

# **East Mills Community School District Classified Employee Handbook**



# EAST MILLS STRATEGIC PLAN VISION 2018 - 2023

## Our Mission

Through education and learning, we foster a culture of excellence where proud and passionate students build a future by being leaders in the community and the world.

## Our Vision

Every one, Everyday, A Success!

## Our Core Values

### STUDENTS FIRST

Make decisions that are in the best interest of students. Use every resource strategically so that we can meet students' individual needs.

### EXCELLENCE

Be relentless in your pursuit of greatness. Be bold and innovate. Learn from your mistakes. Hold yourself and others to high standards.

### INTEGRITY

Do the right thing, even when no one is looking. Be honest. Be trustworthy. Be accountable.

### EQUITY

Diversity is an asset that makes us stronger. Advocate for the needs of others. Ensure that all members of our community have access to the tools and resources they need to be successful.

### SERVICE

Listen. Empathize. Respond. Own problems and help to solve them.

### TENACITY

Embrace hard work and persevere in the face of challenges. Follow through on your commitments and strive to do your best, no matter what.



### Contact Us

#### East Mills Community School

District 58962 380th St.  
Hastings, IA, 51540

Business Office (712) 624-8700

Elementary (712) 624-8696

Jr. High/Sr. High (712) 624-8645

Visit us on the web at:  
[www.emschools.org](http://www.emschools.org)

## **Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Statement**

It is the policy of the East Mills Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs) sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have a question or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Kelly Sutherland, Elementary Principal, 58962 380th Street, Hastings, Iowa 51540, (712) 624--8696, [ksutherland@emschools.org](mailto:ksutherland@emschools.org)

### **Introduction**

This handbook has been developed to assist us in clarifying some issues that arise from time to time. Every effort has been made to include the most accurate representation of current practices as possible.

Our goal is to assist all classified staff members in understanding various rights and responsibilities. The information has been assembled by the Superintendent in reference to Board Policy and past practices. A complete set of the School Board Policies is available on the district website.

Classified employees are employees who are not administrators or employees in positions that require an Iowa Department of Education teaching license and who are employed to fulfill the duties listed on their job description on a yearly, monthly, or hourly basis. Classified employees shall include but not be limited to teacher associates, custodial and maintenance employees, clerical employees, food service employees, transportation employees, and temporary help for the summer. The position may be full-time or part-time. The East Mills Community School District Board policies offer additional references to classified employees and a copy is available on the District website.

The work you do for our school district contributes a great deal to the educational process and too often that work goes unrecognized. Please know that you are appreciated and considered a valuable part of the educational community.

### **Activity Workers:**

All classified employees will be asked to work one ticket taking event each year with no additional compensation. If an employee is asked to work at additional activities as a ticket taker, they will be paid \$25 per event. The pay must go through the normal payroll process and will be included in the employee's monthly paycheck.

### **Admission to School Events:**

All school employees and their spouse or guest are provided with complimentary free admission to school events. This includes athletic events, plays, concerts, etc. except state sponsored events.

### **Assignment of Duties, Work Schedule, and Hours:**

The assignment of duties, days to be worked, and hours will be made by the employee's supervisor, building principal, or superintendent. Custodial/Maintenance employees will report directly to the Director of Maintenance. Transportation employees will report directly to the Director of Transportation. Food Service employees will report directly to the Food Service Director. Teacher Associates will report directly to the Teacher to whom they are assigned but the Building Principal will supervise and be responsible for all employees who work in the building. Any other employees who work in a building will report to the Principal. Any district-wide employees who don't work in a specific building will report to the Superintendent.

### **Attendance Expectations:**

The District expects all employees to be present and ready to perform their duties at the start of their duty day and to remain present for their entire duty day unless they have the prior approval of their supervisor. Employees who exhibit chronic tardiness, or those who fail to call their supervisor or designated representative prior to being tardy, may be subject to progressive discipline up to and including termination of employment.

### **Chain of Command:**

Smooth operation of the school requires all employees to follow the chain of command when they have questions, concerns, or issues. Chain of command requires that you start with your immediate supervisor and work through the chain of command. The normal progression would be: your immediate supervisor (could be a Teacher, a Supervisor, or anyone else in the chain of command) – Building Principal – Superintendent – and finally the School Board. Skipping steps in this process causes problems and therefore you are asked to follow the chain of command that is appropriate for your position. If you have questions about that please ask.

