

Vermilion Association for Special Education

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QUICK START INSTRUCTIONS

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 1 - SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Vermilion Association for Special Education

1:10 Cooperative Legal Status

The Illinois Constitution requires the State to provide for an efficient system of high-quality public educational institutions and services in order to achieve the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capabilities.

The General Assembly has implemented this mandate through the creation of Cooperatives. The Cooperative is governed by the laws for education entities serving a resident population of not fewer than 1,000 and not more than 500,000.

The Executive Council constitutes a body corporate that possesses all the usual powers of a corporation for public purposes, and in that name may sue and be sued, purchase, hold and sell personal property and real estate, and enter into such obligations as are authorized by law.

LEGAL REF.:

Ill. Constitution, Art. X, Sec. 1.

105 ILCS 5/10-1 *et seq.*

CROSS REF.: 2:10 (Cooperative Governance), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

1:20 Cooperative Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements

The Cooperative is organized and operates as a Joint Agreement serving the educational needs of children in grades K through 22 and others as required by the School Code.

The Cooperative enters into and participates in joint programs and intergovernmental agreements with units of local government and other entities in order to jointly provide services and activities in a manner that will increase flexibility, scope of service opportunities, cost reductions, and/or otherwise benefit the Cooperative and the community. The Executive Director shall manage these activities to the extent the program or agreement requires the Cooperative's participation and shall provide periodic implementation or operational data and/or reports to the Executive Council concerning these programs and agreements.

LEGAL REF.:

Ill. Constitution, Art. VII, Sec. 10.

5 ILCS 220/, Intergovernmental Cooperation Act

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

1:30 Cooperative Philosophy

The Cooperative, in an active partnership with parents and community, will promote excellence in a caring environment in which all students learn and grow. This partnership aims to empower all students to develop strong self-respect and to become responsible learners and decision-makers. The Cooperative is committed to developing and using a visionary and innovative curriculum, a knowledgeable and dedicated staff, and sound fiscal and management practices.

Vision

To be the premier team of professionals who provide the highest quality education services and supports to Vermilion County schools, students and families to ensure our students reach their fullest potential.

Mission

VASE exists to provide comprehensive, evidence-based prevention and intervention services to enable students with diverse needs to achieve their maximum learning potential through collaboration with, and support to the families, district personnel, and community agencies.

Values

- Everyone will learn.
- Every person has a purpose and should be treated with fairness, honesty, and respect.
- A strong sense of unity, responsibility, open communication, and a solid work ethic are the keys to a positive collaborative learning community.
- Ongoing personal and professional growth along with sharing this knowledge with others will promote a professional learning community.
- Through the use of professionalism and open communication, conflicts and problems are an opportunity for growth/change.

CROSS REF: 2:10 (Cooperative Governance), 3:10 (Goals and Objectives), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 2 - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:10 Cooperative Governance

The Cooperative is governed by an Executive Council consisting of 10 members. The Council's powers and duties include the authority to adopt, enforce, and monitor all policies for the management and governance of the Cooperative's school.

Official action by the Council may only occur at a duly called and legally conducted meeting. Except as otherwise provided by the Open Meetings Act, a quorum must be physically present at the meeting.

As stated in the School Code, a Council member has no legal authority as an individual.

LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 120/, Open Meetings Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-1, 5/10-10, 5/10-12, 5/10-16.5, 5/10-16.7, and 5/10-20.5.

CROSS REF.: 1:10 (Cooperative Legal Status), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification), 2:120 (Council Member Development), 2:200 (Types of Executive Council Meetings), 2:220 (Executive Council Meeting Procedure)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:20 Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification

The major powers and duties of the Executive Council include, but are not limited to:

1. Annually organizing the Council by electing officers and establishing its regular meeting schedule and, thereafter, taking action during lawfully called meetings to faithfully fulfill the Council's responsibilities in accordance with Council policy and State and federal law.
2. Formulating, adopting, and modifying Council policies, at its sole discretion, subject only to mandatory collective bargaining agreements and State and federal law.
3. Employing an Executive Director and other personnel, making employment decisions, dismissing personnel, including determining whether an employee has willfully or negligently failed to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by 325 ILCS 5/, and establishing an equal employment opportunity policy that prohibits unlawful discrimination.
4. Directing, through policy, the Executive Director, in his or her charge of the Cooperative's administration.
5. Approving the annual budget, major expenditures, payment of obligations, annual audit, and other aspects of the Council's financial operation; and making available a statement of financial affairs as provided in State law.
6. Entering contracts in accordance with applicable federal and State law, including using the public bidding procedure when required.
7. Providing, constructing, controlling, and maintaining adequate physical facilities; making school buildings available for use as civil defense shelters; and establishing a resource conservation policy.
8. Establishing an equal educational opportunities policy that prohibits unlawful discrimination.
9. Approving the curriculum, textbooks, and educational services.
10. Evaluating the educational program.
11. Establishing and supporting student behavior policies designed to maintain an environment conducive to learning, including deciding individual student suspension or expulsion cases brought before it.
12. Establishing the school year.
13. Requiring a moment of silence to recognize veterans during any type of school event held at a Cooperative school on November 11.
14. Providing student transportation services pursuant to State law.
15. Entering into joint agreements with other councils to establish cooperative educational programs or provide educational facilities.
16. Complying with requirements in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA). Specifically, each individual Council member must, if an allegation is raised to the member during an open or closed Council meeting that a student is an abused child as defined in ANCRA, direct or cause the Council to direct the Executive Director or other equivalent school administrator to comply with ANCRA's requirements concerning the reporting of child abuse.
17. Notifying the State Superintendent of Education promptly and in writing of the name of a licensed teacher who was convicted of a felony, along with the conviction and the name and location of the court where the conviction occurred.
18. Notifying the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) of the State of Ill. Board of Trustees promptly and in writing when it learns that a teacher as defined in the Ill. Pension Code was convicted of a felony, along with the name and location of the court where the conviction occurred, and the case number assigned by that court to the conviction.
19. Communicating the schools' activities and operations to the community and representing the needs and desires of the community in educational matters.

Indemnification

To the extent allowed by law, the Council shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless Executive Council members, employees, volunteer personnel (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-22.34, 10-22.34a and 10-22.34b), mentors of certified staff (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a, 2-3.53b, and 105 ILCS 5/21A-5 *et seq.*), and student teachers who, in the course of discharging their official duties imposed or authorized by law, are sued as parties in a legal proceeding. Nothing herein, however, shall be construed as obligating the Council to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless any person who engages in criminal activity, official misconduct, fraud, intentional or willful and wanton misconduct, or acts beyond the authority properly vested in the individual.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10, 5/17-1, 5/21B-85, and 5/27-1.

115 ILCS 5/, Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act.

325 ILCS 5/, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

CROSS REF.: 1:10 (Cooperative Legal Status), 1:20 (Cooperative Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements), 2:10 (Cooperative Governance), 2:140 (Communications To and From the Council), 2:240 (Council Policy Development), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:70 (Resource Conservation), 4:100 (Insurance Management), 4:110 (Transportation), 4:150 (Facility Management and Building Programs), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:210 (Resignations), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:15 (School Accountability), 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:30 (Student Assignment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:200 (Suspension Procedures), 8:10 (Connection with the Community), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:100 Council Member Conflict of Interest

No Executive Council member shall: (1) have a beneficial interest directly or indirectly in any contract, work, or business of the Cooperative unless permitted by State or federal law; or (2) solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to agreements or contracts with the Cooperative. Situations in which the interest is not substantial, or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value must comply with State law and Council policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*.

Council members must annually file a *Statement of Economic Interests* as required by the Ill. Governmental Ethics Act. Each Council member is responsible for filing the statement with the county clerk of the county in which the Council member resides by May 1.

Federal and State Grant Awards

No Council member shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award or State award governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/) if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when a Council member or any of the following individuals has a financial or other interest in or a tangible benefit from the entity selected for the contract:

1. A member of the Council member's immediate family;
2. The Council member's partner; or
3. An entity that employs or is about to employ the Council member or one of the individuals listed in one or two above.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-9.

5 ILCS 420/, Ill. Governmental Ethics Act.

30 ILCS 708/, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.

50 ILCS 105/3, Public Officer Prohibited Activities Act.

2 C.F.R. §200.318(c)(1).

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:105 Ethics and Gift Ban

Prohibited Political Activity

The following precepts govern political activities being conducted by Cooperative employees and Executive Council members:

1. No employee shall intentionally perform any *political activity* during any *compensated time*, as those terms are defined herein.
2. No Council member or employee shall intentionally use any Cooperative property or resources in connection with any political activity.
3. At no time shall any Council member or employee intentionally require any other Council member or employee to perform any political activity: (a) as part of that Council member's or employee's duties, (b) as a condition of employment, or (c) during any compensated time off, such as, holidays, vacation, or personal time off.
4. No Council member or employee shall be required at any time to participate in any political activity in consideration for that Council member or employee being awarded additional compensation or any benefit, whether in the form of a salary adjustment, bonus, compensatory time off, continued employment or otherwise; nor shall any Council member or employee be awarded additional compensation or any benefit in consideration for his or her participation in any political activity.

A Council member or employee may engage in any activity that: (1) is otherwise appropriate as part of his or her official duties, or (2) is undertaken by the individual on a voluntary basis that is not prohibited by this policy.

Limitations on Receiving Gifts

Except as permitted by this policy, no Council member or employee, and no spouse of or immediate family member living with a Council member or employee, shall intentionally solicit or accept any *gift* from any *prohibited source*, as those terms are defined herein, or that is otherwise prohibited by law or policy. No prohibited source shall intentionally offer or make a gift that violates this policy.

The following are exceptions to the ban on accepting gifts from a prohibited source:

1. Opportunities, benefits, and services that are available on the same conditions as for the general public.
2. Anything for which the Council member or employee, or his or her spouse or immediate family member, pays the fair market value.
3. Any: (a) contribution that is lawfully made under the Election Code, or (b) activities associated with a fundraising event in support of a political organization or candidate.
4. Educational materials and missions.
5. Travel expenses for a meeting to discuss Cooperative business.
6. A gift from a relative, meaning those people related to the individual as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, great aunt, great uncle, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, and including the father, mother, grandfather, or grandmother of the individual's spouse and the individual's fiancé or fiancée.
7. Anything provided by an individual on the basis of a personal friendship unless the recipient has reason to believe that, under the circumstances, the gift was provided because of the official position or employment of the recipient or his or her spouse or immediate family member and not because of the personal friendship. In determining whether a gift is provided on the basis of

personal friendship, the recipient shall consider the circumstances under which the gift was offered, such as: (a) the history of the relationship between the individual giving the gift and the recipient of the gift, including any previous exchange of gifts between those individuals; (b) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift; and (c) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift also at the same time gave the same or similar gifts to other Council members or employees, or their spouses or immediate family members.

8. Food or refreshments not exceeding \$75 per person in value on a single calendar day; provided that the food or refreshments are: (a) consumed on the premises from which they were purchased or prepared; or (b) catered. *Catered* means food or refreshments that are purchased ready to consume, which are delivered by any means.
9. Food, refreshments, lodging, transportation, and other benefits resulting from outside business or employment activities (or outside activities that are not connected to the official duties of a Council member or employee) if the benefits have not been offered or enhanced because of the official position or employment of the Council member or employee and are customarily provided to others in similar circumstances.
10. Intra-governmental and inter-governmental gifts. *Intra-governmental gift* means any gift given to a Council member or employee from another Council member or employee, and *inter-governmental gift* means any gift given to a Council member or employee from an officer or employee of another governmental entity.
11. Bequests, inheritances, and other transfers at death.
12. Any item or items from any one prohibited source during any calendar year having a cumulative total value of less than \$100.

Each of the listed exceptions is mutually exclusive and independent of every other.

A Council member or employee, his or her spouse or an immediate family member living with the Council member or employee, does not violate this policy if the recipient promptly takes reasonable action to return a gift from a prohibited source to its source or gives the gift or an amount equal to its value to an appropriate charity that is exempt from income taxation under 26 U.S.C. §501(c)(3).

Enforcement

The Executive Council Chairperson and Executive Director shall seek guidance from the Council attorney concerning compliance with and enforcement of this policy and State ethics laws. The Council may, as necessary or prudent, appoint an Ethics Advisor for this task.

Written complaints alleging a violation of this policy shall be filed with the Executive Director or Executive Council Chairperson. If attempts to correct any misunderstanding or problem do not resolve the matter, the Executive Director or Executive Council Chairperson shall, after consulting with the Council Attorney, either place the alleged violation on a Council meeting agenda for the Council's disposition or refer the complainant to Council policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A Council member who is related, either by blood or by marriage, up to the degree of first cousin, to the person who is the subject of the complaint, shall not participate in any decision-making capacity for the Council. If the Council finds it more likely than not that the allegations in a complaint are true, it shall notify the State's Attorney and/or consider disciplinary action for the employee.

Definitions

Unless otherwise stated, all terms used in this policy have the definitions given in the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/1-5.

Political activity means:

1. Preparing for, organizing, or participating in any political meeting, political rally, political demonstration, or other political event.
2. Soliciting contributions, including but not limited to the purchase of, selling, distributing, or receiving payment for tickets for any political fundraiser, political meeting, or other political event.
3. Soliciting, planning the solicitation of, or preparing any document or report regarding anything of value intended as a campaign contribution.
4. Planning, conducting, or participating in a public opinion poll in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.
5. Surveying or gathering information from potential or actual voters in an election to determine probable vote outcome in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.
6. Assisting at the polls on Election Day on behalf of any political organization or candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
7. Soliciting votes on behalf of a candidate for elective office or a political organization or for or against any referendum question or helping in an effort to get voters to the polls.
8. Initiating for circulation, preparing, circulating, reviewing, or filing any petition on behalf of a candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
9. Making contributions on behalf of any candidate for elective office in that capacity or in connection with a campaign for elective office.
10. Preparing or reviewing responses to candidate questionnaires.
11. Distributing, preparing for distribution, or mailing campaign literature, campaign signs, or other campaign material on behalf of any candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
12. Campaigning for any elective office or for or against any referendum question.
13. Managing or working on a campaign for elective office or for or against any referendum question.
14. Serving as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention.
15. Participating in any recount or challenge to the outcome of any election.

With respect to an employee whose hours are not fixed, *compensated time* includes any period of time when the employee is on premises under the control of the Cooperative and any other time when the employee is executing his or her official duties, regardless of location.

Prohibited source means any person or entity who:

1. Is seeking official action by: (a) a Council member, or (b) an employee, or by the Council member or another employee directing that employee;
2. Does business or seeks to do business with: (a) a Council member, or (b) an employee, or with the Council member or another employee directing that employee;
3. Conducts activities regulated by: (a) a Council member, or (b) an employee or by the Council member or another employee directing that employee;
4. Has an interest that may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of the official duties of the Council member or employee;
5. Is registered or required to be registered with the Secretary of State under the Lobbyist Registration Act, except that an entity does not become a prohibited source merely because a registered lobbyist is one of its members or serves on its council of directors; or
6. Is an agent of, a spouse of, or an immediate family member living with a prohibited source.

Gift means any gratuity, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other tangible or

intangible item having monetary value including but not limited to, cash, food and drink, and honoraria for speaking engagements related to or attributable to government employment or the official position of a Council member or employee.

Complaints of Sexual Harassment Made Against Council Members by Elected Officials

Pursuant to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/70-5), members of the Council and other elected officials are encouraged to promptly report claims of sexual harassment by a Council member. Every effort should be made to file such complaints as soon as possible, while facts are known, and potential witnesses are available. If the official feels comfortable doing so, he or she should directly inform the individual that the individual's conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.

Council members and elected officials should report claims of sexual harassment against a member of the Council to the Executive Council Chairperson or Executive Director. If the report is made to the Executive Director, the Executive Director shall promptly notify the Council Chairperson, or if the Council Chairperson is the subject of the complaint, the Council Vice Chairperson. Reports of sexual harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable.

When a complaint of sexual harassment is made against a member of the Council by another Council member or other elected official, the Executive Director shall appoint a qualified outside investigator who is not a Cooperative employee or Council member to conduct an independent review of the allegations. The investigator shall prepare a written report and submit it to the Council.

If a Council member has engaged in sexual harassment, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Council.

The Executive Director will post this policy on the Cooperative website and/or make this policy available in the Cooperative's administrative office.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/22-93.

5 ILCS 430/, State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

10 ILCS 5/9-25.1, Election Interference Prohibition Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Council Member Conflict of Interest), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:110 Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Executive Council Officers

The Executive Council officers are: Executive Council Chairperson, Vice Council Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers are elected or appointed by the Executive Council at its organizational meeting.

Executive Council Chairperson

The Executive Council elects an Executive Council Chairperson from its members for a one-year term. The duties of the Executive Council Chairperson are to:

1. Preside at all meetings;
2. Focus the Executive Council meeting agendas on appropriate content;
3. Make all Executive Council committee appointments, unless specifically stated otherwise;
4. Attend and observe any Executive Council committee meeting at his or her discretion;
5. Represent the Executive Council on other Executive Councils or agencies;
6. Sign official Cooperative documents requiring the Executive Council Chairperson's signature, including Executive Council minutes, and financial reports;
7. Call special meetings of the Executive Council;
8. Serve as the *head of the public body* for purposes of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and Freedom of Information Act;
9. Ensure that a quorum of the Executive Council is physically present at all Executive Council meetings, except as otherwise provided by OMA;
10. Serve as or appoint the Executive Council's official spokesperson to the media;
11. Ensure that all fingerprint-based criminal history records information checks, screenings, and sexual misconduct related employment history reviews (EHRs) required by State law and policy 5:30, *Hiring Process and Criteria*, are completed for the Executive Director.

The Executive Council Chairperson is permitted to participate in all Executive Council meetings in a manner equal to all other Executive Council members, including the ability to make and second motions.

The Council Vice Chairperson fills a vacancy in the Council Chairmanship.

Council Vice Chairperson

The Executive Council elects a Council Vice Chairperson from its members for a one-year term. The Council Vice Chairperson performs the duties of the Executive Council Chairperson if:

1. The office of Executive Council Chairperson is vacant;
2. The Executive Council Chairperson is absent; or
3. The Executive Council Chairperson is unable to perform the office's duties.

A vacancy in the Vice Executive Chairperson is filled by a special Executive Council election.

Secretary

The Executive Council elects a Secretary for a one-year term. The Secretary may be, but is not required to be, an Executive Council member. The Secretary may receive reasonable compensation as determined by the Executive Council before appointment. However, if the Secretary is an Executive Council member, the compensation shall not exceed \$500 per year, as fixed by the Executive Council at least 180 days before the beginning of the term. The duties of the Secretary are to:

1. Keep minutes for all Executive Council meetings, and keep the verbatim record for all closed Executive Council meetings;
2. Keep records of the Executive Council's official acts, and sign them, along with the Executive Council Chairperson, before submitting them to the Treasurer at such times as the Treasurer may require;
3. Sign official Cooperative documents requiring the Secretary's signature; and
4. Maintain Executive Council policy and such other official documents as directed by the Executive Council.

The Secretary may delegate some or all of these duties, except when State law prohibits the delegation. The Executive Council appoints a secretary pro tempore, who may or may not be a Executive Council member, if the Secretary is absent from any meeting or refuses to perform the duties of the office. A permanent vacancy in the office of Secretary is filled by special Executive Council election.

Treasurer

The Treasurer of the Executive Council shall be either a member of the Executive Council who serves a one-year term or a non-Executive Council member who serves at the Executive Council's pleasure. A Treasurer who is an Executive Council member may not be compensated. A Treasurer who is not an Executive Council member may be compensated provided it is established before the appointment. The Treasurer must:

1. Be at least 21 years old;
2. Not be a member of the County Board of School Trustees; and
3. Have a financial background or related experience, or 12 credit hours of college-level accounting.

The Treasurer shall:

1. Furnish a bond, which shall be approved by a majority of the full Executive Council;
2. Maintain custody of school funds;
3. Maintain records of school funds and balances;
4. Prepare a monthly reconciliation report for the Executive Director and Executive Council; and
5. Receive, hold, and expend Cooperative funds only upon the order of the Executive Council.

A vacancy in the Treasurer's office is filled by Executive Council appointment.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/8-1, 5/8-2, 5/8-3, 5/8-6, 5/8-16, 5/8-17, 5/10-1, 5/10-5, 5/10-7, 5/10-8, 5/10-13, 5/10-13.1, 5/10-14, 5/10-16.5, 5/10-21.9, 5/17-1, 5/21B-85, and 5/22-94.

5 ILCS 120/7, Open Meetings Act.

5 ILCS 420/4A-106, Ill. Governmental Ethics Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:150 (Committees), 2:220 (Executive Council Meeting Procedure), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria)

Adopted: September 11, 2023

2:125 Council Member Compensation; Expenses

Council Member Compensation Prohibited

Executive Council members provide volunteer service to the community and may not receive compensation for services, except that a Council member serving as the Council Secretary may be paid an amount up to the statutory limit if the Council so provides.

Roll Call Vote

All Council member expense requests for travel, meals, and/or lodging must be approved by roll call vote at an open meeting of the Council.

Regulation of Cooperative Expenses

The Council regulates the reimbursement of all travel, meal, and lodging expenses in the Cooperative by resolution. No later than approval of the annual budget and when necessary, the Executive Director will recommend a maximum allowable reimbursement amount for expenses to be included in the resolution. The recommended amount should be based upon the Cooperative's budget and other financial considerations.

Money shall not be advanced or reimbursed, or purchase orders issued for: (1) the expenses of any person except the Council member, (2) anyone's personal expenses, or (3) entertainment expenses. Entertainment includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless the entertainment is ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.

Exceeding the Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Amount(s)

All requests for expense advancements, reimbursements, and/or purchase orders that exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement amount set by the Council may only be approved by it when:

1. The Council's resolution to regulate expenses allows for such approval;
2. An emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists; and
3. The request is approved by a roll call vote at an open Council meeting.

Advancements

The Council may advance to its members actual and necessary expenses to be incurred while attending:

1. Meetings sponsored by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) or by the Regional Superintendent of Schools;
2. County or regional meetings and the annual meeting sponsored by any Executive Council association complying with Article 23 of the School Code; and
3. Meetings sponsored by a national organization in the field of public-school education.

Expense advancement requests must be submitted to the Executive Director or designee on the Council's standardized estimated expense approval form. After spending expense advancements, Council members must use the Council's standardized expense reimbursement form and submit to the Executive Director: (a) the itemized, signed advancement voucher that was issued, and (b) the amount of actual expenses by attaching receipts. A Council member must return to the Cooperative any portion of an expense advancement not used. If an expense advancement is not requested, expense reimbursements may be issued by the Council to its members for the activities listed in numbers one through three, above, along with registration fees or tuition for a course(s) that allowed compliance with the mandatory trainings, and other professional development opportunities that are

encouraged by the School Code, and other training provided by one of the entities described in the above list. (See the **Reimbursements and Purchase Orders** subhead, below). Expense advancements and vouchers shall be presented to the Council in its regular bill process.

Reimbursements and Purchase Orders

Expense reimbursement is not guaranteed and, when possible, Council members should seek pre-approval of expenses by providing an estimation of expenses on the Council's standardized estimated expense approval form, except in situations when the expense is diminutive. When pre-approval is not sought, Council members must seek reimbursement on the Council's standardized expense reimbursement form. Expense reimbursements and purchase orders shall be presented to the Council in its regular bill process.

Credit and Procurement Cards

Credit and procurement cards shall not be issued to Council members.

Standardized Expense Form(s) Required

All requests for expense advancement, reimbursement, and/or purchase orders in the Cooperative must be submitted on the appropriate itemized, signed standardized form(s). The form(s) must show the following information:

1. The amount of the estimated or actual expense, with attached receipts for actual incurred expenses.
2. The name and office of the Council member who is requesting the expense advancement or reimbursement. Receipts from group functions must include the names, offices, and job titles of all participants.
3. The date(s) of the official business on which the expense advancement or reimbursement will be or was expended.
4. The nature of the official business conducted when the expense advancement or reimbursement will be or was expended.

Types of Official Business for Expense Advancements, Reimbursements, and Purchase Orders

1. Registration. When possible, registration fees will be paid by the Cooperative in advance.
2. Travel. The least expensive method of travel will be used, providing that no hardship will be caused to the Council member. Council members will be reimbursed for:
 - a. Air travel at the coach or economy class commercial airline rate. First class or business class air travel will be reimbursed only if emergency circumstances warrant. The emergency circumstances must be explained on the expense form and Council approval of the additional expense is required. Fees for the first checked bag will be reimbursed. Copies of airline tickets and baggage receipts must be attached to the expense form.
 - b. Rail or bus travel at actual cost. Rail or bus travel costs may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Copies of tickets must be attached to the expense form to substantiate amounts.
 - c. Use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service for income tax purposes. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Mileage for use of personal automobiles in trips to and from transportation terminals will also be reimbursed. Toll charges and parking costs will be reimbursed.
 - d. Automobile rental costs when the vehicle's use is warranted. The circumstances for such use must be explained on the expense form.
 - e. Taxis, airport limousines, ride sharing or other local transportation costs.

3. Meals. Meals charged to the Cooperative should represent mid-fare selections for the hotel/meeting facility or general area, consistent with the maximum allowable reimbursement amount set by the Council. Tips are included with meal charges. Expense forms must explain the meal charges incurred. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.
4. Lodging. Council members should request conference rate or mid-fare room accommodations. A single room rate will be reimbursed. Council members should pay personal expenses at checkout. If that is impossible, deductions for the charges should be made on the expense form.
5. Miscellaneous Expenses. Council members may seek reimbursement for other expenses incurred while attending a meeting sponsored by organizations described herein by fully describing the expenses on the expense form, attaching receipts.

Additional Requirements for Travel Expenses Charged to Federal and State Grants

All Council member expenses for travel charged to a federal grant or State grant governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/) must comply with Council policy 5:60, Expenses, and its implementing procedures. Travel expenses include costs for transportation, lodging, meals, and related items.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20 and 5/10-22.32.

30 ILCS 708/, Government Accountability and Transparency Act.

50 ILCS 150/, Local Government Travel Expense Control Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Council Member Conflict of Interest), 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards), 5:60 (Expenses)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:130 Council-Executive Director Relationship

The Executive Council directs, through policy, the Executive Director in his or her charge of the administration of the Cooperative by delegating its authority to operate the Cooperative and provide leadership to staff. The Council employs and evaluates the Executive Director and holds him or her responsible for the operation of the Cooperative in accordance with Council policies and State and federal law.

The Executive Director relationship is based on mutual respect for their complementary roles. The relationship requires clear communication of expectations regarding the duties and responsibilities of both the Council and Executive Director.

The Council considers the recommendations of the Executive Director as the Cooperative Chief Executive Officer. The Council adopts policies necessary to provide direction for the Cooperative and to encourage achievement of Cooperative goals. The Executive Director develops plans, programs, and procedures needed to implement the policies and directs the Cooperative's operations.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-16.7 and 5/10-21.4.

CROSS REF.: 3:40 (Executive Director)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:140 Communications To and From the Council

The Executive Council welcomes communications from staff members, parents/guardians, students, and community members. Individuals may submit questions or communications for the Executive Council's consideration to the Executive Director or may use the electronic link to the Council's email address(es) posted on the Cooperative's website.

The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that the home page for the Cooperative's website contains an active electronic link to the email address(es) for the Council.

If contacted individually, Council members will refer the person to the appropriate level of authority, except in unusual situations. Council members' questions or communications to staff or about programs will be channeled through the Executive Director's office. Council members will not take individual action that might compromise the Council or Cooperative. There is no expectation of privacy for any communication sent to the Council or its members, whether sent by letter, email, or other means.

Council Member Use of Electronic Communications

For purposes of this section, *electronic communications* includes, without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, instant messaging, texting, and any form of social networking. Electronic communications among a majority or more of a Council-quorum shall not be used for the purpose of discussing Cooperative business. Electronic communications among Council members shall be limited to: (1) disseminating information, and (2) messages not involving deliberation, debate, or decision-making. The following list contains examples of permissible electronic communications:

- Agenda item suggestions
- Reminders regarding meeting times, dates, and places
- Council meeting agendas or information concerning agenda items
- Individual emails to community members, subject to the other limitations in this policy

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Oath of Office taken by Council members, individual Council members will not (a) reply to an email on behalf of the entire Council, or (b) engage in the discussion of Cooperative business through electronic communications with a majority of a Council-quorum.

LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 120/, Open Meetings Act.

50 ILCS 205/20, Local Records Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:220 (Executive Council Meeting Procedure), 3:30 (Chain of Command), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:150 Committees

The Executive Council may establish committees to assist with the Council's governance function and, in some situations, to comply with State law requirements. These committees are known as Council committees and report directly to the Council. Committee members may include both Council members and non-Council members depending on the committee's purpose. The Executive Council Chairperson makes all Council committee appointments unless specifically stated otherwise. Council committee meetings shall comply with the Open Meetings Act. A Council committee may not take final action on behalf of the Council - it may only make recommendations to the Council.

Special Council Committees

A special committee may be created for specific purposes or to investigate special issues. A special committee is automatically dissolved after presenting its final report to the Council or at the Council's discretion.

Standing Council Committees

A standing committee is created for an indefinite term although its members will fluctuate. Standing committees are:

1. Behavioral Interventions Committee. This committee develops and monitors procedures for using behavioral interventions in accordance with Council policy 7:230, *Misconduct by Students with Disabilities*, and provides information and recommendations to the Council. At the Executive Council Chairperson's discretion, the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee shall perform the duties assigned to the Behavioral Interventions Committee.
2. Building and Grounds Committee.
3. Finance Committee.
4. Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee. This committee assists in the development of student behavior policy and procedure and provides information and recommendations to the Council. Its members are parents/guardians and teachers and may include persons whose expertise or experience is needed. The committee reviews such issues as administering medication in the schools, reciprocal reporting between the Cooperative and local law enforcement agencies regarding criminal and civil offenses committed by students, student discipline, disruptive classroom behavior, school bus safety procedures, and the dissemination of student conduct information.
5. Personnel Committee.

Nothing in this policy limits the authority of the Executive Director or designee to create and use committees that report to him or her or to other staff members.

LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 120/, Open Meetings Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14 and 5/14-8.05.

CROSS REF.: 2:110 (Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Council Officers), 2:200 (Types of Executive Council Meetings), 2:240 (Council Policy Development), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:160 Council Attorney

The Executive Council may retain legal services with one or more attorneys or law firms to be the Council Attorney(s). The Council Attorney represents the Executive Council in its capacity as the governing body for the Cooperative. The Council Attorney serves on a retainer or other fee arrangement as determined in advance. The Council Attorney will provide services as described in the agreement for legal services or as memorialized by an engagement letter. The Cooperative will only pay for legal services that are provided in accordance with the agreement for legal services, as memorialized by an engagement letter, or that are otherwise authorized by this policy or a majority of the Council.

The Executive Director, his or her designee, and Executive Council Chairperson, are each authorized to confer with and/or seek the legal advice of the Council Attorney. The Council may also authorize a specific Council member to confer with the Council Attorney on its behalf.

The Executive Director may authorize the Council Attorney to represent the Cooperative in any legal matter until the Council has an opportunity to be informed of and/or consider the matter.

The Council retains the right to consult with or employ other attorneys and to terminate the service of any attorney.

LEGAL REF.:

Rule 1.7 (Conflict of Interest: Current Clients) and Rule 1.13 (Organization as Client) of the Ill. Rules of Professional Conduct adopted by the Ill. Supreme Court.

CROSS REF.: 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:170 Procurement of Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Services

The Executive Council selects architects, engineers, and land surveyors to provide professional services to the Cooperative on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications, and in accordance with State law.

LEGAL REF.:

40 U.S.C. §1101 *et seq.*

50 ILCS 510/, Local Government Professional Services Selection Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.21.

Shively v. Belleville Twp. High Sch. Dist. 201, 329 Ill.App.3d 1156 (5th Dist. 2002), *appeal denied*.

Adopted: September 11, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:200 Types of Executive Council Meetings

General

For all meetings of the Executive Council and its committees, the Executive Director or designee shall satisfy all notice and posting requirements contained herein as well as in the Open Meetings Act. This shall include mailing meeting notifications to news media that have officially requested them and to others as approved by the Council. Unless otherwise specified, all meetings are held in the Regional Office of Education in Danville. Council policy 2:220, *Executive Council Meeting Procedure*, governs meeting quorum requirements.

The Executive Director is designated on behalf of the Council and each Council committee to receive the training on compliance with the Open Meetings Act that is required by Section 1.05(a) of that Act. The Executive Director may identify other employees to receive the training. In addition, each Council member must complete a course of training on the Open Meetings Act as required by Section 1.05(b) or (c) of that Act.

Regular Meetings

The Council announces the time and place for its regular meetings at the beginning of each fiscal year. The Executive Director shall prepare and make available the calendar of regular Council meetings. The regular meeting calendar may be changed with 10 days' notice in accordance with State law.

A meeting agenda shall be posted at the Cooperative's main office and the Council's meeting room, or other location where the meeting is to be held, at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Closed Meetings

The Council and Council committees may meet in a closed meeting to consider the following subjects:

1. The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with [the Open Meetings Act]. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).
2. Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).
3. The selection of a person to fill a public office, as defined in the Open Meetings Act, including a vacancy in a public office, when the public body is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance, or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the public body is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).
4. Evidence or testimony presented in open hearing, or in closed hearing where specifically authorized by law, to a quasi-adjudicative body, as defined in the Open Meetings Act, provided that the body prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4).
5. Evidence or testimony presented to the Council regarding denial of admission to Cooperative events or property pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-24, provided that the Council prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5).

6. The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).
7. The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6).
8. The sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(7).
9. Security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(8).
10. Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).
11. The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10).
12. Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).
13. The establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the public body or any intergovernmental risk management association or self-insurance pool of which the public body is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(12).
14. Self-evaluation, practices and procedures or professional ethics, when meeting with a representative of a statewide association of which the public body is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16).
15. Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21).
16. Meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involves internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(29).

The Council may hold a closed meeting, or close a portion of a meeting, by a majority vote of a quorum, taken at an open meeting. The vote of each Council member present, and the reason for the closed meeting, will be publicly disclosed at the time of the meeting and clearly stated in the motion and the meeting minutes.

A single motion calling for a series of closed meetings may be adopted when such meetings will involve the same particular matters and are scheduled to be held within three months of the vote.

No final Council action will be taken at a closed meeting.

Reconvened or Rescheduled Meetings

A meeting may be rescheduled or reconvened. Public notice of a rescheduled or reconvened meeting shall be given in the same manner as that for a special meeting, except that no public notice is required when the original meeting is open to the public and: (1) is to be reconvened within 24 hours, or (2) an announcement of the time and place of the reconvened meeting was made at the original meeting and there is no change in the agenda.

Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President or by any three members of the Council by giving

notice thereof, in writing, stating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting to remaining Council members by mail at least 48 hours before the meeting, or by personal service at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Public notice of a special meeting is given by posting a notice at the Cooperative's main office at least 48 hours before the meeting and by notifying the news media that have filed a written request for notice. A meeting agenda shall accompany the notice.

All matters discussed by the Council at any special meeting must be related to a subject on the meeting agenda.

Emergency Meetings

Public notice of emergency meetings shall be given as soon as practical, but in any event, before the meeting to news media that have filed a written request for notice.

Posting on the Cooperative Website

In addition to the other notices specified in this policy, the Executive Director or designee shall post the following on the Cooperative website: (1) the annual schedule of regular meetings, which shall remain posted until the Council approves a new schedule of regular meetings; (2) a public notice of all Council meetings; and (3) the agenda for each meeting which shall remain posted until the meeting is concluded.

LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 120/, Open Meetings Act.

5 ILCS 140/, Freedom of Information Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-6 and 5/10-16.

CROSS REF.: 2:110 (Qualifications Term, and Duties of Council Officers), 2:220 (Executive Council Meeting Procedure), 2:230 (Public Participation at Executive Council Meetings and Petitions to the Council), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220 Executive Council Meeting Procedure

Agenda

The Executive Council Chairperson is responsible for focusing the Council meeting agendas on appropriate content. The Executive Director shall prepare agendas in consultation with the Executive Council Chairperson. The Executive Council Chairperson shall designate a portion of the agenda as a consent agenda for those items that usually do not require extensive discussion before Council action. Upon the request of any Council member, an item will be withdrawn from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for independent consideration.

Each Council meeting agenda shall contain the general subject matter of any item that will be the subject of final action at the meeting. Items submitted by Council members to the Executive Director or the Executive Council Chairperson shall be placed on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. Cooperative residents may suggest inclusions for the agenda. Discussion items may be added to the agenda at the beginning of a regular meeting. The Council will take final action only on items contained in the posted agenda; items not on the agenda may still be discussed.

The Executive Director shall provide a copy of the agenda, with adequate data and background information, to each Council member at least 48 hours before each meeting, except a meeting held in the event of an emergency. The meeting agenda shall be posted in accordance with Council policy 2:200, *Types of Executive Council Meetings*.

The Executive Council Chairperson shall determine the order of business at regular Council meetings. Upon consent of a majority of members present, the order of business at any meeting may be changed.

Voting Method

Unless otherwise provided by law, when a vote is taken upon any measure before the Council, with a quorum being present, a majority of the votes cast shall determine its outcome. A vote of *abstain* or *present*, or a vote other than *yea* or *nay*, or a failure to vote, is counted for the purposes of determining whether a quorum is present. A vote of *abstain* or *present*, or a vote other than *yea* or *nay*, or a failure to vote, however, is not counted in determining whether a measure has been passed by the Council, unless otherwise stated in law. Voting shall be carried out alphabetically by Cooperative name.

On all questions involving the expenditure of money and on all questions involving the closing of a meeting to the public, a roll call vote shall be taken and entered in the Council's minutes.

Minutes

The Council Secretary shall keep written minutes of all Council meetings (whether open or closed), which shall be signed by the Executive Council Chairperson and the Secretary. The minutes include:

1. The meeting's date, time, and place;
2. Council members recorded as either present or absent;
3. A summary of the discussion on all matters proposed, deliberated, or decided, and a record of any votes taken;
4. On all matters requiring a roll call vote, a record of who voted *yea* and *nay*;
5. If the meeting is adjourned to another date, the time and place of the adjourned meeting;
6. The vote of each member present when a vote is taken to hold a closed meeting or portion of a meeting, and the reason for the closed meeting with a citation to the specific exception contained in the Open Meetings Act (OMA) authorizing the closed meeting;
7. A record of all motions, including individuals making and seconding motions; and

8. The type of meeting, including any notices and if a reconvened meeting, the original meeting's date.

The minutes shall be submitted to the Council for approval or modification at its next regularly scheduled open meeting. Minutes for open meetings must be approved within 30 days after the meeting or at the second subsequent regular meeting, whichever is later.

