



MPB
2023-2024
Staff Handbook

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MT. PLEASANT BLYTHEDALE UFSD

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SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICE CONTACTS

EMILY HERSH, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools, ext. 81304

GRISELDA RODRIGUEZ-REYES, Principal, ext. 81204

LISA RYAN, CSE CHAIRPERSON, EXT. 81205

LAUREN BUCKRIDGE, CPSE AND CSE (K) CHAIRPERSON, EXT. 81311

KATE GARCIA, School Counselor, ext. 81312

DAVID COVA, Ext. 81215

RENEE ROOT, Psychologist, ext. 81214

Vacant, School Business Administrator, ext. 81306

ANDREA AITKEN, Secretary to CSO/District Clerk, ext. 81301

MARLINA FERRANDINO, Principal's Secretary, ext. 81202

MARISA RUSH, Office Assistant, ext. 81307

MT. PLEASANT BLYTHEDALE MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Mt. Pleasant Blythedale UFSD to create a community for the excitement and love of learning in the pursuit of academic excellence and personal growth in a caring environment.

Our motto is: "We are a community where students can learn as their bodies heal."

MT. PLEASANT BLYTHEDALE LITERACY/MATHEMATICS STATEMENTS

Literacy is an integrated approach through all subject areas. It is the cognitive orchestration of knowledge that is constantly evolving as a reflection of our ever-changing society. Literacy affords each individual an ability to access his or her potential by utilizing a variety of methods in order to become life-long independent learners.

Mathematics is the use of strategies, tools, and vocabulary to understand rules, operations, processes, and formulas. It is the process of building a strong foundation allowing students to apply and transfer knowledge utilizing proper logic and problem solving techniques. Applications relate to real life experiences that serve as a means to prepare students to become life-long learners who can explain and support their mathematical thinking with sound reasoning.

All of the above we will perform, so that each child, in accordance with his/her talents and interests, may become a responsible, contributing member of society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Monthly Planning documents are to maintained on the District's Shared Drive (Google: Planning Documents). The district is committed to a strong dedicated focus on instruction, thereby expecting clear and concise documentation of planning. These plans are to be current; applicable to the grade level, subject, students. These plans are due each month no later than the 1st.

FACULTY MEETINGS FOR TEACHERS

Faculty meetings will be held each month as follows: September 11th, October 2nd, November 6th, December 4th, January 8th, February 5th, March 9th, April 15th, May 6th, and June 3rd. As per contract additional monthly meetings may be held with five days advance notice

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Town Hall meetings will typically be held each Monday as follows: Faculty at 8:15 a.m. . See Morning Message for details.

VISITOR POLICY

Any visitor to the school must obtain prior administrative approval.

DRESS CODE

STAFF are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. A staff member's dress, grooming and appearance shall be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process. The dress standard for a teacher may vary according to the classroom situation, but it should always be in good taste, clean, and be a good example of our profession and for students who are preparing for the work world. Anything that distracts from the learning environment is prohibited.

COMMUNICATION

It is the expectation that staff members' keep abreast of information posted on the Morning Message. The purpose is to convey daily updates: including but not limited to, special alerts, meetings, and attendance. It is the expectation that all district employees read the morning message at the start of each day and check regularly throughout the day as attendance and scheduling may change.

In addition, every staff member is expected to regularly check their e-mail account as well as their mailboxes located in the Principal's Office area.

Prior approval by the principal is required for all written correspondence prior to public dissemination.

STUDENT DROP OFF/PICK UP POLICY

In the interest of ensuring the safety of all MPB students, the following procedure has been established for all children who will not be transported by bus. If there is a need for a student not to take the bus, prior arrangement must be made with the principal.

Procedure for Parent Transportation (Non-Bussing)

- Arrival is between 8:45am-9:15am (PreK-12)
- Departure is at 3:00pm (elementary) & 3:15pm (secondary). PreK 2:30pm
- Arrival/departure take place at Main Hospital Entrance (Elephant Circle)
- If arrival is outside the time period, parent/guardian should bring the child to Security.
- Security will contact the main office to notify of arrival.
- Alternate arrival/departure time is at the discretion of the Principal.

