



**HANDBOOK
FOR
CONFIDENTIAL GROUP**

**Approved by the Board
of School Directors
June 12, 2025**

**For the period
July 1, 2025 through
June 30, 2029**

CONFIDENTIAL GROUP
HANDBOOK

I. POSITIONS COVERED BY THIS AGREEMENT

- A. Confidential Assistant to the Superintendent
- B. Confidential Assistant to the Director of Management Services
- C. Confidential Assistant to the Director of Human Resources
- D. Human Resources Confidential Assistant
- E. Confidential Benefits Specialist

II. CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT

A. Full-time:

Works at least six (6) hour or more per day for a total of at least thirty (30) hours a week.

B. Part-time:

Works less than six (6) hours per day and works less than thirty (30) hours a week.

III. WORK SCHEDULES

A. Full-time:

The normal workday is eight (8) hours, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with one hour for lunch. Exact work schedules will be determined by supervisors.

IV. HOLIDAYS

As per district calendar.

V. ANNUAL LEAVE

A. Paid Time Off (PTO)

1. Employees who desire to take time off from work can do so through the use of Paid Time Off. Paid Time Off shall be available to all employees of the confidential employee group, with the exception of employees who are on probation. If an existing employee transfers into another position they shall be able to accrue and utilize paid time off while in probationary status for the new position, including any paid time off in the employee's bank.
2. All eligible employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.
3. If an employee is not eligible on the first of the month due to probation or unpaid leave, the hours for that month will be pro-rated. Employees may take PTO in whole shift or half shift increments only. Example: If an employee is scheduled to work a seven-hour day then the employee may take either seven (7) hours or three and half (3.5) hours of Paid Time Off.
4. If an employee becomes eligible for PTO from the first to the fifteenth of the month, the employee shall earn PTO retroactive to the first of the month. If the employee becomes eligible for PTO from the sixteenth to the last day of the month then the employee shall start to earn PTO on the first of the following month.
5. Planned time off, example vacation, will require approval from the employee's supervisor, which shall not be unreasonably denied. However, the employee shall not be required to submit a reason with the request. Employees need to request planned time off two (2) weeks in advance. The employee will need to request the time off through the computer system or via the paper form. Employees may take up to ten consecutive working days off during a single planned time off absence.
6. Unplanned time off must be due to illness or personal emergency. Unplanned time off shall not require prior approval. The employee will need to report their absence to their supervisor prior to the start of their shift. The employee shall provide a reason for the reported absence. The employee will need to record their absence in the computer system upon returning to work. If the employee is out four consecutive workdays or more, the employee must contact their supervisor to inform the supervisor of their anticipated length of time out of work. The employee must also contact the Office of Human Resources to request a medical leave of absence form, if the absence is due to medical reasons.
7. Paid Time Off may be taken a day before or a day after a holiday. Holidays are reflected on the school calendar, which is approved yearly

by the Board of School Directors. Since Central Offices must continue to run efficiently the day before or after a holiday, approvals for Paid Time Off will be limited to one employee per central office department, unless an exception is approved by the employee's immediate supervisor for more than one person within the department to be off before or after a holiday. Approval by an employee's supervisor is required. Requests for planned paid time off for a day before or after a holiday must be made two (2) weeks in advance in order for the supervisor to consider the request.

8. Paid Time Off shall accumulate without a cap on the number of hours an employee can bank/accumulate from year to year.
9. Employees may not take more time off during the fiscal year or school year than they earn in the fiscal year or school year.
10. If an employee has a medical reason, which requires them to use more PTO than they earn within a year, the employee is required to request and receive permission from the Director of Human Resources to use their PTO beyond their allotment for the fiscal year or school year, which shall not be unreasonably denied. Such requests require the employee to provide rationale for the use of the employee's banked PTO. Such requests should be limited to medical reasons of the employee.
11. If an employee has used their maximum PTO for a fiscal year, but an employee has an immediate family member who has a medical emergency or the employee experiences a personal emergency, the employee may request with an explanation and must receive permission from the Director of Human Resources to use PTO hours beyond their allotment for the fiscal year with a not to exceed amount of three workdays.
12. If employee uses all of their allotted PTO in a fiscal year due to a medical reason, the employee may request to use up to thirty-five hours from their banked PTO to use for a period of Planned Time Off. The employee will need to submit an explanation with the request for PTO.
13. Paid Time Off will be calculated and earned based on whether an employee is classified full-time or part-time. A full-time twelve-month employee shall receive more Paid Time Off than a part-time twelve-month employee.
14. Employees do not accrue PTO when they are taking unpaid leave, disability leave, etc. (i.e. days not worked).
15. Employees may request to be paid for up to seventy (70) hours of PTO at their current hourly rate at the end of each fiscal year. Employee must use at least seventy (70) hours of PTO in the current fiscal year to be eligible to be paid for unused PTO.

