HR News

Semi-Annual Reminders

Human Resources would like to provide you with information on several important APS policies and regulations, as well as other types of district information. It is your responsibility to be familiar with all district policies and regulations and to abide by them.

1. District policies are accessible online. In addition to policies and regulations, there is other information available online on a variety of topics. Human Resources strongly encourages everyone to become familiar with its websites. HR also publishes the HR News, which is announced via the Superintendent’s Bulletin. Please take the time to read each issue for important information that may affect your job.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Policy AC.1-E

The Aurora Public Schools is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or protected activity and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Career and technical education opportunities will be offered without regard to these protected classes.

In adhering to this policy, the Aurora Public Schools abides by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act and Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Questions, complaints or requests for additional information regarding the ADA, (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) Section 504 and Title IX may be forwarded to the designated ADA, Section 504 compliance coordinator.

Name and Title: Megan Lonergan, Director of Employee Relations
Office Address: 1085 Peoria Street
Aurora, Colorado 80011
Phone Number: (303)344-8060, ext. 28020
Days/Hours Available: Monday-Friday, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Nondiscrimination/Nonharassment of Employees

Policy GBAA

The Aurora Public Schools is committed to the policy that no otherwise qualified employee shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any district program or activity on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation.

As part of this policy, the district is committed to maintaining a working environment for employees that is free from harassment based on an individual’s race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, gender (with or without sexual conduct), sexual orientation, age, disability or protected activity (opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the statutory complaint process). All such harassment, by district employees, students and third parties, is strictly prohibited. All members of the district community, employees, and students are required to promptly report conduct that could be in violation of this policy.

Reporting Suspected Discrimination and/or Harassment

Any employee who believes that he or she may have experienced unlawful discrimination or harassment, or who believes that he or she has observed unlawful discrimination or harassment taking place, shall report this information immediately to his or her immediate supervisor. If the complaint involves the employee’s immediate supervisor, the employee may report to the supervisor or administrator at the next level or may report directly to the chief personnel officer or a human resources director.

Discipline, Suspension & Dismissal of Classified Employees

Policy GDQD

The board of education authorizes the superintendent to compose and implement regulations related to the suspension, discipline and termination of classified employees. Such regulations are designed to treat employees fairly while at the same time maintaining a productive and efficient workforce.

The conduct described below illustrates the kinds of behavior that could result in varying degrees of disciplinary action:

A. Failure to carry out instructions or failure to perform a job in a satisfactory manner
B. Insubordination
C. Discourteous, offensive or abusive conduct or language
D. Dishonesty
E. Possessing, using, transmitting, dispensing, manufacturing or distributing or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or any illegal drugs
F. Excessive absences or tardiness
G. Abusing sick leave privileges
H. Failing to notify a supervisor prior to absence
I. Falsifying district records of any kind
J. Engaging in work stoppage or strike of any kind
K. Failing to follow safety regulations or practices
L. Provoking, instigating, or participating in a fight or scuffle
M. Being convicted of a criminal offense

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N. Carelessness with or intentionally damaging property
O. Temporarily or permanently removing, possessing or using district property without authorization
P. Threatening, intimidating or coercing others
Q. Horseplay or practical jokes that can or do result in injury damage to property
R. Failing to report situations that could be injurious to personnel or equipment
S. Possessing, on district property, any object that can be considered a weapon
T. Making false, vicious or malicious statements about another employee or the district
U. Engaging in conduct, on/off the job, which adversely affects the employee’s ability to do his/her job or which reflects adversely on the district

Computer and E-mail Policy
Policy EGAEEA

The e-mail and computer systems of the Aurora Public Schools constitute a system which is to be used by district employees to accomplish the business purposes of the school district. Anyone using this system should be aware that computer files and e-mail messages are not confidential.

Both retrieval authorized by district policy and unauthorized retrieval may occur. In addition, e-mail messages may constitute public records under the Colorado Open Records Act. Consequently, employees should utilize some other method of creating, storing and conveying confidential, private or personal information they wish to remain confidential. By using this system, users agree to abide by the e-mail policy and regulation and confirm that they have read and understand the terms of that policy.

Internet Social Networks

While employees are free to utilize blogs and social network sites during your non-work time and on their personal computers, any blog or Internet communication that:

- Contains content that indicates the employee’s involvement in criminal conduct, or
- Contains inappropriate online conduct that negatively affects the employee’s performance, or
- Seriously diminishes the reputation or standing in the community of the employee or district, or
- Divulges confidential district or student-related information, may subject the employee to discipline or termination.