Parents are required to show identification and sign for their child.

ABSENCE

In the event that you are going to be late or absent, please call or text Emily Hersh at (914) 804-6128 **AND** Griselda Reyes at (914) 606-0218 the evening before or on the day of absence between 6:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m.

SUBSTITUTE PLANS

In the event of absence, it is the responsibility of each teacher to inform principal or designee of daily schedule/routines and lessons for substitute to follow. Emailing plans works best in case of an emergency. Daily lessons should be posted on GoogleClassroom for access via Sub Account.

COVERAGE

Whenever possible, notification of coverage will be posted on the Morning Message. Coverage is considered part of a staff members' professional responsibility.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Please be advised that information about our students is confidential. This includes full names, medical diagnosis, addresses, etc. This information should not be shared with anyone who is not an employee of the hospital or the school. Even parents of students cannot be given information about another child. Also, it is not appropriate to discuss any children (progress, behavior, personal information) in open areas of the school/ hospital.

CONTACTS

Please be aware that there is an administrator available to assist you in any event. Our direct numbers are as follows:

Emily Hersh: Ext. 81304 or 914-804-6128

Griselda Reyes: Ext. 81204 or 914-606-0218

If you cannot get us on our direct line, please call the school office at Ext. 81202 or EXT 81301

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide positive teaching leadership.
- Assign appropriate material to meet all student needs.
- Assure that all students understand the homework and class assignments.
- Give positive and constructive feedback to students.
- Inform parents of the student's progress in a timely manner-monthly or as necessary.
- Respect cultural, racial and ethnic differences.
- Recognize the individuality of all students.
- Check that homework and home/school communication folder has been completed and forms have been signed by parent/ guardian.
- Review all student IEPs with appropriate support staff
- Maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

TEACHER AIDE

- Support students by reinforcing classroom routines and clear expectations
- Remind students to get started with their assignments by sitting in groups with students, individually, making sure that students have the materials they need.
- Circulate around the room assisting students in maintaining focus on the teacher, to redirect students who are distracted or not engaged and set up the materials for small group instruction.
- Be visible at all times and assist students to ensure that the mini-lesson is clear to them, as well as the next steps for small group work.
- Escort the students to bussing, lunch and other activities
- Discuss with the teacher ways to assist students in reaching their goals.
- Check with the teacher to see what needs to be done.
- Maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

LUNCH/RECESS PROCEDURES

All Teachers/ Teacher Aides should supervise students within the appropriate eating areas at the following times:

Pre-K Students – 11:30 a.m.

Elementary Students – 11:30 a.m.

Secondary Students – 12:15 p.m.

While students are eating it is important to circulate, interact with students and help where appropriate. Encourage students to eat and make sure that they adhere to the appropriate diet.

STAFF EVALUATION

All will receive an annual evaluation and a performance review based on the goals set with a supervisor during May/June. The annual performance reviews and other goals set with the supervisor throughout the year will be the basis of the evaluation.

DISMISSAL

The staff day ends at **3:30pm for teachers** and **3:45pm for teacher aides**. For the 23 -24 school year, (K-12) Teachers may leave on Friday at 3:15 p.m. as long as students have left the classroom and are properly supervised. Teachers may be required to remain in building to support in extreme circumstance (i.e. medical emergencies). Teacher aides shall have 15 minutes of break time that is scheduled between 3:30pm-3:45pm. Teacher aide breaks are permitted offsite.

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

Please exercise caution in bringing personal possessions with you. The school cannot be responsible for missing items.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Please be advised that there are restrictions to photographing our students. Students cannot be photographed without having a signed permission slip located in the school office. Please make sure that visitors do not take pictures of our students without first getting authorization from the school office. Please note, pictures of students on personal social media accounts is prohibited.