16. In order to transition from the current model of sick days, personal days and vacation days to the Paid Time Off model, employee's sick leave, personal leave, and vacation leave shall be added together and converted hour for hour to PTO hours and placed in the employee's bank. The employee may view his/her time benefit bank through the Employee Access Center.
17. An employee who willfully violates the leaves provisions involving PTO shall be subject to a progressive disciplinary process.
18. Ms. Gail Boettcher is exempt from PTO and will continue to receive sick, personal, vacation and family illness days. Ms. Boettcher's severance will be calculated based on the meet and discuss agreement that was in effect from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021.

B. How Time is Earned:

1. Full-time, twelve-month employees with six years of service or greater with the district:
Employees shall earn **252** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.
2. Full-time, twelve-month employees with five years or less of service with the district:
Employees shall earn **182** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.
3. Full-time, twelve-month employees hired on or after July 1, 2021 with six years of service or greater with the district:
Employees shall earn **245** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.

4. Full-time, twelve-month employees hired on or after July 1, 2021 with five years or less of service with the district:
Employees shall earn **210** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.
5. Part-time, twelve-month employees with six years of service or greater with the district:
Employees shall earn **125** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.
6. Part-time, twelve-month employees with five years or less of service with the district:
Employees shall earn **90** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.
7. Part-time, twelve-month employees hired on or after July 1, 2021 with six years of service or greater with the district:
Employees shall earn **105** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.
8. Part-time, twelve-month employees hired on or after July 1, 2021 with five years or less of service with the district:
Employees shall earn **70** hours a year from July 1 to June 30. Twelve month employees will receive half their Current Year PTO Hours on July 1st and the remaining half of their Current Year PTO Hours on January 1st.

C. Severance:

1. Full-time, twelve-month employees with fifteen (15) years or more employment with the District, who retire or resign their employment and have accumulated Paid Time Off, shall receive a severance payment for their unused PTO hours. This unused PTO will be paid to the employee at their current hourly rate at time of termination. The maximum amount of PTO that shall be paid out to full time, twelve-month employees at time of retirement or resignation is up to **525** hours based on the employee's bank of hours. Employees who are terminated for cause will not receive a payout for unused Paid Time Off.
2. Full-time, twelve-month employees with ten (10) but less than fifteen (15) years of employment with the District, who retire or resign their

employment and have accumulated Paid Time Off, shall receive a severance payment for their unused PTO hours. The maximum amount of PTO that shall be paid out to full time, twelve-month employees at time of retirement or resignation is up to **378** hours based on the employee's bank of hours. Employees who are terminated for cause will not receive a payout for unused Paid Time Off.

3. Part-time, twelve-month employees with fifteen (15) years or more employment with the District, who retire or resign their employment and have accumulated Paid Time Off, shall receive a severance payment for their unused PTO hours. This unused PTO will be paid to the employee at their current hourly rate at time of termination. The maximum amount of PTO that will be paid out to a part-time, twelve-month employee at time of retirement or resignation is up to **262** hours, based on the employee's bank of hours. Employees who terminated for cause will not receive a payout for unused Paid Time Off.
4. Part-time, twelve-month employees with ten (10) but less than fifteen (15) years or more employment with the District, who retire or resign their employment and have accumulated Paid Time Off, will receive a severance payment for their unused PTO hours. This unused PTO shall be paid to the employee at their current hourly rate at time of termination. The maximum amount of PTO that will be paid out to a part-time, twelve-month employee at time of retirement or resignation is up to **189** hours, based on the employee's bank of hours. Employees who terminated for cause will not receive a payout for unused Paid Time Off.