### **Communication with Students:**

All staff members should maintain a professional relationship with students both inside and outside the classroom. Accepting students as friends on any social networking site is highly discouraged. All communication with students should be in a public manner and parents should be aware of the interaction whenever possible. It is the responsibility of every staff member to read and be familiar with the provisions of the Iowa Administrative Code concerning inappropriate staff and student interaction. We are charged with teaching, coaching, mentoring and supporting the educational development of our students.

### **Confidentiality:**

School employees frequently have access to confidential information. It is expected that school employees maintain confidentiality about information learned in the school environment and refrain from discussing matters related to students (student conduct, discipline, or performance) or their families with uninvolved staff and others outside of the work environment.

**Copy Machine/Printer:**

Copy machines are located in all attendance centers for your use. Please be sure that only school related items are being photocopied or printed on these machines. If the machine should jam or otherwise malfunction, please contact the building secretary so that repair technicians can be notified if needed.

**Dismissal:**

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee has the authority to dismiss any classified employee. The employee shall have the right to a hearing before the Board, should he/she so desire.

**Dress Code**

It is expected that faculty of the East Mills Community School District dress appropriately in a professional manner. Fridays are Spirit Days. Acceptable jeans are permitted only with an East Mills top.

**Drug and Alcohol Testing Program:**

Employees who operate school vehicles are subject to drug and alcohol testing if a commercial driver's license is required to operate the school vehicle and the school vehicle transports sixteen or more persons including the driver or the school vehicle weighs twenty-six thousand one pounds or more. For purposes of the drug and alcohol testing program, the term "employees" includes applicants who have been offered a position to operate a school vehicle. The employees operating a school vehicle as described above are subject to pre-employment drug testing and random, reasonable suspicion and post-accident drug and alcohol testing. Employees operating school vehicles will not perform a safety-sensitive function within four hours of using alcohol. Employees governed by this policy are subject to the drug and alcohol testing program beginning the first day they operate or are offered a position to operate school vehicles and continue to be subject to the drug and alcohol testing program as long as they may be required to perform a safety-sensitive function as it is defined in the administrative regulations. Employees with questions about the drug and alcohol testing program may contact the school district contact person, superintendent at the district business office. Employees who violate the terms of this policy are subject to discipline, up to and, including termination.

**Emergency Dismissals:**

Support staff employees will not be paid for scheduled work time missed due to emergency dismissals such as late starts and early dismissals related to weather. When school is dismissed for the entire workday or shift, the employees that are not required to report to work will not be paid. The employee may be required to extend the work year when students are required to make up the day at the end of the school year. Support staff employees will not be paid early dismissal time that is prescheduled on the school work calendar that is designated for professional development.

**Employee Evaluation:**

Evaluation of classified employees on their skills, abilities, and competence shall be an ongoing process initiated by the immediate supervisor and supervised by the Superintendent. The goals of the formal evaluation of classified employees shall be:

- To maintain classified employees who meet or exceed the Board's standards of performance
- To clarify each classified employee's role
- To ascertain the areas in need of improvement
- To clarify the immediate priorities of the Board
- To develop a working relationship between the supervisor, administrators, and other employees.

Classified employees are evaluated each spring. The immediate supervisor shall review the evaluation with the employee.

**Full/Part-Time Employees:**

Any employee who works 32 hours per week or more is considered a full-time employee. An employee that works less than 32 hours per week is considered a part-time employee.

**Grievance Procedure:**

Any school employee may register a grievance or complaint for the purpose of resolving any alleged unfair treatment or discrimination. This process should start with the immediate supervisor and work its way through the chain of command as appropriate.

**Group Insurance Benefits:**

**Health** - Secretaries and Custodians are offered coverage on the High HSA health plan. The cost for single coverage is paid at 100% and this plan includes a \$2,000 HSA contribution by the district. Supervisors are offered coverage on the High HSA plan. The cost for single coverage plus spouse is paid at 100% and this plan includes a \$3,500 HSA contribution by the district. All Administrators are offered coverage on the High HSA plan. The cost for single coverage plus dependents is paid at 100% and this plan includes a \$5,000 HSA contribution by the district. All other Support Staff meeting the 130-hour requirement are offered coverage on the High HSA health plan. The payroll deduction for single coverage is based on the health care reform affordability factor, there is no HSA contribution connected to this plan.

**Long Term Disability** – All classified employees who work 30 or more hours per week will be covered by a policy that is fully paid by the district.