Every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, in an open meeting, the Council: (1) reviews minutes from all closed meetings that are currently unavailable for public release, and (2) determines which, if any, no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection. This is also referred to as a *semi-annual review*. The Council may meet in a prior closed session to review the minutes from closed meetings that are currently unavailable for public release, but it reports its determination in open session.

The Council's meeting minutes must be submitted to the Council Treasurer at such times as the Treasurer may require.

The official minutes are in the custody of the Council Secretary. Open meeting minutes are available for inspection during regular office hours within 10 days after the Council's approval; they may be inspected in the Cooperative's main office, in the presence of the Secretary, the Executive Director or designee, or any Council member.

Minutes from closed meetings are likewise available, but only if the Council has released them for public inspection, except that Council members may access closed session minutes not yet released for public inspection (1) in the Cooperative's administrative offices or their official storage location, and (2) in the presence of the Recording Secretary, the Executive Director or designated administrator, or any elected Council member. The minutes, whether reviewed by members of the public or the Council, shall not be removed from the Cooperative's administrative offices or their official storage location except by vote of the Council or by court order.

The Council's open meeting minutes shall be posted on the Cooperative website within ten days after the Council approves them; the minutes will remain posted for at least 60 days.

Verbatim Record of Closed Meetings

The Executive Director, or the Council Secretary when the Executive Director is absent, shall audio record all closed meetings. If neither is present, the Executive Council Chairperson or presiding officer shall assume this responsibility. After the closed meeting, the person making the audio recording shall label the recording with the date and store it in a secure location. The Executive Director shall ensure that: (1) an audio recording device and all necessary accompanying items are available to the Council for every closed meeting, and (2) a secure location for storing closed meeting audio recordings is maintained within the Cooperative's administrative offices or their official storage location.

After 18 months have passed since being made, the audio recording of a closed meeting is destroyed provided the Council approved: (1) its destruction, and (2) minutes of the particular closed meeting.

Individual Council members may access verbatim recordings in the presence of the Recording Secretary, the Executive Director or designated administrator, or any elected Council member. Access to the verbatim recordings is available at the Cooperative's administrative offices or the verbatim recording's official storage location. Requests shall be made to the Executive Director or Executive Council Chairperson. While a Council member is listening to a verbatim recording, it shall not be re-recorded or removed from the Cooperative's main office or official storage location, except by vote of the Council or by court order.

Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video Means

A quorum of the Council must be physically present at all Council meetings. A majority of the full

membership of the Council constitutes a quorum.

Provided a quorum is physically present, a Council member may attend a meeting by video or audio conference if he or she is prevented from physically attending because of: (1) personal illness or disability, (2) employment or Cooperative business, (3) a family or other emergency, or (4) unexpected childcare obligations. If a member wishes to attend a meeting by video or audio means, he or she must notify the recording secretary or Executive Director at least 24 hours before the meeting unless advance notice is impractical. The recording secretary or Executive Director will inform the Executive Council Chairperson and make appropriate arrangements. A Council member who attends a meeting by audio or video means, as provided in this policy, may participate in all aspects of the Council meeting including voting on any item.

No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video; Disaster Declaration

The ability of the Council to meet in person with a quorum physically present at its meeting location may be affected by the Governor or the Director of the Ill. Dept. of Public Health issuing a disaster declaration related to a public health emergency. The Executive Council Chairperson or, if the office is vacant or the Chairperson is absent or unable to perform the office's duties, the Vice Council Chairperson determines that an in-person meeting or a meeting conducted under the **Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video Means** subhead above, is not practical or prudent because of the disaster declaration; if neither the Chairperson nor Vice Council Chairperson are present or able to perform this determination, the Executive Director shall serve as the duly authorized designee for purposes of making this determination. The individual who makes this determination for the Council shall put it in writing, include it on the Council's published notice and agenda for the audio or video meeting and in the meeting minutes, and ensure that the Council meets every OMA requirement for the Council to meet by video or audio conference without the physical presence of a quorum.

Rules of Order

Unless State law or Council-adopted rules apply, the Executive Council Chairperson, as the presiding officer, will use the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, as a guide when a question arises concerning procedure.

Broadcasting and Recording Council Meetings

Any person may record or broadcast an open Council meeting. Special requests to facilitate recording or broadcasting an open Council meeting, such as seating, writing surfaces, lighting, and access to electrical power, should be directed to the Executive Director at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Recording meetings shall not distract or disturb Council members, other meeting participants, or members of the public. The Executive Council Chairperson may designate a location for recording equipment, may restrict the movements of individuals who are using recording equipment, or may take such other steps as are deemed necessary to preserve decorum and facilitate the meeting.

LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 120/2a, 120/2.02, 120/2.05, 120/2.06, and 120/7, Open Meetings Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-6, 5/10-7, 5/10-12, and 5/10-16.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 2:200 (Types of Executive Council Meetings), 2:230 (Public Participation at Executive Council Meetings and Petitions to the Council)

Adopted: August 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E1 Exhibit - Council Treatment of Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings and Minutes

The following procedures govern the verbatim audio recordings and minutes of Executive Council meetings that are closed to the public.

Actor	Action
<p><i>Before any Council meeting:</i></p> <p>Executive Director or designee</p>	<p>Arranges to have an audio recording device with adequate storage capacity and a back-up audio recording device in the Council meeting room during every Council meeting regardless of whether a closed meeting is scheduled.</p> <p>The Council may close a portion of a public meeting without prior notice; it cannot, however, have a closed meeting unless it can record the session.</p>
<p><i>Before a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Executive Council Chairperson or presiding officer (#3 and #4 may be delegated to the Council Secretary or Recording Secretary)</p>	<p>On the closed meeting date: (1) convenes an open meeting, (2) requests a motion to adjourn into closed meeting making sure the reason for the meeting is identified in the motion, (3) takes a roll call vote, (4) ensures that the minutes record the vote of each member present and the reason for the closed meeting with a citation to the specific exception contained in the Open Meetings Act (OMA) authorizing the closed meeting (5 ILCS 120/2a), and (5) adjourns the open meeting.</p>
<p><i>Before a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Executive Director or Council Secretary</p>	<p>Immediately before a closed meeting, tests and activates the audio recording device.</p>
<p><i>During a closed meeting:</i></p> <p>Executive Council Chairperson or presiding officer</p>	<p>Convenes the closed meeting stating:</p> <p>Seeing a quorum of the Council of Education gathered today, ___ date, at ___ o'clock, at ___ location, for the purpose of holding a closed meeting in order to confidentially discuss ___, I call the meeting to order. In order to record who is present, I request that each individual state his or her name and position with the Cooperative. (Note: This script is an example.)</p> <p>Limits discussion to the topics that were included in the motion to go into a closed meeting.</p> <p>The failure to immediately call a person out-of-order who strays from the purposes included in the motion may result in an appearance of acquiescence. This responsibility to call a person out-of-order falls on each Council member in the event of the President's failure.</p> <p>Once the closed meeting is finished, announces a return to an open meeting or adjournment, and states the time.</p>
<p><i>After a closed meeting:</i></p>	<p>For Verbatim Recordings:</p>

Executive Director,
Recording Secretary, or
Council Secretary

Takes possession of the audio recording of the closed meeting and labels it with identification information, specifically the date and items discussed.

Adds the identification information contained on the audio recording's label to a cumulative list of closed meeting recordings.

As soon as possible, puts the recording of the closed meeting in the previously identified secure location for storing recordings of closed meetings.

Upon request of a Council member:

1. Provides access to the verbatim recordings' minutes at a reasonable time and place without disrupting Cooperative operations;
2. Supervises the access to the closed session minutes or delegates it to one of the following individuals in the Cooperative:
 - a. The Recording Secretary,
 - b. The Executive Director or designated administrator, or
 - c. Any elected Council member; and
3. Logs the access to the recordings in 2:220-E7, *Access to Closed Meeting Minutes and Verbatim Recordings*.

For Closed Meeting Minutes:

Prepares written closed meeting minutes that include:

- The date, time, and place of the closed meeting
- The Council members present and absent
- A summary of discussion on all matters proposed or discussed
- The time the closed meeting was adjourned

Upon request of a Council member:

1. Provides access to the closed session minutes at a reasonable time and place without disrupting Cooperative operations;
2. Supervises the access to the closed session minutes or delegates it to one of the following individuals in the Cooperative:
 - a. The Recording Secretary,
 - b. The Executive Director or designated administrator, or
 - c. Any elected Council member; and
3. Logs the access in 2:220-E7, *Access to Closed Meeting*

	<i>Minutes and Verbatim Recordings.</i>
<i>After a closed meeting:</i> Executive Council	Approves the previous closed meeting minutes at the next open meeting.
<i>In preparation for the semi-annual review:</i> Executive Director or designee	<p>Every six months, prepares a recommendation concerning the continued need for confidential treatment of all of the Council's closed meeting minutes; includes this recommendation in the packet for the meeting in which the Council will conduct its semi-annual review.</p> <p>This step is in preparation of the Council's meeting to decide whether the need for confidential treatment of specific closed meeting minutes continues to exist.</p> <p>If the Council wants to discuss closed meeting minutes in closed session, places "review of unreleased closed meeting minutes" on a closed meeting agenda.</p> <p>Places "result of Council's review of unreleased closed meeting minutes" as an item on a subsequent open meeting agenda.</p>
<i>In preparation for the semi-annual review:</i> Individual Council members	<p>Before the meeting in which the Council will conduct its semi-annual review, examines the material supplied by the Executive Director.</p> <p>Individual Council members should consider: (1) the Executive Director's recommendation, (2) the recommendation of the Council Attorney, (3) other Council members' opinions, (4) the minutes themselves, and/or (5) whether the minutes would be exempted from public disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act.</p>
<i>During the semi-annual review:</i> Executive Council	<p>The Council decides in open session whether: (1) the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of closed meeting minutes, or (2) the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.</p> <p>The Council may have an earlier meeting in closed session to discuss the continued need for confidential treatment.</p>
<i>After the semi-annual review:</i> Executive Director or designee	Re-labels and re-files closed meeting minutes as appropriate.
<i>Monthly:</i> Executive Council Chairperson	Adds "destruction of closed meeting audio recording" as an agenda item to an upcoming open meeting.
<i>Monthly:</i>	Approves the destruction of particular closed meeting

Executive Council	recording(s) that are at least 18 months old, and for which approved minutes of the closed meeting already exist.
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LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 120/, Open Meetings Act.

DATED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E2 Exhibit - Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting

Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

A motion was made by _____, and seconded by _____, to adjourn to closed meeting to discuss:

- ☐ The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors, or specific volunteers of the Cooperative or legal counsel for the Cooperative, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor, or a volunteer of the Cooperative or against legal counsel for the Cooperative to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).
- ☐ Collective negotiating matters between the Cooperative and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).
- ☐ The selection of a person to fill a public office, including a vacancy in a public office, when the Cooperative is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance, or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the Cooperative is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).
- ☐ Evidence or testimony presented in open hearing, or in closed hearing where authorized by law, to a quasi-adjudicative body, as defined in the Open Meetings Act, provided that the body prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision with its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4).
- ☐ Evidence or testimony presented to the Council regarding denial of admission to school events or property pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-24, provided that the Council prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5), added by P.A. 103-311.
- ☐ The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the Cooperative, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).
- ☐ The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the Cooperative. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6).
- ☐ The sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(7).
- ☐ Security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(8).
- ☐ Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).

☐ The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10).

☐ Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular Cooperative has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the Cooperative finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).

☐ The establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Government and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the Cooperative or any intergovernmental risk management association or self-insurance pool of which the Cooperative is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(12).

☐ Self-evaluation, practices and procedures or professional ethics, when meeting with a representative of a statewide association of which the Cooperative is a member. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16).

☐ Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21).

☐ Meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involves internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(29).

Closed Meeting Roll Call:

"Yeas"	"Nays"

Motion: ☐ Carried ☐ Failed

DATED : August 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E3 Exhibit - Closed Meeting Minutes

Closed Meeting Minutes

Items in bold are required by 5 ILCS 120/2.06(a)(1)-(3). Non-bolded items align with best practices.

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Location: _____

Name of person(s) taking and recording the minutes: _____

Name of person presiding: _____

Members in attendance:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Members absent:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Summary of the discussion on all matters (as specified in the vote to close the meeting):

Basis for the finding that litigation is probable or imminent, if applicable (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)):

Time of adjournment or return to open meeting: _____

The Executive Council, during its semi-annual review of closed session minutes, has decided these minutes no longer need confidential treatment. Semi-annual means every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the council. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.

☐ **These minutes are available for public inspection as of:** _____
(Date)

DATED: June 5, 2023

2:220-E4 Exhibit - Open Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes Protocol

1. Meeting minutes are the permanent record of the proceedings during a Executive Council meeting. All Council action must be recorded in the minutes; thus, the minutes focus on Council action.
2. The minutes only include information provided at the meeting. Information may not be corrected or updated in the minutes unless it was discussed at the meeting.
3. Minutes include a summary of the Council's discussion on an agenda topic; the minutes do not state what is said verbatim. The minutes do not repeat the same point made by different individuals. If appropriate, the minutes include a brief background and an explanation of the circumstances surrounding an issue discussed. The minutes do not include the names of members making specific points during discussion. Requests from individual Council members to include their vote or an opinion are handled according to Council policy 2:220, *Executive Council Meeting Procedure*.
4. The minutes include the topic of reports that are made to the Council including reports from the Executive Director or a Council committee. Written reports are filed with the minutes but do not become part of the minutes.
5. The minutes note when a member is not present for the entire meeting due to late arrival and/or early departure.
6. Although items may be considered by the Council in a different order than appeared on the agenda, items in the minutes are generally recorded in the same order as they appeared on the agenda. When a meeting is reconvened on a different date, the minutes must describe what happened on each meeting date.
7. The minutes should be recorded in an objective but positive/constructive tone. Answers and explanations, rather than questions, are recorded. Writing style, including choice of words and sentence structure, is at the discretion of the individual recording the minutes.
8. The minutes include individuals' names who speak during the meeting's public participation segment as well as the topics they address. All written documents presented at a Council meeting are filed with the minutes but do not become part of the minutes.
9. The following template generally governs meeting minutes.

Open Meeting Minutes

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Type of meeting: ☐ Regular ☐ Special ☐ Reconvened or rescheduled ☐ Emergency

Name of person taking the minutes: _____

Name of person presiding: _____

Members in attendance:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Members absent:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Members in attendance remotely:

5.

6.

7.
1.

2.

3.

Approval of Agenda

List any items removed from the consent agenda:

Motion made by: _____

Motion: ☐ To approve

☐ To add items as follows: *(No action may be taken on new agenda items.)*

Motion seconded by: _____

Action: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes *(Needed only if this item is not on the consent agenda.)*

Minutes from the Council meeting held on: _____

Motion made by: _____

Motion: ☐ To approve

☐ To approve subject to incorporation of the following amendment(s):

Motion seconded by:

Action: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed

Approval of Items on Consent Agenda *(This may include expense advancements, reimbursements, and/or purchase orders regulated by the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act (see Council policies 2:125, Council Member Compensation; Expenses, and 5:60, Expenses)*

Summary of discussion:

Motion to approve the consent agenda made by: _____

Motion seconded by: _____

Roll Call: *(Needed when consent agenda contains an item involving the expenditure of money.)*

"Yeas"

"Nays"

Action: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed

Public Comments *(Reproduce this section for each individual making a comment.)*

The following individual appeared and commented on the topic noted below: *(Include the title of any documents presented to the Council.)*

Name: _____

Topic:

Remaining Agenda Items *(Reproduce this section for each agenda item.)*

Agenda item:

Summary of discussion:

Motion made by: _____

Motion to:

Motion seconded by:

Action: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed

(If a roll call vote occurred, record the vote of individual Council members.)

"Yeas"

"Nays"

If Applicable, Approval of Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting *(Insert 2:220-E2, Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting.)*

Approval of Motion to Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by: _____

Motion seconded by:

Action: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed

Time of adjournment: _____

Post-Meeting Action

Date minutes approved: _____

Date minutes were available for public inspection:

Date minutes were available for public inspection: _____

Date minutes were posted on Cooperative website: _____

DATED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E5 Exhibit - Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

Logging and Review Process

Step 1. The Council Secretary or Recording Secretary maintains a log of the closed meeting minutes that are unavailable for public inspection. The meeting minutes are logged according to the reason the Council held the closed meeting. 2:220-E6, *Log of Closed Meeting Minutes*.

Step 2. The Council meets in closed session to review the log of unreleased closed meeting minutes. The Council or Recording Secretary brings a copy of all unreleased closed meeting minutes and, if requested, allows Council members to review the actual minutes. The Council identifies which closed meeting minutes or portions thereof no longer need confidential treatment. Use *Report Following the Council's Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes*, below.

Step 3. At least semi-annually (every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the Council), in an open meeting, the Council takes action to release for public inspection those minutes, or portions thereof, no longer needing confidential treatment. Use *Action to Accept*, below. Closed meeting minutes will not be released for public inspection if confidential treatment is needed to protect the public interest or the privacy of an individual, including: (1) student disciplinary cases or other matters relating to an individual student, and (2) personnel files and employees' and Council members' personal information. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.

Step 4. The Council or Recording Secretary: (1) updates the log of unreleased closed meeting minutes to remove any minutes that the Council made available for public inspection; (2) makes a notation on any applicable closed meeting minutes of the Council's action to release it or a portion of it for public inspection; (3) continues to log new closed meeting minutes that the Council has not released for public inspection (2:220-E6, *Log of Closed Meeting Minutes*), and (4) maintains logs for access to closed session minutes pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e).

Report Following the Council's Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

The Executive Council met on _____ in closed session to conduct its semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes that have not been released for public inspection.

The closed meeting minutes, or portions thereof, from the following dates no longer require confidential treatment: *(insert closed meeting dates)*

--	--	--	--	--	--

The need for confidentiality still exists as to all remaining closed meeting minutes to protect an individual's privacy or the Cooperative's interests.

Action to Accept the Council's Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

Open meeting date: _____

Motion to approve the Council's semi-annual review of unreleased closed meeting minutes and to release for public inspection those minutes, or portions thereof, that the Council identified as no longer needing confidential treatment made by: _____

Motion seconded by: _____

Action: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed

DATED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E6 Exhibit - Log of Closed Meeting Minutes

The purpose of this log is to facilitate the Council's semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes. *Semi-annual* means every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the Council. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653. See 2:220-E5, *Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes*.

The Council Secretary or Recording Secretary shall maintain a list of closed meeting minutes, arranged according to the reason for the closed meeting, that have not been released for public inspection.

Closed Session Held to Discuss:	Dates of Closed Sessions		
Specific employee(s), specific independent contractors, specific volunteers, or Cooperative legal counsel; however, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with [the Open Meetings Act]. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).			
Collective negotiating matters or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2).			
Selection of a person to fill a vacancy on the Council. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(3).			
Evidence or testimony presented in a hearing where authorized by law. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4).			
Evidence or testimony presented to the Council regarding denial of admission to school events or property pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-24, provided that the Council prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5), added by P.A. 103-311.			
Purchase or lease of real property. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5).			
Setting of a price for sale or lease of Cooperative property. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6).			
Sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment			

Sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(7).			
Security procedures and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(8).			
Student disciplinary cases. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9). <i>Minutes of meetings held for this reason shall never be released to protect the individual student's privacy.</i>			
Any matter involving an individual student. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10). <i>Minutes of meetings held for this reason shall never be released to protect the individual student's privacy.</i>			
Litigation, when an action against, affecting, or on behalf of the Cooperative has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the Council finds that an action is probable or imminent. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).			
Establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Government and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the Cooperative or any intergovernmental risk management association or self-insurance pool. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(12).			
Self-evaluation, practices and procedures or professional ethics, when meeting with an IASB representative. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(16).			
Minutes of meetings lawfully closed, whether for purposes of approval or semi-annual review. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21).			
Meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involves internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(29).			

DATED : February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E7 Exhibit - Access to Closed Meeting Minutes and Verbatim Recordings

The Council must allow its duly elected officials or appointed officials filling a vacancy of an elected office access to closed session minutes and verbatim recordings. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e). The following subheads implement the logistics of granting this access.

Access to Closed Meeting Minutes

Duplicate this section for each grant of access to closed meeting minutes.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Storage Location: _____

Name of person(s) responsible for storing the closed meeting minutes: _____

☐ **Access granted**

Date access occurred: _____ Start time: _____ End time: _____

Requesting Council member's name *(Please print)* _____

In the presence of: *(Check appropriate box and insert name on the line.)*

☐ Recording Secretary _____

☐ Executive Director or designated administrator

☐ Elected Council member _____

For requesting Council member: *(Read the following and sign below)*

While the Open Meetings Act does not provide a cause of action against me or the Council for disclosing closed session discussions (*Swanson v. Bd. of Police Commissioners*, 197 Ill.App.3d 592 (2nd Dist. 1990)), I acknowledge and understand that any disclosures by me of information in the closed session minutes not yet released to the public could subject me to a possible civil action alleging that I created harm to another, i.e., an intentional tort(s).

Requesting Council Member Signature

Date

Verbatim Recording Access

Duplicate this section for each grant of access to verbatim recordings.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Storage Location: _____

Name of person(s) responsible for storing the verbatim recording: _____

☐ **Access granted**

Date access occurred: _____ Start time: _____ End time: _____

Requesting Council member's name *(Please print)* _____

In the presence of: *(Check appropriate box and insert name on the line.)*

☐ Recording Secretary _____

☐ Executive Director or designated administrator _____

☐ Elected Council member _____

☐ **Access denied** ☐ **Access unavailable.** Verbatim recording requested is older than 18 months and was destroyed pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c).

For requesting Council member: *(Read the following and sign below.)*

While the Open Meetings Act does not provide a cause of action against me or the Council for disclosing closed session discussions (*Swanson v. Bd. of Police Commissioners*, 197 Ill.App.3d 592 (2nd Dist. 1990)), I acknowledge and understand that any disclosures by me of information in the closed session verbatim recordings could subject me to a possible civil action alleging that I created harm to another, i.e., an intentional tort(s).

Requesting Council Member Signature

Date

DATED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E8 Exhibit - Executive Council Records Maintenance Requirements and FAQs

Open Meetings Act

The Open Meetings Act (OMA) requires public bodies to "keep written minutes of all their meetings, whether open or closed, and a verbatim record of all their closed meetings in the form of an audio or video recording." 5 ILCS 120/2.06(a). Minutes must include, but are not limited to: (1) the date, time, and place of the meeting; (2) the members of the public body recorded as either present or absent and whether the members were physically present or present by means of video or audio conference; and (3) a summary of discussion on all matters proposed, deliberated, or decided, and record of any votes taken. Id.

The remainder of Section 2.06 addresses the approval of open meeting minutes, the treatment of verbatim recordings of closed meetings, the semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes, the confidential nature of closed meeting minutes, and the right of persons to address public officials under rules established and recorded by the public body. The requirements of Section 2.06, as well as OMA requirements pertaining to Council agendas, are included in policy 2:220, *Executive Council Meeting Procedure*.

Exhibit 2:220-E3, *Closed Meeting Minutes*, provides a sample template for keeping closed meeting minutes that incorporates the requirements of Section 2.06 of OMA. It also includes an area to designate if the Council has determined, pursuant to Section 2.06(d), that the closed meeting minutes no longer need confidential treatment.

Exhibit 2:220-E4, *Open Meeting Minutes*, contains a protocol for open meeting minutes that incorporates the requirements of Section 2.06 of OMA. It also provides a sample template for keeping open meeting minutes.

Exhibit 2:220-E5, *Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes*, contains a process for implementing the semi-annual review of closed meeting minutes, and exhibit 2:220-E6, *Log of Closed Meeting Minutes*, is designed to facilitate this semi-annual review

(every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the Council). 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.

Exhibit 2:220-E9, *Requirements for No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video During Disaster Declaration*, contains a process for compliance with 105 ILCS 120/7(e), added by P.A. 101-640, when a Council is meeting without a physical quorum present at the meeting location during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns.

Local Records Act

The Local Records Act (LRA) provides that public records, including "any book, paper, map, photograph, digitized electronic material, or other official documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made, produced, executed or received by any agency or officer pursuant to law or in connections with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by such agency or officer" must be preserved unless the State Local Records Commission has given permission to destroy those records. 50 ILCS 205/3 and 7. Council records, including agendas, meeting packets and meeting minutes, fall into this definition.

Public bodies located in Cook County must work with the Local Records Commission of Cook County to determine how long they must retain public records. Public bodies located outside of Cook County must work with the Downstate Local Records Commission to determine how long they must retain public records.

Policy 2:250, *Access to Cooperative Public Records*, contains a subhead entitled **Preserving Public Records** which provides as follows:

Public records, including email messages, shall be preserved and cataloged if: (1) they are evidence of the Cooperative's organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities, (2) they contain informational data appropriate for preservation, (3) their retention is required by State or federal law, or (4) they are subject to a retention request by the Council Attorney (e.g., a litigation hold), Cooperative auditor, or other individual authorized by the Executive Council or State or federal law to make such a request. Unless its retention is required as described in items numbered 3 or 4 above, a public record, as defined by the Illinois Local Records Act, may be destroyed when authorized by the Local Records Commission.

See the sample policy, 2:220, *Executive Council Meeting Procedure*, for all relevant footnotes. Also see administrative procedure 2:250-AP2, *Protocols for Record Preservation and Development of Retention Schedules*, for recommendations regarding Cooperative records retention protocols and links to web-based record management resources.

Open Meeting Minutes

Are we required to approve them?	Must they be semi-annually reviewed?	May we release them to the public?	May we destroy them?
<p>Yes, within 30 days or at the next subsequent meeting, whichever is later.</p> <p><i>A public body shall approve the minutes of its open meeting within 30 days after that meeting or at the public body's second subsequent regular meeting, whichever is later. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(b).</i></p>	<p>No.</p> <p>Unlike the closed meeting requirement, OMA does not contain semi-annual review requirements for open meeting minutes.</p>	<p>Yes, must within 10 days after minutes are approved.</p> <p><i>The minutes of meetings open to the public shall be available for public inspection within 10 days after the approval of such minutes by the public body. Beginning July 1, 2006, at the time it complies with other requirements of this subsection, a public body that has a website that the full-time staff of the public body maintains shall post the minutes of a regular meeting of its governing body open to the public on the public body's website within 10 days after the approval of the minutes by the public body. Beginning July 1, 2006, any minutes of meetings open to</i></p>	<p>No.</p> <p>There is no OMA provision permitting the destruction of open meeting minutes, and they must be preserved unless the State Local Records Commission has given permission to destroy them.</p> <p>If a public body would like to destroy open meeting minutes, then it must comply with the LRA and work with its Local Records Commission. It is highly unlikely, however, that the Local Records Commission would approve of their destruction.</p>

		the public posted on the public body's website shall remain posted on the website for at least 60 days after their initial posting. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(b).	
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Open Meeting Verbatim Recordings

Are we required to approve them?	Must they be semi-annually reviewed?	May we release them to the public?	May we destroy them?
<p>No.</p> <p>OMA does not require public bodies to approve verbatim recordings of open meetings.</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>Unlike the closed meeting requirement, OMA does not require public bodies to keep verbatim recordings of open meetings, <i>unless</i> the public body is meeting without the physical presence of a quorum during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns. 5 ILCS 120/7(e). OMA does not contain semi-annual review requirements for open meeting verbatim recordings.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Unlike the closed meeting requirement, OMA does not require public bodies to keep verbatim recordings of open meetings, <i>unless</i> the public body is meeting without the physical presence of a quorum during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns. 5 ILCS 120/7(e). If a public body makes verbatim recordings of open meetings, then such recordings are subject to public disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. 5 ILCS 140/.</p>	<p>Open meeting verbatim recordings made of meetings held without the physical presence of a quorum of a public body during a disaster declaration related to public health concerns may be destroyed after 18 months if prerequisites are met. (See <u>Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings</u> subhead, below).</p> <p><i>[P]ublic bodies holding open meetings under this subsection (e) must also keep a verbatim record of all their meetings in the form of an audio or video recording. Verbatim records made under this paragraph (9) shall be made available to the public under, and are otherwise subject to, the provisions of Section 2.06. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9).</i></p> <p>In all other cases, if a public body would like to destroy open meeting verbatim recordings,</p>

			then it must comply with the LRA and work with its Local Records Commission.
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Closed Meeting Minutes

Are we required to approve them?	Must they be semi-annually reviewed?	May we release them to the public?	May we destroy them?
<p>Yes.</p> <p>OMA does not directly state public bodies are required to approve closed meeting minutes, nor does it set a time frame for such approval. However, OMA Section 2.06(d) requires public bodies to meet at least semi-annually to "review minutes of all closed meetings." 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d).</p> <p>Moreover, OMA Section 2.06(c) specifically allows the destruction of closed meeting verbatim recordings only if certain conditions are met, one of which is that "the public body approves minutes of the closed meeting that meet the written minutes requirements of subsection (a) of this Section." 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c)(2). Both of these tasks would be difficult to achieve if closed meeting minutes were not first approved.</p> <p>One practice is to approve closed meeting minutes within</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p><i>Each public body shall periodically meet to review all existing minutes of all prior closed meetings (this includes records from all time that the Council has been in existence). Meetings to review minutes shall occur every 6 months, or as soon thereafter as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the public body. At such meetings a determination shall be made, and reported in an open session that (1) the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes or (2) that the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.</i> 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d), amended by P.A. 102-653.</p>	<p>Yes, if prerequisites are met.</p> <p><i>Minutes of meetings closed to the public shall be available only after the public body determines that it is no longer necessary to protect the public interest or the privacy of an individual by keeping them confidential.</i> 5 ILCS 120/2.06(f).</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>There is no OMA provision permitting the destruction of closed meeting minutes, and they must be preserved unless the State Local Records Commission has given permission to destroy them.</p> <p>In addition:</p> <p><i>No minutes of meetings closed to the public shall be removed from the public body's main office or official storage location, except by vote of the public body or by court order.</i> 5 ILCS 120/2.06(f).</p>

the same time frame that open meeting minutes are approved - within 30 days of the meeting or at the next subsequent meeting, whichever is later.			If a public body would like to destroy closed meeting minutes, then it must comply with the LRA and work with its Local Records Commission. It is highly unlikely, however, that the Local Records Commission would approve of their destruction.
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Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings

Are we required to approve them?	Must they be semi-annually reviewed?	May we release them to the public?	May we destroy them?
No. OMA does not require approval of closed meeting verbatim recordings.	No. OMA does not require semi-annual review of closed meeting verbatim recordings.	Possibly but unlikely. <i>Unless the public body has made a determination that the verbatim recording no longer requires confidential treatment or otherwise consents to disclosure, the verbatim record of a meeting closed to the public shall not be open for public inspection or subject to discovery in any administrative or judicial proceeding other than one brought to enforce this Act. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e).</i> But see <i>Kodish v. Oakbrook Terrace Fire Protection Dist.</i> (235 F.R.D. 447 (N.D.Ill. 2006), where a federal district court ordered that closed meeting verbatim recordings be disclosed to the Plaintiff in discovery because his primary claim was brought under federal law.	Yes, after 18 months if prerequisites are met. <i>The verbatim record may be destroyed without notification to or the approval of a records commission or the State Archivist under the Local Records Act or the State Records Act no less than 18 months after the completion of the meeting recorded but only after: 1.) the public body approves the destruction of a particular recording; and 2.) the public body approves minutes of the closed meeting that meet the written minutes requirements of subsection (a) of this Section. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c).</i> In addition: <i>No verbatim recordings shall be recorded or removed from the public body's main office or official storage location, except by vote of the public body or by court order. 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e).</i>

DATED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:220-E9 Exhibit - Requirements for No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video During Disaster Declaration

Use this exhibit to document the Council's and/or its committee(s)'s (5 ILCS 120/1.02) processes to comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) when a council and/or its committee(s) must meet during a disaster declaration related to a public health emergency/concern and the meeting will have no physical presence of a quorum and participation by audio or video.

Note: If a Council committee uses this exhibit, replace Executive Council Chairperson, Vice Council Chairperson, and Supt. with the appropriate committee leaders.

Consult the Council Attorney for guidance.

Documentation of OMA Requirements for Council Members to Participate in a Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum

☐ The Governor or the Director of the Ill. Dept. of Public Health has issued a disaster declaration related to a public health emergency because of a disaster as defined in 20 ILCS 3305/4, and all or part of the jurisdiction of the Council is covered by the disaster area. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(1), amended by P.A. 101-640. **Note:** OMA uses "public health concerns," but the Ill. Emergency Management Act (IEMA) uses "public health emergency;" this exhibit matches the IEMA term because it governs disaster declarations.

Insert Disaster Declaration or Executive Order number [_____] or attach to this document.

☐ The Executive Council Chairperson or, if the office is vacant or the President is absent or unable to perform the office's duties, the Council Vice Chairperson, or if neither the President nor Council Vice Chairperson are present or able to perform this determination, the Executive Director (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(2), amended by P.A. 101-640, and 140/2(e)) signs below that the following three **Steps** were executed by:

Step 1. Determining whether the meeting is a bona fide emergency (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(7), amended by P.A. 101-640) (*check Yes or No, below*):

☐ Yes; it is an emergency meeting, and I:

- A. Notified the Council members and the public, including any news medium which has filed an annual request for notice of meetings as soon as practicable, but in any event prior to the holding of such meeting pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.02(a) and 120/7(e)(7)(A), amended by P.A. 101-640;
- B. Stated the nature of the emergency at the beginning of the meeting; and
- C. Provided the Executive Director or Council Secretary the resources necessary during the meeting to keep a verbatim record of the meeting, **for both open and closed**, and managed it the same way that the Council complies with the verbatim recording requirements for closed meetings (see exhibit 2:220-E1, *Council Treatment of Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings and Minutes*). **Note:** In this situation, a verbatim recording is not limited to closed meetings only.
- D. Move to Step 2, below.

☐ No; it is a regular or special meeting, and I:

- A. Ensured that the Council provided 48 hours' notice of the meeting to all Council members, to any news medium on file in the Cooperative that have requested notice of meetings pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.02(a), and to members of the public by posting it on the Cooperative's website. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(7), amended by P.A. 101-640. **Note:** 5 ILCS 120/7(e), amended by P.A. 101-

640 does not have the "if any" exception for Executive Councils that do not have websites. Consult the Council attorney regarding alternate ways to communicate notice of a meeting when the Cooperative does not have a website and a Disaster Declaration or Executive Order has been issued.

Insert meeting date and time, and a link to the meeting notice or attach a copy of the notice to this document.

B. Moves to Step 2, below.

Step 2. Determining whether it is practical, prudent, or feasible for any in-person attendance at the regular meeting location (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(2), amended by P.A. 101-640). (*Check Yes or No, below*):

☐ Yes; in-person attendance is practical, prudent, or feasible, and I:

- A. Ensured that at least one Council member, the Council Attorney, or the Executive Director was physically present at the regular meeting location (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(5), amended by P.A. 101-640), and
- B. Verified that members of the public who were present could hear all discussion and testimony and all votes of the members of the Council. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(4), amended by P.A. 101-640.
- C. Move to Step 3, below.

☐ No; in-person attendance is not practical, prudent, or feasible, and I:

- A. Made a written determination referring to the specific Executive Order or Disaster Declaration citing the public health concern/emergency that applies to the Council and the meeting. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(1) and (2), amended by P.A. 101-640.
- B. Included the written determination made in letter A., above, on the Council's published notice and agenda for the alternative arrangements for the meeting. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(7)(A)-(B), amended by P.A. 101-640.
- C. Offered the alternative arrangements to the public by offering a telephone number or a web-based link. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(4), amended by P.A. 101-640.

Insert a link to the meeting notice or attach a copy of the notice or refer to above if already attached to this document (see above).

Include this written determination on the Council/committee's published notice and agenda for the audio or video meeting, and in the meeting minutes.

D. Move to Step 3, below.

Step 3. During the meeting, I:

☐ Directed the Recording Secretary to, in addition to the requirements for open meetings under OMA, also keep verbatim record of the open meeting by recording it and making it open and available to the public under all provisions of OMA. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9), amended by P.A. 101-640. *Sample text follows below in the subhead below* **Report to the Public Following the Council's Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum.**

☐ Read my written determination referring to the specific Executive Order or Disaster Declaration citing the public health concern/emergency that applies to the Council and the meeting and directed the Recording Secretary to include it in the meeting minutes.

☐ Ensured that any interested member of the public has access to contemporaneously hear all discussion, testimony, and roll call votes. 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(4), amended by P.A. 101-640.

☐ Requested the Recording Secretary to enter into the appropriate minutes of the Council that each Council member participating in the meeting, wherever their physical locations, announced:

1. Themselves present (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(3), amended by P.A. 101-640), and
2. A verification that they could hear one another and all discussion and testimony. Id.

See 2:220-E3, *Closed Meeting Minutes* and/or 2:220-E4, *Open Meeting Minutes*.

Attach to this document copies or information about where these minutes may be found.

☐ Announced and considered each Council member participating in the meeting present at the meeting for purposes of determining a quorum and participating in all proceedings (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(8), amended by P.A. 101-640) and directed the Recording Secretary to reflect it in the minutes (best practice for transparency).

☐ Conducted all votes by roll call, so each Council member's vote on each issue could be identified and recorded (5 ILCS 120/7(e)(6), amended by P.A. 101-640), and ensured that the Recording Secretary entered all votes as **Roll Call Votes** (*Use exhibit 2:220-E4, Open Meeting Minutes but ensure all votes are recorded as roll call votes pursuant to the example below*):

"Yeas"	"Nays"

Motion: ☐ Carried ☐ Failed

☐ Executed or directed execution of the subhead below **Report to the Public Following the Council's Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum**.

Report to the Public Following the Council's Meeting with No Physical Presence of Quorum

The text below may be used for the actual report.

The Executive Council met on *[insert date]* with no physical presence of quorum to conduct its business.

The verbatim *[circle one]* audio | video recording of this meeting is available to the public under all provisions of OMA and will be destroyed pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c)(no less than 18 months after the completion of the meeting recorded but only after: (1) the Council approves the destruction of the particular recording; and (2) the Council approves minutes of the meeting that meet the written minutes requirements of OMA). 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9), amended by P.A. 101-640.

Insert links to the verbatim recording of meeting here or attach to this document.

Note: Consult the council attorney for guidance on the destruction of a verbatim recording of an open meeting without the physical presence of a quorum. While 5 ILCS 120/2.06(c) refers to the process for destroying closed session verbatim recordings, 5 ILCS 120/7(e)(9), amended by P.A. 101-640, applies that process for destroying closed session verbatim recordings to the destruction of the verbatim open session recordings that are required when a council determines it is necessary for it to meet without the physical presence of a quorum due to a public health emergency.

Completed By: _____

Title: _____

DATED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:230 Public Participation at Executive Council Meetings and Petitions to the Council

During each regular and special open meeting of the Council, any person may comment to or ask questions of the Executive Council (*public participation*), subject to the reasonable constraints established and recorded in this policy's guidelines below. The Council listens to comments or questions during public participation; responses to comments to or questions of the Council are most often managed through policy 3:30, *Chain of Command*.