INCIDENT AND OCCURRENCE REPORTS

Staff:

Whenever a staff member or student gets injured during the workday, (fall, hit, etc.) a **school incident** report is to be filled out by the staff member involved or by a staff member who witnessed the incident. Prior to completing the incident report, please see Principal or Superintendent. Before seeking medical consult, please discuss worker's compensation eligibility with Superintendent. These reports are to be completed by Principal the day the event occurs.

Student:

If a student is injured during the school day, that child needs to be taken to the unit for evaluation. If hospital personnel need an incident report, then the school personnel needs to fill out a school occurrence report and submits to the principal or designee. If you have any questions when filling out the forms, please see **Griselda**.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF FRACTIONAL DAYS POLICY

Based on a 7 1/2 hour work day for instructional staff (exclusive of lunch time):

8:15am-3:30pm (7.5 hours)

1/4 day: arrive by 9:50 am or leave at 1:50 pm

1/2 day: arrive or leave at 11:30 am

Please be aware that 1/4 day absences are different for teachers on Faculty Meeting days. On those days, a 1/4 day will be deducted for staff that cannot attend the meetings and leaves at 3:00 pm. A 1/2 day will be deducted for staff that cannot attend the meetings and leaves at 1:00 pm.

BUSSING PROCEDURES

- All staff must report to their assigned location on time.
- It is important to maintain a positive, respectful, professional attitude at all times. Everybody should always be on task.
- Staff that have individual walkie talkies should use to communicate with the office.
- If you have a problem/concerns first contact the Main Office (Marlina), she will inform Griselda if assistance is needed.
- Remember you represent Mt. Pleasant Blythedale School District at all times.
- **At end of day, teacher aides should not leave until 3:30 p.m. or announcement has been made on Fridays. Bus Supervisors will remain with late buses after 3:30 p.m.**

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES

The signal for a fire drill is as follows:

- *An announcement will be made over the phone and/or loud speaker notifying the staff that a fire drill is taking place.*
 - Please notify an administrator if you are missing an Escape Route Chart.
 - It is imperative that children are absolutely silent during a fire drill.
 - Teachers are responsible for leading their students to safety.
 - Teachers **MUST** verify that all children are accounted for.
- An administrator will notify the staff when ALL CLEAR.

MEDICAL/CODE EMERGENCIES

In the event there is a medical emergency and you need to call a code, pick up the telephone and dial ext. 80. SAY: Type of Code (i.e. Code Blue), Tell your exact location (i.e. upstairs school area, downstairs school area). Repeat 3 times. CHECK

Code Red	Fire	Code Orange	Hazardous Materials
Code Yellow	Bomb Threat	Code Gray	Severe Weather
Code Brown	Utility Failure	Code Blue	Medical Emergency
Code Silver	Security weapon	Code Pink	Runner

PAYROLL

For ten-month employees (teachers), there will be 20 pay periods (2 per month) for the year, with the option to elect 24-pay periods. Employees working 12-months, there will be 24-pay periods. Pay dates will be on the 15th of the month (or the week day prior, if the 15th falls on a weekend) and the last day of the month. The multi-paycheck (for teachers, 10-month employees) will be received at the end of June.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

If you believe you are a victim of sexual harassment, please report this immediately to the Superintendent. Steps will be taken to resolve complaints quickly and fairly.