We also caution against posting or sending personal, private or sensitive photos via the web or cell phones. Sensitive information (such as personal photos) that may be contained in a cell phone or laptop may be accessible to a wide audience if the phone or laptop is lost or stolen. Once these pictures are in cyberspace, it is nearly impossible to control access to them.

Parents entrust us with the duty to impart basic societal values and qualities of good citizenship to their children. When using Internet social networks or cell phone functions, please remember that we act as role models for our students and must fulfill our professional duties at all times.
**Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection**

**Policy JLF**

The Colorado Child Protection Act of 1987 states that certain persons, among them any school official or employee, who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, are required to make an immediate oral report (or cause a report to be made) to the county department of human services in which the child resides, or to local law enforcement (in instances of non-interfamilial abuse).

The oral report must be followed promptly by a written report. It is not the responsibility of school personnel to make a determination if abuse or neglect has occurred. Human services or local law enforcement will make that decision.

If you are uncertain as to whether reasonable cause exists, you should nevertheless make a report to human services or law enforcement and allow those agencies to determine whether an investigation is warranted. Even if suspected abuse involves a case which is very old, and even if the suspected perpetrator is also a minor, a report must be made.

**Legal Notice Posters**

By law, each site is required to display employment notices which address certain legal issues, including wage and hour requirements. Please verify that you have such notices at your site, and that they are in a place that is readily accessible to all employees.

Please contact Megan Lonergan, Director of Employee Relations, at ext. 28020 if you do not have the posters.

**The required notices are:**
- Federal Minimal Wage - Rights Under the Fair Labor Standards Act
- Equal Employment is the Law

**Colorado Law Regarding Nursing Mothers**

The Workplace Accommodations for Nursing Mothers Act requires employers who have one or more employees to provide reasonable unpaid break time or permit an employee to use paid break time, meal time, or both, each day to allow the employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for up to two years after the child’s birth. The employer is required to make reasonable efforts to provide a room, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk.
September is…
Fruits and Vegetables Month

Folks who eat a healthy and balanced diet full of fruits and vegetables can help lower their risk of:

- Obesity
- Heart Disease
- Type II Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure

Most people know the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables, but few of us actually eat the recommended servings everyday. Here are a few tips to help increase your daily consumption of fruits and veggies.

★ **Make it easy** - have ready to eat fruit and vegetables always prepared for when you need a quick snack.

★ **Try something new** - ever wondered what that strange looking fruit in the produce section is? Try it this week! You might have a new favorite.

★ **Freeze and blend it** - there are tons of smoothie recipes out there that incorporate all types of fruits and vegetables.

★ **Focus your meals around a fruit or vegetable** - half of your plate at each meal should be nice and colorful with fruits or vegetables.

Did you know APS has a Healthy Schools Coordinator who focuses on the wellness of staff and students? Email Her, Rachel Phillips at rmphillips@aurorak12.org.
GuidanceResources®

Healthy Proteins: Alternatives to Meat

Protein is an important part of a diet. It helps to regulate energy, hormones, muscles, tissues and antibodies. Without adequate protein, individuals may feel lethargic and are more prone to disease. As an essential nutrient, protein cannot be stored and needs to be replenished daily.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends healthy adults take in approximately 0.4 grams of protein per day, per pound of body weight. This means a 130-pound person needs approximately 52 grams of protein; a 170-pound person needs 68 grams.

While lean meat is a good source of protein, there are other ways for people to get protein if they do not eat meat. The following offers simple ways to include protein in daily meals and snacks:

**Breakfast:**
- Peanut butter and whole-wheat bread
- Soy milk and shredded wheat
- Oatmeal (cooked)
- Vegetarian soy sausage

**Lunch:**
- Tofu or tempeh stir-fry
- Chickpeas and brown rice
- Lentil soup
- Black bean nachos with soy cheese
- Quinoa (rinsed and cooked)

**Dinner:**
- Whole-wheat pasta with vegetarian hamburger
- Baked potato with soy cottage cheese
- Vegetarian chicken nuggets and dipping sauce

**Snack:**
- Edamame and soy sauce
- Unsalted almonds
- Tahini and cut-up vegetables
- Soy yogurt

Finding the ingredients for meat-free, protein-filled meals is easier than ever with the growing popularity of vegetarian and soy products. Local health food or grocery stores should offer many of these products.

Here when you need us.

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Contact us anytime for confidential assistance.
Exercise Tips for Those on the Go

Many of us have little or no time for a traditional workout. Given the demands of family, work and school, the thought of spending time at the gym or outside jogging can seem like a fantasy. But even the busiest people can find ways to stay fit by changing their daily routine.

Fitness experts recommend a minimum of 20 to 30 minutes of exercise three times a week. Even this minimum can drastically improve your health, give you more energy and reduce stress. Use the following tips to incorporate exercise into your day, whether you are at home or at work.