To preserve sufficient time for the Council to conduct its business, any person appearing before the Council is expected to follow these guidelines:

1. Address the Council only at the appropriate time as indicated on the agenda and when recognized by the Executive Council Chairperson. This includes following the directives of the Executive Council Chairperson to maintain order and decorum for all.
2. Use a sign-in sheet, if requested.
3. Identify oneself and be brief. Ordinarily, the time for any one person to address the Council during public participation shall be limited to five minutes. In unusual circumstances, and when an individual has made a request to speak for a longer period of time, the Executive Council Chairperson may allow a person to speak for more than five minutes. If multiple individuals wish to address the Council on the same subject, the group is encouraged to appoint a spokesperson.
4. Observe, when necessary and appropriate, the Executive Council Chairperson's authority to:
 - a. Shorten the time for each person to address the Council during public participation to conserve time and give the maximum number of people an opportunity to speak; and/or
 - b. Determine procedural matters regarding public participation not otherwise covered in Council policy.
5. Conduct oneself with respect and civility toward others and otherwise abide by Council policy 8:30, *Visitors to and Conduct on School Property*.

Petitions or written correspondence to the Council shall be presented to the Council in the next regular Council packet.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-6 and 5/10-16.

5 ILCS 120/2.06, Open Meetings Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:220 (Executive Council Meeting Procedure), 8:10 (Connection with the Community), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:240 Council Policy Development

The Executive Council governs using written policies. Written policies ensure legal compliance, establish Council processes, articulate Cooperative ends, delegate authority, and define operating limits. Council policies also provide the basis for monitoring progress toward Cooperative ends.

Policy Development

Anyone may propose new policies, changes to existing policies, or deletion of existing policies. Staff suggestions should be processed through the Executive Director. Suggestions from all others should be made to the Executive Council Chairperson or the Executive Director.

The Executive Director is responsible for: (1) providing relevant policy information and data to the Council, (2) notifying those who will implement or be affected by or required to implement a proposed policy and obtaining their advice and suggestions, and (3) having policy recommendations drafted into written form for Council deliberation. The Executive Director shall seek the counsel of the Council Attorney when appropriate.

Policy Adoption and Dissemination

Policies or policy revisions will not be adopted at the Council meeting at which they are first introduced, except when: (1) appropriate for a consent agenda because no Council discussion is required, or (2) necessary or prudent in order to meet emergency or special conditions or to be legally compliant. Further Council consideration may be given at a subsequent meeting(s) and after opportunity for community input. The adoption of a policy will serve to supersede all previously adopted policies on the same topic.

The Council policies are available for public inspection in the Cooperative's main office during regular office hours and on the Cooperative's website. Copy requests should be made pursuant to Council policy 2:250, *Access to Cooperative Public Records*.

Council Policy Review and Monitoring

The Council will periodically review its policies for relevancy, monitor its policies for effectiveness, and consider whether any modifications are required. The Council may use an annual policy review and monitoring calendar.

Words Importing Gender

Throughout this policy manual, words importing the masculine and/or feminine gender include all gender neutral/inclusive pronouns.

Executive Director Implementation

The Council will support any reasonable interpretation of Council policy made by the Executive Director. If reasonable minds differ, the Council will review the applicable policy and consider the need for further clarification.

In the absence of Council policy, the Executive Director is authorized to take appropriate action.

Suspension of Policies

The Council, by a majority vote of members present at any meeting, may temporarily suspend a Council policy except those provisions that are controlled by law or contract. The failure to suspend with a specific motion does not invalidate the Council action.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.5.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 2:250 (Access to Cooperative Public Records), 3:40 (Executive Director)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:250 Access to Cooperative Public Records

Full access to the Cooperative's *public records* is available to any person as provided in the III. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), this policy, and implementing procedures. The Executive Director or designee shall: (1) provide the Council with sufficient information and data to permit the Council to monitor the Cooperative's compliance with FOIA and this policy, and (2) report any FOIA requests during the Council's regular meetings along with the status of the Cooperative's response.

Freedom of Information Officer

The Executive Director shall serve as the Cooperative's Freedom of Information Officer and assumes all the duties and powers of that office as provided in FOIA and this policy. The Executive Director may delegate these duties and powers to one or more designees, but the delegation shall not relieve the Executive Director of the responsibility for the action that was delegated.

Definition

The Cooperative's *public records* are defined as records, reports, forms, writings, letters, memoranda, books, papers, maps, photographs, microfilms, cards, tapes, recordings, electronic data processing records, electronic communications, recorded information and all other documentary material pertaining to the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics, having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of the Cooperative.

Requesting Records

A request for inspection and/or copies of public records must be made in writing and may be submitted by personal delivery, mail, telefax, or email directed to the Cooperative's Freedom of Information Officer. Individuals making a request are not required to state a reason for the request other than to identify when the request is for a commercial purpose or when requesting a fee waiver. The Executive Director or designee shall instruct Cooperative employees to immediately forward any request for inspection and copying of a public record to the Cooperative's Freedom of Information Officer or designee.

Responding to Requests

The Freedom of Information Officer shall approve all requests for public records unless:

1. The requested material does not exist;
2. The requested material is exempt from inspection and copying by the Freedom of Information Act; or
3. Complying with the request would be unduly burdensome.

Within five business days after receipt of a request for access to a public record, the Freedom of Information Officer shall comply with or deny the request, unless the time for response is extended as specified in Section 3 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer may extend the time for a response for up to five business days from the original due date. If an extension is needed, the Freedom of Information Officer shall: (1) notify the person making the request of the reason for the extension, and (2) either inform the person of the date on which a response will be made, or agree with the person in writing on a compliance period.

The time periods are extended for responding to requests for records made for a *commercial purpose*, requests by a *recurrent requester*, or *voluminous requests*, as those terms are defined in Section 2 of FOIA. The time periods for responding to those requests are governed by Sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.6 of FOIA.

When responding to a request for a record containing both exempt and non-exempt material, the Freedom of Information Officer shall redact exempt material from the record before complying with the request.

Fees

Persons making a request for copies of public records must pay any and all applicable fees. The Freedom of Information Officer shall establish a fee schedule that complies with FOIA and this policy and is subject to the Council's review. The fee schedule shall include copying fees and all other fees to the maximum extent they are permitted by FOIA, including without limitation, search and review fees for responding to a request for a *commercial purpose* and fees, costs, and personnel hours in connection with responding to a *voluminous request*.

Copying fees, except when fixed by statute, shall be reasonably calculated to reimburse the Cooperative's actual cost for reproducing and certifying public records and for the use, by any person, of its equipment to copy records. In no case shall the copying fees exceed the maximum fees permitted by FOIA. If the Cooperative's actual copying costs are equal to or greater than the maximum fees permitted by FOIA, the Freedom of Information Officer is authorized to use FOIA's maximum fees as the Cooperative's fees. No copying fees shall be charged for: (1) the first 50 pages of black and white, letter or legal sized copies, or (2) electronic copies other than the actual cost of the recording medium, except if the response is to a *voluminous request*, as defined in FOIA.

A fee reduction is available if the request qualifies under Section 6 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer shall set the amount of the reduction taking into consideration the amount of material requested and the cost of copying it.

Provision of Copies and Access to Records

A public record that is the subject of an approved access request will be available for inspection or copying at the Cooperative's administrative office during regular business hours, unless other arrangements are made by the Freedom of Information Officer.

Many public records are immediately available from the Cooperative's website including, but not limited to, the process for requesting a public record. The Freedom of Information Officer shall direct a requester to the Cooperative's website if a requested record is available there. If the requester is unable to reasonably access the record online, he or she may resubmit the request for the record, stating his or her inability to reasonably access the record online, and the Cooperative shall make the requested record available for inspection and copying as otherwise provided in this policy.

Preserving Public Records

Public records, including email messages, shall be preserved and cataloged if: (1) they are evidence of the Cooperative's organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities, (2) they contain informational data appropriate for preservation, (3) their retention is required by State or federal law, or (4) they are subject to a retention request by the Council Attorney (e.g., a litigation hold), Cooperative auditor, or other individual authorized by the Executive Council or State or federal law to make such a request. Unless its retention is required as described in items numbered 3 or 4 above, a public record, as defined by the Illinois Local Records Act, may be destroyed when authorized by the Local Records Commission.

LEGAL REF.:

5 ILCS 140/, Illinois Freedom of Information Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-16 and 5/24A-7.1.

820 ILCS 40/11.

820 ILCS 130/5.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Council), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure

A student, parent/guardian, employee, or community member should notify any Cooperative Complaint Manager if he or she believes that the Executive Council, its employees, or its agents have violated his or her rights guaranteed by the State or Federal Constitution, State or Federal statute, or Council policy, or has a complaint regarding any one of the following:

1. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*
2. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, excluding Title IX complaints governed by Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*
3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §791 *et seq.*
4. Discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin prohibited by the Illinois Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d *et seq.*; and/or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.* (see Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*)
5. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.* (see also number 4, above, for discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin)
6. Sexual harassment prohibited by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a); Illinois Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/; and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.* (Title IX sexual harassment complaints are addressed under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*)
7. Breastfeeding accommodations for students, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60
8. Bullying, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7
9. Misuse of funds received for services to improve educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged or deprived children
10. Curriculum, instructional materials, and/or programs
11. Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, 820 ILCS 180/
12. Illinois Equal Pay Act of 2003, 820 ILCS 112/
13. Provision of services to homeless students
14. Illinois Whistleblower Act, 740 ILCS 174/
15. Misuse of genetic information prohibited by the Illinois Genetic Information Privacy Act, 410 ILCS 513/; and Titles I and II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000ff *et seq.*
16. Employee Credit Privacy Act, 820 ILCS 70/

The Complaint Manager will first attempt to resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure. If a formal complaint is filed under this policy, the Complaint Manager will address the complaint promptly and equitably. A student and/or parent/guardian filing a complaint under this policy may forego any informal suggestions and/or attempts to resolve it and may proceed directly to this grievance procedure. The Complaint Manager will not require a student or parent/guardian complaining of any form of harassment to attempt to resolve allegations directly with the accused (or the accused's parents/guardians); this includes mediation.

Right to Pursue Other Remedies Not Impaired

The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed under this policy shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies, e.g., criminal complaints, civil actions, etc. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies. If a person is pursuing another remedy subject to a complaint under this policy, the Cooperative will

continue with a simultaneous investigation under this policy.

Deadlines

All deadlines under this policy may be extended by the Complaint Manager as he or she deems appropriate. As used in this policy, *school business days* means days on which the Cooperative's main office is open.

Filing a Complaint

A person (hereinafter Complainant) who wishes to avail him or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any Cooperative Complaint Manager. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same gender. The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The Complaint Manager shall assist the Complainant as needed.

For any complaint alleging bullying and/or cyberbullying of students, the Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint under Council policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

For any complaint alleging sex discrimination that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall process and review the complaint under Council policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*.

For any complaint alleging harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint under Council policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

For any complaint alleging sexual harassment or other violation of Board policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy, and shall consider whether an investigation under Council policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, should be initiated.

Investigation Process

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf. The Complaint Manager shall ensure both parties have an equal opportunity to present evidence during an investigation. The complaint and identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the Complainant.

The identity of any student witnesses will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the parent/guardian of the student witness, or by the student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

The Complaint Manager will inform, at regular intervals, the person(s) filing a complaint under this policy about the status of the investigation. Within 30 school business days after the date the complaint was filed, the Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Executive Director. The Complaint Manager may request an extension of time from the Executive Director.

The Executive Director will keep the Council informed of all complaints.

If a complaint contains allegations involving the Executive Director or Council member(s), the written report shall be filed directly with the Council, which will make a decision in accordance with paragraph four of the following section of this policy.

Decision and Appeal

Within five school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's report, the Executive Director shall provide his or her written decision to the Complainant and the accused as well as to the Complaint Manager. All decisions shall be based upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.

Within 10 school business days after receiving the Executive Director's decision, the Complainant or the accused may appeal the decision to the Council by making a written request to the Complaint Manager. The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Council.

Within 30 school business days after an appeal of the Executive Director's decision, the Council shall affirm, reverse, or amend the Executive Director's decision or direct the Executive Director to gather additional information. Within five school business days after the Council's decision, the Executive Director shall inform the Complainant and the accused of the Council's action.

For complaints containing allegations involving the Executive Director or Council member(s), within 30 school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's or outside investigator's report, the Council shall provide its written decision to the Complainant and the accused, as well as to the Complaint Manager.

This policy shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Executive Director or Council. The failure to strictly follow the timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.

Appointing a Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers

The Executive Director shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator to manage the Cooperative's efforts to provide equal opportunity employment and educational opportunities and prohibit the harassment of employees, students, and others.

The Executive Director shall appoint a Title IX Coordinator to coordinate the Cooperative's efforts to comply with Title IX.

The Executive Director shall appoint at least one Complaint Manager to administer this policy. If possible, the Executive Director will appoint two Complaint Managers, each of a different gender. The Cooperative's Nondiscrimination Coordinator may be appointed as one of the Complaint Managers.

The Executive Director shall insert into this policy and keep current the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and the Complaint Managers.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Kristin Dunker

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833

Title IX Coordinator:

Kristin Dunker

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833

dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

217-443-8273

217-443-8273

Complaint Managers:

Kristin Dunker

Sarah Imhoff

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833

dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

imhoffs@vase.k12.il.us

217-443-8273

217-443-8273

LEGAL REF.:

8 U.S.C. §1324a *et seq.*, Immigration Reform and Control Act.

20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Education Rights Privacy Act.

20 U.S.C. §1400, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Education Amendments; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

29 U.S.C. §206(d), Equal Pay Act.

29 U.S.C. §621 *et seq.*, Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

29 U.S.C. §791 *et seq.*, Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

29 U.S.C. §2612, Family and Medical Leave Act.

42 U.S.C. §2000d *et seq.*, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

42 U.S.C. §2000ff *et seq.*, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.

42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*, Americans With Disabilities Act; 28 C.F.R. Part 35.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.8, 5/3-10, 5/10-20, 5/10-20.5, 5/10-20.7a, 5/10-20.60, 5/10-20.69, 5/10-20.75, 5/10-22.5, 5/22-19, 5/22-95 (final citation pending), 5/24-4, 5/27-1, 5/27-23.7, and 45/1-15.

5 ILCS 415/10(a)(2), Government Severance Pay Act.

5 ILCS 430/70-5(a), State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

410 ILCS 513/, Ill. Genetic Information Privacy Act.

740 ILCS 174/, Whistleblower Act.

740 ILCS 175/, Ill. False Claims Act.

775 ILCS 5/, Ill. Human Rights Act.

820 ILCS 70/, Employee Credit Privacy Act.

820 ILCS 112/, Equal Pay Act of 2003.

820 ILCS 180/, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act; 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 280.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.240, 200.40, 226.50, and 226.570.

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 8:70 (Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities), 8:95 (Parental Involvement), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

2:265 Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure

Sexual harassment affects a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to work. Providing an educational and workplace environment free from sexual harassment is an important Cooperative goal. The Cooperative does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities, and it complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106) concerning everyone in the Cooperative's education programs and activities, including applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and third parties.

Title IX Sexual Harassment Prohibited

Sexual harassment as defined in Title IX (Title IX Sexual Harassment) is prohibited. Any person, including a Cooperative employee or agent, or student, engages in Title IX Sexual Harassment whenever that person engages in conduct on the basis of an individual's sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A Cooperative employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the Cooperative's educational program or activity; or
3. *Sexual assault* as defined in 20 U.S.C. §1092(f)(6)(A)(v), *dating violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(11), *domestic violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(12), or *stalking* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(36).

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities, rape, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

Definitions from 34 C.F.R. §106.30

Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Education program or activity includes locations, events, or circumstances where the Cooperative has substantial control over both the *Respondent* and the context in which alleged sexual harassment occurs.

Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint means a document filed by a *Complainant* or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a *Respondent* and requesting that the Cooperative investigate the allegation.

Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of the conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Supportive measures mean non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the *Complainant* or the *Respondent* before or after the filing of a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* or where no *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* has been filed.

Title IX Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response

The Executive Director or designee will ensure that the Cooperative prevents and responds to allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment as follows:

1. Ensures that the Cooperative's comprehensive health education program in Council policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, incorporates (a) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention programs in grades pre-K through 12, and (b) age-appropriate education about the warning signs, recognition, dangers, and prevention of teen dating violence in grades 7-12. This includes incorporating student social and emotional development into the Cooperative's educational program as required by State law and in alignment with Council policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*.
2. Incorporates education and training for school staff pursuant to policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, and as recommended by the Executive Director, Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, or a Complaint Manager.
3. Notifies applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and collective bargaining units of this policy and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator by, at a minimum, prominently displaying them on the Cooperative's website, if any, and in each handbook made available to such persons.

Making a Report

A person who wishes to make a report under this Title IX Sexual Harassment grievance procedure may make a report to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the person is comfortable speaking. A person who wishes to make a report may choose to report to a person of the same gender.

School employees shall respond to incidents of sexual harassment by promptly making or forwarding the report to the Title IX Coordinator. An employee who fails to promptly make or forward a report may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

The Executive Director shall insert into this policy and keep current the name, office address, email address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator.

Title IX Coordinator:

Kristin Dunker
Name

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833
Address

dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us
Email

217-443-8273
Telephone

Processing and Reviewing a Report or Complaint

Upon receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator and/or designee will promptly contact the *Complainant* to: (1) discuss the availability of supportive measures, (2) consider the *Complainant's* wishes with respect to *supportive measures*, (3) inform the *Complainant* of the availability of *supportive measures* with or without the filing of a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint*, and (4) explain to the *Complainant* the process for filing a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint*.

Further, the Title IX Coordinator will analyze the report to identify and determine whether there is another or an additional appropriate method(s) for processing and reviewing it. For any report received, the Title IX Coordinator shall review Council policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; 5:120, *Employee Ethics*; *Code of Professional Conduct*; and *Conflict of Interest*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*; 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*; and 7:190, *Student Behavior*, to determine if the allegations in the report require further action.

Reports of alleged sexual harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the Cooperative's duty to investigate and maintain an educational program or activity that is productive, respectful, and free of sexual harassment.

Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Grievance Process

When a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will investigate it or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation.

The Executive Director or designee shall implement procedures to ensure that all *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaints* are processed and reviewed according to a Title IX grievance process that fully complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45. The Cooperative's grievance process shall, at a minimum:

1. Treat *Complainants* and *Respondents* equitably by providing remedies to a *Complainant* where the *Respondent* is determined to be responsible for sexual harassment, and by following a grievance process that complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45 before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions against a *Respondent*.
2. Require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence - including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence - and provide that credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a *Complainant*, *Respondent*, or witness.
3. Require that any individual designated by the Cooperative as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated by the Cooperative to facilitate an informal resolution process:
 - a. Not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual *Complainant* or *Respondent*.
 - b. Receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the Cooperative's *education program or activity*, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process (including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable), and how to serve impartially.
4. Require that any individual designated by the Cooperative as an investigator receiving training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.
5. Require that any individual designated by the Cooperative as a decision-maker receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the *Complainant's* sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.
6. Include a presumption that the *Respondent* is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
7. Include reasonably prompt timeframes for conclusion of the grievance process.
8. Describe the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies the Cooperative may implement following any determination of responsibility.
9. Base all decisions upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.

10. Include the procedures and permissible bases for the *Complainant* and *Respondent* to appeal.
11. Describe the range of *supportive measures* available to *Complainants* and *Respondents*.
12. Not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

Enforcement

Any Cooperative employee who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Council in the context of the relationship of the third party to the Cooperative, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any Cooperative student who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with student behavior policies. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding sexual harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy does not increase or diminish the ability of the Cooperative or the parties to exercise any other rights under existing law.

Retaliation Prohibited

The Cooperative prohibits any form of retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, has made a report or complaint, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in a proceeding under this policy. Any person should report claims of retaliation using Council policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Any person who retaliates against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in any manner under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion, with regard to students.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

Davis v. Monroe County Bd. of Educ., 526 U.S. 629 (1999).

Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent Sch. Dist., 524 U.S. 274 (1998).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct, and Conflict of Interest), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

2:270 Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited

Discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin negatively affect a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to work. Providing an educational and workplace environment free from such discrimination and harassment is an important District goal. The District does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, or national origin in any of its education programs or activities, and it complies with federal and State non-discrimination laws.

Examples of Prohibited Conduct

Examples of conduct that may constitute discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin include: disciplining students more harshly and frequently because of their race, color, or national origin; denying students access to high-rigor academic courses, extracurricular activities, or other educational opportunities based on their race, color, or national origin; denying language services or other educational opportunities to English learners; and assigning students special education services based on a student's race, color, or national origin.

Harassment is a form of prohibited discrimination. Examples of conduct that may constitute harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin include: the use of racial, ethnic or ancestral slurs or stereotypes; taunts; name-calling; offensive or derogatory remarks about a person's actual or perceived race, color, or national origin; the display of racially-offensive symbols; racially-motivated physical threats and attacks; or other hateful conduct.

Making a Report or Complaint: Investigation Process

Individuals are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidents of discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Reports under this policy will be processed under Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Any District employee who receives a report or complaint of discrimination or harassment must promptly forward the report or complaint to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager. Any employee who fails to promptly comply may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Reports and complaints of discrimination or harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

This policy does not impair or otherwise diminish the existing rights of unionized employees to request an exclusive bargaining representative to be present during any investigatory interviews, nor does this policy diminish any rights available under an applicable collective bargaining agreement, including, but not limited to, a grievance procedure.

Federal and State Agencies

If the District fails to take necessary corrective action to stop harassment based on race, color, or national origin, further relief may be available through the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights (IDHR) or the U.S. Dept. of Education's Office for Civil Rights. To contact IDHR, go to: <https://dhr.illinois.gov/about-us/contact-idhr.html> or call (312) 814-6200 (Chicago) or (217) 785-5100 (Springfield).

Prevention and Response Program

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a prevention and response program to respond to complaints of discrimination based on race, color, and national origin, including harassment, and

retaliation. The program shall include procedures for responding to complaints which:

1. Reduce or remove, to the extent practicable, barriers to reporting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation;
2. Permit any person who reports or is the victim of an incident of alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to be accompanied when making a report by a support individual of the person's choice who complies with the District's policies and rules;
3. Permit anonymous reporting, except that an anonymous report may not be the sole basis of any disciplinary action;
4. Offer remedial interventions or take such disciplinary action as may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis;
5. Offer, but do not require or unduly influence, a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation the option to resolve allegations directly with the accused; and
6. Protects a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation from suffering adverse consequences as a result of a report of, investigation of, or a response to the incident.

Policy Posting and Distribution

This policy shall be posted on the District's website. The Superintendent shall annually inform staff members of this policy by posting it in a prominent and accessible location such as the District website, employee handbook, staff intranet site, and/or in other areas where policies and rules of conduct are made available to staff. The Superintendent shall annually inform students and their parents/guardians of this policy by posting it on the District's website and including an age-appropriate summary of the policy in the student handbook(s).

Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Any District student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with Board policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*.

Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints, participating in the complaint process, or otherwise providing information about discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin is prohibited (see Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*).

Individuals should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §2000d, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 34 C.F.R. Part 100.

42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 29 C.F.R. Part 1601.

105 ILCS 5/22-95.

775 ILCS 5/1-101 *et seq.*, Illinois Human Rights Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:240 (Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 3 - GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Vermilion Association for Special Education

3:10 Goals and Objectives

The Executive Director directs the administration in order to manage the Cooperative and to facilitate the implementation of a quality educational program in alignment with Executive Council policy 1:30, *Cooperative Philosophy*. Specific goals and objectives are to:

1. Provide educational expertise.
2. Plan, organize, implement, and evaluate educational programs that will provide for students' mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards.
3. Meet or exceed student performance and academic improvement goals established by the Executive Council.
4. Develop and maintain channels for communication between the school and community.
5. Develop an administrative procedures manual and handbooks for personnel and students that are in alignment with Executive Council policy.
6. Manage the Cooperative's fiscal and business activities to ensure financial health, cost-effectiveness, and protection of the Cooperative's assets.
7. Provide for the proper use, reasonable care, and appropriate maintenance of the Cooperative's real and personal property, including buildings, equipment, and supplies.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-16.7, 5/10-21.4, and 5/10-21.4a.

CROSS REF.: 1:30 (Cooperative Philosophy), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification), 2:130 (Council Executive Director Relationship), 3:40 (Executive Director), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director), 3:60 (Administrative Responsibility of the Building Principal), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

3:30 Chain of Command

The Executive Director shall develop an organizational chart indicating the channels of authority and reporting relationships for school personnel. These channels should be followed, and no level should be bypassed except in unusual situations.

All personnel should refer matters requiring administrative action to the responsible administrator, and may appeal a decision to a higher administrative officer. Whenever possible, each employee should be responsible to only one immediate supervisor. When this is not possible, the division of responsibility must be clear.

CROSS REF.: 1:20 (Cooperative Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements), 2:140 (Communications To and From the Council), 3:70 (Succession of Authority), 8:110(Public Suggestions and Concerns)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

3:40 Executive Director

Duties and Authority

The Executive Director is the Cooperative's executive officer and is responsible for the administration and management of the Cooperative in accordance with Executive Council policies and directives, and State and federal law. Cooperative management duties include, without limitation, preparing, submitting, publishing, and posting reports and notifications as required by State and federal law, including the special reporting responsibilities in policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. The Executive Director is authorized to develop administrative procedures and take other action as needed to implement Council policy and otherwise fulfill his or her responsibilities. The Executive Director may delegate to other Cooperative staff members the exercise of any powers and the discharge of any duties imposed upon the Executive Director by Council policies or by Council vote. The delegation of power or duty, however, shall not relieve the Executive Director of responsibility for the action that was delegated.

Qualifications

The Executive Director must be of good character and of unquestionable morals and integrity. The Executive Director shall have the experience and the skills necessary to work effectively with the Council, Cooperative employees, students, and the community. The Executive Director must have and maintain a Professional Educator License with a Special Education Director endorsement issued by the Ill. State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board.

Evaluation

The Council will evaluate, at least annually, the Executive Director's performance and effectiveness, using standards and objectives developed by the Executive Director and Council that are consistent with State law, the Council's policies, and the Executive Director's contract. A specific time should be designated for a formal evaluation session with all Council members present. The evaluation should include a discussion of professional strengths as well as performance areas needing improvement.

Compensation and Benefits

The Council and the Executive Director shall enter into an employment agreement that conforms to Council policy and State law. This contract shall govern the employment relationship between the Council and the Executive Director. The terms of the Executive Director's employment agreement, when in conflict with this policy, will control.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-16.7, 5/10-20.47, 5/10-21.4, 5/10-21.9, 5/10-23.8, 5/21B-20, 5/21B-25, 5/24-11, and 5/24A-3.

5 ILCS 120/7.3, Open Meetings Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.310, 1.705, and 25.355.

CROSS REF: 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification), 2:130 (Council-Executive Director Relationship), 2:240 (Council Policy Development), 3:10 (Goals and Objectives), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:210 (Resignations), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

3:50 Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director

Duties and Authority

The Executive Council establishes Cooperative administrative and supervisory positions in accordance with the Cooperative's needs and State law. This policy applies to all administrators other than the Executive Director, including without limitation, the Building Principal. The general duties and authority of each administrative or supervisory position are approved by the Council, upon the Executive Director's recommendation, and contained in the respective position's job description. In the event of a conflict, State law and/or the administrator's employment agreement shall control.

Qualifications

All administrative personnel shall be appropriately licensed and shall meet all applicable requirements contained in State law and Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rules.

Evaluation

The Executive Director or designee shall evaluate all administrative personnel and make employment and salary recommendations to the Council.

Administrators shall annually present evidence to the Executive Director of professional growth through attendance at educational conferences, additional schooling, in-service training, and Illinois Administrators' Academy courses, or through other means as approved by the Executive Director.

Administrative Work Year

The work year for administrators shall be the same as the Cooperative's fiscal year, July 1 through June 30, unless otherwise stated in the employment agreement. In addition to legal holidays, administrators shall have vacation periods as approved by the Executive Director. All administrators shall be available for work when their services are necessary.

Compensation and Benefits

The Council and each administrator shall enter into an employment agreement that complies with Council policy and State law. The terms of an individual employment contract, when in conflict with this policy, will control.

The Council will consider the Executive Director's recommendations when setting compensation for individual administrators. These recommendations should be presented to the Council no later than the March Council meeting or at such earlier time that will allow the Council to consider contract renewal and nonrenewal issues.

Unless stated otherwise in individual employment contracts, all benefits and leaves of absence available to teaching personnel are available to administrative personnel.

LEGAL REF:

105 ILCS 5/10-21.4a, 5/10-23.8a, 5/10-23.8b, 5/21B, and 5/24A.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.310, 1.705, and 50.300; and Parts 25 and 29.

CROSS REF: 3:60 (Administrative Responsibility of the Building Principal), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:210 (Resignations), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:290 (Employment

Termination and Suspensions)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

3:60 Administrative Responsibility of the Building Principal

Duties and Authority

The Executive Council, upon the recommendation of the Executive Director, employs a Building Principal as the chief administrator and instructional leader of the school, and may employ an Assistant Principal. The primary responsibility of a Building Principal is the improvement of instruction. The Building Principal shall perform all duties as described in State law as well as such other duties as specified in his or her employment agreement or as the Executive Director may assign, that are consistent with the Building Principal's education and training. The Building Principal and Assistant Principal shall complete State law requirements to be a prequalified evaluator before conducting an evaluation of a teacher.

Evaluation Plan

The Executive Director or designee shall implement an evaluation plan for the Principal and Assistant Principal that complies with Section 24A-15 of the School Code and relevant Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rules. Using that plan, the Executive Director or designee shall evaluate the Building Principal and Assistant Principal. The Executive Director or designee may conduct additional evaluations.

Qualifications and Other Terms and Conditions of Employment

Qualifications and other terms and conditions of employment are found in Council policy 3:50, *Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director*.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a, 5/10-20.14, 5/10-21.4a, 5/10-23.8a, 5/10-23.8b, and 5/24A-15.

10 ILCS 5/4-6.2, Election Code.

105 ILCS 127/, School Reporting of Drug Violations Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Parts 35 and 50, Subpart D.

CROSS REF.: 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:210 (Resignations), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

3:70 Succession of Authority

If the Executive Director, Building Principal, or other administrator is temporarily unavailable, the succession of authority and responsibility of the respective office shall follow a succession plan, developed by the Executive Director and submitted to the Executive Council.

CROSS REF.: 1:20 (Cooperative Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements), 3:30 (Chain of Command)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 4 - OPERATIONAL SERVICES

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:10 Fiscal and Business Management

The Executive Director is responsible for the Cooperative's fiscal and business management. This responsibility includes annually preparing and presenting the Cooperative's statement of affairs to the Executive Council and publishing it before December 1 as required by State law.

The Executive Director shall ensure the efficient and cost-effective operation of the Cooperative's business management using computers, computer software, data management, communication systems, and electronic networks, including electronic mail, the Internet, and security systems. Each person using the Cooperative's electronic network shall complete an *Authorization for Access to the Cooperative's Electronic Network*.

Budget Planning

The Cooperative's fiscal year is from July 1 until June 30. The Executive Director shall present to the Executive Council, no later than the first regular meeting in August, a tentative budget with appropriate explanation. This budget shall represent the culmination of an ongoing process of planning for the fiscal support needed for the Cooperative's educational program. The Cooperative's budget shall be entered upon the Ill. State Board of Education's (ISBE) *Cooperative Budget Form*. To the extent possible, the tentative budget shall be balanced as defined by ISBE guidelines. The Executive Director shall complete a tentative deficit reduction plan if one is required by ISBE guidelines.

Preliminary Adoption Procedures

After receiving the Executive Director's proposed budget, the Executive Council sets the date, place, and time for:

1. A public hearing on the proposed budget, and
2. The proposed budget to be available to the public for inspection.

The Executive Council Secretary shall arrange to publish a notice in a local newspaper stating the date, place, and time of the proposed budget's availability for public inspection and the public hearing. The proposed budget shall be available for public inspection at least 30 days before the time of the budget hearing.

At the public hearing, the proposed budget shall be reviewed, and the public shall be invited to comment, question, or advise the Executive Council.

Final Adoption Procedures

The Executive Council adopts a budget before the end of the first quarter of each fiscal year, September 30, or by such alternative procedure as State law may define. To the extent possible, the budget shall be balanced as defined by ISBE; if not balanced, the Executive Council will adopt a deficit reduction plan to balance the Cooperative's budget within three years according to ISBE requirements.

The Executive Council adopts the budget by roll call vote. The budget resolution shall be incorporated into the meeting's official minutes. Executive Council members' names voting *yea* and *nay* shall be recorded in the minutes.

The Executive Director or designee shall perform each of the following:

1. Post the Cooperative's final annual budget, itemized by receipts and expenditures, on the Cooperative's Internet website; notify parents/guardians that it is posted and provide the website's address.
2. File a certified copy of the budget resolution and an estimate of revenues by source anticipated

to be received in the following fiscal year, certified by the Cooperative's Chief Fiscal Officer, with the County Clerk within 30 days of the budget's adoption.

3. Submit the annual budget, a deficit reduction plan if one is required by ISBE guidelines, and other financial information to ISBE according to its requirements.

Any amendments to the budget shall be made as provided in the School Code.

Budget Amendments

The Executive Council may amend the budget by the same procedure as provided for in the original adoption.

Implementation

The Executive Director or designee shall implement the Cooperative's budget and provide the Executive Council with a monthly financial report that includes all deficit fund balances. The amount budgeted as the expenditure in each fund is the maximum amount that may be expended for that category, except when a transfer of funds is authorized by the Executive Council.

The Executive Council shall act on all interfund loans, interfund transfers, transfers within funds, and transfers from the working cash fund or abatements of it, if one exists.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-17, 5/10-22.33, 5/17-1, 5/17-1.2, 5/17-1.3, 5/17-2A, 5/17-3.2, 5/17-11, 5/20-5, 5/20-8, and 5/20-10.

35 ILCS 200/18-55 *et seq.*

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 100.

CROSS REF.: 4:20 (Fund Balances), 4:40 (Incurring Debt), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:15 Identity Protection

The collection, storage, use, and disclosure of social security numbers by the Cooperative shall be consistent with State and federal laws. The goals for managing the Cooperative's collection, storage, use, and disclosure of social security numbers are to:

1. Limit all activities involving social security numbers to those circumstances that are authorized by State or federal law.
2. Protect each social security number collected or maintained by the Cooperative from unauthorized disclosure.

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that the Cooperative complies with the Identity Protection Act, 5 ILCS 179/. Compliance measures shall include each of the following:

1. All employees having access to social security numbers in the course of performing their duties shall be trained to protect the confidentiality of social security numbers. Training should include instructions on the proper handling of information containing social security numbers from the time of collection through the destruction of the information.
2. Only employees who are required to use or handle information or documents that contain social security numbers shall have access to such information or documents.
3. Social security numbers requested from an individual shall be provided in a manner that makes the social security number easily redacted if the record is required to be released as part of a public records request.
4. When collecting a social security number or upon request by an individual, a statement of the purpose(s) for which the Cooperative is collecting and using the social security number shall be provided. The stated reason for collection of the social security number must be relevant to the documented purpose.
5. All employees must be advised of this policy's existence, and a copy of the policy must be made available to each employee. The policy must also be made available to any member of the public, upon request.
6. If this policy is amended, employees will be advised of the existence of the amended policy and a copy of the amended policy will be made available to each employee.

No Cooperative employee shall collect, store, use, or disclose an individual's social security number unless specifically authorized by the Executive Director. An employee who has substantially breached the confidentiality of social security numbers may be subject to disciplinary action of sanctions up to and including dismissal in accordance with Cooperative policy and procedure. This policy shall not be interpreted as a guarantee of the confidentiality of social security numbers and/or other personal information. The Cooperative will use best efforts to comply with this policy, but this policy should not be construed to convey any rights to protection of information not otherwise afforded by law.

Treatment of Personally Identifiable Information Under Grant Awards

The Executive Director ensures that the Cooperative takes reasonable cybersecurity and other measures to safeguard information including: (1) *protected personally identifiable information*, (2) other types of information that a federal agency, pass-through entity, or State awarding agency designates as sensitive, such as *personally identifiable information* (PII) and (3) information that the Cooperative considers to be sensitive consistent with applicable laws regarding privacy and confidentiality (collectively, *sensitive information*), when administering federal grant awards and State grant awards governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/).

The Executive Director shall establish procedures for the identification, handling, storage, access, disposal and overall confidentiality of sensitive information. The Executive Director shall ensure that employees and contractors responsible for the administration of a federal or State award for the

Cooperative receive regular training in the safeguarding of sensitive information. Employees mishandling sensitive information are subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

LEGAL REF.:

2 C.F.R. §200.303(e).

5 ILCS 179/, Identity Protection Act.

30 ILCS 708/, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.

50 ILCS 205/3, Local Records Act.

105 ILCS 10/, Illinois School Student Records Act.

CROSS REF: 2:250 (Access to Cooperative Public Records), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:20 Fund Balances

The Executive Director or designee shall maintain fund balances adequate to ensure the Cooperative's ability to maintain levels of service and pay its obligations in a prompt manner in spite of unforeseen events or unexpected expenses. The Executive Director or designee shall inform the Executive Council whenever it should discuss drawing upon its reserves or borrowing money.

CROSS REF.: 4:10 (Fiscal and Business Management), 4:80 (Accounting and Audits)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:30 Revenue and Investments

Revenue

The Executive Director or designee is responsible for making all claims for State Aid, special State funds for specific programs, federal funds, and categorical grants.

Investments

The Executive Director shall either appoint a Chief Investment Officer or serve as one. The Chief Investment Officer shall invest money that is not required for current operations, in accordance with this policy and State law.

The Chief Investment Officer and Executive Director shall use the standard of prudence when making investment decisions. They shall use the judgment and care, under circumstances then prevailing, that persons of prudence, discretion, and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the safety of their capital as well as its probable income.

Investment Objectives

The objectives for the Cooperative's investment activities are:

1. Safety of Principal - Every investment is made with safety as the primary and over-riding concern. Each investment transaction shall ensure that capital loss, whether from credit or market risk, is avoided.
2. Liquidity - The investment portfolio shall provide sufficient liquidity to pay Cooperative obligations as they become due. In this regard, the maturity and marketability of investments shall be considered.
3. Rate of Return - The highest return on investments is sought, consistent with the preservation of principal and prudent investment principles.
4. Diversification - The investment portfolio is diversified as to materials and investments, as appropriate to the nature, purpose, and amount of the funds.

Authorized Investments

The Chief Investment Officer may invest Cooperative funds in one or more of the following:

1. Bonds, notes, certificates of indebtedness, treasury bills, or other securities now or hereafter issued, that are guaranteed by the full faith and credit of the United States of America as to principal and interest.
2. Bonds, notes, debentures, or other similar obligations of the United States of America, its agencies, and its instrumentalities.