SCHOOL POLICY

All new staff are required to read and review the school district's Policy Manual located in the school office and on the school website with particular emphasis on those listed below. Please use the checklist below to indicate that you have complied with this requirement:

- 5681 School Safety Plans;
- 5683 Fire and Emergency Drills
- 6110 Code of Ethics
- 6121 Sexual-Harassment in the Workplace(Adults)
- 6150, 6151, 7320 Alcohol, Drugs, and Other Substances
- 6410 Acceptable Use Policy
- 3120, 3320, 3421, 5676, 5684, 6411, 7121, 7131, 7133, 7240,7241, 7243, 7250, 7270, 7512, 7514, 7552 (FERPA) - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Related to HIPPA (Patient Privacy Act)
- 7360 Weapons in School and Gun-Free Schools
- 7530, 7531 Child Abuse
- 7551 Sexual Harassment (Students)
- 3420, 5681, 6121, 7550, 7553, 8242, 8271 Bullying
- 3412, 5683, 7311 Bomb Threats & Threats of Violence in School
- 7351 Use of Aversive Intervention
- 6141 Vaccinations
- Code of Conduct
- District-Wide School Safety Plan
- Guidelines for computer and Internet Use for Staff

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

The Board of Education, in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), gives "eligible" employees of the District the right to take unpaid leave for a period of up to 12 workweeks in a 12-month period as determined by the District. The District will compute the 12-month period according to the following time frame: a "rolling" 12-month period will be used that is measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

Employees are "eligible" if they have been employed by the District for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours of service during the previous 12-month period; and if there are 50 employees within a 75-mile radius. Full-time teachers are deemed to meet the 1,250 hour test. The law covers both full-time and part-time employees.

Qualified employees may be granted leave for one or more of the following reasons:

- a) The birth of a child and care for the infant;
- b) Adoption of a child and care for the infant;
- c) The placement with the employee of a child in foster care;
- d) To care for a spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition as defined by the FMLA;
- e) A serious health condition of the employee, as defined by the FMLA, that prevents the employee from performing his or her job.

At the Board of Education's or employee's option, certain types of paid leave may be substituted for unpaid leave.

An employee on FMLA leave is also entitled to have health benefits maintained while on leave. If an employee was paying all or part of the premium payments prior to leave, the employee will continue to pay his/her share during the leave period.

In most instances, an employee has a right to return to the same position or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and working conditions at the conclusion of the leave.

The Board of Education has a right to 30 days advance notice from the employee where practicable. In addition, the Board may require an employee to submit certification from a health care provider to substantiate that the leave is due to the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's immediate family member. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the denial of FMLA leave. The Board may also require that an employee present a certification of fitness to return to work when the absence was caused by the employee's serious health condition. The Board of Education has the right to deny restoration to employment if the employee does not furnish the certificate of fitness.

A notice which explains the FMLA's provisions and provides information concerning the procedures for filing complaints of violations of the FMLA shall be posted in each school building.

Administration is directed to develop regulations to implement this policy, informing employees of their rights and responsibilities under the FMLA.

Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
Public Law 103-3
29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 825

ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

New York State prohibits impairment from or use of alcohol and controlled substances on school property. "Controlled Substances" refers to the hundreds of chemicals listed in the Controlled Substances Act by the Federal Government. All so-called "Street Drugs" (Heroin, Cocaine, Crack, Marijuana, Speed, Acid) are controlled substances. See *Board of Education policy #6150, #6151 and #7320 for details.*
Mt. Pleasant Blythedale UFSD is a Drug Free Campus.

DISTRICT'S PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The Mt. Pleasant Blythedale UFSD prohibits the use of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment means any act of physical force upon a pupil for the purpose of punishing that pupil. See *Board of Education Policy #7350.*

Procedures have been identified by the District for persons to report suspected cases of child abuse. *Refer to Board of Education Policy #7530.*

Child Abuse Hotline

To report child abuse or neglect contact the New York State Office of Children and Family Services
1-800-342-3720.

DISTRICT'S NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Mt. Pleasant Blythedale Union Free School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, gender, or genetic predisposition or carrier status, or sexual orientation in its education program, services and activities. This policy of non-discrimination includes the following areas: recruitment and appointment of employees, employment pay and benefits, counseling services for students, admission to and access by students to educational programs, course offerings and student activities. The district official responsible for the coordination of activities relating to compliance with non-discrimination is the Superintendent. This official will provide information, including complaint procedures to any person who feels that his/her rights may have been violated by the district or its employees.