VI. INCLEMENT WEATHER SCHOOL CLOSING

As a general rule, Confidential Assistants and the Confidential Benefits Specialist are expected to report to work on days when school is closed due to inclement weather. However, this rule has two specific areas of clarification.

- A. The Superintendent reserves the right to close all offices. Employees will be notified of this decision via the telephone chain. The Superintendent will make the final decision.
- B. Employees will attempt to be in by 10:00 a.m. on snow days. This will allow time for digging out problems and possible difficulties on the road. Quitting time on these days may be earlier than usual. However, this decision will be based on developing road conditions during the day. If, for one reason or another, an individual cannot make it to work, he/she should call his/her supervisor and take a personal day or vacation day. This should be reported to the Office of Human Resources the day following the personal day.
- C. Employees will suffer no loss of pay or use of personal or vacation days when buildings open late, close early or are closed due to unforeseeable circumstances.

VII. OTHER BENEFITS

A. Eligibility

All full-time employees whose status is not a probationary employee. This definition applies to all fringe benefits: medical, prescription, dental, vision, withdrawal bonus, disability income protection insurance and life insurance.

If applicable to the position, new employees who received Board paid benefits as part of their position shall wait forty-five (45) calendar days and the benefits commence on the 46th calendar day from the start of employment.

- 1. Effective July 1, 2025, the District will offer a Personal Choice Silver Plan and a Personal Choice Alternative Gold Plan.
 - a. **The Personal Choice Silver Plan** is available for all employees within this group who do not elect the Personal Choice Alternative Gold Plan. The **Silver Plan** is the Independence Blue Cross' Personal Choice Plan \$3,500/\$40/\$80/100% or equivalent from another carrier. The District will pay the full cost of the premium for the **Silver Plan** during all four years of the agreement.
 - b. **The Personal Choice Alternative Gold Plan** is available to all employees within this plan who have not selected the Personal Choice Silver Plan and who are eligible for medical insurance coverage. Employees who elect the Personal Choice Alternative Gold Plan will contribute to the monthly premium.

In year 1 (2025-2026) employees will be responsible for two (2%) percent of the monthly premium.

In year 2 (2026-2027) employees will be responsible for three (3%) percent of the monthly premium.

In year 3 (2027-2028) employees will be responsible for four (4%) percent of the monthly premium.

In year 4 (2028-2029) employees will be responsible for five (5%) percent of the monthly premium.

- c. Contributions to the monthly premiums are deducted on a pre-tax basis as permitted under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. The District is a sponsor to a pre-tax plan pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 125, and the regulations promulgated thereunder. Employees who participate in the **Gold Plan** and contribute to the monthly premium do so on a pre-federal income and FICA tax basis.

2. **HRA Funding:**

The Silver Plan: Employees who participate in the **Silver Plan** will be eligible for the following funding to a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA).

During the 2025-2026, 2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029 contract years of the agreement, the District will fund up to \$2,500.00 annually for single coverage and up to \$5,000.00 annually for all other coverage levels in a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). The HRA funding may be used for the deductible, medical copayments, out of network claims, and prescription copayments.

C. Prescription Insurance

1. Effective July 1, 2025 the District shall offer the prescription plan through CVS Caremark or equivalent from another carrier. The District will pay the full cost of CVS Caremark or equivalent prescription plan from another carrier.
2. The prescription drug plan will include \$20.00 appropriate co-pay for generic prescriptions, \$40.00 appropriate co-pay for preferred brand prescriptions and \$70.00 appropriate co-pay for non-preferred brand prescriptions.
3. The prescription plan will include: drug quantity management, step therapy programs, prior authorizations, and Prudent Rx. The program

will exclude compound prescriptions that are non FDA approved from the plan.