The term "agencies of the United States of America" includes: (a) the federal land banks, federal intermediate credit banks, banks for cooperative, federal farm credit banks, or any other entity authorized to issue debt obligations under the Farm Credit Act of 1971 and Acts amendatory thereto, (b) the federal home loan banks and the federal home loan mortgage corporation, and (c) any other agency created by Act of Congress.

3. Interest-bearing savings accounts, interest-bearing certificates of deposit or interest-bearing time deposits or any other investments constituting direct obligations of any bank as defined by the Illinois Banking Act.
4. Short-term obligations of corporations organized in the United States with assets exceeding \$500,000,000 if: (a) such obligations are rated at the time of purchase at one of the three

highest classifications established by at least two standard rating services and that mature not later than 270 days from the date of purchase, (b) such purchases do not exceed 10% of the corporation's outstanding obligations, and (c) no more than one-third of the Cooperative's funds may be invested in short-term obligations of corporations under this paragraph.

5. Obligations of corporations organized in the United States with assets exceeding \$500,000,000 if: (a) such obligations are rated at the time of purchase at one of the three highest classifications established by at least two standard rating services and which mature more than 270 days but less than 10 years from the date of purchase, (b) such purchases do not exceed 10% of the corporation's outstanding obligations, and (c) no more than one-third of the Cooperative's funds may be invested in obligations of corporations under this paragraph.
6. Money market mutual funds registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, provided that the portfolio of any such money market mutual fund is limited to obligations described in paragraph (1) or (2) and to agreements to repurchase such obligations.
7. Interest-bearing bonds of any county, township, city, village, incorporated town, municipal corporation, Cooperative, the State of Illinois, any other state, or any political subdivision or agency of the State of Illinois or any other state, whether the interest earned is taxable or tax-exempt under federal law. The bonds shall be (a) registered in the name of the municipality, county, or other governmental unit, or held under a custodial agreement at a bank, and (b) rated at the time of purchase within the four highest general classifications established by a rating service of nationally recognized expertise in rating bonds of states and their political subdivisions.
8. Short term discount obligations of the Federal National Mortgage Association or in shares or other forms of securities legally issuable by savings banks or savings and loan associations incorporated under the laws of this State or any other state or under the laws of the United States. Investments may be made only in those savings banks or savings and loan associations, the shares, or investment certificates that are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Any such securities may be purchased at the offering or market price thereof at the time of such purchase. All such securities so purchased shall mature or be redeemable on a date or dates prior to the time when, in the judgment of the Chief Investment Officer, the public funds so invested will be required for expenditure by the Cooperative or its governing authority.
9. Dividend-bearing share accounts, share certificate accounts, or class of share accounts of a credit union chartered under the laws of this State or the laws of the United States; provided, however, the principal office of any such credit union must be located within the State of Illinois. Investments may be made only in those credit unions the accounts of which are insured by applicable law.
10. A Public Treasurers' Investment Pool created under Section 17 of the State Treasurer Act. The Cooperative may also invest any public funds in a fund managed, operated, and administered by a bank, subsidiary of a bank, or subsidiary of a bank holding company or use the services of such an entity to hold and invest or advice regarding the investment of any public funds.
11. The Illinois Cooperative Liquid Asset Fund Plus.
12. Repurchase agreements of government securities having the meaning set out in the Government Securities Act of 1986, as now or hereafter amended or succeeded, subject to the provisions of said Act and the regulations issued there under. The government securities, unless registered or inscribed in the name of the Cooperative, shall be purchased through banks or trust companies authorized to do business in the State of Illinois.

Except for repurchase agreements of government securities that are subject to the Government Securities Act of 1986, as now or hereafter amended or succeeded, the Cooperative may not purchase or invest in instruments that constitute repurchase agreements, and no financial institution may enter into such an agreement with or on behalf of the Cooperative unless the instrument and the transaction meet all of the following requirements:

- a. The securities, unless registered or inscribed in the name of the Cooperative, are

purchased through banks or trust companies authorized to do business in the State of Illinois.

- b. The Chief Investment Officer, after ascertaining which firm will give the most favorable rate of interest, directs the custodial bank to "purchase" specified securities from a designated institution. The "custodial bank" is the bank or trust company, or agency of government, that acts for the Cooperative in connection with repurchase agreements involving the investment of funds by the Cooperative. The State Treasurer may act as custodial bank for public agencies executing repurchase agreements.
- c. A custodial bank must be a member bank of the Federal Reserve System or maintain accounts with member banks. All transfers of book-entry securities must be accomplished on a Reserve Bank's computer records through a member bank of the Federal Reserve System. These securities must be credited to the Cooperative on the records of the custodial bank and the transaction must be confirmed in writing to the Cooperative by the custodial bank.
- d. Trading partners shall be limited to banks or trust companies authorized to do business in the State of Illinois or to registered primary reporting dealers.
- e. The security interest must be perfected.
- f. The Cooperative enters into a written master repurchase agreement that outlines the basic responsibilities and liabilities of both buyer and seller.
- g. Agreements shall be for periods of 330 days or less.
- h. The Chief Investment Officer informs the custodial bank in writing of the maturity details of the repurchase agreement.
- i. The custodial bank must take delivery of and maintain the securities in its custody for the account of the Cooperative and confirm the transaction in writing to the Cooperative. The custodial undertaking shall provide that the custodian takes possession of the securities exclusively for the Cooperative; that the securities are free of any claims against the trading partner; and that any claims by the custodian are subordinate to the Cooperative's claims to rights to those securities.
- j. The obligations purchased by the Cooperative may only be sold or presented for redemption or payment by the fiscal agent bank or trust company holding the obligations upon the written instruction of the Chief Investment Officer.
- k. The custodial bank shall be liable to the Cooperative for any monetary loss suffered by the Cooperative due to the failure of the custodial bank to take and maintain possession of such securities.

13. Any investment as authorized by the Public Funds Investment Act and Acts amendatory thereto. Paragraph 13 supersedes paragraphs 1-12 and controls in the event of conflict.

Except as provided herein, investments may be made only in banks, savings banks, savings and loan associations, or credit unions that are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or other approved share insurer.

The Chief Investment Officer and Executive Director shall regularly consider material, relevant, and decision-useful sustainability factors in evaluating investment decisions, within the bounds of financial and fiduciary prudence. Such factors include, but are not limited to: (1) corporate governance and leadership factors, (2) environmental factors, (3) social capital factors, (4) human capital factors, and (5) business model and innovation factors, as provided under the Ill. Sustainable Investing Act, 30 ILCS 238/.

Selection of Depositories, Investment Managers, Dealers, and Brokers

The Chief Investment Officer shall establish a list of authorized depositories, investment managers, dealers and brokers based upon the creditworthiness, reputation, minimum capital requirements,

qualifications under State law, as well as a long history of dealing with public fund entities. The Executive Council will review and approve the list at least annually.

In order to be an authorized depository, each institution must submit copies of the last two sworn statements of resources and liabilities or reports of examination that the institution is required to furnish to the appropriate State or federal agency. Each institution designated as a depository shall, while acting as such depository, furnish the Cooperative with a copy of all statements of resources and liabilities or all reports of examination that it is required to furnish to the appropriate State or federal agency.

The above eligibility requirements of a bank to receive or hold public deposits do not apply to investments in an interest-bearing savings account, demand deposit account, interest-bearing certificate of deposit, or interest-bearing time deposit if: (1) the Cooperative initiates the investment at or through a bank located in Illinois, and (2) the invested public funds are at all times fully insured by an agency or instrumentality of the federal government.

The Cooperative shall consider a financial institution's record and current level of financial commitment to its local community when deciding whether to deposit funds in that financial institution. The Cooperative may consider factors including:

1. For financial institutions subject to the federal Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 (CRA), the current and historical ratings that the financial institution has received, to the extent that those ratings are publicly available, under the CRA;
2. For financial institutions subject to the Ill. Community Reinvestment Act (ICRA), the current and historical ratings that the financial institution has received, to the extent that those ratings are publicly available, under the ICRA;
3. Any changes in ownership, management, policies, or practices of the financial institution that may affect the level of the financial institution's commitment to its community;
4. The financial impact that the withdrawal or denial of Cooperative deposits might have on the financial institution;
5. The financial impact to the Cooperative as a result of withdrawing public funds or refusing to deposit additional public funds in the financial institution; and
6. Any additional burden on the Cooperative's resources that might result from ceasing to maintain deposits of public funds at the financial institution under consideration.

The Cooperative may not deposit public funds in a financial institution subject to the CRA unless the institution has a current rating of satisfactory or outstanding under the CRA. The Cooperative may not deposit public funds in a financial institution subject to the ICRA unless either: (1) the institution has a current rating of satisfactory under the ICRA at the time of deposit; or (2) the Ill. Dept. of Financial and Professional Regulation has not yet completed its initial examination of the institution under the ICRA. The Cooperative may not withdraw public funds from a financial institution prior to the date of maturity solely on the basis of a less than satisfactory rating under the ICRA. When investing or depositing public funds, the Cooperative may give preference to financial institutions that have a current rating of outstanding under the CRA and the ICRA.

Collateral Requirements

All amounts deposited or invested with financial institutions in excess of any insurance limit shall be collateralized in accordance with the Public Funds Investment Act, 30 ILCS 235/. The Executive Director or designee shall keep the Executive Council informed of collateral agreements.

Safekeeping and Custody Arrangements

The preferred method for safekeeping is to have securities registered in the Cooperative's name and held by a third-party custodian. Safekeeping practices should qualify for the Governmental Accounting

Standards Board Statement No. 3, Deposits with Financial Institutions, Investments (including Repurchase Agreements), and Reverse Repurchase Agreements, Category I, the highest recognized safekeeping procedures.

Controls and Report

The Chief Investment Officer shall establish a system of internal controls and written operational procedures to prevent losses arising from fraud, employee error, misrepresentation by third parties, or imprudent employee action.

The Chief Investment Officer shall provide a quarterly investment report to the Executive Council. The report will: (1) assess whether the investment portfolio is meeting the Cooperative's investment objectives, (2) identify each security by class or type, book value, income earned, and market value, (3) identify those institutions providing investment services to the Cooperative, and (4) include any other relevant information. The investment portfolio's performance shall be measured by appropriate and creditable industry standards for the investment type.

The Executive Council will determine, after receiving the Executive Director's recommendation, which fund is in most need of interest income and the Executive Director shall execute a transfer. This provision does not apply when the use of interest earned on a particular fund is restricted.

Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

The Executive Council and Cooperative officials will avoid any investment transaction or practice that in appearance or fact might impair public confidence. Executive Council members are bound by the Executive Council policy 2:100, *Council Member Conflict of Interest*. No Cooperative employee having influence on the Cooperative's investment decisions shall:

1. Have any interest, directly or indirectly, in any investments in which the Cooperative is authorized to invest,
2. Have any interest, directly or indirectly, in the sellers, sponsors, or managers of those investments, or
3. Receive, in any manner, compensation of any kind from any investments in that the agency is authorized to invest.

LEGAL REF.:

30 ILCS 235/, Public Funds Investment Act.

30 ILCS 238/, III. Sustainable Investing Act.

105 ILCS 5/8-7, 5/10-22.44, 5/17-1, and 5/17-11.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Council Member Conflict of Interest), 4:10 (Fiscal and Business Management), 4:80 (Accounting and Audits)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:40 Incurring Debt

The Executive Director shall provide early notice to the Executive Council of the Cooperative's need to borrow money. The Executive Director or designee shall prepare all documents and notices necessary for the Executive Council, at its discretion, to: (1) issue State Aid Anticipation Certificates, working cash fund bonds, bonds, notes, and other evidence of indebtedness, or (2) establish a line of credit with a bank or other financial institution. The Executive Director shall notify the Ill. State Board of Education before the Cooperative issues any form of long-term or short-term debt that will result in outstanding debt that exceeds 75% of the debt limit specified in State law.

Bond Issue Obligations

In connection with the Executive Council issuance of bonds, the Executive Director shall be responsible for ensuring the Cooperative's compliance with federal securities laws, including the anti-fraud provisions of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended and, if applicable, the continuing disclosure obligations under Rule 15c2-12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Additionally, in connection with the Executive Council issuance of bonds, the interest on which is excludable from *gross income* for federal income tax purposes, or which enable the Cooperative or bond holder to receive other federal tax benefits, the Executive Council authorizes the Executive Director to establish written procedures for post-issuance compliance monitoring for such bonds to protect their tax-exempt (or tax-advantaged) status.

The Executive Council may contract with outside professionals, such as bond counsel and/or a qualified financial consulting firm, to assist it in meeting the requirements of this subsection.

LEGAL REF.:

15 U.S.C. §77a *et seq.*, Securities Act of 1933.

15 U.S.C. §78a *et seq.*, Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

17 C.F.R. §240.15c2-12.

30 ILCS 305/2, Bond Authorization Act.

30 ILCS 350/, Local Government Debt Reform Act.

30 ILCS 352/, Bond Issue Notification Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.31, 5/17-16, 5/17-17, 5/18-18, 5/18-20, and 5/19-1 *et seq.*

CROSS REF.: 4:10 (Fiscal and Business Management)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:45 Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery

Insufficient Fund Checks

The Executive Director or designee is responsible for collecting up to the maximum fee authorized by State law for returned checks written to the Cooperative that are not honored upon presentation to the respective bank or other depository institution for any reason. The Executive Director is authorized to contact the Executive Council Attorney whenever necessary to collect the returned check amount, fee, collection costs and expenses, and interest.

Delinquent Debt Recovery

The Executive Director is authorized to seek collection of delinquent debt owed the Cooperative to the fullest extent of the law.

LEGAL REF.:

15 ILCS 405/10.05 and 10.05d, State Comptroller Act.

105 ILCS 123/, Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act.

810 ILCS 5/3-806, Uniform Commercial Code.

Adopted: September 11, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:50 Payment Procedures

The Treasurer shall prepare a list of all due and payable bills, indicating vendor name and amount, and shall present it to the Executive Council in advance of the Executive Council's first regular monthly meeting or, if necessary, a special meeting. These bills are reviewed by the Executive Council, after which they may be approved for payment by Executive Council order. Approval of all bills shall be given by a roll call vote and the votes shall be recorded in the minutes. The Treasurer shall pay the bills after receiving a Executive Council order or pertinent portions of the Executive Council minutes, even if the minutes are unapproved, provided the order or minutes are signed by the Executive Council Chairperson and Secretary, or a majority of the Executive Council.

The Treasurer is authorized, without further Executive Council approval, to pay Social Security taxes, wages, pension contributions, utility bills, and other recurring bills. These disbursements shall be included in the listing of bills presented to the Executive Council.

The Executive Council authorizes the Executive Director or designee to establish revolving funds and a petty cash fund system for school cafeterias, lunchrooms, athletics, or similar purposes, provided such funds are maintained in accordance with Executive Council policy 4:80, *Accounting and Audits*, and remain in the custody of an employee who is properly bonded according to State law.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/8-16, 5/10-7, and 5/10-20.19.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.70.

CROSS REF.: 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:80 (Accounting and Audits)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:55 Use of Credit and Procurement Cards

The Executive Director and employees designated by the Executive Director are authorized to use Cooperative credit and procurement cards to simplify the acquisition, receipt, and payment of purchases and travel expenses incurred on the Cooperative's behalf. Credit and procurement cards shall only be used for those expenses that are for the Cooperative benefit and serve a valid and proper public purpose; they shall not be used for personal purchases. Cardholders are responsible for exercising due care and judgment and for acting in the Cooperative's best interests.

The Executive Director or designee shall manage the use of Cooperative credit and procurement cards by employees. It is the Executive Council's responsibility, through the audit and approval process, to determine whether Cooperative credit and procurement card use by the Executive Director is appropriate.

In addition to the other limitations contained in this and other Executive Council policies, Cooperative credit and procurement cards are governed by the following restrictions:

1. Credit and/or procurement cards may only be used to pay certain job-related expenses or to make purchases on behalf of the Executive Council or Cooperative or any student activity fund, or for purposes that would otherwise be addressed through a conventional revolving fund.
2. The Executive Director or designee shall instruct the issuing bank to block the cards' use at unapproved merchants.
3. Each cardholder, other than the Executive Director, may charge no more than \$500 in a single purchase and no more than \$1000 within a given month without prior authorization from the Executive Director.
4. The Executive Director or designee must approve the use of a Cooperative credit or procurement card whenever such use is by telephone, fax, and the Internet. Permission shall be withheld when the use violates any Executive Council policy, is from a vendor whose reputation has not been verified, or would be more expensive than if another available payment method were used.
5. The consequences for unauthorized purchases include, but are not limited to, reimbursing the Cooperative for the purchase amount, loss of cardholding privileges, and, if made by an employee, discipline up to and including discharge.
6. All cardholders must sign a statement affirming that they are familiar with this policy.
7. The Executive Director shall implement a process whereby all purchases using a Cooperative credit or procurement card are reviewed and approved by someone other than the cardholder or someone under the cardholder's supervision.
8. Cardholders must submit the original, itemized receipt to document all purchases.
9. No individual may use a Cooperative credit or procurement card to make purchases in a manner contrary to State law, including, but not limited to, the bidding and other purchasing requirements in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21, or any Executive Council policy.
10. The Executive Director or designee shall account for any financial or material reward or rebate offered by the company or institution issuing the Cooperative credit or procurement card and shall ensure that it is used for the Cooperative benefit.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.21.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.70(d).

CROSS REF.: 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:80 (Accounting and Audits), 4:90 (Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds), 5:60 (Expenses)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:60 Purchases and Contracts

The Executive Director shall manage the Cooperative purchases and contracts in accordance with State law, the standards set forth in this policy, and other applicable Executive Council policies.

Standards for Purchasing and Contracting

All purchases and contracts shall be entered into in accordance with applicable federal and State law. The Executive Council Attorney shall be consulted as needed regarding the legal requirements for purchases or contracts. All contracts shall be approved or authorized by the Executive Council.

All purchases and contracts should support a recognized Cooperative function or purpose as well as provide for good quality products and services at the lowest cost, with consideration for service, reliability, and delivery promptness, and in compliance with State law. No purchase or contract shall be made or entered into as a result of favoritism, extravagance, fraud, or corruption.

Adoption of the annual budget authorizes the Executive Director or designee to purchase budgeted supplies, equipment, and services, provided that State law is followed. Purchases of items outside budget parameters require prior Executive Council approval, except in an emergency.

When presenting a contract or purchase for Executive Council approval, the Executive Director or designee shall ensure that it complies with applicable federal and State law, including but not limited to, those specified below:

1. Supplies, materials, or work involving an expenditure in excess of \$35,000 must comply with the State law bidding procedure, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21, unless specifically exempted.
2. Construction, lease, or purchase of school buildings must comply with State law and Executive Council policy 4:150, *Facility Management and Building Programs*.
3. Guaranteed energy savings must comply with 105 ILCS 5/19b-1 *et seq.*
4. Third party non-instructional services must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-22.34c.
5. Goods and services that are intended to generate revenue and other remunerations for the Cooperative in excess of \$1,000, including without limitation vending machine contracts, sports and other attire, class rings, and photographic services, must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21(b-5). The Executive Director or designee shall keep a record of: (1) each vendor, product, or service provided, (2) the actual net revenue and non-monetary remuneration from each contract or agreement, and (3) how the revenue was used and to whom the non-monetary remuneration was distributed. The Executive Director or designee shall report this information to the Executive Council by completing the necessary forms that must be attached to the Cooperative's annual budget.
6. Any contract to purchase food with a bidder or offeror must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21(b-10).
7. The purchase of paper and paper products must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.19c and Executive Council policy 4:70, *Resource Conservation*.
8. Each contractor with the Cooperative is bound by each of the following:
 - a. In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(f): (1) prohibit any of its employees who is or was found guilty of a criminal offense listed in 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(c) and 5/21B-80(c) to have direct, daily contact at a Cooperative school or school-related activity with one or more student(s); (2) prohibit any of the contractor's employees from having direct, daily contact with one or more students if the employee was found guilty of any offense in 5/21B-80(b) (certain drug offenses) until seven years following the end of the employee's sentence for the criminal offense; and (3) require each of its employees who will have direct, daily contact with student(s) to cooperate during the Cooperative's fingerprint-based criminal history records check on him or her.

- b. In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/22-94: (1) prohibit any of its employees from having *direct contact with children or students* if the contractor has not performed a sexual misconduct related employment history review (EHR) of the employee or if the Cooperative objects to the employee's assignment based on the employee's involvement in an instance of sexual misconduct as provided in 105 ILCS 5/22-94(j)(3), which the contractor is required to disclose; (2) discipline, up to and including termination or denial of employment, any employee who provides false information or willfully fails to disclose information required by the EHR; (3) maintain all records of EHRs and provide the Cooperative access to such records upon request; and (4) refrain from entering into any agreements prohibited by 105 ILCS 5/22-94(g).
 - c. In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/24-5: (1) concerning each new employee of a contractor that provides services to students or in schools, provide the Cooperative with evidence of physical fitness to perform the duties assigned and freedom from communicable disease; and (2) require any new or existing employee who provides services to students or in schools to complete additional health examinations as required by the District and be subject to additional health examinations, including tuberculosis screening, as required by the Ill. Dept. of Public Health rules or order of a local health official.
- 9. Any pavement engineering project using a coal tar-based sealant product or high polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon sealant product for pavement engineering-related use must comply with the Coal Tar Sealant Disclosure Act.
 - 10. Design-build contracts must comply with 105 ILCS 5/15A-1 *et seq.*
 - 11. Any new contract for a district-administered assessment must comply with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.86.
 - 12. Purchases made with federal or State awards must comply with 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and 30 ILCS 708/, as applicable, and any terms of the award.

The Executive Director or designee shall: (1) execute the reporting and website posting mandates in State law concerning Cooperative contracts, and (2) monitor the discharge of contracts, contractors' performances, and the quality and value of services or products being provided.

LEGAL REF.:

2 C.F.R. Part 200.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.19c, 5/10-20.21, 5/10-20.86, 5/10-21.9, 5/10-22.34c, 5/15A-1 *et seq.*, 5/19b-1 *et seq.*, 5/22-94, and 5/24-5.

30 ILCS 708/, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.

410 ILCS 170/, Coal Tar Sealant Disclosure Act.

820 ILCS 130/, Prevailing Wage Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:100 (Council Member Conflict of Interest), 4:70 (Resource Conservation), 4:150 (Facility Management and Building Programs), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

4:70 Resource Conservation

The Executive Director or designee shall manage a program of energy and resource conservation for the Cooperative that includes:

1. Periodic review of procurement procedures and specifications to ensure that purchased products and supplies are reusable, durable, or made from recycled materials, if economically and practically feasible.
2. Purchasing recycled paper and paper products in amounts that will, at a minimum, meet the specifications in the School Code, if economically and practically feasible.
3. Periodic review of procedures on the reduction of solid waste generated by academic, administrative, and other institutional functions. These procedures shall: (a) require recycling the Cooperative's waste stream, including landscape waste, computer paper, and white office paper, if economically and practically feasible; (b) include investigation of the feasibility of potential markets for other recyclable materials that are present in the Cooperative's waste stream; and (c) establish a goal for the reduction in the amount of solid waste generated by the Cooperative, when it is economically and practically feasible to do so.
4. Energy conservation measures.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.19c and 5/19b.

CROSS REF.: 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:150 (Facility Management and Building Programs)

Adopted: August 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:80 Accounting and Audits

The Cooperative's accounting and audit services shall comply with the *Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing*, as adopted by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), State and federal laws and regulations, and generally accepted accounting principles. Determination of liabilities and assets, prioritization of expenditures of governmental funds, and provisions for accounting disclosures shall be made in accordance with government accounting standards as directed by the auditor designated by the Executive Council. The Executive Director, in addition to other assigned financial responsibilities, shall report monthly on the Cooperative's financial performance, both income and expense, in relation to the financial plan represented in the budget.

Annual Audit

At the close of each fiscal year, the Executive Director shall arrange an audit of the Cooperative funds, accounts, statements, and other financial matters. The audit shall be performed by an independent certified public accountant designated by the Executive Council and be conducted in conformance with prescribed standards and legal requirements. A complete and detailed written audit report shall be provided to each Executive Council member and to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall annually, on or before October 15, submit one copy of the audit to the Regional Superintendent of Schools. The Executive Director shall also ensure the Cooperative's auditing firm files the Cooperative's audit with ISBE annually on or before October 15.

Annual Financial Report

The Executive Director or designee shall annually prepare and submit the Annual Financial Report (AFR) on a timely basis using the form adopted by ISBE. The Executive Director shall review and discuss the AFR with the Executive Council before it is submitted and submit one copy of the AFR to the Regional Superintendent of Schools annually on or before October 15. The Executive Director shall also ensure the Cooperative's auditing firm files the Cooperative's AFR with ISBE annually on or before October 15.

Inventories

The Executive Director or designee is responsible for establishing and maintaining accurate inventory records. The inventory record of supplies and equipment shall include a description of each item, quantity, location, purchase date, and cost or estimated replacement cost, unless the supplies and equipment are acquired by the Cooperative pursuant to a federal or State grant award, in which case the inventory record shall also include the information required by 2 C.F.R. §200.313, if applicable. The Executive Director shall establish procedures for the management of property acquired by the Cooperative under grant awards that comply with federal and State law.

Capitalization Threshold

To be considered a capital asset for financial reporting purposes, a capital item must be at or above a capitalization threshold of \$10,000 and have an estimated useful life greater than one year.

Disposition of Cooperative Property

The Executive Director or designee shall notify the Executive Council, as necessary, of the following so that the Executive Council may consider its disposition: (1) Cooperative personal property (property other than buildings and land) that is no longer needed for school purposes, and (2) school site, building, or other real estate that is unnecessary, unsuitable, or inconvenient. Notwithstanding the above, the Executive Director or designee may unilaterally dispose of personal property of a diminutive value. The Executive Director shall establish procedures for the disposition and, when permitted by the terms and conditions of the award, the retention of property acquired by the Cooperative under grant awards that comply with federal and State law.

Taxable Fringe Benefits

The Executive Director or designee shall: (1) require that all use of Cooperative property or equipment by employees is for the Cooperative's convenience and best interests unless it is a Executive Council -approved fringe benefit, and (2) ensure compliance with the Internal Revenue Service regulations regarding when to report an employee's personal use of Cooperative property or equipment as taxable compensation.

Controls for Revolving Funds and Petty Cash

Revolving funds and the petty cash system are established in Executive Council policy 4:50, *Payment Procedures*. The Executive Director shall: (1) designate a custodian for each revolving fund and petty cash fund, (2) obtain a bond for each fund custodian, and (3) maintain the funds in compliance with this policy, State law, and ISBE rules. A check for the petty cash fund may be drawn payable to the designated petty cash custodian. Each revolving fund shall be maintained in a bank that has been approved by the Executive Council and established in an amount approved by the Executive Director consistent with the annual budget. All expenditures from these bank accounts must be directly related to the purpose for which the account was established and supported with documentation, including signed invoices or receipts. All deposits into these bank accounts must be accompanied with a clear description of their intended purpose. The Executive Director or designee shall include checks written to reimburse revolving funds on the Executive Council's monthly listing of bills indicating the recipient and including an explanation.

Control Requirements for Checks

The Executive Council must approve all bank accounts opened or established in the Cooperative's or a Cooperative school's name or with the Cooperative's Federal Employer Identification Number. All checks issued by the Cooperative must be signed by either the Treasurer or Executive Director.

The Executive Director is primarily responsible for establishing and implementing a system of internal controls for safeguarding the Cooperative's financial condition; the Executive Council, however, will oversee these safeguards. The control objectives are to ensure efficient business and financial practices, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with State law and Executive Council policies, and to prevent losses from fraud, waste, and abuse, as well as employee error, misrepresentation by third parties, or other imprudent employee action. The Cooperative's system of internal controls shall include the following:

1. All financial transactions must be properly authorized and documented.
2. Financial records and data must be accurate and complete.
3. Accounts payable must be accurate and punctual.
4. Cooperative assets must be protected from loss or misuse.
5. Incompatible duties should be segregated, if possible.
6. Accounting records must be periodically reconciled.
7. Equipment and supplies must be safeguarded.
8. Staff members with financial or business responsibilities must be properly trained and supervised, and must perform their responsibilities with utmost care and competence.
9. Any unnecessary weaknesses or financial risks must be promptly corrected.

The Executive Director or designee shall annually audit the Cooperative's financial and business operations for compliance with established internal controls and provide the results to the Executive Council. The Executive Council may from time-to-time engage a third-party to audit internal controls in addition to the annual audit.

LEGAL REF.:

2 C.F.R. §200 *et seq.*

30 ILCS 708/, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act; 44 Ill.Admin.Code 7000 *et seq.*

105 ILCS 5/2-3.27, 5/2-3.28, 5/3-7, 5/3-15.1, 5/5-22, 5/10-21.4, 5/10-20.19, 5/10-22.8, and 5/17-1 *et seq.*

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 100.

CROSS REF.: 4:10 (Fiscal and Business Management), 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards), 4:90 (Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:90 Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds

The Executive Council, upon the Executive Director or designee's recommendation, establishes student activity funds to be managed by student organizations under the guidance and direction of a staff member for educational, recreational, or cultural purposes. The Executive Council, upon the Executive Director or designee's recommendation, also establishes fiduciary funds to be supervised by the Executive Director or designee. The Cooperative has custodial responsibilities for fiduciary funds but no direct involvement in the management of such funds.

Student Activity Funds

The Executive Director or designee shall be responsible for supervising student activity funds in accordance with Executive Council policy, 4:80, *Accounting and Audits*; State law; and the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rules for student activity funds. The Executive Council will appoint a treasurer for each fund to serve as the fund's sole custodian and be bonded in accordance with the School Code. The treasurer shall have all of the responsibilities specific to the treasurer listed in ISBE rules for school activity funds, except that the treasurer is not authorized to make loans between activity funds.

Unless otherwise instructed by the Executive Council, a student activity fund's balance will carry over to the next fiscal year. An account containing student activity funds that is inactive for 12 consecutive months shall be closed and its funds transferred to another student activity fund or authorized fund with a similar purpose.

Fiduciary Funds

The Executive Director or designee shall be responsible for supervising fiduciary funds in accordance with Executive Council policy 4:80, *Accounting and Audits*; State law; and ISBE rules for fiduciary funds. The Executive Council will appoint a treasurer for each fund to serve as the fund's sole custodian and be bonded in accordance with the School Code. The treasurer shall have all of the responsibilities specific to the treasurer listed in the ISBE rules for fiduciary funds.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/8-2 and 5/10-20.19.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§100.20, 100.80, and 100.85.

CROSS REF.: 4:80 (Accounting and Audits)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:100 Insurance Management

The Executive Director shall recommend and maintain all insurance programs that provide the broadest and most complete coverage available at the most economical cost, consistent with sound insurance principles.

The insurance program shall include each of the following:

1. Liability coverage to insure against any loss or liability of the Cooperative and the listed individuals against civil rights damage claims and suits, constitutional rights damage claims and suits, and death and bodily injury and property damage claims and suits, including defense costs, when damages are sought for negligent or wrongful acts allegedly committed in the scope of employment or under the Executive Council's direction or related to any mentoring services provided to the Cooperative's licensed staff members; Executive Council members; employees; volunteer personnel authorized by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.34, 5/10-22.34a, and 5/10-22.34b; mentors of licensed staff members authorized in 105 ILCS 5/21A-5 *et seq.* (new teacher), 105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a (new principal), and 2-3.53b (new Executive Directors); and student teachers.
2. Comprehensive property insurance covering a broad range of causes of loss involving building and personal property. The coverage amount shall normally be for the replacement cost or the insurable value.
3. Workers' Compensation to protect individual employees against financial loss in case of a work-related injury, certain types of disease, or death incurred in an employee-related situation.

LEGAL REF.:

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, Pub. L. 99-272, §10001, 26 U.S.C. §4980B(f), 42 U.S.C. §300bb-1 *et seq.*

105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a, 5/2-3.53b, 5/10-20.20, 5/10-22.3, 5/10-22.3a, 5/10-22.3b, 5/10-22.3f, 5/10-22.34, 5/10-22.34a, 5/10-22.34b, 5/21A-5 *et seq.*, and 5/22-15.

215 ILCS 5/, III. Insurance Code.

750 ILCS 75/, III. Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act.

820 ILCS 305/, Workers' Compensation Act.

Adopted: September 11, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:110 Transportation

Pupil transportation shall be the responsibility of the District of residence. No employee may transport students in school or private vehicles unless authorized by the administration.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §6312(c)(5)(B), Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.22 and 5/29-1 *et seq.*

105 ILCS 45/1-15 and /1-17.

625 ILCS 5/1-148.3a-5, 5/1-182, 5/11-1414.1, 5/12-813.1, 5/12-815, 5/12-816, 5/12-821, and 5/13-109.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.510 and 226.750; Part 120.

92 Ill.Admin.Code Part 440.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:280 (Duties and Qualifications), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children) 7:220 (Bus Conduct)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:120 Food Services

Good nutrition shall be promoted in the Cooperative's meal programs and in other food and beverages that are sold to students during the school day. The Executive Director shall manage a food service program that complies with this policy and is in alignment with policy 6:50, *School Wellness*.

Food or beverage items sold to students as part of a reimbursable meal under federal law must follow the nutrition standards specified in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture rules that implement the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Acts. Schools being reimbursed for meals under these laws are *participating schools*.

The food service program in participating schools shall comply with the nutrition standards specified in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's *Smart Snacks rules* when it offers competitive foods to students on the school campus during the school day. *Competitive foods* are all food and beverages that are offered by any person, organization or entity for sale to students on the school campus during the school day that are not reimbursed under programs authorized by federal law. The food service programs in participating schools shall also comply with any applicable mandates in the Illinois State Board of Education's School Food Service rules implementing these federal laws and the Ill. School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act.

All revenue from the sale of any food or beverages sold in competition with the School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program to students in food service areas during the meal period shall accrue to the nonprofit school lunch program account.

LEGAL REF.:

Russell B. National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §1751 *et seq.*

Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §1771 *et seq.*

7 C.F.R. Parts 210 (National School Lunch Program) and 220 (School Breakfast Program).

105 ILCS 125/, School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 305, School Food Service.

CROSS REF.: 4:130 (Free and Reduced-Price Food Services), 6:50 (School Wellness)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:130 Free and Reduced-Price Food Services

Notice

The Executive Director shall be responsible for implementing the Cooperative's free and reduced-price food services policy and all applicable programs.

If State funding is available for the Healthy School Meals for All Program, the Board will annually determine if it will participate in the program.

Eligibility Criteria and Selection of Children

A student's eligibility for free and reduced-price food services shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines, family-size income standards, set annually by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and distributed by the Ill. State Board of Education. From time to time, the income eligibility guidelines and standards may not be necessary when reimbursements for students' free breakfasts and lunches are claimed through the U.S. Depts. of Agriculture and Education's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). When claiming the CEP, the Cooperative will follow its requirements.

Notification

At the beginning of each school year, by letter, the Cooperative shall notify students and their parents/guardians of: (1) eligibility requirements for free and reduced-price food service; (2) the application process; (3) the name and telephone number of a contact person for the program; and (4) other information required by federal law. The Executive Director shall provide the same information to: (1) informational media, the local unemployment office, and any major area employers contemplating layoffs; and (2) the Cooperative's website (if applicable), all school newsletters, or students' registration materials. Parents/guardians enrolling a child in the Cooperative for the first time, any time during the school year, shall receive the eligibility information.

Nondiscrimination Assurance

The Cooperative shall avoid publicly identifying students receiving free or reduced-price meals and shall use methods for collecting meal payments that prevent identification of children receiving assistance.

Appeal

A family may appeal the Cooperative's decision to deny an application for free and reduced-price food services or to terminate such services as outlined by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture in 7 C.F.R. §245.7, Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools. The Executive Director shall establish a hearing procedure for adverse eligibility decisions and provide by mail a copy of them to the family. The Cooperative may also use these procedures to challenge a child's continued eligibility for free or reduced-price meals or milk.

During an appeal, students previously receiving food service benefits shall not have their benefits terminated. Students who were denied benefits shall not receive benefits during the appeal. The status of a student's appeal or eligibility for free or reduced-food services shall not relieve the Cooperative of its obligation to provide him or her with a free meal or snack under the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act if he or she requests one, regardless of his or her ability to pay.

The Executive Director shall keep on file for a period of three years a record of any appeals made and the hearing record. The Cooperative shall also maintain accurate and complete records showing the data and method used to determine the number of eligible students served free and reduced-price food services. These records shall be maintained for three years.

LEGAL REF.:

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, National School Lunch Program, 7 C.F.R. Part 210.

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools, 7 C.F.R. Part 245.

105 ILCS 125/, School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act.

105 ILCS 126/, Childhood Hunger Relief Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §305.10 *et seq.*

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:140 Waiver of Student Fees

The Executive Director will recommend to the Executive Council a schedule of fees, if any, to be charged students for the use of textbooks, consumable materials, extracurricular activities, and other school student fees. Students must also pay fines for the loss of or damage to schoolbooks or other school-owned materials.

Fees for textbooks, other instructional materials, and driver education, as well as fines for the loss or damage of school property, are waived for students who meet the eligibility criteria for a waiver as described in this policy. In order that no student is denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of parents/guardians to pay student fees and fines, the Executive Director will recommend to the Executive Council which additional fees, if any, the Cooperative will waive for students who meet the eligibility criteria for a waiver.

Notification

The Executive Director shall ensure that a notice of waiver applicability is provided to parents/guardians with every bill for fees and/or fines, and that applications for waivers are widely available and distributed according to State law and Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rule and that provisions for assisting parents/guardians in completing the application are available.

Eligibility Criteria

A student shall be eligible for a fee and fine waiver when:

1. The student currently lives in a household that meets the same income guidelines, with the same limits based on household size, that are used for the federal free meals program.
2. The student's parents/guardians are veterans or active-duty military personnel with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line; or
3. The student is homeless, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11434a).

The Executive Director or designee will give additional consideration where one or more of the following factors are present:

- Illness in the family;
- Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
- Unemployment;
- Emergency situations;
- When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.

Verification

The Executive Director or designee must follow the verification requirements of 7 C.F.R. 245.6a when using the free lunch or breakfast eligibility guidelines pursuant to The National School Lunch Act as the basis for waiver of the student's fee(s).

Determination and Appeal

Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of a waiver request, the Executive Director or designee shall mail a notice to the parent/guardian whenever a waiver request is denied. The denial notice shall include: (1) the reason for the denial, (2) the process and timelines for making an appeal, and (3) a statement that the parent/guardian may reapply for a waiver any time during the school year if circumstances change. If the denial is appealed, the Cooperative shall follow the procedures for the resolution of appeals as provided in the ISBE rule on waiver of fees.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §11434a, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.13, 5/10-22.25, and 5/27-815.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.245 [may contain unenforceable provisions].