DISTRICT'S ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The Board of Education affirms its commitment to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone. The Board recognizes its responsibility to provide for all district students an environment that is free of harassment and intimidation. Any harassment is a violation of law and is in direct opposition to District Policy. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, and by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. See Board of Education Policies #3420, #6121, #7531 and #7551.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or student of the Mt. Pleasant Blythedale UFSD to harass another employee or student through conduct or communications.

The district encourages reporting all perceived incidents of harassment, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe they have been the victim of harassment should discuss their concerns with their supervisor or with the Superintendent.

In addition, the School District encourages individuals who believe they are being harassed to advise the offender immediately that his or her behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued. The School District recognizes, however, that it is not necessary for an individual to talk directly to an offender if that individual feels uncomfortable doing so.

HEALTH PRACTICES

As a Special Act School District, educating the patients of Blythedale Children's Hospital, all medical decisions are made by the Hospital's Medical Director/Team along with the Superintendent. It is the expectation that all employees adhere to district policies, practices, protocols, and procedures.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES BY STUDENTS

While students have the responsibility to abide by the policies and regulations of the District, they shall also be afforded opportunity to present complaints and grievances free from interference, coercion, restraint, discrimination, or reprisal. The Complaints and Grievances Coordinator shall be the school principal, the school counselor or school Superintendent.

STAFF DRESS CODE

STAFF are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. A staff member's dress, grooming and appearance shall be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE:

School attendance is both a right and a responsibility. The School District recognizes that consistent school attendance has a positive correlation with academic success and high school graduation. The *District's Student Attendance Policy (#7110)* intends to meet the following objectives:

- **To increase school completion for all students;**
- **To raise student achievement and close gaps in student performance;**
- **To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts;**
- **To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons;**
- **To verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance.**

In order to achieve above objectives, we must adhere to the following practice:

- 1) Teacher: after three (3) consecutive student absences, case manager should check in with Principal Secretary or Principal to identify any awareness for absence.
 - a) If awareness provided, please log reason into eSchool.
 - b) If no awareness, teacher must contact parent and log into eSchool.
 - c) If teacher is unable to make contact, an email should be sent to Guidance Counselor.
- 2) Guidance Counselor: Follows up with Social Worker and Principal.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CUSTODIANS OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS **Revised January 21, 2016**

Introduction

The Code of Conduct, as set forth in the Code of Conduct itself, sets forth a framework intended to assist impacted employees to help people with special needs "live self-directed, meaningful lives in their communities, free from abuse and neglect, and protected from harm", in addition to the specific guidance provided by the agency's policies and training.

Similarly, the Notice to Mandated Reporters contains guidance designed to assist mandated reporters and is intended to provide a summary of reporting obligations for mandated reporters. It is not intended to supplement or in any way add to the reporting obligations provided by law, rule or regulation.

As provided by law, rule or regulation, only custodians who have or will have regular and direct contact with vulnerable persons receiving services or support from facilities or providers covered by the *Justice Center Act* must sign that they have read and understand the Code of Conduct.

The framework provides:

1. Person-Centered Approach

My primary duty is to the people who receive supports and services from this organization. I acknowledge that each person of suitable age must have the opportunity to direct his or her own life, honoring, where consistent with agency policy, their right to assume risk in a safe manner, and recognizing each person's potential for lifelong learning and growth. I understand that my job will require flexibility, creativity and commitment. Whenever consistent with agency policy, I will work to support the individual's preferences and interests.

2. Physical, Emotional and Personal Well-being

I will promote the physical, emotional and personal well-being of any person who receives services and supports from this organization, including their protection from abuse and neglect and reducing their risk of harm to others and themselves.

3. Respect, Dignity and Choice

I will respect the dignity and individuality of any person who receives services and supports from this organization and honor their choices and preferences whenever possible and consistent with agency policy. I will help people receiving supports and services use the opportunities and resources available to all in the community, whenever possible and consistent with agency policy.

