.

Cell Phone Policy:

Student Support Classified Staff (paraprofessionals)

Cell phone use is prohibited when staff are “on the clock” and with students.

Non Student Support Staff

Cell phone use is prohibited when staff are “on the clock” unless prior arrangements have been made with the Administration.

Acknowledgement

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been given a copy of the Classified Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been given the opportunity to read and understand the contents of the Classified Handbook.

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign this page and return to the Superintendent.