At Home
- Try stretching or doing aerobics while watching TV.
- Clean the old-fashioned way. Vigorous mopping, scrubbing and dusting can burn calories.
- If you have a yard, use a push lawn mower or use hand tools when gardening.
- Take your pets for long walks instead of just letting them outside.
- Play with your children outside.

On the Commute
- If you live close enough, walk to work.
- If you live a little farther away, consider riding your bike.
- If walking or cycling is not an option, use public transit. You will get some exercise walking to and from the stops.
- If you must drive, park a few blocks away, or at least at the far end of the lot, to force yourself to walk more.

At Work
- Take the stairs to your floor. If you work on a higher floor, walk part of the way, and then take the elevator.
- Get out of the office on your lunch break. Walk somewhere else to build in some easy exercise.
- Turn a coffee break into a walk around the office or a chance to do some light stretching.

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The Benefits of Cardio vs. Resistance Workouts

The common question people ask is “how much exercise is enough and which kind should I do?” The American College of Sports Medicine just released new recommendations for the quantity and quality of exercise for adults and those recommendations call for a combination of cardiorespiratory and resistance training, along with some work on flexibility.

Cardio Exercise
Adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. Exercise recommendations can be met in two ways:
- 30-60 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise five days a week
- 20-60 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise three days a week
You can do one continuous session or multiple shorter sessions (at least 10 minutes at a time) to accumulate the desired amount of daily exercise.
Gradual progression of time, frequency and intensity is recommended to lessen the chance of injury.

Resistance Exercise
Adults should train each major muscle group 2 to 3 times each week using a variety of exercises and equipment.
- Very light or light intensity is best for the older population or for previously sedentary adults starting exercise.
- 2 to 4 sets of each exercise will help adults improve strength and power.
- For each exercise, 8 to 12 repetitions improve strength and power, 10 to 15 repetitions improve strength in middle age and older people starting exercise and 15 to 20 repetitions improve muscular endurance.
- Adults should wait at least 48 hours between resistance training sessions.

Flexibility Exercise
Adults should do flexibility exercises at least 2 to 3 days each week to improve range of motion.
- Each stretch should be held for 10 to 30 seconds to the point of tightness or slight discomfort.
- Repeat each stretch 2 to 4 times, accumulating 60 seconds per stretch.
- Flexibility exercise is most effective when the muscle is warm. Try light aerobic activity or a hot bath to warm the muscles before stretching.

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Relaxation Tips for Better Sleep

Everyone has trouble falling asleep from time to time. Establishing a bedtime routine, avoiding caffeine and alcohol in the evening, and turning off the TV and smartphone can help prevent sleep issues. But on those nights when you just can’t fall asleep, there are some other techniques that can help quiet mind and body and ease you into slumber. Try the following techniques:

**Deep Breathing**
Breathing from our chests or shoulders can create more tension and stress by preventing air from reaching the bottom of our lungs. Deep breathing focuses on using the diaphragm (the spot just under your rib cage) to draw slow, deep breaths of air into the lungs and to release them slowly.

**Stretching and Yoga**
Stress often appears as tension in our necks, shoulders and head, what’s commonly referred to as the stress triangle. Stretching exercises can relieve tension, make your body more flexible and produce a calming effect. Yoga is a more formal method of stretching, but even just shrugging your shoulders, stretching your arms and rolling your neck a few times can have positive effects.

**Massage**
Physically, massage can help alleviate tense muscles, lower blood pressure, promote deep breathing and improve posture. Mental benefits of massage include reduced anxiety, increased body awareness and enhanced creativity.

**Meditation and Visualization**
Meditation involves “quieting the mind” by blocking out sensory input and distraction, while visualization involves using the brain’s creative capacity to create a stress-free experience, much like daydreaming. Both meditation and visualization can be helpful in relieving stress.

**Additional Tips for Good Sleep:**
- Get up about the same time every day and maintain a regular schedule.
- Go to bed only when you’re tired. If you cannot fall asleep within 20 minutes, get up and do something relaxing.
- Establish pre-sleep rituals, such as a warm bath, a light bedtime snack or 10 minutes of reading.
- Do not go to bed on an empty or too-full stomach.
- Exercise regularly at least six hours before bedtime.
- Do not eat or drink anything containing caffeine within six hours of bedtime.
- Do not drink alcohol within several hours of bedtime.
- Avoid smoking close to bedtime.
- Keep the room where you sleep cool (around 68 degrees).
- Minimize noise with earplugs and sound-absorbing bedroom decorations such as drapes and carpets.

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