CROSS REF.: 4:130 (Free and Reduced-Price Food Services), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:150 Facility Management and Building Programs

The Executive Director shall manage the Cooperative's facilities and grounds as well as facility construction and building programs in accordance with the law, the standards set forth in this policy, and other applicable Executive Council policies. The Executive Director or designee shall facilitate: (1) inspections of schools by the Regional Superintendent and State Fire Marshal or designee, (2) review of plans and specifications for future construction or alterations of a school if requested by the relevant municipality, county (if applicable), or fire protection Cooperative, and (3) compliance with the 10-year safety survey process required by the School Code.

Standards for Managing Buildings and Grounds

All Cooperative buildings and grounds shall be adequately maintained in order to provide an appropriate, safe, and energy efficient physical environment for learning and teaching. The Executive Director or designee shall provide the Executive Council with periodic reports on maintenance data and projected maintenance needs that include cost analysis. This policy is not intended to discourage efforts to improve the appearance of buildings or grounds that are consistent with the designated use of those buildings and grounds.

Standards for Green Cleaning

For each Cooperative school with 50 or more students, the Executive Director or designee shall establish and supervise a green cleaning program that complies with the guidelines established by the Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council.

Standards for Facility Construction and Building Programs

As appropriate, the Executive Council will authorize a comprehensive study to determine the need for facility construction and expansion. On an annual basis, the Executive Director or designee shall provide the Executive Council with projected facility needs, enrollment trends, and other data impacting facility use. Executive Council approval is needed for all new facility construction and expansion.

When making decisions pertaining to design and construction of school facilities, the Executive Council will confer with members of the staff and community, the Ill. State Board of Education, and educational and architectural consultants, as it deems appropriate. The Executive Council's facility goals are to:

1. Integrate facilities planning with other aspects of planning and goal setting.
2. Base educational specifications for school buildings on identifiable student needs.
3. Design buildings for sufficient flexibility to permit new or modified programs.
4. Design buildings for maximum potential for community use.
5. Meet or exceed all safety requirements.
6. Meet requirements on the accessibility of school facilities to disabled persons as specified in State and federal law.
7. Provide for low maintenance costs, energy efficiency, and minimal environmental impact.

Naming Buildings and Facilities

Recognizing that the name for a school building, facility, or ground or field reflects on its public image, the Executive Council's primary consideration will be to select a name that enhances the credibility and stature of the school or facility. Any request to name or rename an existing facility should be submitted to the Executive Council. When a facility is to be named or renamed, the Executive Council Chairperson will appoint a special committee to consider nominations and make a recommendation, along with supporting rationale, to the Executive Council. The Executive Council will make the final

selection. The Executive Director or designee may name a room or designate some area on a school's property in honor of an individual or group that has performed outstanding service to the school without using the process in this policy.

The committee will:

1. Encourage input from the community, staff members, and students.
2. Give consideration to names of local communities, neighborhoods, streets, landmarks, history of the area, and individuals who have made a contribution to the Cooperative, community, State, or nation.
3. Ensure that the name will not duplicate or cause confusion with the names of existing facilities in the Cooperative.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*, Americans with Disabilities Act; 28 C.F.R. Parts 35 and 36.

20 ILCS 3130/, Green Buildings Act.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.12, 5/10-20.49, 5/10-22.36, 5/10-20.63, and 5/17-2.11.

105 ILCS 140/, Green Cleaning Schools Act.

105 ILCS 230/, School Construction Law.

410 ILCS 25/, Environmental Barriers Act.

410 ILCS 35/25, Equitable Restrooms Act.

820 ILCS 130/, Prevailing Wage Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 151, School Construction Program; Part 180, Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools; and Part 2800, Green Cleaning for Elementary and Secondary Schools.

71 Ill.Admin.Code Part 400, Ill. Accessibility Code.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 2:170 (Procurement of Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Services), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 8:70 (Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:160 Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds

The Executive Director shall take all reasonable measures to protect: (1) the safety of Cooperative personnel, students, and visitors on Cooperative premises from risks associated with hazardous materials, and (2) the environmental quality of the Cooperative's buildings and grounds.

Pesticides

Pesticides will not be applied on the paved surfaces, playgrounds, or playing fields of any school serving grades K-8 during a school day or partial school day when students are in attendance for instructional purposes. Additionally, the application of any restricted use pesticides is prohibited on or within 500 feet of school property during normal school hours. Before pesticides are used on Cooperative premises, the Executive Director or designee shall notify employees and parents/guardians of students as required by the Structural Pest Control Act, 225 ILCS 235/, and the Lawn Care Products Application and Notice Act, 415 ILCS 65/.

Coal Tar Sealant

Before coal tar-based sealant products or high polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon sealant products are used on Cooperative premises, the Executive Director or designee shall notify employees and parents/guardians of students in writing or by telephone as required by the Coal Tar Sealant Disclosure Act.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.17a; 5/10-20.48.

29 C.F.R. §1910.1030, Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens, as adopted by the Illinois Department of Labor, 56 Ill.Admin.Code §350.700(b).

29 C.F.R. §1910.1200, Occupational Safety and Health Administration Hazard Communication Standards, as adopted by 820 ILCS 255/1.5, Toxic Substances Disclosure to Employees Act.

20 ILCS 3130/, Green Buildings Act.

105 ILCS 135/, Toxic Art Supplies in Schools Act.

105 ILCS 140/, Green Cleaning School Act.

105 ILCS 160/, Pesticide Application at Schools Act.

225 ILCS 235/, Structural Pest Control Act.

415 ILCS 60/14, Illinois Pesticide Act.

415 ILCS 65/, Lawn Care Products Application and Notice Act.

410 ILCS 170/, Coal Tar Sealant Disclosure Act.

820 ILCS 255/, Toxic Substances Disclosure to Employees Act. (*inoperative*)

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.330.

CROSS REF.: 4:150 (Facility Management and Building Programs), 4:170 (Safety)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:165 Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors

Child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors harm students, their parents/guardians, the Cooperative's environment, its school communities, and the community at large, while diminishing a student's ability to learn. The Executive Council has a responsibility and obligation to increase awareness and knowledge of: (1) issues regarding child sexual abuse, (2) likely warning signs that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse, (3) grooming behaviors related to child sexual abuse and grooming, (4) how to report child sexual abuse, (5) appropriate relationships between Cooperative employees and students based upon State law, and (6) how to prevent child sexual abuse.

To address the Executive Council's obligation to increase awareness and knowledge of these issues, prevent sexual abuse of children, and define prohibited grooming behaviors, the Executive Director or designee shall implement an Awareness and Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors Program. The Program will:

1. Educate students with:
 - a. An age-appropriate and evidence-informed health and safety education curriculum that includes methods for how to report child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors to authorities, through policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*;
 - b. Information in policy 7:250, *Student Support Services*, about: (i) Cooperative counseling options, assistance, and intervention for students who are victims of or affected by sexual abuse, and (ii) community-based Children's Advocacy Centers and sexual assault crisis centers and how to access those serving the Cooperative.
2. Train Cooperative employees about child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors by January 31 of each school year with materials that include:
 - a. A definition of prohibited grooming behaviors and employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*;
 - b. Evidence-informed content on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee-student boundary violations pursuant to policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; 5:100, *Staff Development Program*; and 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; and
 - c. How to report child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and/or boundary violations pursuant to policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.
3. Provide information to parents/guardians in student handbooks about the warning signs of child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee-student boundary violations with evidence-informed educational information that also includes:
 - a. Assistance, referral, or resource information, including how to recognize grooming behaviors, appropriate relationships between Cooperative employees and students based upon policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, and how to prevent child sexual abuse from happening;
 - b. Methods for how to report child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and/or employee-student boundary violations to authorities; and
 - c. Available counseling and resources for children who are affected by sexual abuse, including both emotional and educational support for students affected by sexual abuse, so that the student can continue to succeed in school pursuant to policy 7:250, *Student*

Support Services.

4. Provide parents/guardians of students in any of grades K through 8 with not less than five days' written notice before commencing any class or course providing instruction in recognizing and avoiding sexual abuse, as well as the opportunity to object in writing.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-23.13, 5/22-85.5, 5/27-9.1a, and 5/27-13.2.

105 ILCS 110/3, Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act.

325 ILCS 5/, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

720 ILCS 5/11-25, Criminal Code of 2012.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:250 (Student Support Services)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:170 Safety

Safety and Security

All Cooperative operations, including the education program, shall be conducted in a manner that will promote the safety and security of everyone on Cooperative property or at a Cooperative event. The Executive Director or designee shall develop, implement, and maintain a comprehensive safety and security plan that includes, without limitation:

1. An emergency operations and crisis response plan(s) addressing prevention, preparation, response, and recovery for each school;
2. Provisions for a coordinated effort with local law enforcement and fire officials, emergency medical services personnel, and the Council Attorney;
3. A school safety drill plan;
4. Instruction in safe bus riding practices; and
5. A clear, rapid, factual, and coordinated system of internal and external communication.

In the event of an emergency that threatens the safety of any person or property, students and staff are encouraged to follow the best practices discussed for their building regarding the use of any available cellular telephones.

School Safety Drill Plan

During every academic year, each school building that houses school children shall conduct, at a minimum, each of the following in accordance with the School Safety Drill Act (105 ILCS 128/):

1. Three school evacuation drills to address and prepare students and school personnel for fire incidents. One of these three drills shall require the participation of the local fire department or Cooperative.
2. One bus evacuation drill.
3. One severe weather and shelter-in-place drill to address and prepare students and school personnel for possible tornado incidents.
4. One law enforcement lockdown drill to address a school shooting incident and to evaluate the preparedness of school personnel and students. This drill shall occur no later than 90 days after the first day of school of each year and shall require the participation of all school personnel and students present at school at the time of the drill, except for those exempted by administrators, school support personnel, or a parent/guardian.

Annual Review

The Executive Council or its designee will annually review each school building's emergency operations and crisis response plan(s), protocols, and procedures, as well as each building's compliance with the school safety drill plan. This annual review shall be in accordance with the School Safety Drill Act (105 ILCS 128/) and the Joint Rules of the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE).

Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

At least one automated external defibrillator (AED) shall be present in each Cooperative attendance center during the school day and during any Cooperative-sponsored extracurricular activity on school grounds. In addition, the Executive Director or designee shall implement a written plan for responding to medical emergencies at the Cooperative's physical fitness facilities in accordance with the Fitness Facility Medical Emergency Preparedness Act and shall file a copy of the plan with the Ill. Dept. of Public Health (IDPH). The plan shall provide for at least one AED to be available at every physical

fitness facility on the premises according to State law requirements.

The Cooperative shall have an AED on site as well as a trained AED user: (1) on staff during staffed business hours; and (2) available during activities or events sponsored and conducted or supervised by the Cooperative. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that every AED on the Cooperative's premises is properly tested and maintained in accordance with rules developed by the IDPH. This policy does not create an obligation to use an AED.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

The Executive Director or designee shall implement a plan with the Cooperative's local fire officials to:

1. Determine which school buildings to equip with approved *carbon monoxide alarms* or *carbon monoxide detectors*,
2. Locate the required carbon monoxide alarms or carbon monoxide detectors within 20 feet of a carbon monoxide emitting device, and
3. Incorporate carbon monoxide alarm or detector activation procedures into each school building that requires a carbon monoxide alarm or detector. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure each school building annually reviews these procedures.

Unsafe School Choice Option

The unsafe school choice option provided in State law permits students to transfer to another school within the Cooperative in certain situations. This transfer option is unavailable in this Cooperative because each grade is in only one attendance center. A student, who would otherwise have qualified for the choice option, or such a student's parent/guardian, may request special accommodations from the Executive Director or designee. The unsafe school choice option provided in State law permits students to transfer to another school within the Cooperative in certain situations. This transfer option is unavailable in this Cooperative because the Cooperative has only one school or attendance center. A student who would otherwise have qualified for the choice option, or such a student's parent/guardian, may request special accommodations from the Executive Director or designee.

Lead Testing in Water

The Executive Director or designee shall implement testing for lead in each source of drinking water in school buildings in accordance with the Ill. Plumbing License Law and guidance published by the IDPH. The Executive Director or designee shall notify parent(s)/guardian(s) about the sampling results from their children's respective school buildings.

Emergency Closing

The Executive Director is authorized to close school(s) in the event of hazardous weather or other emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff members, or school property.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.2, 5/10-20.57, 5/18-12, and 5/18-12.5.

105 ILCS 128/, School Safety Drill Act; 29 Ill.Admin.Code Part 1500.

210 ILCS 74/, Physical Fitness Facility Medical Emergency Preparedness Act.

225 ILCS 320/35.5, Ill. Plumbing License Law.

CROSS REF.: 4:110 (Transportation), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 4:180 (Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery), 4:190 (Targeted School Violence Prevention Program), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on

School Property), 8:100 (Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies)

Adopted: December 9, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:175 Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications

Persons Prohibited on School Property without Prior Permission

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender meets either of the following two exceptions:

1. The offender is a parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or
2. The offender received permission to be present from the Executive Council, Executive Director, or Executive Director's designee. If permission is granted, the Executive Director or Executive Council Chairperson shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal.

In all cases, the Executive Director or designee shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity. If a student is a sex offender, the Executive Director or designee shall develop guidelines for managing his or her presence in school.

Screening

The Executive Director or designee shall perform fingerprint-based criminal history records information checks and/or screenings required by State law or Executive Council policy for employees; student teachers; students doing field or clinical experience other than student teaching; contractors' employees who have direct, daily contact with one or more children; and resource persons and volunteers. The Executive Council Chairperson shall ensure that these checks are completed for the Executive Director. He or she shall take appropriate action based on the result of any criminal background check and/or screen.

Notification to Parents/Guardians

The Executive Director shall develop procedures for the distribution and use of information from law enforcement officials under the Sex Offender Community Notification Law and the Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Community Notification Law. The Executive Director or designee shall serve as the Cooperative contact person for purposes of these laws. The Executive Director and Building Principal shall manage a process for schools to notify the parents/guardians during school registration that information about sex offenders is available to the public as provided in the Sex Offender Community Notification Law. This notification must occur during school registration and at other times as the Executive Director or Building Principal determines advisable.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7926, Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

20 ILCS 2635/, Uniform Conviction Information Act.

720 ILCS 5/11-9.3, Criminal Code of 2012.

730 ILCS 152/, Sex Offender Community Notification Law.

730 ILCS 154/75-105, Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Community Notification Law.

CROSS REF.: 2:110 (Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers), 3:40 (Executive Director), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director), 3:60 (Administrative Responsibility of the Building Principal), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:260 (Student Teachers), 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property), 8:100 (Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:180 Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery

The Executive Council recognizes that the Cooperative will play an essential role along with the local health department and emergency management agencies in protecting the public's health and safety during a pandemic.

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect individuals and, because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads sustainably.

To prepare the Cooperative community for a pandemic, the Executive Director or designee shall: (1) learn and understand how the roles that the federal, State, and local government function; (2) form a pandemic planning team consisting of appropriate Cooperative personnel and community members to identify priorities and oversee the development and implementation of a comprehensive pandemic school action plan; and (3) build awareness of the final plan among staff, students, and community.

Emergency School Closing

In the case of a pandemic, the Governor may declare a disaster due to a public health emergency that may affect any decision for an emergency school closing. Decisions for an emergency school closing will be made by the Executive Director in consultation with and, if necessary, at the direction of the Governor, Ill. Dept. of Public Health, Cooperative's local health department, emergency management agencies, and/or Regional Office of Education.

During an emergency school closing, the Executive Council Chairperson and the Executive Director may, to the extent the emergency situation allows, examine existing Executive Council policies pursuant to Policy 2:240, *Board Policy Development*, and recommend to the Executive Council for consideration any needed amendments or suspensions to address mandates that the Cooperative may not be able to accomplish or implement due to a pandemic.

Executive Council Meeting Procedure; No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video

A disaster declaration related to a public health emergency may affect the Executive Council's ability to meet in person and generate a quorum of members who are physically present at the location of a meeting. Policy 2:220, *Executive Council Meeting Procedure*, governs Executive Council meetings by video or audio conference without the physical presence of a quorum.

Payment of Employee Salaries During Emergency School Closures

The Executive Director shall consult with the Executive Council to determine the extent to which continued payment of salaries and benefits will be made to the Cooperative's employees, pursuant to policies 3:40, *Executive Director*, 3:50, *Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director*, 5:35, *Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act*, 5:200, *Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal*, and 5:270, *Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment*, and consistent with: (1) applicable laws, regulations, federal or State or local emergency declarations, executive orders, and agency directives; (2) collective bargaining agreements and any bargaining obligations; and (3) the terms of any grant under which an employee is being paid.

Suspension of In-Person Instruction; Remote and/or Blended Remote Learning Day Plan(s)

When the Governor declares a disaster due to a public health emergency pursuant to 20 ILCS 3305/7, and the State Superintendent of Education declares a requirement for the Cooperative to use *Remote Learning Days* or *Blended Remote Learning Days*, the Executive Director shall approve and present to the Executive Council for adoption a Remote and/or Blended Remote Learning Day Plan (Plan) that:

1. Recommends to the Executive Council for consideration any suspensions or amendments to curriculum-related policies to reduce any Council-required graduation or other instructional requirements in excess of minimum curricular requirements specified in School Code that the Cooperative may not be able to provide due to the pandemic;
2. Implements the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-30; and
3. Ensures a plan for periodic review of and/or amendments to the Plan when needed and/or required by statute, regulation, or State guidance.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-16.7, 5/10-20.5, 5/10-20.56, and 5/10-30.

5 ILCS 120/2.01 and 120/7(e), Open Meetings Act.

20 ILCS 2305/2(b), Ill. Dept. of Public Health Act (Part 1).

20 ILCS 3305/, Ill. Emergency Management Agency Act.

115 ILCS 5/, Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act.

CROSS REF.: 1:20 (Cooperative Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification), 2:220 (Executive Council Meeting Procedure), 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 3:40 (Executive Director), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director), 3:70 (Succession of Authority), 4:170 (Safety), 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment), 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements), 7:90 (Release During School Hours), 8:100 (Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

4:190 Targeted School Violence Prevention Program

Threats and acts of targeted school violence harm the Cooperative's environment and school community, diminishing students' ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Providing students and staff with access to a safe and secure Cooperative environment is an important Executive Council goal. While it is not possible for the Cooperative to completely eliminate threats in its environment, a Targeted School Violence Prevention Program (Program) using the collective efforts of local school officials, staff, students, families, and the community helps the Cooperative reduce these risks to its environment.

The Executive Director or designee shall develop and implement the Program. The Program oversees the maintenance of a Cooperative environment that is conducive to learning and working by identifying, assessing, classifying, responding to, and managing threats and acts of targeted school violence. The Program shall be part of the Cooperative's Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan, required by policy 4:170, *Safety*, and shall:

1. Establish a Cooperative-level School Violence Prevention Team to: (a) develop a Cooperative-level Targeted School Violence Prevention Plan, and (b) oversee the Cooperative's Building-level Threat Assessment Team(s).
2. Establish Building-level Threat Assessment Team(s) to assess and intervene with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to safety. This team may serve one or more schools.
3. Require all Cooperative staff, volunteers, and contractors to report any expressed threats or behaviors that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self.
4. Encourage parents/guardians and students to report any expressed threats or behaviors that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self.
5. Comply with State and federal law and align with Executive Council policies.

The Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act protects the Cooperative from liability. The Program does not: (1) replace the care of a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches or a licensed medical practitioner or professional trained in violence prevention, assessments and counseling services, (2) extend beyond available resources within the Cooperative, (3) extend beyond the school day and/or school-sponsored events, or (4) guarantee or ensure the safety of students, Cooperative staff, or visitors.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-21.7, 5/10-27.1A, 5/10-27.1B, 5/24-24, and 5/22-110.

105 ILCS 128/, School Safety Drill Act.

745 ILCS 10/, Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act.

29 Ill.Admin.Code Part 1500.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 4:170 (Safety), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:270 (Guidance and Counseling Program), 7:140 (Search and Seizure), 7:150 (Agency and Law Enforcement Requests), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:290 (Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention), 7:340 (Student Records), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property), 8:100 (Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 5 - PERSONNEL

Vermilion Association for Special Education

General Personnel

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:10 Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment

The Cooperative shall provide equal employment opportunities to all persons regardless of their race; color; creed; religion; national origin; sex; sexual orientation; age; ancestry; marital status; arrest record; military status; order of protection status; unfavorable military discharge; citizenship status provided the individual is authorized to work in the United States; work authorization status; use of lawful products while not at work; being a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence; genetic information; physical or mental handicap or disability, if otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodation; pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; reproductive health decisions; credit history, unless a satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a particular position; conviction record, unless authorized by law; family responsibilities; or other legally protected categories. No one will be penalized solely for his or her status as a registered qualifying patient or a registered designated caregiver for purposes of the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act, 410 ILCS 130/.

Persons who believe they have not received equal employment opportunities should report their claims to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or a Complaint Manager under policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, or in the case of denial of equal employment opportunities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*. These individuals are listed below. No employee or applicant will be discriminated or retaliated against because he or she: (1) requested, attempted to request, used, or attempted to use a reasonable accommodation as allowed by the Illinois Human Rights Act, or (2) initiated a complaint, was a witness, supplied information, or otherwise participated in an investigation or proceeding involving an alleged violation of this policy or State or federal laws, rules or regulations, provided the employee or applicant did not make a knowingly false accusation nor provide knowingly false information.

Administrative Implementation

The Executive Director shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator for personnel who shall be responsible for coordinating the Cooperative's nondiscrimination efforts. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator may be the Executive Director or a Complaint Manager under policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

The Executive Director shall appoint a Title IX Coordinator to coordinate the Cooperative's efforts to comply with Title IX.

The Executive Director shall insert into this policy the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the Cooperative's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Kristin Dunker

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833

dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

Title IX Coordinator:

Kristin Dunker

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833

dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

217-443-8273

217-443-8273

Complaint Managers:

Kristin Dunker

Sarah Imhoff

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
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dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

imhoffs@vase.k12.il.us

217-443-8273

217-443-8273

The Executive Director shall also use reasonable measures to inform staff members and applicants that the Cooperative is an equal opportunity employer, such as, by posting required notices and including this policy in the appropriate handbooks.

Minority Recruitment

The Cooperative will attempt to recruit and hire minority employees. The implementation of this policy may include advertising openings in minority publications, participating in minority job fairs, and recruiting at colleges and universities with significant minority enrollments. This policy, however, does not require or permit the Cooperative to give preferential treatment or special rights based on a protected status without evidence of past discrimination.

LEGAL REF.:

8 U.S.C. §1324a *et seq.*, Immigration Reform and Control Act.

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

29 U.S.C. §206(d), Equal Pay Act.

29 U.S.C. §218d, Fair Labor Standards Act.

29 U.S.C. §621 *et seq.*, Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

29 U.S.C. §701 *et seq.*, Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

38 U.S.C. §4301 *et seq.*, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (1994).

42 U.S.C. §1981 *et seq.*, Civil Rights Act of 1991.

42 U.S.C. §2000d *et seq.*, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 34 C.F.R. Part 100.

42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 29 C.F.R. Part 1601.

42 U.S.C. §2000ff *et seq.*, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

42 U.S.C. §2000gg *et seq.*, Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; 29 C.F.R. Part 1636.

42 U.S.C. §2000e(k), Pregnancy Discrimination Act.

42 U.S.C. §12111 *et seq.*, Americans with Disabilities Act, Title I.

III. Constitution, Art. I, §§17, 18, and 19.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.7, 5/10-20.7a, 5/10-21.1, 5/10-22.4, 5/10-23.5, 5/22-19, 5/24-4, 5/24-4.1, and 5/24-7.

410 ILCS 130/40, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

410 ILCS 513/25, Genetic Information Privacy Act.

740 ILCS 174/, III. Whistleblower Act.

775 ILCS 5/1-103, 5/2-101, 5/2-102, 5/2-103, 5/2-103.1, 5/2-104(D) and 5/6-101, III. Human Rights Act.

775 ILCS 35/, Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

820 ILCS 55/10, Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act.

820 ILCS 70/, Employee Credit Privacy Act.

820 ILCS 75/, Job Opportunities for Qualified Applicants Act.

820 ILCS 112/, III. Equal Pay Act of 2003.

820 ILCS 180/30, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act.

820 ILCS 260/, Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:40 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 5:50 (Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition), 5:70 (Religious Holidays), 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment), 5:300 (Schedules and Employment Year), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 8:70 (Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited

The Cooperative expects the workplace environment to be productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment. Cooperative employees shall not engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, citizenship status, work authorization status, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibilities, reproductive health decisions, order of protection status, military status, or unfavorable discharge from military service, nor shall they engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's other protected status identified in policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*. Harassment of students, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, is prohibited by policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*; and 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*.

The Cooperative will take remedial and corrective action to address unlawful workplace harassment, including sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment Prohibited

The Cooperative shall provide a workplace environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law. The Cooperative provides annual sexual harassment prevention training in accordance with State law.

Cooperative employees shall not make unwelcome sexual advances or request sexual favors or engage in any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical, or other conduct. The terms intimidating, hostile, or offensive include, but are not limited to, conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Sexual harassment will be evaluated in light of all the circumstances.

Making a Report or Complaint

Employees and *nonemployees* (persons who are not otherwise employees and are directly performing services for the Cooperative pursuant to a contract with the Cooperative, including contractors, and consultants) are encouraged to promptly report information regarding violations of this policy. Individuals may choose to report to a person of the individual's same gender. Every effort should be made to file such reports or complaints as soon as possible, while facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

Aggrieved individuals, if they feel comfortable doing so, should directly inform the person engaging in the harassing conduct or communication that such conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.

Whom to Contact with a Report or Complaint

An employee should report claims of harassment, including making a confidential report, to any of the following: his/her immediate supervisor, the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

An employee may also report claims using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. If a claim is reported using Board policy 2:260, then the Complaint Manager shall process and review the claim according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy.

The Executive Director shall insert into this policy the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the Cooperative's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:	Title IX Coordinator:
Kristin Dunker	Kristin Dunker
15009 Catlin Tilton Rd., Tilton, IL 61833	15009 Catlin Tilton Rd., Tilton, IL 61833
dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us	dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us
217-443-8273	217-443-8273

Complaint Managers:

Kristin Dunker	Sarah Imhoff
15009 Catlin Tilton Rd., Tilton, IL 61833	15009 Catlin Tilton Rd., Tilton, IL 61833
dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us	imhoffs@vase.k12.il.us
217-443-8273	217-443-8273

Investigation Process

Any Cooperative employee who receives a report or complaint of harassment must promptly forward the report or complaint to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, or a Complaint Manager. Any employee who fails to promptly forward a report or complaint may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Reports and complaints of harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the Cooperative's duty to investigate and maintain a workplace environment that is productive,

respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

For any report or complaint alleging sexual harassment that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall consider whether action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, should be initiated.

For any report or complaint alleging harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall investigate under Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*.

For any other alleged workplace harassment that does not require action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall consider whether an investigation under policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, should be initiated, regardless of whether a written report or complaint is filed.

Reports That Involve Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse of a Child by School Personnel

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A(b), that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

Any complaint alleging an incident of sexual abuse shall be processed and reviewed according to policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. In addition to reporting the suspected abuse, the complaint shall also be processed under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Enforcement

A violation of this policy by an employee may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. A violation of this policy by a third party will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the Cooperative, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action, which for an employee that may be up to and including discharge.

Retaliation Prohibited

An employee's employment, compensation, or work assignment shall not be adversely affected by complaining or providing information about harassment. Retaliation against employees for bringing complaints or providing information about harassment is prohibited (see policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*), and depending upon the law governing the complaint, whistleblower protection may be available under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/), the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), and/or the Ill. Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/).

An employee should report allegations of retaliation to his/her immediate supervisor, the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

Employees who retaliate against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in the reporting or complaint process will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Recourse to State and Federal Fair Employment Practice Agencies

The Cooperative encourages all employees who have information regarding violations of this policy to report the information pursuant to this policy. The following government agencies are available to assist employees: the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The Executive Director shall also use reasonable measures to inform staff members, applicants, and nonemployees of this policy, which shall include posting on the Cooperative website and/or making this policy available in the Cooperative's administrative office, and including this policy in the appropriate handbooks.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 29 C.F.R. §1604.11.

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

5 ILCS 430/70-5(a), State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

775 ILCS 5/2-101(E) and (E-1), 5/2-102(A), (A-10), (D-5), 5/2-102(E-5), 5/2-109, 5/5-102, and 5/5-102.2, Ill. Human Rights Act.

56 Ill. Admin.Code Parts 2500, 2510, 5210, and 5220.

Vance v. Ball State Univ., 570 U.S. 421 (2013).

Crawford v. Metro. Gov't of Nashville & Davidson Cnty., 555 U.S. 271 (2009).

Jackson v. Birmingham Bd. of Educ., 544 U.S. 167 (2005).

Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Servs., 523 U.S. 75 (1998).

Burlington Indus. v. Ellerth, 524 U.S. 742 (1998).

Faragher v. City of Boca Raton, 524 U.S. 775 (1998).

Harris v. Forklift Systems, 510 U.S. 17 (1993).

Franklin v. Gwinnett Co. Public Schools, 503 U.S. 60 (1992).

Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986).

Porter v. Erie Foods Int, Inc., 576 F.3d 629 (7th Cir. 2009).

Williams v. Waste Mgmt., 361 F.3d 1021 (7th Cir. 2004).

Berry v. Delta Airlines, 260 F.3d 803 (7th Cir. 2001).

Sangamon Cnty. Sheriff's Dept. v. Ill. Human Rights Com'n, 233 Ill.2d 125 (Ill. 2009).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:30 Hiring Process and Criteria

The Cooperative hires the most qualified personnel consistent with budget and staffing requirements and in compliance with Executive Council policy on equal employment opportunity and minority recruitment. The Executive Director is responsible for recruiting personnel and making hiring recommendations to the Executive Council. If the Executive Director's recommendation is rejected, the Executive Director must submit another. The Executive Director may select personnel on a short-term basis for a specific project or emergency condition before the Executive Council's approval. No individual will be employed who has been convicted of a criminal offense listed in 105 ILCS 5/21B-80(c).

All applicants must complete a Cooperative application in order to be considered for employment.

Job Descriptions

The Executive Council maintains the Executive Director's job description and directs, through policy, the Executive Director, in his or her charge of the Cooperative's administration.

The Executive Director shall develop and maintain a current comprehensive job description for each position or job category; however, a provision in a collective bargaining agreement or individual contract will control in the event of a conflict.

Investigations

The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that a fingerprint-based criminal history records check and a check of the Statewide Sex Offender Database and Violent Offender Against Youth Database is performed on each applicant as required by State law. When the applicant is a successful Executive Director candidate who has been offered employment by the Executive Council, the Executive Council Chairperson shall ensure that these checks are completed. The Executive Director or designee, or if the applicant is a successful Executive Director candidate, then the Executive Council Chairperson shall notify an applicant if the applicant is identified in either database. The School Code requires the Executive Council Chairperson to keep a conviction record confidential and share it only with the Executive Director, Regional Executive Director, State Executive Director, State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board, any other person necessary to the hiring decision, the Ill. State Police and/or Statewide Sex Offender Database for purposes of clarifying the information, and/or the Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Illinois when required by law. The Executive Council reserves its right to authorize additional background inquiries beyond a fingerprint-based criminal history records check when it deems it appropriate to do so, in accordance with applicable laws.

Each newly hired employee must complete a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Form as required by federal law.

The Cooperative retains the right to discharge any employee whose criminal background investigation reveals a conviction for committing or attempting to commit any of the offenses outlined in 105 ILCS 5/21B-80 or who falsifies, or omits facts from, his or her employment application or other employment documents. If an indicated finding of abuse or neglect of a child has been issued by the Ill. Department of Children and Family Services or by a child welfare agency of another jurisdiction for any applicant for student teaching, applicant for employment, or any Cooperative employee, then the Executive Council must consider that person's status as a condition of employment.

The Executive Director shall ensure that the Cooperative does not engage in any investigation or inquiry prohibited by law and complies with each of the following:

1. The Cooperative uses an applicant's credit history or report from a consumer reporting agency only when a satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a

particular position.

2. The Cooperative does not screen applicants based on their current or prior wages or salary histories, including benefits or other compensation, by requiring that the wage or salary history satisfy minimum or maximum criteria.
3. The Cooperative does not request or require a wage or salary history as a condition of being considered for employment, being interviewed, continuing to be considered for an offer of employment, an offer of employment, or an offer of compensation.
4. The Cooperative does not request or require an applicant to disclose wage or salary history as a condition of employment.
5. The Cooperative does not ask an applicant or applicant's current or previous employers about wage or salary history, including benefits or other compensation.
6. The Cooperative does not ask an applicant or applicant's previous employers about claim(s) made or benefit(s) received under the Workers' Compensation Act.
7. The Cooperative does not request of an applicant or employee access in any manner to his or her personal online account, such as social networking websites, including a request for passwords to such accounts.
8. The Cooperative provides equal employment opportunities to all persons. See policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*.

Sexual Misconduct Related Employment History Review (EHR)

Prior to hiring an applicant for a position involving *direct contact with children or students*, the Superintendent shall ensure that an EHR is performed as required by State law. When the applicant is a superintendent candidate, the Board President shall ensure that the EHR is initiated before a successful superintendent candidate is offered employment by the Board.

Physical Examinations

Each new employee must furnish evidence of physical fitness to perform assigned duties and freedom from communicable disease. The physical fitness examination must be performed by a physician licensed in Illinois, or any other state, to practice medicine and surgery in any of its branches, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority by his or her supervising physician to perform health examinations. The employee must have the physical examination performed no more than 90 days before submitting evidence of it to the Cooperative.

Any employee may be required to have an additional examination by a physician who is licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority by his or her supervising physician to perform health examinations, if the examination is job-related and consistent with business necessity. The Executive Council will pay the expenses of any such examination.

Orientation Program

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

The Cooperative's staff will provide an orientation program for new employees to acquaint them with the Cooperative's policies and procedures, the school's rules and regulations, and the responsibilities of their position. Before beginning employment, each employee must sign the *Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status* form as provided in policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.

LEGAL REF.:

8 U.S.C. §1324a *et seq.*, Immigration Reform and Control Act.

15 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Fair Credit Reporting Act.

42 U.S.C. §12112, Americans with Disabilities Act; 29 C.F.R. Part 1630.

105 ILCS 5/10-16.7, 5/10-20.7, 5/10-21.4, 5/10-21.9, 5/10-22.34, 5/10-22.34b, 5/21B-10, 5/21B-80, 5/21B-85, 5/22-6.5, 5/22-94, and 5/24-5.

20 ILCS 2630/3.3, Criminal Identification Act.

820 ILCS 55/, Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act.

820 ILCS 70/, Employee Credit Privacy Act.

820 ILCS 112/, Equal Pay Act of 2003.

Duldulao v. St. Mary of Nazareth Hospital, 136 Ill. App. 3d 763 (1st Dist. 1985), *aff'd in part and remanded* 115 Ill.2d 482 (Ill. 1987).

Kaiser v. Dixon, 127 Ill. App. 3d 251 (2nd Dist. 1984).

Molitor v. Chicago Title & Trust Co., 325 Ill. App. 124 (1st Dist. 1945).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:40 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:125 (Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct), 5:220 (Substitute Teachers), 5:280 (Duties and Qualifications)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:35 Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act

Job Classifications

The Executive Director will ensure that all job positions are identified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" according to State law and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and that employees are informed whether they are "exempt" or "non-exempt." "Exempt" and "non-exempt" employee categories may include certificated and non-certificated job positions. All non-exempt employees, whether paid on a salary or hourly basis, are covered by minimum wage and overtime provisions.

Workweek and Compensation

The workweek for Cooperative employees will be 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday. Non-exempt employees will be compensated for all hours worked in a workweek including overtime. For non-exempt employees paid a salary, the salary is paid for a 40-hour workweek even if an employee is scheduled for less than 40 hours. "Overtime" is time worked in excess of 40 hours in a single workweek.

Overtime

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

A non-exempt employee shall not work overtime without his or her supervisor's express approval. All supervisors of non-exempt employees shall: (1) monitor overtime use on a weekly basis and report such use to the business office, (2) seek the Executive Director or designee's written pre-approval for any long term or repeated use of overtime that can be reasonably anticipated, (3) ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the FLSA are followed, and (4) ensure that employees are compensated for any overtime worked. Accurate and complete time sheets of actual hours worked during the workweek shall be signed by each employee and submitted to the business office. The business office will review work records of employees on a regular basis, make an assessment of overtime use, and provide the assessment to the Executive Director. In lieu of overtime compensation, non-exempt employees may receive compensatory time-off, according to policy 5:310, *Compensatory Time-Off*.

Suspension Without Pay

No exempt employee shall have his or her salary docked, such as by an unpaid suspension, if the deduction would cause a loss of the exempt status. Licensed employees may be suspended without pay in accordance with policy 5:240, *Suspension*. Non-licensed employees may be suspended without pay in accordance with policy 5:290, *Employment Termination and Suspensions*.

Implementation

The Executive Director or designee shall implement the policy in accordance with the FLSA, including its required notices to employees. In the event of a conflict between the policy and State or federal law, the latter shall control.

LEGAL REF.:

820 ILCS 105/4a.

Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. §201 *et seq.*, 29 C.F.R. Parts 516, 541, 548, 553, 778, and 785.

CROSS REF.: 5:240 (Suspension), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 5:310

(Compensatory Time-Off)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:40 Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease

The Executive Director or designee shall develop and implement procedures for managing known or suspected cases of a communicable and chronic infectious disease involving Cooperative employees that are consistent with State and federal law, Illinois Department of Public Health rules, and Executive Council policies.

An employee with a communicable or chronic infectious disease is encouraged to inform the Executive Director immediately and grant consent to being monitored by the Cooperative's Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease Review Team. The Review Team, if used, provides information and recommendations to the Executive Director concerning the employee's conditions of employment and necessary accommodations. The Review Team shall hold the employee's medical condition and records in strictest confidence, except to the extent allowed by law.

An employee with a communicable or chronic infectious disease will be permitted to retain his or her position whenever, after reasonable accommodations and without undue hardship, there is no substantial risk of transmission of the disease to others, provided an employee is able to continue to perform the position's essential functions. An employee with a communicable and chronic infectious disease remains subject to the Executive Council's employment policies including sick and/or other leave, physical examinations, temporary and permanent disability, and termination.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*, Americans With Disabilities Act, amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), Pub. L. 110-325; 29 C.F.R. §1630.1 *et seq.*

29 U.S.C. §791, Rehabilitation Act of 1973; 34 C.F.R. §104.1 *et seq.*

105 ILCS 5/24-5.

20 ILCS 2305/6, Department of Public Health Act.

820 ILCS 40/, Personnel Record Review Act.

77 Ill.Admin.Code Part 690, Control of Communicable Diseases.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 4:180 (Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:50 Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition

All Cooperative workplaces are drug- and alcohol-free workplaces.