4. Bargaining unit members may elect to enroll in the specialty drug program (hereinafter referred to as "Prudent Rx") in accordance with requirements established by the District and/or Prudent Rx.
5. By enrolling in Prudent Rx, bargaining unit members shall pay zero (\$0.00) dollars copay for specialty drugs and any coinsurance shall be waived.
6. Any bargaining unit member, spouse, or dependent who fails to enroll in Prudent Rx shall be responsible for a thirty (30%) percent coinsurance payment ("the coinsurance payment").
7. Any copay coupon received by or credited to the bargaining unit member, spouse or eligible dependent shall be provided and credited to the District by Prudent Rx.
8. If Prudent Rx does not provide the expected savings to both the District and the Association or ceases to exist, the language will not be enforced, at the District's discretion with written notice to the Association and bargaining unit employees. Upon termination, the thirty (30%) percent coinsurance set forth in paragraph 6 shall immediately cease and the copayment shall revert back to the premium share provisions found in the CBA.
9. The prescription drug plan will include a mandatory mail order requirement for maintenance drugs as defined by the carrier. The mail order service will permit employees to order up to a 90-day supply but with a 30-day limit on specialty prescriptions and pay two co-pays at the appropriate rate.

D. Affordable Care Act

If at any time during the term of this agreement or before a successor agreement is reached, it becomes known to the Board that any of the healthcare plans approved by the Board to the Meet and Discuss group will incur the excise tax imposed on employers by the federal government through the Affordable Care Act, then the Board and the meet and discuss group agree to the following:

1. To meet one (1) year prior to plan implementation to select a new healthcare plan for the Meet and Discuss group that will not be subject to the excise tax and to eliminate the health care plan(s) for the meet and discuss members that will incur the tax.

E. Dental

1. Contributions

Board shall contribute up to one hundred percent (100%) of the premium for the family plan coverage.

2. Coverage

Basic Delta Dental plan or equivalent. The Board has the right to select the insurance carrier.

3. Plan Year Maximum Coverage

The plan year maximum will be \$2,000 per person.

F. Dental - Oral Surgery

1. Contributions

Board shall contribute one hundred percent (100%) of the premium cost for the individual or family plan coverage. The Board has the right to select the insurance carrier.

2. Coverage

Oral surgery (100% UCR)
Prosthetics (50% UCR)
Periodontics (50% UCR)
Delta Dental Oral Surgery Plan or Equivalent

G. Dental - Orthodontics

1. Contributions

Board shall contribute one hundred percent (100%) of the premium for the individual or family plan coverage.

2. Coverage

Delta Dental Orthodontics Plan or equivalent. The Board has the right to select the insurance carrier.

3. The lifetime orthodontics benefit shall be two thousand and five hundred dollars (\$2,500).

H. Vision

1. Contributions

The Board shall contribute one hundred percent (100%) of the premium for family plan coverage per month toward the employee's subscription.

2. Coverage

Eye examination and refraction service. Vision Benefits of America Plan or equivalent. The Board has the right to select the insurance carrier.

3. Frame Allowances – up to the programs wholesale allowance of \$300.00.

I. The medical, prescription, dental, orthodontic and vision benefits enumerated above shall, for the remaining years of this agreement, be the same as those benefits afforded members of the Rose Tree Media Education Association, including the same contributions for those benefits as apply to the members of that Association.

J. Disability Income Protection

The District will offer benefit eligible employees the opportunity to purchase Disability Income Protection as a voluntary benefit.

K. Cost Containment

Each employee who chooses not to elect health and hospital coverage with Rose Tree Media School District shall receive monthly payments. The maximum monthly payment under the provisions of this section shall be two hundred eighty-five dollars (\$285). No withdrawal bonus will be paid to any spouse/dependent of a district employee who is covered by the School District's plan.

L. Life Insurance

1. Description: term life insurance policy provides a payment to beneficiary at death of employee. It is strictly a death protection policy and carries no cash value.

2. Coverage: employees are eligible for life insurance equal to \$100,000.

3. Cost: Board shall contribute the full cost of the monthly premium.

M. Tax Deferred Annuity

1. Description: A plan whereby an employee may place a portion of an annual income into an annuity for additional income at retirement. While the employee is investing this amount, he/she does not pay current federal income tax on the contribution. The federal tax on this amount is deferred until such time as the employee collects his/her annuity.
2. The district will provide a TSA program up to 3.0% of salary with a dollar for dollar match to the employee contribution and consistent with the Tax Code.