**Accidental Death and Dismemberment** - All classified employees who work 30 or more hours per week will be covered by a policy which is fully paid by the district.

**\$15,000 Life Insurance Policy** - All classified employees who work 30 or more hours per week will be covered by a policy which is fully paid by the district.

**Tax Sheltered Annuity** – All employees are eligible to participate in a state approved TSA program at their own expense.

**Holidays:**

All classified employees receive holiday pay. The following holidays shall be recognized by the Board for all classified staff. These holidays shall generally be considered vacation days and will be paid.

Labor Day	New Year's Day
Thanksgiving Day	
Christmas Day	

**Building Secretaries:**

Labor Day	New Year's Day
Thanksgiving Day	Memorial Day
Christmas Day	

**Full-time Custodians and Supervisors:**

Labor Day	New Year's Day
Thanksgiving Day	Memorial Day
Christmas Day	4 <sup>th</sup> of July

**Harassment and Abuse:**

It is policy of the East Mills School District that all employees of the district are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from harassment. Definitions and procedures are explained in Board Policy 405.8. Inquiries may be directed to Level I investigators: Principal Kelly Sutherland, 624-8696 and Principal Dale Scott, 624-8645. Level II investigations are conducted through the Green Hills Area Education Agency, and they can be reached at 1-800-432-5804. Physical abuse is a non-accidental physical injury that leaves marks at least 24 hours after the incident. While employees cannot use physical force to discipline a student, there are times when the use of physical force is appropriate, including but not limited to, specific instances when it is necessary to stop a disturbance, to obtain a weapon or other dangerous object, for purposes of self-defense or to protect the safety of others. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse, pressure for sexual activity, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implication, and suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats. Students may report harassment and/or abuse to you. Be sure to direct them to the procedures outlined in the student handbook and offer to assist them in passing that information on to administration. Students are often very reluctant to come to an administrator alone to discuss something of this nature. Offer to go with a student, as they need to report an incident to the administration. Harassment and abuse are violations of school district policy, and in some cases may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report employees and students violating this policy to law enforcement officials.

**Hot Lunch:**

As a service to the school staff, adult hot lunches and breakfasts are provided at a reasonable price. These meals may be purchased in the office. Because of federal auditing requirements, which require frequent cash balance agreement with lunches sold, we ask that you pay for your meals on a regular basis and do not let your account go negative.

### **Internet Use:**

District computers are to be used for educational purposes. In setting an example for our students, staff should not be downloading or playing games on school district computers.

### **Job Description:**

The District has a job description on file for each position. If you would like a copy of your job description, contact your immediate supervisor and they can have one sent to you by the Superintendent's Office. These job descriptions should be kept current, so if you see changes that need to be made provide those changes in writing to the Superintendent's Office.

### **Leaves Available to Classified Employees:**

To take leave, an employee must fill out a leave request form on-line, indicating the applicable leave and the date of the absence. That form must be approved by the immediate supervisor and then it will be forwarded to the Superintendent's Office for approval/denial. You must provide a description of the leave on the form. All scheduled leave must be submitted 48 hours in advance and be approved by the building principal, business office and superintendent. Unexcused absences will be tracked, and disciplinary measures will be implemented as necessary. Insurance is based on 130 hours per month.

**Family and Medical Leave** - Employees of the district are entitled to unpaid family and medical leave to the same extent and subject to the same terms and conditions as set forth in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. (This inclusion shall in no way reduce or adversely impact any other provisions of the leave policy).

**Jury Duty** - The Board will allow classified employees to be excused for jury duty unless extraordinary circumstances exist. The Superintendent has the discretion to determine when extraordinary circumstances exist. Jury duty leave may be paid or unpaid. If jury duty is paid leave, the employee must pay the school district the money he/she received for being on the jury. Classified employees will receive their regular salary. When the classified employee is dismissed from jury duty, the employee shall report to their supervisor. The employee shall be required to perform the employee's duties remaining to be completed that day.

**Military Service Leave** - The Board recognizes classified employees may be called to participate in the armed forces, including the National Guard. If a classified employee is called to serve in the armed forces, the employee shall have a leave of absence for military service until the military service is completed. The leave shall be without loss of status or efficiency rating, and without loss of pay during the first thirty calendar days of the leave.