All employees are prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities while on Cooperative premises or while performing work for the Cooperative:

1. Unlawful manufacture, dispensing, distribution, possession, or use of an illegal or controlled substance, or being impaired by or under the influence of any illegal substance or any detectible use of any illegal substance regardless of when or where the use occurred.
2. Distribution, consumption, use, possession, or being impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage; being present on Cooperative premises or while performing work for the Cooperative when alcohol consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
3. Distribution, consumption, possession, use, or being impaired by or under the influence of cannabis; being present on Cooperative premises or while performing work for the Cooperative when impaired by or under the influence of cannabis, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred, unless distribution, possession, and/or use is by a school nurse or school administrator pursuant to *Ashley's Law*, 105 ILCS 5/22-33. The Cooperative considers employees impaired by or under the influence of cannabis when there is a good faith belief that an employee manifests specific articulable symptoms while working that decrease or lessen the employee's performance of the duties or tasks of the employee's job position.

Upon the Executive Director or designee's reasonable suspicion of an employee's violation of any of the prohibited activities stated above, the Executive Director or designee may direct the employee to undergo a drug and/or alcohol test to corroborate or refute the alleged violation. State law protects the Cooperative from liability when it takes actions pursuant to a reasonable workplace drug policy, including but not limited to subjecting an employee or applicant to reasonable drug and alcohol testing, reasonable and nondiscriminatory random drug testing, discipline, termination of employment, or withdrawal of a job offer due to a failure of a drug test.

For purposes of this policy a controlled substance means a substance that is:

1. Not legally obtainable,
2. Being used in a manner different than prescribed,
3. Legally obtainable, but has not been legally obtained, or
4. Referenced in federal or State controlled substance acts.

For purposes of this policy, *Cooperative premises* means workplace as defined in the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (CRTA) in addition to Cooperative and school buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for a Executive Council meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. *School grounds* means the real property comprising any school, any conveyance used to transport students to school or a school-related activity, and any public way within 1,000 feet of any school ground, designated school bus stops where students are waiting for the school bus, and school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. "Vehicles used for school purposes" means school buses or other school vehicles.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall:

1. Abide by the terms of this Executive Council policy respecting a drug- and alcohol-free workplace; and
2. Notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation

occurring on the Cooperative premises or while performing work for the Cooperative, no later than five calendar days after such a conviction.

Unless otherwise prohibited by this policy, prescription and over-the-counter medications are not prohibited when taken in standard dosages and/or according to prescriptions from the employee's licensed health care provider, provided that an employee's work performance is not impaired.

To make employees aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, the Executive Director or designee shall perform each of the following:

1. Provide each employee with a copy of this policy.
2. Post notice of this policy in a place where other information for employees is posted.
3. Make available materials from local, State, and national anti-drug and alcohol-abuse organizations.
4. Enlist the aid of community and State agencies with drug and alcohol informational and rehabilitation programs to provide information to Cooperative employees.
5. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
 - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace,
 - b. Available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, re-entry, and any employee assistance programs, and
 - c. The penalties that the Cooperative may impose upon employees for violations of this policy.
6. Remind employees that policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, requires the Cooperative to educate students, depending upon their grade, about drug and substance abuse prevention and relationships between drugs, alcohol, and violence.

E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition

All employees are covered by the conduct prohibitions contained in policy 8:30, *Visitors to and Conduct on School Property*. The prohibition on the use of e-cigarettes, tobacco, and cannabis products applies both (1) when an employee is on school property, and (2) while an employee is performing work for the Cooperative at a school event regardless of the event's location.

Tobacco has the meaning provided in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b.

Cannabis has the meaning provided in the CRTA, 410 ILCS 705/1-10.

E-Cigarette is short for electronic cigarette and includes, but is not limited to, any electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS), electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, electronic hookah, vape pen, or similar product or device, and any components or parts that can be used to build the product or device.

Cooperative Action Upon Violation of Policy

An employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. In addition, or alternatively, the Executive Council may require an employee to successfully complete an appropriate drug- or alcohol-abuse rehabilitation program.

The Executive Council shall take disciplinary action with respect to an employee convicted of a drug offense in the workplace within 30 days after receiving notice of the conviction.

Should Cooperative employees be engaged in the performance of work under a federal contract or grant, or under a State contract or grant of \$5,000 or more, the Executive Director shall notify the

appropriate State or federal agency from which the Cooperative receives contract or grant monies of the employee's conviction within 10 days after receiving notice of the conviction.

Disclaimer

The Executive Council reserves the right to interpret, revise or discontinue any provision of this policy pursuant to the **Suspension of Policies** subhead in policy 2:240, *Policy Development*.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7101 *et seq.*, Safe and Drug-Free School and Communities Act of 1994.

21 U.S.C. §812; 21 C.F.R. §1308.11-1308.15, Controlled Substances Act.

41 U.S.C. §8101 *et seq.*, Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.

42 U.S.C. §12114, Americans With Disabilities Act.

21 C.F.R. Parts 1100, 1140, and 1143.

30 ILCS 580/, Drug-Free Workplace Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b.

410 ILCS 82/, Smoke Free Illinois Act.

410 ILCS 130/, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

410 ILCS 705/1-1 *et seq.*, Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act.

720 ILCS 675, Prevention of Tobacco Use by Persons under 21 Years of Age and Sale and Distribution of Tobacco Products Act.

820 ILCS 55/, Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:60 Expenses

The Executive Council regulates the reimbursement of all travel, meal, and lodging expenses by resolution. Money shall not be advanced or reimbursed, or purchase orders issued for: (1) the expenses of any person except the employee, (2) anyone's personal expenses, or (3) entertainment expenses. Entertainment includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless the entertainment is ancillary to the purpose of the program or event. The Cooperative is not responsible for losses due to an employee's own negligence, losses due to normal wear, or losses due to theft, unless the theft was a result of the Cooperative's negligence. Employees must submit the appropriate itemized, signed, standardized form(s) to support any requests for expense advancements, reimbursements, or purchase orders that show the following:

1. The amount of the estimated or actual expense, with attached receipts for actual incurred expenses.
2. The name and title of the employee who is requesting the expense advancement or reimbursement. Receipts from group functions must include the names, offices, and job titles of all participants.
3. The date(s) of the official business on which the expense advancement, reimbursement, or purchase order will be or was expended.
4. The nature of the official business conducted when the expense advancement, reimbursement, or purchase order will be or was expended.

Advancements

The Executive Director may advance expenses to teachers and other licensed employees for the anticipated actual and necessary expenses to be incurred while attending meetings that are related to their duties and will contribute to their professional development, provided they fall below the maximum allowed in the Executive Council's expense regulations.

Expense advancement requests must be submitted to the Executive Director or designee on the Cooperative's standardized estimated expense approval form for employees. After spending expense advancements, employees must use the Cooperative's standardized expense reimbursement form and submit to the Executive Director: (a) the itemized, signed advancement voucher that was issued, and (b) the amount of actual expenses by attaching receipts. Any portion of an expense advancement not used must be returned to the Cooperative. Expense advancements and vouchers shall be presented to the Executive Council in its regular bill process.

Reimbursements and Purchase Orders

Expense reimbursements and purchase orders may be issued by the Executive Director or designee to employees, along with other expenses necessary for the performance of their duties, provided the expenses fall below the maximum allowed in the Executive Council's expense regulations.

Expense reimbursements and purchase order approvals are not guaranteed and, when possible, employees should seek pre-approval of expenses by providing an estimation of expenses on the Cooperative's standardized estimated expense approval form for employees, except in situations when the expense is diminutive. When pre-approval is not sought, employees must seek reimbursement on the Cooperative's standardized expense reimbursement form for employees. Expense reimbursements and purchase orders shall be presented to the Executive Council in its regular bill process.

Use of Credit and Procurement Cards

Credit and procurement card usage is governed by policy 4:55, *Use of Credit and Procurement*

Cards.

Exceeding the Maximum Allowable Expense Amount(s)

All requests for expense advancements, reimbursements, and purchase orders exceeding the maximum allowed in the Executive Council's expense regulations may only be approved when:

1. The Executive Council's resolution to regulate expenses allows for such approval;
2. An emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists; and
3. The request is approved by a roll call vote at an open Executive Council meeting.

Registration

When possible, registration fees will be paid by the Cooperative in advance.

Travel

The least expensive method of travel will be used, provided that no hardship will be caused to the employee. Employees will be reimbursed for:

1. Air travel at the coach or economy class commercial airline rate. First class or business class air travel will be reimbursed only if emergency circumstances warrant. The emergency circumstances must be explained on the expense form and Executive Council approval of the additional expense is required. Fees for the first checked bag will be reimbursed. Copies of airline tickets and baggage receipts must be attached to the expense form.
2. Rail or bus travel at actual cost. Rail or bus travel costs may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Copies of tickets must be attached to the expense form to substantiate amounts.
3. Use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service for income tax purposes. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Mileage for use of personal automobiles in trips to and from transportation terminals will also be reimbursed. Toll charges and parking costs will be reimbursed.
4. Automobile rental costs when the vehicle's use is warranted. The circumstances for such use must be explained on the expense form.
5. Taxis, airport limousines, ride sharing services, or other local transportation costs.

Please also refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

Meals

Meals charged to the Cooperative should represent mid-fare selections for the hotel/meeting facility or general area. Tips are included with meal charges. Expense forms must explain the meal charges incurred. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.

Lodging

Employees should request conference rate or mid-fare room accommodations. A single room rate will be reimbursed. Employees should pay personal expenses at checkout. If that is impossible, deductions for the charges should be made on the expense form.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Employees may seek reimbursement for other expenses incurred while attending a meeting sponsored by organizations described herein by fully describing the expenses on the expense form, attaching receipts.

Additional Requirements for Travel Expenses Charged to Federal and State Grants

All grant-related travel expenses must be pre-approved by the Executive Director or designee.

Expenses for travel, including expenses for transportation, lodging, meals, and related items incurred by employees and charged to a federal grant or State grant governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/) must also meet the following requirements:

1. The participation of the employee is necessary to the award, and the costs are specifically related to the award.
2. Expenses must be permissible under the terms and conditions of the award.
3. Expenses must be reasonable and consistent with this policy.
4. The Executive Council does not reimburse actual expenses or pay a per diem allowance unless the employee is on official travel status for more than 12 hours. However, employees remain eligible for mileage reimbursement (minus regular commuting mileage/costs) and other transportation expenses if on travel status less than 12 hours.
5. Expenses may be charged based on an actual cost basis or on a per diem basis in lieu of actual costs incurred; however, only one method may be applied per trip.
6. Commercial airfare costs in excess of the least expensive coach or economy class are prohibited except when such accommodations would: (1) require circuitous routing; (2) require travel during unreasonable hours; (3) excessively prolong travel; (4) result in additional costs that would offset transportation savings; or (5) offer accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler's medical needs. Qualifying circumstances must be explained on the expense form, and Executive Council approval of the additional expense is required.
7. Per diem rates and actual reimbursement amounts for mileage, meals, and lodging may not exceed the rates established by the Governor's Travel Control Board or federal travel regulations, whichever is less. These limits do not apply when: (1) an employee stays in the lowest-priced room available at or near a hotel where a conference or seminar is located or in accommodations arranged by the conference/seminar organization, or (2) lodging at or below the established rate is unavailable. In those cases, the employee will be reimbursed for actual lodging expenses with prior approval, but in no case will the reimbursement exceed 300% of the applicable maximum per diem rate. If a conference fee includes a meal, the meal or per diem allowance will be reduced by the actual value of the meal or the applicable meal allowance, whichever is less.
8. Employees must use the least expensive compact car available when using a rental car for travel, unless an exception is approved. The Executive Council does not reimburse employees for collision damage waiver or theft insurance.
9. The Executive Council will reimburse travel expenses not chargeable to an award from other Cooperative funds consistent with this policy.

LEGAL REF.:

2 C.F.R. §200.475.

30 ILCS 708/130, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.

50 ILCS 150/, Local Government Travel Expense Control Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.32.

820 ILCS 115/9.5, Ill. Wage Payment and Collection Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:125 (Board Member Compensation; Expenses), 2:240 (Policy Development), 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:70 Religious Holidays

The Executive Director shall grant an employee's request for time off to observe a religious holiday if the employee gives at least five days' prior notice and the absence does not cause an undue hardship.

Employees may use earned vacation time or personal leave to make up the absence, provided such time is consistent with the Cooperative's operational needs. A per diem deduction may also be requested by the employee.

LEGAL REF.:

775 ILCS 5/2-101 and 5/2-102, Ill. Human Rights Act.

775 ILCS 35/155, Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:80 Court Duty

The Cooperative will deduct any fees that an employee receives for court duty, less mileage and meal expenses, from the employee's compensation, or make arrangements for the employee to endorse the fee check to the Cooperative.

An employee should give at least five days' prior notice of pending court duty to the Cooperative.

Witness Duty

The Cooperative will pay full salary during the time a licensed employee is absent due to a subpoena to serve as a witness in a trial or have a deposition taken in any school-related matter pending in court.

Jury Duty

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

The Cooperative will pay full salary during the time a licensed employee is absent due to jury duty.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.7.

705 ILCS 305/4.1, Jury Act.

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:90 Abused and Neglected Child Reporting

Any Cooperative employee who suspects or receives knowledge that a student may be an abused or neglected child or, for a student aged 18 through 22, an abused or neglected individual with a disability, shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on its Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)(within Illinois); 1-217-524-2606 (outside of Illinois); or 1-800-358-5117 (TTY). Any Cooperative employee who believes a student is in immediate danger of harm, shall first call 911. The employee shall also promptly notify the Executive Director or Building Principal that a report has been made. The Executive Director or Building Principal shall immediately coordinate any necessary notifications to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) with DCFS, the applicable school resource officer (SRO), and/or local law enforcement.

Negligent failure to report occurs when a Cooperative employee personally observes an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect and reasonably believes, in his or her professional or official capacity, that the instance constitutes an act of child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) and he or she, without willful intent, fails to immediately report or cause a report to be made of the suspected abuse or neglect to DCFS.

Any Cooperative employee who discovers child sexual abuse material on *electronic and information technology equipment*, as defined in 325 ILCS 5/4.5(a), shall immediately report it to local law enforcement, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or online at report.cybertip.org/ or www.missingkids.org. The Executive Director or Building Principal shall also be promptly notified of the discovery and that a report has been made.

Any Cooperative employee who observes any act of hazing that does bodily harm to a student must report that act to the Building Principal, Executive Director, or designee who will investigate and take appropriate action. If the hazing results in death or great bodily harm, the employee must first make the report to law enforcement and then to the Executive Director or Building Principal. Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed to or required of a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any group, organization, club, or athletic team whose members are or include other students.

Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA), School Code, and *Erin's Law* Training

The Executive Director or designee shall provide staff development opportunities for Cooperative employees in the detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

All Cooperative employees shall:

1. Before beginning employment, sign the *Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status* form provided by DCFS. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that the signed forms are retained.
2. Complete mandated reporter training as required by law within three months of initial employment and at least every three years after that date.
3. Complete an annual evidence-informed training related to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors (including *sexual misconduct* as defined in *Faith's Law*), and boundary violations as required by law and policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*.

Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse: Investigations

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A, that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

If a Cooperative employee reports an alleged incident of sexual abuse to DCFS and DCFS accepts the report for investigation, DCFS will refer the matter to the local Children's Advocacy Center (CAC). The Executive Director or designee will implement procedures to coordinate with the CAC.

DCFS and/or the appropriate law enforcement agency will inform the Cooperative when its investigation is complete or has been suspended, as well as the outcome of its investigation. The existence of a DCFS and/or law enforcement investigation will not preclude the Cooperative from conducting its own parallel investigation into the alleged incident of sexual abuse in accordance with Council policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.

Special Executive Director Responsibilities

The Executive Director shall execute the requirements in Council policy 5:150, *Personnel Records*, whenever another Cooperative requests a reference concerning an applicant who is or was a Cooperative employee and was the subject of a report made by a Cooperative employee to DCFS.

When the Executive Director has reasonable cause to believe that a license holder (1) committed an intentional act of abuse or neglect with the result of making a child an abused child or a neglected child under ANCRA or an act of sexual misconduct under *Faith's Law*, and (2) that act resulted in the license holder's dismissal or resignation from the Cooperative, the Executive Director shall notify the State Superintendent and the Regional Superintendent in writing, providing the Ill. Educator Identification Number as well as a brief description of the misconduct alleged. The Executive Director must make the report within 30 days of the dismissal or resignation and mail a copy of the notification to the license holder.

The Executive Director shall develop procedures for notifying a student's parents/guardians when a Cooperative employee, contractor, or agent is alleged to have engaged in sexual misconduct with the student as defined in *Faith's Law*. The Executive Director shall also develop procedures for notifying the student's parents/guardians when the Executive Council takes action relating to the employment of the employee, contractor, or agent following the investigation of sexual misconduct. Notification shall not occur when the employee, contractor, or agent alleged to have engaged in sexual misconduct is the student's parent/guardian, and/or when the student is at least 18 years of age or emancipated.

The Executive Director shall execute the recordkeeping requirements of *Faith's Law*.

Special Executive Council Member Responsibilities

Each individual Executive Council member must, if an allegation is raised to the member during an open or closed Executive Council meeting that a student is an abused child as defined in ANCRA, direct or cause the Executive Council to direct the Executive Director or other equivalent school administrator to comply with ANCRA's requirements concerning the reporting of child abuse.

If the Executive Council determines that any Cooperative employee, other than an employee licensed under 105 ILCS 5/21B, has willfully or negligently failed to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by ANCRA, the Executive Council may dismiss that employee immediately.

When the Executive Council learns that a licensed teacher was convicted of any felony, it must promptly report it to the State agencies listed in Council policy 2:20, *Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification*.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7926, Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-21.9, 5/10-23.13, 5/21B-85, 5/22-85.5, and 5/22-85.10.

20 ILCS 1305/1-1 *et seq.*, Department of Human Services Act.

325 ILCS 5/, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

720 ILCS 5/12C-50.1, Criminal Code of 2012.

CROSS REF.: 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification), 3:40 (Executive Director), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director), 3:60 (Administrative Responsibility of the Building Principal), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Conduct; and Code of Professional; and Conflict of Interest), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:150 (Agency and Law Enforcement Requests)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:100 Staff Development Program

The Superintendent or designee shall implement a staff development program. The goal of the program shall be to update and improve the skills and knowledge of staff members in order to achieve and maintain a high level of job performance and satisfaction.

Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) and *Erin's Law* Training

The staff development program shall include the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) mandated reporter training and training on the awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors (*Erin's Law*) as follows (see Board policies 4:165, *Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors*, and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*):

1. Within three months of employment, each staff member must complete mandated reporter training from a provider or agency with expertise in recognizing and reporting child abuse. Mandated reporter training must be completed again at least every three years.
2. By January 31 of every year, all school personnel must complete evidence-informed training on preventing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors (including *sexual misconduct* as defined in *Faith's Law*), and boundary violations.

In-Service Training Requirements

The staff development program shall provide, at a minimum, within six months of employment and renewed at least once every five years thereafter (unless required more frequently by other State or federal law), the in-service training of all Cooperative staff who work with pupils on:

1. Health conditions of students, including but not limited to training on:
 - a. Anaphylactic reactions and management, conducted by a person with expertise on anaphylactic reactions and management;
 - b. Management of asthma, prevention of asthma symptoms, and emergency response in the school setting;
 - c. The basics of seizure recognition and first aid and emergency protocols, consistent with best practice guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
 - d. The basics of diabetes care, how to identify when a diabetic student needs immediate or emergency medical attention, and whom to contact in case of emergency;
 - e. Current best practices regarding identification and treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and
 - f. How to respond to an incident involving life-threatening bleeding, including use of a school's trauma bleeding control kit, if applicable.
2. Social-emotional learning. Training may include providing education to all school personnel about the content of the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards, how they apply to everyday school interactions, and examples of how social emotional learning can be integrated into instructional practices across all grades and subjects.
3. Developing cultural competency, including but not limited to understanding and reducing implicit bias, including *implicit racial bias* as defined in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.61 (implicit bias training).
4. Identifying warning signs of mental illness, trauma, and suicidal behavior in youth, along with appropriate intervention and referral techniques, including resources and guidelines as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/2-3.166 (*Ann Marie's Law*) and the definitions of *trauma*, *trauma-responsive learning environments*, and *whole child* as set forth in 105 ILCS 5/3-11.
5. Domestic and sexual violence and the needs of expectant and parenting youth, conducted by persons with expertise in domestic and sexual violence and the needs of expectant and parenting youth. Training shall include, but is not limited to:

- a. Communicating with and listening to youth victims of domestic or sexual violence and expectant and parenting youth;
 - b. Connecting youth victims of domestic or sexual violence and expectant and parenting youth to appropriate in-school services and other agencies, programs, and services as needed;
 - c. Implementing the Cooperative's policies and procedures regarding such youth, including confidentiality; and
 - d. Procedures for responding to incidents of teen dating violence that take place at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/27-240 (see Board policy 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*).
6. Protections and accommodations for students, including but not limited to training on:
 - a. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act as it pertains to the school environment; and
 - b. Homelessness.
 7. Educator ethics and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming behavior (see Board policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*); including but not limited to training on:
 - a. Teacher-student conduct;
 - b. School employee-student conduct; and
 - c. Evidence-informed training on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13 (*Erin's Law*).
 8. Effective instruction in violence prevention and conflict resolution, conducted in accordance with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/27-115 (violence prevention and conflict resolution education).

Additional Training Requirements

In addition, the staff development program shall include each of the following:

1. Ongoing professional development for all school personnel and school resource officers on the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 5/10-20.14, the adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, trauma-responsive learning environments as defined in 105 ILCS 5/3-11(b), the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates.
2. Annual continuing education and/or training opportunities (professional standards) for school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff. Each school food authority's director shall document compliance with this requirement by the end of each school year and maintain documentation for a three-year period.
3. All high school coaching personnel, including the head and assistant coaches, and athletic directors must obtain online concussion certification by completing online concussion awareness training in accordance with 105 ILCS 25/1.15. Coaching personnel and athletic directors hired on or after 8-19-14 must be certified before their position's start date.
4. The following individuals must complete concussion training as specified in the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act: coaches and assistant coaches (whether volunteer or employee) of an interscholastic athletic activity; nurses, licensed and/or non-licensed healthcare professionals serving on the Concussion Oversight Team; athletic trainers; game officials of an interscholastic athletic activity; and physicians serving on the Concussion Oversight Team.
5. For school personnel who work with hazardous or toxic materials on a regular basis, training on the safe handling and use of such materials.
6. For delegated care aides performing services in connection with a student's seizure action plan,

training in accordance with 105 ILCS 150/, the Seizure Smart School Act.

7. For delegated care aides performing services in connection with a student's diabetes care plan, training in accordance with 105 ILCS 145/, the Care of Students with Diabetes Act.
8. For all Cooperative staff, annual sexual harassment prevention training.
9. Title IX requirements for training in accordance with 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (see Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*).
10. Training for all Cooperative employees on the prevention of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, and national origin in school as part of new employee training and at least once every two years.
11. Training for at least one designated employee at each school about the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) database and steps required to register students for it.
12. Training in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26A for at least one staff member in each school designated as a resource for students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence, and for any employees whose duties include the resolution of complaints of violations of 105 ILCS 5/26A (see Board policy 7:255, *Students who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*).

The Executive Director shall develop protocols for administering youth suicide awareness and prevention education to staff consistent with Board policy 7:290, *Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention*.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

42 U.S.C. §1758b, Pub. L. 111-296, Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010; 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 and 235.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.62, 5/2-3.166, 5/3-11, 5/10-20.17a, 5/10-20.61, 5/10-22.6(c-5), 5/10-22.39, 5/10-23.12, 5/10-23.13, 5/22-80(h), 5/22-95, 5/22-115, 5/24-5, and 5/26A.

105 ILCS 25/1.15, Interscholastic Athletic Organization Act.

105 ILCS 145/25, Care of Students with Diabetes Act.

105 ILCS 150/25, Seizure Smart School Act.

105 ILCS 110/3, Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act.

325 ILCS 5/4, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

745 ILCS 49/, Good Samaritan Act.

775 ILCS 5/2-109 and 5/5A-103, Ill. Human Rights Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 22.20, 226.800, and Part 525.

77 Ill.Admin.Code §527.800.

CROSS REF.: 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 3:40 (Executive Director), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Executive Director), 4:160 (Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 6:15

(School Accountability), 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:50 (School Wellness), 6:160 (English Learners), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 7:285 (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program), 7:290 (Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention), 7:305 (Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:110 Recognition for Service

The Executive Council will periodically recognize those Cooperative employees who contribute significantly to the educational programs and welfare of the students.

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:120 Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest

All Cooperative employees are expected to maintain high standards in their job performance, demonstrate integrity and honesty, be considerate and cooperative, and maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents/guardians, staff members, and others.

The Executive Director or designee shall provide this policy to all Cooperative employees and students and/or parents/guardians in their respective handbooks, and ensure its posting on the Cooperative's website, if any.

Professional and Appropriate Conduct

Professional and appropriate employee conduct are important Executive Council goals that impact the quality of a safe learning environment and the school community, increasing students' ability to learn and the Cooperative's ability to educate. To protect students from sexual misconduct by employees, and employees from the appearance of impropriety, State law also recognizes the importance for Cooperative employees to constantly maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students by following established expectations and guidelines for employee-student boundaries. Many breaches of employee-student boundaries do not rise to the level of criminal behavior but do pose a potential risk to student safety and impact the quality of a safe learning environment. Repeated violations of employee-student boundaries may indicate the grooming of a student for sexual abuse. As bystanders, employees may know of concerning behaviors that no one else is aware of, so their training on: (1) preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming behavior; (2) this policy; and (3) federal and state reporting requirements is essential to maintaining the Executive Council's goal of professional and appropriate conduct.

The Executive Director or designee shall identify employee conduct standards that define appropriate employee-student boundaries, provide training about them, and monitor the Cooperative's employees for violations of employee-student boundaries. The employee conduct standards will require that, at a minimum:

1. Employees who are governed by the *Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators*, adopted by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), will comply with its incorporation by reference into this policy.
2. Employees are trained on educator ethics, child abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee-student boundary violations as required by law and Council policies 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 4:165, *Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; and 5:100, *Staff Development Program*.
3. Employees maintain professional relationships with students, including maintaining employee-student boundaries based upon students' ages, grade levels, and developmental levels and following Cooperative-established guidelines for specific situations, including but not limited to:
 - a. Transporting a student;
 - b. Taking or possessing a photo or video of a student; and
 - c. Meeting with a student or contacting a student outside the employee's professional role.
4. Employees report prohibited behaviors and/or boundary violations pursuant to Council policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.
5. Discipline up to and including dismissal will occur for any employee who violates an employee conduct standard or engages in any of the following:
 - a. Violates expectations and guidelines for employee-student boundaries.
 - b. Sexually harasses a student.

- c. Willfully or negligently fails to follow reporting requirements of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7926).
- d. Engages in *grooming* as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25.
- e. Engages in grooming behaviors. Prohibited grooming behaviors include, at a minimum, *sexual misconduct*. *Sexual misconduct* is any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, by an employee with direct contact with a student, that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - i. A sexual or romantic invitation.
 - ii. Dating or soliciting a date.
 - iii. Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog.
 - iv. Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student.
 - v. Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature.
 - vi. A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student.

Statement of Economic Interests

The following employees must file a *Statement of Economic Interests* as required by the Ill. Governmental Ethics Act:

- 1. Executive Director;
- 2. Building Principal;
- 3. Head of any department;
- 4. Any employee who, as the Cooperative's agent, is responsible for negotiating one or more contracts, including collective bargaining agreement(s), in the amount of \$1,000 or greater;
- 5. Hearing officer;
- 6. Any employee having supervisory authority for 20 or more employees; and
- 7. Any employee in a position that requires an administrative or a chief school business official endorsement.

Ethics and Gift Ban

Council policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*, applies to all Cooperative employees. Students shall not be used in any manner for promoting a political candidate or issue.

Prohibited Interests; Conflict of Interest; and Limitation of Authority

In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/22-5, "no school officer or teacher shall be interested in the sale, proceeds, or profits of any book, apparatus, or furniture used or to be used in any school with which such officer or teacher may be connected," except when the employee is the author or developer of instructional materials listed with ISBE and adopted for use by the Executive Council. An employee having an interest in instructional materials must file an annual statement with the Executive Council Secretary.

For the purpose of acquiring profit or personal gain, no employee shall act as an agent of the Cooperative nor shall an employee act as an agent of any business in any transaction with the Cooperative. This includes participation in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award or State award governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/) when the employee has a real or apparent conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when an employee or any of the following individuals has a financial or other interest in

or a tangible benefit from the entity selected for the contract:

1. A member of the employee's immediate family;
2. An employee's partner; or
3. An entity that employs or is about to employ the employee or one of the individuals listed in one or two above.

Employees shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to agreements or subcontracts. Situations in which the interest is not substantial, or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value must comply with State law and Council policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*.

School Counselor Gift Ban

School counselors are prohibited from intentionally soliciting or accepting any gift from a *prohibited source* or any gift that would be in violation of any federal or State statute or rule. For school counselors, a *prohibited source* is any person who is (1) employed by an institution of higher education, or (2) an agent or spouse of or an immediate family member living with a person employed by an institution of higher education. This prohibition does not apply to:

1. Opportunities, benefits, and services available on the same conditions as for the general public.
2. Anything for which the school counselor pays market value.
3. A gift from a relative.
4. Anything provided by an individual on the basis of a personal friendship, unless the school counselor believes that it was provided due to the official position or employment of the school counselor and not due to the personal friendship. In determining whether a gift is provided on the basis of personal friendship, the school counselor must consider the circumstances in which the gift was offered, including any of the following:
 - a. The history of the relationship between the individual giving the gift and the school counselor, including any previous exchange of gifts between those individuals.
 - b. Whether, to the actual knowledge of the school counselor, the individual who gave the gift personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift.
 - c. Whether, to the actual knowledge of the school counselor, the individual who gave the gift also, at the same time, gave the same or a similar gift to other Cooperative employees.
5. Bequests, inheritances, or other transfers at death.
6. Any item(s) during any calendar year having a cumulative total value of less than \$100.
7. Promotional materials, including, but not limited to, pens, pencils, banners, posters, and pennants.
8. Travel, lodging, food, and beverage costs incurred by the school counselor and paid by an institution of higher education for attendance by the school counselor of an educational or military program at the institution of higher education.

A school counselor does not violate this prohibition if he or she promptly returns the gift to the prohibited source or donates the gift or an amount equal to its value to a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity.

Outside Employment

Employees shall not engage in any other employment or in any private business during regular working hours or at such other times as are necessary to fulfill appropriate assigned duties.

Incorporated

by reference: 5:120-E (Code of Ethics for Ill. Educators)

LEGAL REF.:

U.S. Constitution, First Amendment.

2 C.F.R. §200.318(c)(1).

5 ILCS 420/4A-101, Ill. Governmental Ethics Act.

5 ILCS 430/, State Officials and Employee Ethics Act.

30 ILCS 708/, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.

50 ILCS 135/, Local Governmental Employees Political Rights Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.39, 5/10-23.13, 5/22-5, 5/22-85.5, and 5/22-93.

325 ILCS 5/, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

720 ILCS 5/11-25, Criminal Code of 2012.

775 ILCS 5/5A-102, Ill. Human Rights Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 22, Code of Ethics for Ill. Educators.

Pickering v. Board of Township H.S. Dist. 205, 391 U.S. 563 (1968).

Garcetti v. Ceballos, 547 U.S. 410 (2006).

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:125 (Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:125 Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct

Definitions

Includes - Means "includes without limitation" or "includes but is not limited to."

Social media - Media for social interaction, using highly accessible web-based and/or mobile technologies that allow users to share content and/or engage in interactive communication through online communities. This includes, but is not limited to, services such as *Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), Threads, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Discord, and YouTube*.

Personal technology - Any device that is not owned or leased by the Cooperative or otherwise authorized for Cooperative use and: (1) transmits sounds, images, text, messages, videos, or electronic information, (2) electronically records, plays, or stores information, or (3) accesses the Internet, or private communication or information networks. This includes computers, tablets, smartphones, smartwatches, and other devices.

Usage and Conduct

All Cooperative employees who use personal technology and/or social media shall:

1. Adhere to the high standards for **Professional and Appropriate Conduct** required by Council policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes Cooperative employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students and other employees that is inappropriate as defined by Council policies 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:100, *Staff Development Program*; 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*; and 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
2. Choose a Cooperative-provided or supported method whenever possible to communicate with students and their parents/guardians.
3. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
4. Inform their immediate supervisor if a student initiates inappropriate contact with them via any form of personal technology or social media.
5. Report instances of suspected abuse or neglect discovered through the use of social media or personal technology pursuant to a school employee's obligations under Council policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.
6. Not disclose confidential information, including but not limited to school student records (e.g., student work, photographs of students, names of students, or any other personally identifiable information about students) or personnel records, in compliance with Council policy 5:130, *Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information*. For Cooperative employees, proper approval may include implied consent under the circumstances.
7. Refrain from using the Cooperative's logos without permission and follow Council policy 5:170, *Copyright*, and all Cooperative copyright compliance procedures.
8. Use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Any duty-free use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.
9. Assume all risks associated with the use of personal technology and social media at school or school-sponsored activities, including students' viewing of inappropriate Internet materials through the Cooperative employee's personal technology or social media. The Executive

Council expressly disclaims any responsibility for imposing content filters, blocking lists, or monitoring of its employees' personal technology and social media.

10. Be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy ranging from prohibiting the employee from possessing or using any personal technology or social media at school to dismissal and/or indemnification of the Cooperative for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the Cooperative relating to, or arising out of, any violation of this policy.

Executive Director Responsibilities

The Executive Director shall:

1. Inform Cooperative employees about this policy.
2. Direct Building Principals to annually:
 - a. Provide their building staff with a copy of this policy.
 - b. Inform their building staff about the importance of maintaining high standards in their school relationships.
 - c. Remind their building staff that those who violate this policy will be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
3. Build awareness of this policy with students, parents, and the community.
4. Ensure that neither the Cooperative, nor anyone on its behalf, commits an act prohibited by the Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act, 820 ILCS 55/10; i.e., the *Facebook Password Law*.
5. Periodically review this policy and any implementing procedures with Cooperative employee representatives and electronic network system administrator(s) and present proposed changes to the Executive Council.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/21B-75 and 5/21B-80.

775 ILCS 5/5A-102, III. Human Rights Act.

820 ILCS 55/10, Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20, Code of Ethics for Ill. Educators.

Garcetti v. Ceballos, 547 U.S. 410 (2006).

Pickering v. High School Dist. 205, 391 U.S. 563 (1968).

Mayer v. Monroe County Community School Corp., 474 F.3d 477 (7th Cir. 2007).

CROSS REF.: 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:130 (Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 5:170 (Copyright), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

5:130 Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information

Cooperative employees are responsible for maintaining: (1) the integrity and security of all internal information, and (2) the privacy of confidential records, including but not limited to: student school records, personnel records, and the minutes of, and material disclosed in, a closed Executive Council meeting. Internal information is any information, oral or recorded in electronic or paper format, maintained by the Cooperative or used by the Cooperative or its employees. The Executive Director or designee shall manage procedures for safeguarding the integrity, security, and, as appropriate, confidentiality of internal information.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act.

45 C.F.R. §164.502, Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information; General Rules.

5 ILCS 140/, Ill. Freedom of Information Act.

50 ILCS 205/, Local Records Act.

105 ILCS 10/, Ill. School Student Records Act.

105 ILCS 85, Student Online Personal Protection Act.

820 ILCS 40/, Personnel Record Review Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board), 2:250 (Access to District Public Records), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Adopted: August 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:132 Staff-Student Interactions

The Executive Council requires that all VASE employees, whether administrative, certified, or non-certified, maintain a professional, ethical relationship with students that is conducive to an effective, safe learning environment; and that staff members act as role models for students at all times, whether or not on or off school property and both during and outside of school hours.

The Executive Council does not seek to interfere with the lawful, private, off-duty conduct of its employees. Off-duty conduct, however, may occasionally affect an employee's ability to effectively perform the duties of his or her job by creating conflict of interest, office or classroom distractions, misunderstanding, the perception of favoritism, or complaints of sexual harassment, discrimination, favoritism, and breach of confidentiality, to name only a few examples. At times, off-duty conduct can lead to liability or other legal responsibilities of employee or the Executive Council.

The Executive Council understands that many personal relationships are entirely appropriate and develop through family or neighborhood interactions with respect and adherence to the appropriate standards of professional conduct. To the degree that such relationships develop or exist, it is the staff's responsibility to ensure that such relationships continue along and within appropriate boundaries.

The relationship between the school employee and the student should be one of professional cooperation and respect. It is the policy of the Executive Council to prohibit any type of close personal relationship between a school employee and a student that is unprofessional.

Staff members are prohibited from the following:

1. Inappropriate personal communication with a student (via phone, email, letters, notes, text messaging, social networking sites and/or other electronic or peer-like communications, etc.) unrelated to coursework or official school matters, unless the student is relative of the employee.
2. Making derogatory comments to students regarding the school and/or its staff
3. Discussing or revealing to students personal matters about their private lives or inviting students to do the same in a manner that diverges from the educational role of the staff member (such as school support service personnel trained and certified to provide counseling), or in a manner that may imply or describe matters of a sexual nature, matters involving tobacco, alcohol or drugs, or matters which causes the student to be unduly burdened by the information or request for information (and such examples may include personal health, family problems, employment concerns, etc.).
4. Extended counseling of students on personal problems relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships unless employed as a school psychologist, school social worker, or other counselor whose purpose in the school is to provide such services. Counseling is defined as advice or guidance provided by a professional trained and certified to provide counseling in the school setting.
5. Inappropriate physical displays of affection to students, flirting, or making suggestive comments or gestures.
6. Giving inappropriate personal or individualized gifts to students.
7. Conducting social activities on a one-on-one basis outside of school with students or students from the general student population for special treatment (e.g., gifts, dinners, and rides) without prior consent of the student's parent and advance notice to the Director.
8. Providing alcohol or drugs to students.
9. Sending students on personal errands outside of school.
10. Disclosing information about a student to any unauthorized person.
11. Associating with students in any situation or activity that could be considered sexually suggestive

or involves the presence of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.

12. Engaging in unprofessional conduct with the parents of students, including but not limited to conduct or communication that may be viewed as sexual in nature, conduct or communication that may derogatory of the school or school staff, disclosure of confidential information, or other conduct which may interfere with educational mission of the Executive Council.

Even if the student participated willingly or the student's parents or guardians provided permission for the student's participation in the activity, illegal, unethical, or unprofessional activity with students is against Executive Council policy.

An employee seeking an exception to a prohibited behavior must obtain consent from their supervising administrator.

If a current student contacts a staff member using a social media site, the employee is not to reply to the message and immediately reject any initiation the student may have sent.