N. Worker's Compensation Insurance

1. Description: This insurance pays for all medical expenses and loss of time as a result of an accident occurring to an employee while working on the job.
2. Eligibility: Administrative assistants and confidential secretaries are covered by the plan. Coverage is automatic and immediate upon employment.
3. Cost: Board provides all of this coverage.

O. Pennsylvania School Employees' Retirement System

Early Retirement Incentive

This benefit may be provided shall circumstances determine it necessary, when offered, the terms and conditions will be provided to this group once it is approved by the Board of School Directors.

VIII. GENERAL

A. Physical Examination

1. All employees newly hired will be required to take a physical examination and tine test at his/her own expense within thirty (30) days of hiring.

B. Probationary Period

1. All Confidential Employees will begin their employment with the School District as a Probationary Employee. The employee's performance will be evaluated within ninety (90) calendar days from the date of hire or placement in a confidential position, by the immediate supervisor and/or administrator. At the end of the ninety (90) calendar day probationary period and upon receipt of a satisfactory evaluation, the period of probationary employment has been satisfied and the employee's status is changed from Probationary Employee to Regular Part-time employee or Regular Full-time employee. If the supervisor fails to evaluate the employee at the end of the ninety (90) calendar day probationary period, the employee is considered to be a satisfactory employee and their status is changed from Probationary Employee to Regular Part-time employee or Regular Full-time employee. If an employee's performance is rated unsatisfactory during the probationary period, he/she will be dismissed from employment.

C. Grievance

1. An employee who feels he/she has not been treated fairly with regard to the provisions of this handbook should notify his/her immediate supervisor within one week. If the matter cannot be resolved informally at that level, the employee is entitled to a hearing conducted by the Director of Management Services if requested within thirty (30) days of the original grievance.

D. Resignation and Discharge

1. An employee who expects to resign should provide his/her supervisor with at least a two (2) weeks notice whenever possible. An employee facing discharge is entitled to a hearing conducted by the Director of Management Services if he/she so requests.

E. Automobile

1. The Board will provide non-ownership liability insurance as the secondary insurer to supplement the individuals own insurance for accidents occurring while on authorized school business.
2. Individuals using their own automobiles in pursuance of school district duties as approved by their immediate supervisor will be reimbursed at the rate allowed by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

F. Continuing Education

The Board shall approve and reimburse for college or graduate course tuition (no fees) on the following basis:

1. The maximum reimbursement in any one year (fiscal year July 1 through June 30th) shall be \$1,500 per employee or \$7,000.00 for the entire group with no roll-over of any remaining funds from one (1) year into the next.
2. Courses taken must be approved by the Superintendent, on a pre-approval form which had been submitted and approved before the course has commenced.
3. Course work must be undergraduate or graduate level in a field relevant to the confidential employee's position and responsibilities.
4. Reimbursement shall be made upon submission of evidence of successful completion of a course, with a grade of "C" or better for undergraduate level courses, "B" or better for graduate course work. Evidence of payment for the course and amount is required.
5. Any payment under continuing education is conditioned upon continuing employment in a full-time position in the district for one year following the date of reimbursement. In the event the employee does not satisfy this requirement, he/she shall be liable to the District for the reimbursement payments.

G. Legal Assistance

At the Superintendent's discretion, the School Board Solicitor will be made available to individuals sued for performance within the jurisdiction of their assignments.

IX. SALARIES

A. Increase will be as follows.

	2025-2026 Year 1	2026-2027 Year 2	2027-2028 Year 3	2028-2029 Year 4
Conf. Asst. to the Sup't Hourly Rate	\$47.57	\$49.47	\$51.45	\$53.51
Conf. Asst. to the Dir.of Mgmt Serv. Hourly Rate	\$43.83	\$45.58	\$47.40	\$49.30
Conf. Asst. to the Dir. Of HR Hourly Rate	\$43.31	\$45.04	\$46.84	\$48.71
HR Conf. Asst. Hourly Rate	\$34.59	\$35.97	\$37.41	\$38.91
Conf. Benefits Specialist Hourly Rate	\$37.88	\$39.39	\$40.97	\$42.61

B. Overtime Pay – Employees required to work in excess of forty (40) hours in any calendar week, which include paid time off, shall be compensated at the rate of one and one-half (1.5) times the employee's hourly rate for the excess hours.