**Personal Leave** - At the beginning of the school year, each classified employee shall be granted two (2) days of leave without loss of pay to be used for the employee's personal business that can't be taken care of during the workday. A day is defined to be the employee's normal working day. For example, if you normally work 4 hours per day, one personal day of 4 hours is intended. An employee planning to use a leave day shall notify his/her supervisor three (3) days in advance except in cases of emergency. Leave is subject to supervisor and superintendent approval. No personal leave day will be allowed the workday immediately preceding or immediately following any holiday, paid vacation, school recess, during the first or last two



weeks of the school year, except in cases of emergency. Should an emergency arise during the above days, permission is to be obtained from the employee's immediate supervisor. Personal leave days shall not accumulate.

**Political Leave** – Political leave may be granted to run for elective public office.

**Professional Leave** - Professional leave may be granted to classified employees for the purpose of attending meetings and conferences directly related to their assignments. Application for the leave must be presented to the building principal one week prior to the meeting or conference. It shall be within the discretion of the building principal to grant professional leave. The leave may be denied on the day before or after a vacation or holiday, on special days when services are needed, when it would cause undue interruption of the education program and school district operation, or for other reasons deemed relevant by the building principal.

**Sick Leave/Emergency Leave (including family illness and bereavement)** - Sick leave applies as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> year 12 days
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year 13 days
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year 14 days
- 4<sup>th</sup> year 15 days
- Subsequent years 15 days

Unused sick leave is cumulative to a maximum of 90 days. When an employee is absent from work as a result of a job-related injury or illness covered by workers' compensation, the employee may invoke one of the following alternatives:

1. The employee may draw workers' compensation with no supplemental pay from the Board, which would result in no loss of accumulated sick leave.
2. The employee may elect to have the Board supplement the workers' compensation to the extent that the compensation and supplemental are equal to the employee's regular salary. Sick leave days shall be used to justify the supplement by the Board in the same ratio as the supplement to the regular salary.

Evidence may be required to confirm the employee's illness, the need of illness leave, the ability to return to work and the capability to perform the duties required.

**Unpaid Leave** - Unpaid leave may be used to excuse an involuntary absence not provided for in other leave policies. Unpaid leave for classified employees must be authorized by the Superintendent. Whenever possible, classified employees shall make a written request for unpaid leave ten days prior to the beginning date of the requested leave. If the leave is granted a deduction in salary shall be made. The building principal shall have complete discretion to grant or deny the requested unpaid leave. In making this determination, the building principal shall consider the effect of the employee's absence on the education program and school district operation and other factors the building principal believes are relevant in making this determination. Personal days must be used before using unpaid leave.

**Vacations** - Full-time, year-round (12 month) classified employees who have served a full year (12 months) are entitled to two (2) weeks of vacation with pay. Full-time, year-round (12

month) employees that have served less than 12 months are entitled to vacation with pay prorated to the nearest half day. Supervisors will receive three (3) weeks of vacation.

- All vacations are subject to approval of the Superintendent through the appropriate administrator or supervisor.
- Vacation time is non-cumulative.
- When a vacation includes a paid holiday, the vacation time shall be extended at the beginning or the close of the vacation.

The work year is defined as the 12 months from July 1 of one year through June 30 of the following year.

### **Letters of Assignment:**

Letters of Assignment are issued to all regular employees. The classified employee work year runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. Days actually worked will vary with the assignment and will be communicated to each employee by their immediate supervisor. Letters of Assignment are issued after the teacher negotiations process has concluded. Letters of Assignment indicate that 30 days' notice is required by the employer or the employee to terminate the employment agreement. The need for some positions, especially paraprofessionals, could change as students move in or out or as other factors change.

### **Licensing/Certification:**

Classified employees who require a special license or other certification shall keep them current at their own expense. Licensing requirements needed for a position will be considered met if the employee meets the requirements established by law and by the Iowa Department of Education for the position.

### **Medication Policy:**

Only specified individuals of the school district are authorized to dispense medications to students. Those medications are administered through the nurse's station, or the representative school offices by those trained to dispense the medications and keep an accurate record thereof. Under NO circumstances is it permissible for a non-authorized employee to dispense any form of medication to students. Even over-the-counter, simple medications (cough drops, etc.) are *not* to be given to students.

### **Mileage:**

Mileage is paid to employees of the school district for travel between school buildings during the workday. There is a mileage form that is filled out and turned in to the supervisor for approval. Upon approval, the form is given to the business office for payment. Mileage is paid monthly at the approved rate. Mileage is also paid to employees who drive their own vehicles out of town for district-related business. Whenever available, school-owned vehicles should be used. Mileage for out-of-town trips will only be paid when a school-owned vehicle is unavailable. Mileage will not be paid between the employee's home and location of work assignment.