It is also the policy of the Executive Council to prohibit any type of sexual relationship, sexual contact, or sexually nuanced behavior between a school employee and an enrolled student. It also applies regardless of whether the student or the school employee initiated the sexual behavior, or whether or not the student welcomes the sexual behavior and/or reciprocates the attention.

The Director and/or Executive Council shall promptly investigate all reasonable allegations of prohibited staff/student relationships according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement steps for addressing complaints against staff.

Any violation of the policy may result in notification of law enforcement officials and the filing of criminal charges and/or disciplinary action by the Executive Council in accordance with any applicable collectively negotiated agreement and law, up to and including termination of employment. Inappropriate employee conduct does not need to rise to the level of criminal activities for such conduct to be in violation of Executive Council rules and subject to disciplinary sanctions.

Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to inappropriate staff behavior as enumerated in this policy, as well as students, VASE employees, or third parties who have knowledge of or witness any possible occurrence of inappropriate staff-student relations, shall report the incident to the employee's supervisor or VASE Director. Anonymous complaints shall be investigated by the Director to the extent practicable.

Any employee having knowledge of or reasonable suspicion that another employee has or may have engaged in inappropriate conduct with a student that may constitute child abuse must also follow the reporting procedures for such allegations.

VASE shall promptly investigate all complaints of inappropriate staff-student relations and take prompt corrective action to stop such conduct if it occurs.

LEGAL REF.:

Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.

Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information; General Rules, 45 C.F.R. §164.502.

Ill. Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/.

Local Records Act, 50 ILCS 205/.

105 ILCS 10/.

Personnel Record Review Act, 820 ILCS 40/.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Board), 2:250 (Access to District Public Records), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:140 Solicitations By or From Staff

Cooperative employees shall not solicit donations or sales, nor shall they be solicited for donations or sales, on school grounds without prior approval from the Executive Director.

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:150 Personnel Records

Maintenance and Access to Records

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

The Executive Director or designee shall manage the maintenance of personnel records in accordance with State and federal law and Executive Council policy. Records, as determined by the Executive Director, are retained for all employment applicants, employees, and former employees given the need for the Cooperative to document employment-related decisions, evaluate program and staff effectiveness, and comply with government recordkeeping and reporting requirements. Personnel records shall be maintained in the Cooperative's administrative office, under the Executive Director's direct supervision.

Access to personnel records is available as follows:

1. An employee will be given access to his or her personnel records according to State law and guidelines developed by the Executive Director.
2. An employee's supervisor or other management employee who has an employment or business-related reason to inspect the record is authorized to have access.
3. Anyone having the respective employee's written consent may have access.
4. Access will be granted to anyone authorized by State or federal law to have access.
5. All other requests for access to personnel information are governed by policy 2:250, *Access to District Public Records*.

Prospective Employer Inquiries Concerning a Current or Former Employee's Job Performance

The Executive Director or designee shall manage a process for responding to inquiries by a prospective employer concerning a current or former employee's job performance. The Executive Director shall:

1. Execute the requirements in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act whenever another Cooperative asks for a reference concerning an applicant who is or was a Cooperative employee and was the subject of a report made by a Cooperative employee to Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS); and
2. Comply with the federal law prohibiting the Cooperative from providing a recommendation of employment for an employee, contractor, or agent that the Cooperative knows, or has probable cause to believe, has engaged in sexual misconduct with a student or minor in violation of the law, but the Executive Director or designee may follow routine procedures regarding the transmission of administrative or personnel files for that employee.
3. Manage the Cooperative's responses to employer requests for sexual misconduct related employment history review (EHR) information in accordance with *Faith's Law*.

When requested for information about an employee by an entity other than a prospective employer, the Cooperative will only confirm position and employment dates unless the employee has submitted a written request to the Executive Director or designee.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7926.

105 ILCS 5/22-94.

325 ILCS 5/4, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

745 ILCS 46/10, Employment Record Disclosure Act.

820 ILCS 40/, Personnel Record Review Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.660.

CROSS REF.: 2:250 (Access to District Public Records), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: September 11, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:170 Copyright

Works Made for Hire

The Executive Director shall manage the development of instructional materials and computer programs by employees during the scope of their employment in accordance with State and federal laws and Executive Council policies. Whenever an employee is assigned to develop instructional materials and/or computer programs, or otherwise performs such work within the scope of his or her employment, it is assured the Cooperative shall be the owner of the copyright.

Copyright Compliance

While staff members may use appropriate supplementary materials, it is each staff member's responsibility to abide by the Cooperative's copyright compliance procedures and to obey the copyright laws. The Cooperative is not responsible for any violations of the copyright laws by its staff or students. A staff member should contact the Executive Director or designee whenever the staff member is uncertain about whether using or copying material complies with the Cooperative's procedures or is permissible under the law or wants assistance on when and how to obtain proper authorization. No staff member shall, without first obtaining the permission of the Executive Director or designee, install or download any program on a Cooperative-owned computer. At no time shall it be necessary for a Cooperative staff member to violate copyright laws in order to properly perform his or her duties.

LEGAL REF.:

17 U.S.C. §101 *et seq.*, Federal Copyright Law of 1976.

105 ILCS 5/10-23.10.

CROSS REF.: 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:180 Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity

A temporary illness or temporary incapacity is an illness or other capacity of ill-being that renders an employee physically or mentally unable to perform assigned duties. During such a period, the employee can use accumulated sick leave benefits. However, income received from other sources (worker's compensation, Cooperative-paid insurance programs, etc.) will be deducted from the Cooperative's compensation liability to the employee. The Executive Council's intent is that in no case will the employee, who is temporarily disabled, receive more than 100 percent of his or her gross salary.

Those insurance plans privately purchased by the employee and to which the Cooperative does not contribute, are not applicable to this policy.

If illness, incapacity, or any other condition causes an employee to be absent in one school year, after exhaustion of all available leave, for more than 90 consecutive workdays, such absence may be considered a permanent disability and the Executive Council may begin dismissal proceedings subject to State and federal law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Executive Director may recommend this paragraph's use when circumstances strongly suggest that the employee returned to work intermittently in order to avoid this paragraph's application. This paragraph shall not be considered a limitation on the Executive Council's authority to take any action concerning an employee that is authorized by State and federal law.

Any employee may be required to have an examination, at the Cooperative's expense, by a physician who is licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed physician assistant if the examination is job-related and consistent with business necessity.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*, Americans with Disabilities Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.4, 5/24-12, and 5/24-13.

Elder v. School Dist. No.127 1/2, 60 Ill.App.2d 56 (1st Dist. 1965).

Cooperative No. 151 v. ISBE, 154 Ill.App.3d 375 (1st Dist. 1987).

CROSS REF.: 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:40 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:185 Family and Medical Leave

Leave Description

An eligible employee may use unpaid family and medical leave (FMLA leave), guaranteed by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. The U.S. Department of Labor's rules (federal rules) implementing FMLA, as they may be amended from time to time, control FMLA leave.

An eligible employee may take FMLA leave for up to a combined total of 12 weeks each 12-month period, beginning September 1 and ending August 31 of the next year.

During a single 12-month period, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement may be extended to a total of 26 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a covered servicemember (defined in the federal rules) with a serious injury or illness. The "single 12-month period" is measured forward from the date the employee's first FMLA leave to care for the covered servicemember begins.

While FMLA leave is normally unpaid, the Cooperative will substitute an employee's accrued compensatory time-off and/or paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave, provided such leave is available for use in accordance with policies and rules. In addition, all policies and rules regarding the use of paid leave apply when paid leave is substituted for unpaid FMLA leave. Any substitution of paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave will count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Use of FMLA leave shall not preclude the use of other applicable unpaid leave that will extend the employee's leave beyond 12 weeks, provided that the use of FMLA leave shall not serve to extend such other unpaid leave. Any full workweek period during which the employee would not have been required to work, including summer break, winter break and spring break, is not counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

FMLA leave is available in one or more of the following instances:

1. The birth and first-year care of a son or daughter.
2. The adoption or foster placement of a son or daughter, including absences from work that are necessary for the adoption or foster care to proceed and expiring at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the placement date.
3. The serious health condition of an employee's spouse, child, or parent.
4. The employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job.
5. The existence of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, child, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, as provided by federal rules.
6. To care for the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, as provided by federal rules.

If spouses are employed by the Cooperative, they may together take only 12-weeks for FMLA leaves when the reason for the leave is 1 or 2, above, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition, or a combined total of 26 weeks for item 6 above.

An employee may be permitted to work on an intermittent or reduced-leave schedule in accordance with federal rules.

Eligibility

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must be employed at a worksite where at least 50 employees are employed within 75 miles. In addition, one of the following provisions must describe the employee:

1. The employee has been employed by the Cooperative for at least 12 months and has been employed for at least 1,000 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately before the beginning of the leave. The 12 months an employee must have been employed by the Cooperative need not be consecutive. However, the Cooperative will not consider any period of previous employment that occurred more than seven years before the date of the most recent hiring, except when the service break is due to fulfillment of a covered service obligation under the employee's Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301, *et seq.*, or when a written agreement exists concerning the Cooperative's intention to rehire the employee.
2. The employee is a full-time classroom teacher.

Requesting Leave

If the need for the FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee must provide the Executive Director or designee with at least 30 days' advance notice before the leave is to begin. If 30 days' advance notice is not practicable, the notice must be given as soon as practicable. The employee shall make a reasonable effort to schedule a planned medical treatment so as not to disrupt the Cooperative's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider administering the treatment. The employee shall provide at least verbal notice sufficient to make the Executive Director or designee aware that he or she needs FMLA leave, and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Failure to give the required notice for a foreseeable leave may result in a delay in granting the requested leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice.

Certification

Within 15 calendar days after the Executive Director or designee makes a request for certification for a FMLA leave, an employee must provide one of the following:

1. When the leave is to care for the employee's covered family member with a serious health condition, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by the family member's health care provider.
2. When the leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by the employee's health care provider.
3. When the leave is to care for a covered servicemember with a serious illness or injury, the employee must provide a complete and sufficient certificate signed by an authorized health care provider for the covered servicemember.
4. When the leave is because of a qualified exigency, the employee must provide: (a) a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating that the military member is on active duty or call to active duty status, and the dates of the covered military member's active duty service, and (b) a statement or description, signed by the employee, of appropriate facts regarding the qualifying exigency for which FMLA leave is requested.

The Cooperative may require an employee to obtain a second and third opinion at its expense when it has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification.

The Cooperative may require recertification at reasonable intervals, but not more often than once every 30 days. Regardless of the length of time since the last request, the Cooperative may request recertification when the, (1) employee requests a leave extension, (2) circumstances described by the original certification change significantly, or (3) Cooperative receives information that casts doubt upon the continuing validity of the original certification. Recertification is at the employee's expense and must be provided to the Cooperative within 15 calendar days after the request. The Cooperative may request recertification every six months in connection with any absence by an employee needing an intermittent or reduced schedule leave for conditions with a duration in excess of six months.

Failure to furnish a complete and sufficient certification on forms provided by the Cooperative may result in a denial of the leave request.

Continuation of Health Benefits

During FMLA leave, employees are entitled to continuation of health benefits that would have been provided if they were working. Any share of health plan premiums being paid by the employee before taking the leave, must continue to be paid by the employee during the FMLA leave. A Cooperative's obligation to maintain health insurance coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late and the Cooperative notifies the employee at least 15 days before coverage will cease.

Changed Circumstances and Intent to Return

An employee must provide the Executive Director or designee reasonable notice of changed circumstances (i.e., within two business days if the changed circumstances are foreseeable) that will alter the duration of the FMLA leave. The Executive Director or designee, taking into consideration all of the relevant facts and circumstances related to an individual's leave situation, may ask an employee who has been on FMLA leave for eight consecutive weeks whether he or she intends to return to work.

Return to Work

If returning from FMLA leave occasioned by the employee's own serious health condition, the employee is required to obtain and present certification from the employee's health care provider that he or she is able to resume work.

An employee returning from FMLA leave will be given an equivalent position to his or her position before the leave, subject to: (1) permissible limitations the Cooperative may impose as provided in the FMLA or implementing regulations, and (2) the Cooperative's reassignment policies and practices.

Classroom teachers may be required to wait to return to work until the next semester in certain situations as provided by the FMLA regulations.

Implementation

The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that: (1) all required notices and responses to leave requests are provided to employees in accordance with the FMLA; and (2) this policy is implemented in accordance with the FMLA. In the event of a conflict between the policy and the FMLA or its regulations, the latter shall control. The terms used in this policy shall be defined as in the FMLA regulations.

LEGAL REF.:

29 U.S.C. §2601 *et seq.*, Family and Medical Leave Act; 29 C.F.R. Part 825.

105 ILCS 5/24-6.4.

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:310 (Compensatory Time-Off), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Professional Personnel

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:190 Teacher Qualifications

A teacher, as the term is used in this policy, refers to a Cooperative employee who is required to be licensed under State law. Each teacher must:

1. Have a valid Illinois Professional Educator License issued by the State Superintendent of Education with the required endorsements as provided in the School Code.
2. Provide the Cooperative Office with a complete official transcript of credits earned in institutions of higher education.
3. On or before September 1 of each year, unless otherwise provided in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, provide the Cooperative Office with an official transcript of any credits earned since the date the last transcript was filed.
4. Notify the Executive Director of any change in the teacher's transcript.

The Executive Director or designee shall:

1. Monitor compliance with State and federal law requirements that teachers be appropriately licensed; and
2. Through incentives for voluntary transfers, professional development, recruiting programs, or other effective strategies, ensure that minority students and students from low-income families are not taught at higher rates than other students by unqualified, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §6312(e)(1)(A).

105 ILCS 5/10-20.15, 5/21B-15, 5/21B-20, 5/21B-25, 5/21B-120, and 5/24-23.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.610 *et seq.*, §1.705 *et seq.*, and Part 25.

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:200 Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal

The Executive Council delegates authority and responsibility to the Executive Director to manage the terms and conditions for the employment of professional personnel. The Executive Director shall act reasonably and comply with State and federal law as well as any applicable individual employment contract or collective bargaining agreement in effect. The Executive Director is responsible for making dismissal recommendations to the Executive Council consistent with the Executive Council's goal of having a highly qualified, high performing staff.

School Year and Day, Duty Free Lunch, Salary, Assignments and Transfers, Evaluation

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

Nursing Mothers

The Cooperative accommodates employees who are nursing mothers and compensates them for reasonable time needed to express breast milk according to provisions in State and federal law.

Dismissal

The Cooperative will follow State law when dismissing a teacher.

LEGAL REF.:

29 U.S.C. §218(d), Pub. L. 117-328, Pump for Nursing Mothers Act.

42 U.S.C. §2000gg *et seq.*, Pub. L. 117-328, Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-19, 5/10-19.05, 5/10-20.65, 5/14-1.09a, 5/22-96, 5/22.4, 5/24-16.5, 5/24-2, 5/24-8, 5/24-9, 5/24-11, 5/24-12, 5/24-21, 5/24A-1 through 24A-20.

820 ILCS 260/, Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Parts 50 (Evaluation of Educator Licensed Employees) and 51 (Dismissal of Tenured Teachers).

Cleveland Bd. of Educ. v. Loudermill, 470 U.S. 532(1985).

CROSS REF.: 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:210 Resignations

Teachers may resign at any time with consent of the Executive Council. No teacher may resign during the school term in order to accept another teaching position without the consent of the Executive Council. A teacher may resign outside of a school term if the teacher provides written notice to the secretary of the Executive Council, at least 30 calendar days prior to the first student attendance day of the following school year. Teachers who resign with less than 30 days' notice prior to the first student attendance day of the following school term will be deemed to have resigned during the school term.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/24-14.

Park Forest Heights School Dist. v. State Teacher Certification Bd., 363 Ill.App.3d 433 (1st Dist. 2006).

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:220 Substitute Teachers

The Executive Director may employ substitute teachers as necessary to replace teachers who are temporarily absent.

A substitute teacher must hold either a valid teaching or substitute license and may teach in the place of a licensed teacher who is under contract with the Executive Council. There is no limit on the number of days that a substitute teacher may teach in the Cooperative during the school year, except as follows:

1. A substitute teacher holding a substitute license may teach for any one licensed teacher under contract with the Cooperative only for a period not to exceed 90 paid school days in any one school term.
2. A teacher holding a Professional Educator License or Educator License with Stipulations may teach for any one licensed teacher under contract with the Cooperative only for a period not to exceed 120 paid school days.

The Ill. Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) limits a substitute teacher who is a TRS annuitant to substitute teaching for a period not to exceed 120 paid days or 600 paid hours in each school year through June 30, 2026, but not more than 100 paid days in the same classroom. Beginning July 1, 2026, a substitute teacher who is a TRS annuitant may substitute teach for a period not to exceed 100 paid days or 500 paid hours in any school year, unless the subject area is one where the Regional Executive Director has certified that a personnel shortage exists.

The Executive Council establishes a daily rate of pay for substitute teachers. Substitute teachers receive only monetary compensation for time worked and no other benefits.

Short-Term Substitute Teachers

A short-term substitute teacher must hold a valid short-term substitute teaching license and have completed the Cooperative's short-term substitute teacher training program. Unless otherwise permitted by law, short-term substitutes may teach no more than five consecutive school days for each licensed teacher who is under contract with the Executive Council.

Emergency Situations

A substitute teacher may teach when no licensed teacher is under contract with the Executive Council if the Cooperative has an emergency situation as defined in State law. During an emergency situation, a substitute teacher is limited to 30 calendar days of employment per each vacant position. The Executive Council shall notify the appropriate Regional Office of Education (ROE) within five business days after the employment of a substitute teacher in an emergency situation. The Executive Council may continue to employ the same substitute teacher in a vacant position for 90 calendar days or until the end of the semester, whichever is greater, if, prior to the end of the then current 30-calendar-day period, the Cooperative makes a written request to the ROE for a 30-calendar-day extension and the extension is granted by the ROE.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.68, 5/21B-20(2), 5/21B-20(3), and 5/21B-20(4).

105 ILCS 128/22, School Safety Drill Act.

40 ILCS 5/16-118, Ill. Pension Code.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.790 (Substitute Teacher) and §25.520 (Substitute Teaching License).

CROSS REF.: 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:230 Maintaining Student Discipline

Maintaining an orderly learning environment is an essential part of each teacher's instructional responsibilities. A teacher's ability to foster appropriate student behavior is an important factor in the teacher's educational effectiveness. The Executive Director shall ensure that all teachers, other licensed educational employees (except for individuals employed as paraprofessional educators), and persons providing a student's related service(s): (1) maintain discipline in the school as required in the School Code, and (2) follow the Executive Council policies and administrative procedures on student conduct, behavior, and discipline.

When a student's behavior is unacceptable, the teacher should first discuss the matter with the student, if appropriate. If the unacceptable behavior continues, the teacher should consult with the Building Principal and/or discuss the problem with the parent(s)/guardian(s). A teacher may remove any student from the learning setting whose behavior interferes with the lessons or participation of fellow students. A student's removal must be in accordance with Executive Council policy and administrative procedures.

Cooperative personnel shall not use disciplinary methods that may be damaging to students, such as ridicule, sarcasm, or excessive temper displays. Corporal punishment (including slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of a student in physically painful positions, and intentional infliction of bodily harm) is prohibited in all circumstances. Cooperative personnel may only use reasonable force as permitted by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/22-100 and 5/24-24.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:240 Suspension

Suspension Without Pay

The Executive Council may suspend without pay: (1) a professional employee pending a dismissal hearing, or (2) a teacher as a disciplinary measure for up to 30 employment days for misconduct that is detrimental to the Cooperative. Administrative staff members may not be suspended without pay as a disciplinary measure.

Misconduct that is detrimental to the Cooperative includes:

- Insubordination, including any failure to follow an oral or written directive from a supervisor;
- Violation of Executive Council policy or Administrative Procedure;
- Conduct that disrupts or may disrupt the educational program or process;
- Conduct that violates any State or federal law that relates to the employee's duties; and
- Other sufficient causes.

The Executive Director or designee is authorized to issue a pre-suspension notification to a professional employee. This notification shall include the length and reason for the suspension as well as the deadline for the employee to exercise his or her right to appeal the suspension to the Executive Director or Executive Council-appointed hearing examiner before it is imposed. At the request of the professional employee made within five calendar days of receipt of a pre-suspension notification, the Executive Council or Executive Council -appointed hearing examiner will conduct a pre-suspension hearing. The Executive Council or its designee shall notify the professional employee of the date and time of the hearing. At the pre-suspension hearing, the professional employee or his/her representative may present evidence. If the employee does not appeal the pre-suspension notification, the Executive Director or designee shall report the action to the Executive Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Suspension With Pay

The Executive Council or Executive Director or designee may suspend a professional employee with pay: (1) during an investigation into allegations of disobedience or misconduct whenever the employee's continued presence in his or her position would not be in the Cooperative's best interests, (2) as a disciplinary measure for misconduct that is detrimental to the Cooperative as defined above, or (3) pending a Executive Council hearing to suspend a teacher without pay.

The Executive Director shall meet with the employee to present the allegations and give the employee an opportunity to refute the charges. The employee will be told the dates and times the suspension will begin and end.

Employees Under Investigation by Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

Upon receipt of a DCFS recommendation that the Cooperative remove an employee from his or her position when he or she is the subject of a pending DCFS investigation that relates to his or her employment with the Cooperative, the Executive Council or Executive Director or designee, in consultation with the Executive Council Attorney, will determine whether to:

1. Let the employee remain in his or her position pending the outcome of the investigation; or
2. Remove the employee as recommended by DCFS, proceeding with:
 - a. A suspension with pay; or
 - b. A suspension without pay.

Repayment of Compensation and Benefits

If a professional employee is suspended with pay, either voluntarily or involuntarily, pending the outcome of a criminal investigation or prosecution, and the employee is later dismissed as a result of his or her criminal conviction, the employee must repay to the Cooperative all compensation and the value of all benefits received by him or her during the suspension. The Executive Director will notify the employee of this requirement when the employee is suspended.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/24-12.

5 ILCS 430/5-60(b), State Officials and Employee Ethics Act.

325 ILCS 5/7.4(c-10), Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

Cleveland Bd. of Educ. v. Loudermill, 470 U.S. 532 (1985).

Barszcz v. Cmty College Dist. No. 504, 400 F.Supp. 675 (N.D. Ill. 1975).

Massie v. East St. Louis Sch. Dist. No. 189, 203 Ill.App.3d 965 (5th Dist. 1990).

CROSS REF.: 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:250 Leaves of Absence

Each of the provisions in this policy applies to all professional personnel to the extent that it does not conflict with an applicable collective bargaining agreement or individual employment contract or benefit plan; in the event of a conflict, such provision is severable and the applicable bargaining agreement or individual agreement will control.

Sick and Bereavement Leave, Personal Leave, Leave of Absence without Pay, Child-Rearing Leave, Leaves to Serve as an Officer, Trustee, or Representative of a Specific Organization

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

Family Bereavement Leave

State law allows a maximum of 10 unpaid workdays for eligible employees (Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, 20 U.S.C. §2601 *et seq.*) to take family bereavement leave. The purpose, requirements, scheduling, and all other terms of the leave are governed by the Family Bereavement Leave Act. Eligible employees may use family bereavement leave, without any adverse employment action, for: (1) attendance by the bereaved staff member at the funeral or alternative to a funeral of a covered family member, which includes an employee's child, stepchild, domestic partner, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or stepparent (2) making arrangements necessitated by the death of the covered family member, (3) grieving the death of the covered family member, or (4) absence from work due to a Significant Event, which includes: (i) miscarriage, (ii) an unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure, (iii) a failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party, (iv) a failed surrogacy agreement, (v) a diagnosis that negatively impacts pregnancy or fertility, or (vi) a still birth. An employee qualifying for leave due to a Significant Event will not be required to identify which specific reason applies to the employee's request.

The leave must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the employee received notice of the death of the covered family member or the date on which an event under item (4) above occurs. However, in the event of the death of more than one covered family member in a 12-month period, an employee is entitled to up to a total of six weeks of bereavement leave during the 12-month period, subject to certain restrictions under State and federal law. Other existing forms of leave may be substituted for the leave provided in the Family Bereavement Leave Act. This policy does not create any right for an employee to take family bereavement leave that is inconsistent with the Family Bereavement Leave Act.

Child Extended Bereavement Leave

Unpaid leave from work is available to employees who experience the loss of a child by suicide or homicide. The Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act governs the duration, scheduling, continuity of benefits, and all other terms of the leave. Accordingly, if the Cooperative employs at least 50 but not more than 249 employees on a full-time basis, an employee is entitled to a total of six weeks of unpaid leave within one year after the employee notifies the Cooperative of the loss. An employee may elect to substitute other forms of leave to which the employee is entitled for the leave provided under the Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act.

Sabbatical Leave

Sabbatical leave may be granted in accordance with the School Code.

Leave to Serve as an Election Judge

Any staff member who was appointed to serve as an election judge under State law may, after giving at least 20-days' written notice to the Cooperative, be absent without pay for the purpose of serving as

an election judge. The staff member is not required to use any form of paid leave to serve as an election judge. No more than 10% of the Cooperative's employees may be absent to serve as election judges on the same Election Day.

Leaves for Service in the Military

Leaves for service in the U.S. Armed Services or any of its reserve components and the National Guard, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in military service does not acquire tenure.

General Assembly Leave

Leaves for service in the General Assembly, as well as re-employment rights, will be granted in accordance with State and federal law. A professional staff member hired to replace one in the General Assembly does not acquire tenure.

Leave for Employment in Department of Defense

The Executive Council may grant teachers a leave of absence to accept employment in a Dept. of Defense overseas school.

School Visitation Leave

An eligible professional staff member is entitled to eight hours during any school year, no more than four hours of which may be taken on any given day, to attend school conferences, behavioral meetings, or academic meetings related to the teacher's child, if the conference or meeting cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. Professional staff members must first use all accrued vacation leave, personal leave, compensatory leave, and any other leave that may be granted to the professional staff member, except sick, and disability leave.

The Executive Director shall develop administrative procedures implementing this policy consistent with the School Visitation Rights Act.

Leaves for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Gender Violence, or Other Crime of Violence

An unpaid leave from work is available to any staff member who: (1) is a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence or (2) has a family or household member who is a victim of such violence whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence. The unpaid leave allows the employee to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance, and to grieve and attend to matters necessitated by the death of a family or household member who is killed in a crime of violence, without suffering adverse employment action.

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) governs the purpose, requirements, scheduling, and continuity of benefits, and all other terms of the leave. Accordingly, if the Cooperative employs at least 50 employees, and subject to any exceptions in VESSA, an employee is entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period. Neither the law nor this policy creates a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under or is in addition to the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. §2601 *et seq.*).

COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave

When applicable, paid administrative leave related to COVID-19 will be granted to eligible employees in accordance with State law.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.83, 5/24-6, 5/24-6.1, 5/24-6.2, 5/24-6.3, 5/24-13, and 5/24-13.1.

330 ILCS 61/, Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

820 ILCS 147/, School Visitation Rights Act.

820 ILCS 154/, Family Bereavement Leave Act.

820 ILCS 156/, Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act.

820 ILCS 180/, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act.

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:260 Student Teachers

The Executive Director is authorized to accept students from university-approved teacher-training programs to do student teaching in the Cooperative. No individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense that would subject him or her to license suspension or revocation pursuant to Section 5/21B-80 of the School Code or who has been found to be the perpetrator of sexual or physical abuse of a minor under 18 years of age pursuant to proceedings under Article II of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 is permitted to student teach.

Before permitting an individual to student teach, begin a required internship, or participate in any field experience in the Cooperative, the Executive Director or designee shall ensure that:

1. The Cooperative performed a *105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(g) Check* as described below; and
2. The individual furnished evidence of physical fitness to perform assigned duties and freedom from communicable disease pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-5.

A *105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(g) Check* shall include:

1. Fingerprint-based checks through (a) the Illinois State Police (ISP) for criminal history records information (CHRI) pursuant to the Uniform Conviction Information Act (20 ILCS 2635/1), and (b) the FBI national crime information databases pursuant to the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (P.L. 109-248);
2. A check of the Illinois Sex Offender Registry (see the Sex Offender Community Notification Law (730 ILCS 152/101 *et seq.*); and
3. A check of the Illinois Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry (Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registration Act (730 ILCS 154/75-105).

The School Code requires each individual student teaching or beginning a required internship to provide the Cooperative with written authorization for, and pay the costs of, his or her 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9(g) check (including any applicable vendor's fees). Upon receipt of this authorization and payment, the Executive Director or designee will submit the student teacher's name, sex, race, date of birth, social security number, fingerprint images, and other identifiers, as prescribed by the Ill. State Police (ISP), to the ISP. The Executive Director or designee will provide each student teacher with a copy of his or her report.

Assignment

The Executive Director or designee shall be responsible for coordinating placements of all student teachers within the Cooperative. Student teachers should be assigned to supervising teachers whose qualifications are acceptable to the Cooperative and the students' respective colleges or universities.

LEGAL REF.:

34 U.S.C. §20901 *et seq.*, Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, P.L. 109-248.

20 ILCS 2635/1, Uniform Conviction Information Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-21.9, 5/10-22.34, and 5/24-5.

CROSS REF.: 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:190 (Teacher Qualifications)

Adopted: September 11, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

Educational Support Personnel

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:270 Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment

Employment At-Will

Unless otherwise specifically provided, Cooperative employment is at-will, meaning that employment may be terminated by the Cooperative or employee at any time for any reason, other than a reason prohibited by law, or no reason at all. Nothing in Executive Council policy is intended or should be construed as altering the employment at-will relationship.

Exceptions to employment at-will may include employees who are employed annually, have an employment contract, or are otherwise granted a legitimate interest in continued employment. The Executive Director is authorized to make exceptions to employing nonlicensed employees at-will but shall maintain a record of positions or employees who are not at-will.

Compensation

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

The Executive Council will determine salary and wages for educational support personnel. Increments are dependent on evidence of continuing satisfactory performance. An employee covered by the overtime provisions in State or federal law shall not work overtime without the prior authorization from the employee's immediate supervisor. Educational support personnel are paid twice a month.

Assignment

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

The Executive Director is authorized to make assignments and transfers of educational support personnel.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-22.34 and 5/10-23.5.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act), 5:290 (Employment Termination and Suspensions), 5:310 (Compensatory Time-Off)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:280 Duties and Qualifications

All support staff: (1) must meet qualifications specified in job descriptions, (2) must be able to perform the essential tasks listed and/or assigned, and (3) are subject to Executive Council policies as they may be changed from time to time at the Executive Council's sole discretion.

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals provide supervised instructional support. Service as a paraprofessional requires an educator license with stipulations endorsed for a paraprofessional educator unless a specific exemption is authorized by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE).

Individuals with only non-instructional duties (e.g., providing technical support for computers, providing personal care services, or performing clerical duties) are not paraprofessionals, and the requirements in this section do not apply. In addition, individuals completing their clinical experiences and/or student teaching do not need to comply with this section, provided their service otherwise complies with ISBE rules.

Nonlicensed Personnel Working with Students and Performing Non-Instructional Duties

Nonlicensed personnel performing non-instructional duties may be used:

1. For supervising study halls, long-distance teaching reception areas used incident to instructional programs transmitted by electronic media (e.g., computers, video, and audio), detention and discipline areas, and school-sponsored extracurricular activities;
2. As supervisors, chaperones, or sponsors for non-academic school activities or for school activities connected to the academic program during any time in which the Governor has declared a disaster due to a public health emergency, in accordance with ISBE rule; or
3. For non-teaching duties not requiring instructional judgment or student evaluation.

Nothing in this policy prevents a nonlicensed person from serving as a guest lecturer or resource person under a licensed teacher's direction and with the administration's approval.

LEGAL REF.:

34 C.F.R. §200.58.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.34, 5/10-22.34a, and 5/10-22.34b.

625 ILCS 5/6-104 and 5/6-106.1, Ill. Vehicle Code.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.280, 1.630, and 25.510.

CROSS REF.: 4:110 (Transportation), 4:170 (Safety), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act), 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

5:290 Employment Termination and Suspensions

Resignation

An employee is requested to provide two weeks' notice of a resignation. A resignation notice cannot be revoked once given. An employee planning to retire should notify his or her supervisor at least two months before the retirement date.

Retirement

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

Non-RIF Dismissal

The Cooperative may terminate an at-will employee at any time for any or no reason, but not for a reason prohibited by State or federal law.

Employees who are employed annually or have a contract, or who otherwise have a legitimate expectation of continued employment, may be dismissed: (1) at the end of the school year or at the end of their respective contract after being provided appropriate notice and after compliance with any applicable contractual provisions, or (2) mid-year or mid-contract provided appropriate due process procedures are provided.

The Executive Director is responsible for making dismissal recommendations to the Executive Council consistent with the Executive Council's goal of having a highly qualified, high performing staff. This includes recommending a non-licensed employee for immediate dismissal for willful or negligent failure to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by 325 ILCS 5/.

Reduction in Force and Recall

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

The Executive Council may, as necessary or prudent, decide to decrease the number of educational support personnel or to discontinue some particular type of educational support service and, as a result of that action, dismiss or reduce the hours of one or more educational support employees. When making decisions concerning reduction in force and recall, the Executive Council will follow Sections 10-22.34c (outsourcing non-instructional services) and 10-23.5 (procedures) of the School Code, to the extent they are applicable and not superseded by legislation or an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Final Paycheck

A terminating employee's final paycheck will be adjusted for any unused, earned vacation credit. Employees are paid for all earned vacation. Terminating employees will receive their final pay on the next regular payday following the date of termination, except that an employee dismissed due to a reduction in force shall receive his or her final paycheck on or before the next regular pay date following the last day of employment.

Suspension

Except as provided below, the Executive Director is authorized to suspend an employee without pay as a disciplinary measure, during an investigation into allegations of misconduct or pending a dismissal hearing whenever, in the Executive Director's judgment, the employee's presence is

detrimental to the Cooperative. A disciplinary suspension shall be with pay: (1) when the employee is exempt from the overtime provisions, or (2) until an employee with an employment contract for a definite term is provided a notice and hearing according to the suspension policy for professional employees. Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Ill. Dept. Children and Family Services (DCFS) that the Cooperative remove an employee from his or her position when he or she is the subject of a pending DCFS investigation that relates to his or her employment with the Cooperative, the Executive Council or Executive Director or designee, in consultation with the Executive Council Attorney, will determine whether to:

1. Let the employee remain in his or her position pending the outcome of the investigation; or
2. Remove the employee as recommended, proceeding with:
 - a. A suspension with pay; or
 - b. A suspension without pay.

Any criminal conviction resulting from the investigation or allegations shall require the employee to repay to the Cooperative all compensation and the value of all benefits received by the employee during the suspension. The Executive Director will notify the employee of this requirement when the employee is suspended.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-22.34c and 5/10-23.5.

5 ILCS 430 *et seq.*, State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

325 ILCS 5/7.4(c-10), Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

820 ILCS 105/4a, Minimum Wage Law.

CROSS REF.: 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:240 (Suspension), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:300 Schedules and Employment Year

The Executive Director shall supervise a process for setting work schedules and an employment year for educational support employees in accordance with State and federal law, Executive Council policy, and applicable agreements and shall:

1. Assign each employee one supervisor who will establish a work schedule, including breaks, as required by building or Cooperative needs, workload, and the efficient management of human resources;
2. Allow for the ability to respond to changing circumstances by altering work schedules as needed; and
3. Consider the well-being of the employee. The Executive Director's approval is required to establish a flexible work schedule or job-sharing.

Breaks

An employee who works at least 7.5 continuous hours shall receive a 30-minute duty-free meal break that begins within the first five hours of the employee's workday. The Cooperative accommodates employees who are nursing mothers and compensates them for reasonable time needed to express breast milk according to State and federal law.

LEGAL REF.:

29 U.S.C. §§207 and 218d, Fair Labor Standards Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14a, 5/10-22.34, and 5/10-23.5.

740 ILCS 137/, Right to Breastfeed Act.

820 ILCS 105/, Minimum Wage Law.

820 ILCS 260/, Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:310 Compensatory Time-Off

This policy governs the use of compensatory time-off by employees who: (1) are covered by the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. §201 *et seq.*, and (2) are not represented by an exclusive bargaining representative.

Employees may be given 1-1/2 hours of compensatory time-off in lieu of cash payment for each hour of overtime worked. Other than as provided below, at no time may an employee's accumulated compensatory time-off exceed 240 hours, which represents compensation for 160 hours of overtime. An employee whose work regularly includes public safety, emergency response, or seasonal activities may accumulate a maximum of 480 hours of compensatory time, which represents compensation for 320 hours of overtime. If an employee accrues the maximum number of compensatory time-off hours, the employee: (1) is paid for any additional overtime hours worked, at the rate of one and one-half times the employee's regular hourly rate of pay, and (2) does not accumulate compensatory time-off until the employee uses an equal amount of accrued time-off.

An employee who has accrued compensatory time-off shall be permitted to use such time in at least quarter-day components provided such requests do not unduly disrupt the Cooperative's operations. The employee's supervisor must approve a request to use compensatory time-off.

Upon termination of employment, an employee will be paid for unused compensatory time at the higher of:

1. The average regular rate received by such employee during the last three years of employment; or
2. The final regular rate received by such employee.

Compensatory time-off is time during which the employee is not working and is, therefore, not counted as "hours worked" for purposes of overtime compensation.

Implementation

The Executive Director or designee shall implement this policy in accordance with the FLSA. In the event of a conflict between the policy and the FLSA, the latter shall control.

LEGAL REF.:

Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. §201 *et seq.*; 29 C.F.R. Part 553.

CROSS REF.: 5:35 (Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:320 Evaluation

The Executive Director is responsible for designing and implementing a program for evaluating the job performance of each educational support staff member according to standards contained in Executive Council policies as well as in compliance with State law and any applicable employee handbook and/or collective bargaining agreement. The standards for the evaluation program shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Each employee shall be evaluated annually, preferably before the annual salary review.
2. The direct supervisor shall provide input.
3. The employee's work quality, promptness, attendance, reliability, conduct, judgment, and cooperation shall be considered.
4. The employee shall receive a copy of the annual evaluation.
5. All evaluations shall comply with State and federal law and any applicable employee handbook and/or collective bargaining agreement.

CROSS REF.: 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:150 (Personnel Records)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

5:330 Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves

Each of the provisions in this policy applies to all educational support personnel to the extent that it does not conflict with an applicable collective bargaining agreement or individual employment contract or benefit plan; in the event of a conflict, such provision is severable, and the applicable bargaining agreement or individual agreement will control.

Sick and Bereavement Leave

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

Full or part-time educational support personnel who work at least 600 hours per year receive 12 paid sick leave days per year. Part-time employees will receive sick leave pay equivalent to their regular workday. Unused sick leave shall accumulate to a maximum of 180 days, including the leave of the current year.

Sick leave is defined in State law as personal illness, mental or behavioral complications, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or the acceptance of a child in need of foster care. The Executive Director or designee shall monitor the use of sick leave.