4. Self-Determination

I will help people receiving supports and services realize their rights and responsibilities, and, as consistent with agency policy, make informed decisions and understand their options related to their physical health and emotional well-being.

5. Relationships

I will help people who receive services and supports from this organization maintain or develop healthy relationships with family and friends. I will support them in making informed choices about safely expressing their sexuality and other preferences, whenever possible and consistent with agency policy.

6. Advocacy

I will advocate for justice, inclusion and community participation with, or on behalf of, any person who receives services and supports from this organization, as consistent with agency policy. I will promote justice, fairness and equality, and respect their human, civil and legal rights.

7. Personal Health Information and Confidentiality

I understand that persons served by my organization have the right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to their personal health information and I will protect this information from unauthorized use or disclosure, except as required or permitted by law, rule or regulation.

8. Non-Discrimination

I will not discriminate against people receiving services and supports or colleagues based on race, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, economic condition or disability.

9. Integrity, Responsibility and Professional Competency

I will reinforce the values of this organization when it does not compromise the well-being of any person who receives services and supports. I will maintain my skills and competency through continued learning, including all training provided by this organization. I will actively seek advice and guidance of others whenever I am uncertain about an appropriate course of action. I will not misrepresent my professional qualifications or affiliations. I will demonstrate model behavior to all, including persons receiving services and supports.

10. Reporting Requirement

As a mandated reporter, I acknowledge my legal obligation under *Social Services Law #491*, as may be amended from time to time or superseded, to report all allegations of reportable incidents immediately upon discovery to the **Justice Center's Vulnerable Persons' Central Register by calling 1-855-373-2122.**

CSE MEETING PROCESS

- There will be a (Pre-CSE Meeting) conference prior to the CSE Meetings. All IEP drafts must be completed and submitted prior to the Pre-CSE meeting.
- Case Managers are responsible for updating all sections (as necessary). For further reference see MPB Tile, District Resources, CSE.
- Students participating in Alternate Assessment require benchmarks.
- The School Counselor will make any input/changes to the student's Transitional Planning. He/she will invite each student 12 and over to participate in their respective CSE meeting and explain the CSE Process and the value of their input during these meetings. Teachers should reinforce the invitation.

CASE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY

(Secondary) Case Manager = Advisory Teacher and (Elementary) Case Manager = Homeroom Teacher

- Student progress: determine skills and identify strengths and needs.
- Monitor: IEP Goals, update/create new IEP for Initial/Annual Review/Re-Evaluations.
- Communicate with: parents, other teachers to monitor progress of students in their classes and therapists when necessary.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTACT A THERAPIST

Contact a therapist whenever you need an immediate response such as if a student is in discomfort or there is an equipment issue)

Therapists' cell phone numbers are available on MPB Tile, Classwork, District Resources, BCH Therapist phone number list.

PURCHASING GUIDELINES

In order to provide a prompt and efficient purchasing process: **Every** purchase must be **preceded** by a Blue Requisition (available in the School Office or Supt. Office) along with quotes attached if applicable. All school requisitions must be approved by the Principal and the Superintendent and then forwarded to the Finance Office for a Purchase Order to be generated and the order placed. If the request is for the requestor to make the purchase, then a copy of the requisition will be returned to the requestor. A salmon “Expense Reimbursement Form” should be submitted to the Finance Office along with receipts after the purchase is made.

(Tax is not reimbursable so please consult with the personnel in the Finance Office to secure.)

Technical Contact Information

If you experience technical difficulty please email IT Department at: helpdesk@blythedale.org and CC: ehersh@mpbschools.org or complete helpdesk form on District Website. **Phone:** (914) 592-7555 Ext #71640

Tech Support Hours: 8:00am to 4:00pm. **After Hours:** Call 1-866-818-9119

for concerns/questions with Google Workspace, submit a Google Helpdesk Request via School Website.