### **Payroll:**

Wages and salaries shall be approved by the Board and stated on the Letter of Assignment, which is entered into between the employee and the District. Payroll checks/direct deposits will be distributed on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month unless the 20<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or holiday. In that

case checks/direct deposits will be distributed on the last previous working day. All hourly staff will use a time clock or other system provided by the district to keep track of their hours. Employees will not punch out for lunch, but one half (1/2) hour will be deducted each day for that purpose. Approval by the building principal and superintendent needs to be obtained by the employee to be paid for a working lunch.

**Physical Exams:**

Bus Drivers must have a physical as required by law. Up to \$120 of any balance not paid by the employee's personal health insurance for physicals that are required is paid by the district.

**Qualifications, Recruitment, Selection:**

Persons interested in a classified employee position shall have an opportunity to apply and qualify for classified employee positions in the school district without regard to age, race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, or disability. Job applicants for classified employee positions shall be considered on the basis of the following:

- Training, experience, and skill
- Nature of the occupation
- Demonstrated competence
- Possession of, or ability to obtain, state or other license or certificate as required for the position.

Announcement of the position shall be through means the Superintendent believes will inform potential applicants about the position. Applications for employment may be obtained from, and completed applications shall be returned to, the Administration Office. Whenever possible, the preliminary screening of applicants shall be conducted by the employee who directly supervises and oversees the position.

**Resignation:**

Resignations shall be in writing signed by the resigning party and directed to the Superintendent. The letter of assignment signed by each classified employee requires two weeks' notice.

**Staff Member's Children:**

If faculty member's children are going to be in the building prior to, or after school, they *must* remain in the parent's room or within parent supervision. They are not to go to other parts of the building. Co-workers need this time to complete their workday. The faculty lounge is for adults only.

**Time Clock:**

Employees are required to use the time clock management software to record their work hours. The time clock management system uses the 7-minute rule. Under the 7-minute rule, you would: Round down to the nearest quarter hour if an employee is within the first 7 minutes of the interval. Round up to the nearest quarter hour if an employee is within the last 7 minutes of the interval. For example: 8:00–8:07 rounds to 8:00; 8:08-8:14 rounds to 8:15. All work hours (including overtime) must be accurately recorded in the system for the employee to be paid. Overtime must be approved by the supervisor. Employees must verify their time sheets by the specified day or time using the time clock management software. Failure to do so may delay payment for service performed. Employees are to clock in at the beginning and out at the end of

their work assignment. A lunch period of 30 minutes will automatically be deducted for employees who are assigned to work 6 or more hours in a shift. Employees who are required to return to their work assignment by their supervisor or building principal during their lunch period will be paid for their lunch. Misuse of the time clock system such as but not limited to: refusing to use the system, clocking in for another employee, asking another person to clock in for the employee, inappropriately altering hours, or intentionally damaging the system are grounds for termination of employment. Some positions require the use of paper timesheets. Employees assigned to use paper timesheets must have their timesheet signed and submitted to their supervisor. Failure to do so may delay payment for service performed.

### **Use of School Equipment:**

No school equipment is to be removed from the building without permission from the administration. Board policy requires that a request to borrow school equipment form be filled out and approved prior to the removal of any equipment. School equipment is never to be used for your personal use.

### **W-4's and I-9's:**

**W-4** - Each employee must fill out a federal and state W-4. These withholding forms are required by law. If an employee claims more than 22 exemptions on the state W-4 or is claiming exemption from withholding when wages are expected to exceed \$200 per week, the W-4 must be filed with the state. If a withholding form is not on file for the employee, the employer must withhold at the single rate.

**I-9** - Each employee is required to leave an I-9 on file. The U.S. Department of Justice issues this form. It verifies that the employee is a lawful citizen of the United States or otherwise eligible to work in the U.S. The form must be filled out within three days of employment.

### **Non-Discrimination**

It is the policy of the East Mills Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (Employment only), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (students/program only) in its educational programs and its employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 19B.11, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 - 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.) There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Kelly Sutherland, Elementary Principal, 58962 380th Street Hastings, Iowa 51540, 712-624-8696.

**Classified Employee Handbook Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have received a copy of the Classified Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read the handbook. I also understand that I am required to comply with district policies and can be subject to disciplinary action for non-compliance.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date