As a condition for paying sick leave after three days absence for personal illness or as the Executive Council or Executive Director deem necessary in other cases, the Executive Council or Executive Director may require that the staff member provide a certificate from: (1) a physician licensed in Illinois to practice medicine and surgery in all its branches, (2) a mental health professional licensed in Illinois providing ongoing care or treatment to the staff member, (3) a chiropractic physician licensed under the Medical Practice Act, (4) a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, (5) a licensed physician assistant who has been delegated the authority to perform health examinations by his or her supervising physician, or (6) if the treatment is by prayer or spiritual means, a spiritual adviser or practitioner of the employee's faith. If the Executive Council or Executive Director requires a certificate during a leave of less than three days for personal illness, the Cooperative shall pay the expenses incurred by the employee.

Employees are entitled to use up to 30 days of paid sick leave because of the birth of a child that is not dependent on the need to recover from childbirth. Such days may be used at any time within the 12-month period following the birth of the child. Intervening periods of nonworking days or school not being in session, such as breaks and holidays, do not count towards the 30 working school days. As a condition of paying sick leave beyond the 30 working school days, the Executive Council or the Executive Director may require medical certification.

For purposes of adoption, placement for adoption, or acceptance of a child in need of foster care, paid sick leave may be used for reasons related to the formal adoption or the formal foster care process prior to taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need of foster care, and for taking custody of the child or accepting the child in need to foster care. Such leave is limited to 30 days, unless a longer leave is provided in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, and need not be used consecutively once the formal adoption or foster care process is underway. The Executive Council or Executive Director may require that the employee provide evidence that the formal adoption or foster care process is underway.

Vacation

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

Twelve-month employees shall be eligible for paid vacation days according to the following schedule:

<u>Length of Employment</u>		<u>Monthly Accumulation</u>	<u>Maximum Vacation Leave Earned Per Year</u>
<u>From:</u>	<u>To:</u>		
Beginning of year 1	End of year 8	0.83 Days	10 Days per year
Beginning of year 9	End of year 14	1.25 Days	15 Days per year
Beginning of year 15 or more		1.67 Days	20 Days per year

Part-time employees who work at least half-time are entitled to vacation days on the same basis as full-time employees, but the pay will be based on the employee's average number of part-time hours per week during the last vacation accrual year. The Executive Director will determine the procedure for requesting vacation.

Vacation days earned in one fiscal year must be used by the end of the following fiscal year; they do not accumulate. Employees resigning or whose employment is terminated are entitled to the monetary equivalent of all earned vacation.

Holidays

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

Unless the Cooperative has a waiver or modification of the School Code pursuant to Section 2-3.25g or 24-2(b) allowing it to schedule school on a legal school holiday listed below, Cooperative employees will not be required to work on:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Memorial Day	2024 Election Day
Juneteenth National Freedom Day	Thanksgiving Day
Independence Day	Christmas Day

A holiday will not cause a deduction from an employee's time or compensation. The Cooperative may require educational support personnel to work on a school holiday during an emergency or for the continued operation and maintenance of facilities or property.

Personal Leave

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees not covered by a current applicable bargaining agreement:

Full-time educational support personnel have three paid personal leave days per year. The use of a personal day is subject to the following conditions:

1. Except in cases of emergency or unavoidable situations, a personal leave request should be submitted to the Building Principal three days before the requested date.
2. No personal leave day may be used immediately before or immediately after a holiday, or during the first and/or last five days of the school year, unless the Executive Director grants prior approval.
3. Personal leave may not be used in increments of less than one-half day.
4. Personal leave is subject to any necessary replacement's availability.
5. Personal leave may not be used on an in-service training day and/or institute training days.
6. Personal leave may not be used when the employee's absence would create an undue hardship.

Leave to Serve as a Trustee of the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund

Upon request, the Executive Council will grant 20 days of paid leave of absence per year to a trustee of the Ill. Municipal Retirement Fund in accordance with State law.

Other Leaves

Educational support personnel receive the following leaves on the same terms and conditions granted professional personnel in policy 5:250, *Leaves of Absence*:

1. Leave for Service in the Military.
2. Leave for Service in the General Assembly.
3. School Visitation Leave.
4. Leaves for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Gender Violence, or Other Crime of Violence.
5. Family Bereavement Leave
6. Child Extended Bereavement Leave.
7. Leave to serve as an election judge.
8. COVID-19 Paid Administrative Leave.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.7b, 5/10-20.83, 5/24-2, 5/24-6, and 5/24-6.3.

10 ILCS 5/13-2.5, Election Code.

330 ILCS 61/, Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

820 ILCS 147, School Visitation Rights Act.

820 ILCS 154/, Family Bereavement Leave Act.

820 ILCS 156/, Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act.

820 ILCS 180/, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act.

School Dist. 151 v. ISBE, 154 Ill.App.3d 375 (1st Dist. 1987); *Elder v. Sch. Dist. No.127 1/2*, 60 Ill.App.2d 56 (1st Dist. 1965).

CROSS REF.: 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:185 (Family and Medical Leave), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 6 - INSTRUCTION

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:10 Educational Philosophy and Objectives

The District's educational program will seek to provide an opportunity for each student to develop to his or her maximum potential. The objectives for the educational program are to:

1. Foster students' self-discovery, self-awareness, and self-discipline.
2. Develop students' awareness of and appreciation for cultural diversity.
3. Stimulate students' intellectual curiosity and growth.
4. Provide students with fundamental career concepts and skills.
5. Help students develop sensitivity to the needs and values of others and a respect for individual and group differences.
6. Help each student strive for excellence and instill a desire to reach the limit of his or her potential.
7. Encourage students to become lifelong learners.
8. Provide an educational climate and culture free of bias concerning the protected classifications identified in policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*.

In order for the Board to monitor whether the educational program is attaining these objectives and to be knowledgeable of current and future resource needs, the Executive Director shall prepare an annual report that includes:

1. A review and evaluation of the present curriculum.
2. A projection of curriculum and resource needs.
3. An evaluation of, and plan to eliminate, any bias in the curriculum or instructional materials and methods concerning the classifications referred to in item 8, above.
4. Any plan for new or revised instructional program implementation.
5. A review of present and future facility needs.

CROSS REF: 1:30 (Cooperative Philosophy), 3:10 (Goals and Objectives), 6:15 (School Accountability), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:20 School Year Calendar and Day

School Calendar

The Executive Council, upon the Executive Director's recommendation and subject to State regulations, annually establishes the dates for opening and closing classes, teacher institutes and in-services, the length and dates of vacations, and the days designated as legal school holidays. The school calendar shall have a minimum of 185 days to ensure 176 days of actual student attendance.

Commemorative Holidays

The teachers and students shall devote a portion of the school day on each commemorative holiday designated in the School Code to study and honor the commemorated person or occasion. The Board may, from time to time, designate a regular school day as a commemorative holiday.

School Day

The Board establishes the length of the school day with the recommendation of the Executive Director and subject to State law requirements. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that observances required by State law are followed during each day of school attendance.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-19, 5/10-19.05, 5/10-20.56, 5/10-20.46, 5/10-30, 5/18-12, 5/18-12.5, 5/24-2, 5/27-3, 5/27-18, 5/27-19, 5/27-20, 5/27-20.1, and 5/27-20.2.

10 ILCS 5/11-4.1, Election Code.

5 ILCS 490/, State Commemorative Dates Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(f).

Metzl v. Leininger, 850 F.Supp. 740 (N.D. Ill. 1994), *aff'd* by 57 F.3d 618 (7th Cir. 1995).

CROSS REF.: 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Executive Council; Indemnification), 4:180 (Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:70 (Teaching About Religions), 7:90 (Release During School Hours)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:30 Organization of Instruction

The Cooperative has instructional levels for grades K through 22. The Executive Director shall annually present to the Executive Council a plan for organizing instructional levels and assigning them to school facilities in order to:

1. Support the District's educational program,
2. Maximize facility usage without undue overcrowding, and
3. Provide substantially comparable instructional programs across the District.

Students, for instructional purposes, may be placed in groups within a school that do not necessarily follow grade level designations. For purposes of attendance reporting and other records, however, each student is assigned a grade-level placement.

Kindergarten

The District maintains a full-day kindergarten with an instructional program that fulfills the District's curriculum goals and objectives and the requirements of the State law. The District also offers a half-day kindergarten for those parents/guardians who request a half-day program.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.37 and 5/10-22.18.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420.

CROSS REF.: 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 7:30 (Student Assignment), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:40 Curriculum Development

Adoption

The Executive Director shall recommend a comprehensive curriculum that is aligned with:

1. The District's educational philosophy and goals,
2. Student needs as identified by research, demographics, and student achievement and other data,
3. The knowledge, skills, and abilities required for students to become life-long learners,
4. The minimum requirements of State and federal law and regulations for curriculum and graduation requirements,
5. The curriculum District-wide and articulated across all grade levels,
6. The Illinois State Learning Standards and any District learning standards, and
7. Any required State or federal student testing.

The Executive Council will adopt, upon recommendation of the Executive Director, a curriculum that meets the above criteria.

Experimental Educational Programs and Pilot Projects

The Executive Director may recommend experimental educational programs and/or pilot projects for Board consideration. Proposals must include goals, material needs, anticipated expenses, and an evaluation process. The Executive Director shall submit to the Board periodic progress reports for programs that exceed one year in duration and a final evaluation with recommendation upon the program's completion.

Single-Gender Classes and Activities

The Executive Director may recommend a program of nonvocational single-gender classes and/or activities to provide diverse educational opportunities and/or meet students' identified educational needs. Participation in the classes or activities must be voluntary, both genders must be treated with substantial equality, and the program must otherwise comply with State and federal law and with Board policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*. At least every two years, the Executive Director must evaluate any single-gender class or activity to ensure that: (1) it does not rely on overly broad generalizations about the different talents, capabilities, or preferences of either gender, (2) it is substantially related to the achievement of the important objective for the class or activity, and (3) it continues to comply with State and federal law and with Board policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*.

Development

The Executive Director shall develop a curriculum review program to monitor the current curriculum and promptly suggest changes to make the curriculum more effective, to take advantage of improved teaching methods and materials, and to be responsive to social change, technological developments, student needs, and community expectations.

The Executive Director shall report to the Board as appropriate, the curriculum review program's efforts to:

1. Regularly evaluate the curriculum and instructional program.
2. Ensure the curriculum continues to meet the stated adoption criteria.
3. Include input from a cross-section of teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, and students, representing all grade levels, disciplines, and specialized and alternative programs.

4. Coordinate with the process for evaluating the instructional program and materials.

Curriculum Guides and Course Outlines

The Executive Director shall develop and provide subject area curriculum guides to appropriate staff members.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.8 and 5/10-19.

CROSS REF.: 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:70 (Teaching About Religions), 6:80 (Teaching About Controversial Issues) 6:100 (Using Animals in the Educational Program), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:135 (Accelerated Placement Program), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 6:150 (Home and Hospital Instruction), 6:160 (English Learners), 6:180 (Extended Instructional Programs), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:50 School Wellness

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, shall be promoted in the Cooperative's educational program, school-based activities, and meal programs. This policy shall be interpreted consistently with Section 204 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA).

The Executive Director will ensure:

1. Each school building complies with this policy;
2. The policy is available to the community on an annual basis through copies of or online access to the Policy Manual; and
3. The community is informed about the progress of this policy's implementation.

Goals for Nutrition Education and Nutrition Promotion

The goals for addressing nutrition education and nutrition promotion include the following:

- Schools will support and promote sound nutrition for students.
- Schools will foster the positive relationship between sound nutrition, physical activity, and the capacity of students to develop and learn.
- Nutrition education will be part of the Cooperative's comprehensive health education curriculum. See policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*.

Goals for Physical Activity

The goals for addressing physical activity include the following:

- Schools will support and promote an active lifestyle for students.
- Physical education will be taught in all grades and shall include a developmentally planned and sequential curriculum that fosters the development of movement skills, enhances health-related fitness, increases students' knowledge, offers direct opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting, and encourages healthy habits and attitudes for a healthy lifestyle. See policies 6:60, *Curriculum Content* and 7:260, *Exemption from Physical Education*.
- During the school day, all students will be required to engage in a daily physical education course, unless otherwise exempted. See policies 6:60, *Curriculum Content* and 7:260, *Exemption from Physical Education*.
- The curriculum will be consistent with and incorporate relevant *Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health* as established by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE).

Goals for Other School-Based Activities

The goals for school-based activities include the following:

- Schools will support and promote a healthy eating environment for students.
- Schools will promote and participate in wellness activities.
- Schools will offer other school-based activities to support student health and wellness, including coordinated events and clubs.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available During the School Day; Marketing Prohibited

Students will be offered and schools will promote nutritious food and beverage choices during the school day that are consistent with policy 4:120, *Food Services* (requiring compliance with the

nutrition standards specified in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's (USDA) *Smart Snacks* rules).

In addition, in order to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity, the Executive Director or designee shall:

1. Restrict the sale of *competitive foods*, as defined by the USDA, in the food service areas during meal periods;
2. Comply with all ISBE rules; and
3. Prohibit marketing during the school day of foods and beverages that do not meet the standards listed in policy 4:120, *Food Services*, i.e., in-school marketing of food and beverage items must meet *competitive foods* standards.

Competitive foods standards do not apply to foods and beverages available, but not sold in school during the school day; e.g., brown bag lunches, foods for classroom parties, school celebrations, and reward incentives.

Exempted Fundraising Day (EFD) Requests

All food and beverages sold to students on the school campuses of participating schools during the school day must comply with the "general nutrition standards for competitive foods" specified in federal law.

ISBE rules prohibit EFDs for grades 8 and below in participating schools.

The Executive Director or designee in a participating school may grant an EFD for grades 9 through 12 in participating schools. To request an EFD and learn more about the Cooperative's related procedure(s), contact the Executive Director or designee. The Cooperative's procedures are subject to change. The number of EFDs for grades 9 through 12 in participating schools is set by ISBE rule.

Guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals

Reimbursable school meals served shall meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements and regulations for the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program.

Unused Food Sharing Plan

In collaboration with the Cooperative's local health department, the Executive Director or designee will:

1. Develop and support a food sharing plan (Plan) for unused food that is focused on needy students.
2. Implement the Plan throughout the Cooperative.
3. Ensure the Plan complies with the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as well as accompanying guidance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the Food Donation Program.
4. Ensure that any leftover food items are properly donated to combat potential food insecurity in the Cooperative's community. *Properly* means in accordance with all federal regulations and State and local health and sanitation codes.

Monitoring

At least every three years, the Executive Director shall provide implementation data and/or reports to the Executive Council concerning this policy's implementation sufficient to allow the Executive Council to monitor and adjust the policy (a triennial report). This triennial report must include without limitation each of the following:

- An assessment of the Cooperative's implementation of the policy
- The extent to which the Cooperative is in compliance with the policy
- The extent to which the policy compares to model local school wellness policies
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the policy
- How the Cooperative will make the results of the assessment available to the public
- Where the Cooperative will retain records of the assessment

The Executive Council will monitor and adjust the policy pursuant to policy 2:240, *Council Policy Development*.

Community Involvement

The Executive Council and Executive Director will actively invite suggestions and comments concerning the development, implementation, periodic reviews, and updates of the school wellness policy from parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the Executive Council, school administrators, and the community. Community involvement methods shall align their suggestions and comments to policy 2:140, *Communications To and From the Council*.

Recordkeeping

The Executive Director shall retain records to document compliance with this policy, the Cooperative's records retention protocols, and the Local Records Act.

LEGAL REF.:

Pub. L. 108-265, Sec. 204, Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

42 U.S.C. §1751 *et seq.*, Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act.

42 U.S.C. §1758b, Pub. L. 111-296, Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

42 U.S.C. §1771 *et seq.*, Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

42 U.S.C. §1779, as implemented by 7 C.F.R. §§210.11 and 210.31.

50 ILCS 205/ Local Records Act.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.139 and 5/2-3.189.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 305, Food Program.

ISBE's *School Wellness Policy* Goal, adopted Oct. 2007.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Council), 2:150 (Committees), 2:240 (Policy Development), 4:120 (Food Services), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Education), 8:10 (Connection with the Community)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

6:60 Curriculum Content

The curriculum shall contain instruction on subjects required by State statute or regulation as follows:

1. In kindergarten through grade 8, subjects include: (a) language arts, (b) reading, (c) other communication skills, (d) science, (e) mathematics, (f) social studies, (g) art, and (h) music. A reading opportunity of 60 minutes per day will be promoted for all students in kindergarten through grade 3 whose reading levels are one grade level or more lower than their current grade level. Daily time of at least 30 minutes (with a minimum of at least 15 consecutive minutes if divided) will be provided for supervised, unstructured, child-directed play for all students in kindergarten through grade 5. Before the completion of grade 5, students will be offered at least one unit of cursive instruction. In grades 6, 7, or 8, students must receive at least one semester of civics education in accordance with Illinois Learning Standards for social science.
2. In grades 9 through 12, subjects include: (a) language arts, (b) writing intensive courses, (c) science, (d) mathematics, (e) social studies including U.S. history, American government and one semester of civics, (f) foreign language, (g) music, (h) art, (i) driver and safety education, and (j) career and technical education.

Students otherwise eligible to take a driver education course must receive a passing grade in at least eight courses during the previous two semesters before enrolling in the course. The Executive Director or designee may waive this requirement if he or she believes a waiver to be in the student's best interest. The course shall include: (a) instruction necessary for the safe operation of motor vehicles, including motorcycles, to the extent that they can be taught in the classroom, (b) classroom instruction on distracted driving as a major traffic safety issue, (c) instruction on required safety and driving precautions that must be observed at emergency situations, highway construction and maintenance zones, including worker safety in those zones, and railroad crossings and their approaches, and (d) instruction concerning law enforcement procedures for traffic stops, including a demonstration of the proper actions to be taken during a traffic stop and appropriate interactions with law enforcement. Automobile safety instruction covering traffic regulations and highway safety must include instruction on the consequences of alcohol consumption and the operation of a motor vehicle. The eligibility requirements contained in State law for the receipt of a certificate of completion from the Secretary of State shall be provided to students in writing at the time of their registration.

3. In all schools, drug and alcohol abuse prevention education, including: (a) in each year in grades K through 4, age- and developmentally appropriate instruction, study, and discussion of effective methods for the prevention and avoidance of drugs and the dangers of opioid and substance abuse, (b) in grades 5 through 12, age- and developmentally appropriate classroom instruction on alcohol and drug use and abuse, (c) in grades 6-12, the dangers of fentanyl, and (d) in grades 7 through 12, anabolic steroid abuse prevention, which must also be taught in interscholastic athletic programs.
4. In kindergarten through grade 12, provided it can be funded by private grants or the federal government, violence prevention and conflict resolution must be stressed, including: (a) causes of conflict, (b) consequences of violent behavior, (c) non-violent resolution, and (d) relationships between drugs, alcohol, and violence.
5. In grades kindergarten through 12, through the 2026-2027 school year, age-appropriate Internet safety must be taught, the scope of which shall be determined by the Executive Director or designee. The curriculum must incorporate Council policy 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*, and, at a minimum, include: (a) education about appropriate online behavior, (b) interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and (c) cyberbullying awareness and response.
6. Beginning in the fall of 2027, in grades 3-8 each year, age- and developmentally appropriate instruction on online safety.
7. In all grades, students must receive developmentally appropriate opportunities to gain computer

literacy skills that are embedded in the curriculum.

8. In all grades, instruction on behaviors that violate Council policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.
9. In all schools, citizenship values must be taught, including: (a) American patriotism, (b) principles of representative government (the American Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, and the Constitution of the State of Illinois), (c) proper use and display of the American flag, and (d) the Pledge of Allegiance.
10. In all grades, physical education must be taught including a developmentally planned and sequential curriculum that fosters the development of movement skills, enhances health-related fitness, increases students' knowledge, offers direct opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting, and encourages healthy habits and attitudes for a healthy lifestyle. Unless otherwise exempted, all students are required to engage in a physical education course with such frequency as determined by the Executive Council after recommendation from the Executive Director, but at a minimum of three days per five-day week. For exemptions and substitutions, see Council policy 7:260, *Exemption from Physical Education*.
11. In all schools, health education must be stressed, including: (a) human ecology, health, growth, development, personal health habits, and nutrition, (b) family life, (c) prevention and control of disease, (d) age- and developmentally appropriate and evidence-informed sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in all grades, (e) public health, environmental health, disaster preparedness, and safety education, (f) mental health and illness, (g) dental health, (h) cancer education, and (i) age- and developmentally appropriate consent education. The Executive Director shall implement a comprehensive health education program in accordance with State law.
12. In all schools, abduction education that addresses the danger of and avoidance of abduction.
13. In grades 9-12, the dangers of allergies must be taught.
14. In grades 9-12, training on how to properly administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation and how to use an automated external defibrillator.
15. In all schools, career/vocational education must be taught, including: (a) the importance of work, (b) the development of basic skills to enter the world of work and/or continue formal education, (c) good work habits and values, (d) the relationship between learning and work, and (e) if possible, a student work program that provides the student with work experience as an extension of the regular classroom. A career awareness and exploration program must be available at all grade levels.
16. In grades 9 through 12, consumer education must be taught, including: (a) financial literacy, including consumer debt and installment purchasing (including credit scoring, managing credit debt, and completing a loan application); budgeting; savings and investing; banking (including balancing a checkbook, opening a deposit account, and the use of interest rates); understanding simple contracts; State and federal income taxes; personal insurance policies; the comparison of prices; higher education student loans; identity-theft security; and homeownership (including the basic process of obtaining a mortgage and the concepts of fixed and adjustable rate mortgages, subprime loans, and predatory lending); and (b) the roles of consumers interacting with agriculture, business, labor unions and government in formulating and achieving the goals of the mixed free enterprise system.
17. In grades 9 through 12, intensive instruction in computer literacy, which may be included as a part of English, social studies, or any other subject.
18. In grades 9 through 12, through the 2026-2027 school year, a unit of instruction on media literacy that includes, but is not limited to the following topics: (a) accessing information to evaluate multiple media platforms and better understand the general landscape and economics of the platforms, and issues regarding the trustworthiness of the source of information; (b) analyzing and evaluating media messages to deconstruct media representations according to the authors, target audience, techniques, agenda setting, stereotypes, and authenticity to distinguish fact from opinion; (c) creating media to convey a coherent message using multimodal practices to a

specific target audience that includes, but is not limited to, writing blogs, composing songs, designing video games, producing podcasts, making videos, or coding a mobile or software application; (d) reflecting on media consumption to assess how media affects the consumption of information and how it triggers emotions and behavior; and (e) social responsibility and civics to suggest a plan of action in the class, school, or community for engaging others in a respectful, thoughtful, and inclusive dialogue over a specific issue using facts and reason. Beginning in the fall of 2027, in grades 9 through 12, a unit of instruction on media literacy and Internet safety that includes, but is not limited to, all of the following topics: (a) accessing and evaluating information; (b) creating media; (c) reflecting on media consumption and social responsibility; (d) legal and social penalties for illicit actions online; and (e) reporting illicit content online.

19. In grades 9 through 12, an opportunity for students to take at least one computer science course aligned to Illinois learning standards. *Computer science* means the study of computers and algorithms, including their principles, hardware and software designs, implementation, and impact on society. Computer science does not include the study of everyday uses of computers and computer applications; e.g., keyboarding or accessing the Internet.
20. In all schools, environmental education, including instruction on: (a) the current problems and needs in the conservation of natural resources and (b) beginning in the fall of 2026, instruction on climate change.
21. In all schools, instruction as determined by the Executive Director or designee on United States (U.S.) history must be taught, including: (a) the principles of representative government, (b) the Constitutions of the U.S. and Illinois, (c) the role of the U.S. in world affairs, (d) the role of labor unions, (e) the role and contributions of ethnic groups, including but not limited to, African Americans, Albanians, Asian Americans, Bohemians, Czechs, French, Germans, Hispanics (including the events related to the forceful removal and illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S. citizens during the Great Depression), Hungarians, Irish, Italians, Lithuanians, Polish, Russians, Scots, and Slovaks in the history of this country and State, (f) a study of the roles and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the history of the U.S. and Illinois, (g) Illinois history, (h) the contributions made to society by Americans of different faith practices, including, but not limited to, Muslim Americans, Jewish Americans, Christian Americans, Hindu Americans, Sikh Americans, Buddhist Americans, and any other collective community of faith that has shaped America, (i) Native American nations' sovereignty and self-determination, both historically and in the present day, with a focus on urban Native Americans, and (j) the events of the Native American experience and Native American history within the Midwest and Illinois since time immemorial in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/27-20.05.

In addition, all schools shall hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on Constitution Day, each September 17, commemorating the September 17, 1787 signing of the Constitution. However, when September 17 falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, Constitution Day shall be held during the preceding or following week.

22. In all schools, the curriculum includes instruction as determined by the Executive Director or designee on the Holocaust and crimes of genocide, including Nazi atrocities of 1933-1945, the Native American genocide in North America, Armenian Genocide, the Famine-Genocide in Ukraine, and more recent atrocities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan.
23. In all schools, the curriculum includes instruction as determined by the Executive Director or designee on the history, struggles, and contributions of women.
24. In all schools, the curriculum includes instruction as determined by the Executive Director or designee on Black History, including the history of the pre-enslavement of Black people from 3,000 BCE to AD 1619, the African slave trade, slavery in America, the study of the reasons why Black people came to be enslaved, the vestiges of slavery in this country, the study of the American civil rights renaissance, as well as the struggles and contributions of African-Americans.
25. In all schools offering a secondary agricultural education program, the curriculum includes

courses as required by 105 ILCS 5/2-3.80.

26. In all schools, instruction during courses as determined by the Executive Director or designee on disability history, awareness, and the disability rights movement.
27. In all schools, instruction as determined by the Executive Director or designee on the events of Asian American history, including the history of Asian Americans in Illinois and the Midwest, as well as the contributions of Asian Americans toward advancing civil rights from the 19th century onward, which must include the contributions made by individual Asian Americans in government and the arts, humanities, and sciences, as well as the contributions of Asian American communities to the economic, cultural, social, and political development of the United States.
28. In kindergarten through grade 8, education must be available to students concerning effective methods of preventing and avoiding traffic injuries related to walking and bicycling.

LEGAL REF.:

Pub. L. No. 108-447, Section 111 of Division J, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005.

Pub. L. No. 110-385, Title II, 122 stat. 4096 (2008), Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

47 C.F.R. §54.520.

5 ILCS 465/3 and 465/3a.

20 ILCS 2605/2605-480.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.80(e) and (f), 5/10-20.79, 5/10-23.13, 5/22-110, 5/27-105, 5/27-110, 5/27-115, 5/27-210, 5/27-215, 5/27-245, 5/27-250, 5/27-255, 5/27-260, 5/27-305, 5/27-310, 5/27-315, 5/27-405, 5/27-410 (scheduled for repeal on 7-1-27), 5/27-415 (scheduled for repeal on 7-1-27), 5/27-505, 5/27-510, 5/27-515, 5/27-520, 5/27-525, 5/27-530, 5/27-535, 5/27-540, 5/27-545, 5/27-605, 5/27-705, 5/27-710, 5/27-715, 5/27-720, 5/27-725, 5/27-810, and 5/27-815.

105 ILCS 435/, Vocational Education Act.

625 ILCS 5/6-408.5, III. Vehicle Code.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.420, 1.425, 1.430, and 1.440.

CROSS REF.: 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sex Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:70 (Teaching About Religions), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Education)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:65 Student Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is defined as the process through which students enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve important life tasks. Students competent in SEL are able to recognize and manage their emotions, establish healthy relationships, set positive goals, meet personal and social needs, and make responsible and ethical decisions.

The Executive Director shall incorporate SEL into the Cooperative's curriculum and other educational programs consistent with the Cooperative's mission and the goals and benchmarks of the Ill. Learning Standards. The Ill. Learning Standards include three goals for students:

1. Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
2. Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
3. Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

The incorporation of SEL objectives into the Cooperative's curriculum and other educational programs may include but is not limited to:

1. Classroom and school-wide programming to foster a safe, supportive learning environment where students feel respected and valued. This may include incorporating scientifically based, age-and-culturally appropriate classroom instruction, Cooperative-wide, and school-wide strategies that teach SEL skills, promote optimal mental health, and prevent risk behaviors for all students.
2. Staff development and training to promote students' SEL development. This may include providing all personnel with age-appropriate academic and SEL and how to promote it.
3. Parent/Guardian and family involvement to promote students' SEL development. This may include providing parents/guardians and families with learning opportunities related to the importance of their children's optimal SEL development and ways to enhance it.
4. Community partnerships to promote students' SEL development. This may include establishing partnerships with diverse community agencies and organizations to assure a coordinated approach to addressing children's mental health and SEL development.
5. Early identification and intervention to enhance students' school readiness, academic success, and use of good citizenship skills. This may include development of a system and procedures for periodic and universal screening, assessment, and early intervention for students who have significant risk factors for social, emotional, or mental health conditions that impact learning.
6. Treatment to prevent or minimize mental health conditions in students. This may include building and strengthening referral and follow-up procedures for providing effective clinical services for students with social, emotional, and mental health conditions that impact learning. This may include student and family support services, school-based behavioral health services, and school-community linked services and supports.
7. Assessment and accountability for teaching SEL skills to all students. This may include implementation of a process to assess and report baseline information and ongoing progress about school climate, students' social and emotional development, and academic performance.

LEGAL REF.:

Children's Mental Health Act, 405 ILCS 49/.

CROSS REF.: 1:30, (Cooperative Philosophy), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:270 (Guidance and Counseling Program), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:250 (Student Support Services)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:70 Teaching About Religions

The Cooperative's curriculum may include the study of religions as they relate to geography, history, culture, and the development of various ethnic groups. The study of religions shall give neither preferential nor derogatory treatment to any single religion, religious belief, or to religion in general. The study of religions shall be treated as an academic subject with no emphasis on the advancement or practice of religion.

LEGAL REF.:

School Dist. of Abington Twp v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203 (1963).

Allegheny County v. ACLU Pittsburgh Chapter, 492 U.S. 573 (1989).

CROSS REF.: 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:255 (Assemblies and Ceremonies)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:80 Teaching About Controversial Issues

The Executive Director shall ensure that all school-sponsored presentations and discussions of controversial or sensitive topics in the instructional program, including those made by guest speakers, are:

- Age-appropriate. Proper decorum, considering the students' ages, should be followed.
- Consistent with the curriculum and serve an educational purpose.
- Informative and present a balanced view.
- Respectful of the rights and opinions of everyone. Emotional criticisms and hurtful sarcasm should be avoided.
- Not tolerant of profanity or slander.

The Cooperative specifically reserves its right to stop any school-sponsored activity that it determines violates this policy, is harmful to the Cooperative or the students, or violates State or federal law.

LEGAL REF.:

Garcetti v. Ceballos, 547 U.S. 410 (2006).

Mayer v. Monroe Cnty. Cmty. Sch. Corp., 474 F.3d 477 (7th Cir. 2007).

CROSS REF.: 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:255 (Assemblies and Ceremonies)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:100 Using Animals in the Educational Program

Animals may be brought into school facilities for educational purposes according to procedures developed by the Executive Director assuring: (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

Animal Experiments

Experiments on living animals are prohibited; however, behavior studies that do not impair an animal's health or safety are permissible.

Animal Dissection

The dissection of dead animals or parts of dead animals shall be allowed in the classroom only when the dissection exercise contributes to or is a part of an illustration of pertinent study materials. All dissection of animals shall be confined to the classroom and must comply with the School Code.

Students who object to performing, participating in, or observing the dissection of animals are excused from classroom attendance without penalty during times when such activities are taking place. No student will be penalized or disciplined for refusing to perform, participate in, or observe a dissection. The Executive Director or designee shall inform students of: (1) their right to refrain from performing, participating in, or observing dissection, and (2) which courses contain a dissection unit and which of those courses offers an alternative project.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.122, 5/27-14, and 112/.

CROSS REF.: 6:40 (Curriculum Development)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:110 Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program

The Executive Director or designee shall develop, maintain, and supervise a program for students at risk of academic failure or dropping out of school. The program shall include education and support services addressing individual learning styles, career development, and social needs, and may include without limitation one or more of the following:

- Parent-teacher conferences
- Counseling services by social workers and/or guidance counselors
- Counseling services by psychologists
- Psychological testing
- Truants' alternative and optional education program
- Community agency services
- Alternative learning opportunities program, in conformity with the Alternative Learning Opportunities Law, as it may be amended from time to time
- Graduation incentives program
- Remediation program

Any student who is below the age of 20 years is eligible to enroll in a graduation incentives program if he or she:

1. Is considered a dropout according to State law;
2. Has been suspended or expelled;
3. Is pregnant or is a parent;
4. Has been assessed as chemically dependent; or
5. Is enrolled in a bilingual education or English Language Learners program.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.41, 5/2-3.66, 5/10-20.9a, 5/13B, 5/26-2a, 5/26-13, 5/26-14, and 5/26-16.

CROSS REF.: 6:280 (Grading and Promotion), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:120 Education of Children with Disabilities

The Cooperative shall provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and necessary related services to all children with disabilities enrolled in the Cooperative, as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and implementing provisions of the School Code, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans With Disabilities Act. The term *children with disabilities*, as used in this policy, means children between ages 3 and 21 (inclusive) for whom it is determined, through definitions and procedures described in the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) *Special Education* rules, that special education services are needed. Children with disabilities who turn 22 years old during the school year are eligible for such services through the end of the school year.

It is the intent of the Cooperative to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act even though they do not require services pursuant to IDEA.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the Cooperative shall follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of services to children with disabilities provided in the ISBE *Special Education* rules. For those students who are not eligible for services under IDEA, but, because of disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need or are believed to need special instruction or related services, the Cooperative shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards. The safeguards shall cover students' identification, evaluation, and educational placement. This system shall include notice, an opportunity for the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

The Cooperative may maintain membership in one or more cooperative associations of Cooperatives that shall assist the Cooperative in fulfilling its obligations to the Cooperative's students with disabilities.

If necessary, students may also be placed in nonpublic special education programs or education facilities.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq.*, Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

29 U.S.C. §794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504.

42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*, Americans With Disabilities Act.

34 C.F.R. Part 106.

34 C.F.R. Part 300.

105 ILCS 5/14-1.01 *et seq.*, 5/14-7.02, and 5/14-7.02b.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 226.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:140 Education of Homeless Children

Each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths, including a public pre-school education. A *homeless child* is defined as provided in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the Ill. Education for Homeless Children Act. The Executive Director or designee shall act as or appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children to coordinate this policy's implementation.

A homeless child may attend the Cooperative school that the child attended when permanently housed or in which the child was last enrolled. A homeless child living in any Cooperative school's attendance area may attend that school.

The Executive Director or designee shall review and revise rules or procedures that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths. In reviewing and revising such procedures, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Transportation shall be provided in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and State law. The Executive Director or designee shall give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school. If a child is denied enrollment or transportation under this policy, the Liaison for Homeless Children shall immediately refer the child or his or her parent/guardian to the ombudsperson appointed by the Regional Superintendent and provide the child or his or her parent/guardian with a written explanation for the denial. Whenever a child and his or her parent/guardian who initially share the housing of another person due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar hardship continue to share the housing, the Liaison for Homeless Children may, after the passage of 18 months and annually thereafter, conduct a review as to whether such hardship continues to exist in accordance with State law.

LEGAL REF.:

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*

Ill. Education for Homeless Children Act, 105 ILCS 45/.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.241.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 4:110 (Transportation), 4:140 (Waiver of Student Fees), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:30 (Student Assignment), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:60 (Residence), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students)

Adopted: August 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:150 Home and Hospital Instruction

A student who is absent from school, or whose physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse anticipates that the student will be absent from school, because of a medical condition may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital. Eligibility shall be determined by State law and the Ill. State Board of Education rules governing (1) the continuum of placement options for students who have been identified for special education services or (2) the home and hospital instruction provisions for students who have not been identified for special education services. Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving a written statement from: (1) a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches, (2) a licensed physician assistant, or (3) a licensed advanced practice registered nurse. Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program.

A student who is unable to attend school because of pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, the fulfillment of parenting obligations related to the health of the child, or health and safety concerns arising from domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A, will be provided home instruction, correspondence courses, or other courses of instruction under the following circumstances:

1. Before the birth of the child when the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse indicates, in writing, that she is medically unable to attend regular classroom instruction.
2. For up to three months after the child's birth or a miscarriage.
3. When a student must care for his or her ill child if:
 - a. The child's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse informs the Cooperative, in writing, that the child has a serious health condition that would require the student to be absent from school for two or more consecutive weeks; and
 - b. The student or the student's parent/guardian informs the Cooperative, in writing, that the student needs to care for the child during this period.
4. The student must treat physical or mental health complications or address safety concerns arising from domestic or sexual violence when a health care provider or an employee of the student's domestic or sexual violence organization, as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A, informs the Cooperative, in writing, that the care is needed by the student and will cause the student's absence from school for two or more consecutive weeks.

The Cooperative may reassess home instruction provided to a student under No. 3 or No. 4 every two months to determine the student's continuing need for home instruction.

Periodic conferences will be held between appropriate school personnel, parent(s)/guardian(s), and hospital staff to coordinate course work and facilitate a student's return to school.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-19.05(e), 5/10-22.6a, 5/14-13.01, and 5/18-4.5.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.520, 1.610, and 226.300.

CROSS REF.: 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:280 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:180 Extended Instructional Programs

The Cooperative may offer the following programs in accordance with State law and the Cooperative's educational philosophy:

1. Summer school, whether for credit or not.
2. Advanced vocational training and/or career education program.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-22.18a, 5/10-22.18b, 5/10-22.18c, 5/10-22.20, 5/10-22.20a, 5/10-22.20b, 5/10-22.20c, 5/10-22.29, 5/10-22.33A, 5/10-22.33B, 5/10-23.2, 5/27-22.1, 5/27-22.3, 5/27-23.6.

105 ILCS 110/3, Comprehensive Health Education Program.

105 ILCS 433/, Vocational Academies Act.

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:210 Instructional Materials

All Cooperative classrooms and learning centers should be equipped with an evenly-proportioned, wide assortment of instructional materials, including textbooks, workbooks, audio-visual materials, and electronic materials. These materials should provide quality learning experiences for students and:

1. Enrich and support the curriculum;
2. Stimulate growth in knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards;
3. Provide background information to enable students to make informed judgments and promote critical reading and thinking;
4. Depict in an accurate and unbiased way the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society; and
5. Contribute to a sense of the worth of all people regardless of sex, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or any other differences that may exist.

The Executive Director or designee shall annually provide a list or description of textbooks and instructional materials used in the Cooperative to the Executive Council. Anyone may inspect any textbook or instructional material.

Teachers are encouraged to use age-appropriate supplemental material only when it will enhance, or otherwise illustrate, the subjects being taught. No R-rated movie shall be shown to students unless prior approval is received from the Executive Director or designee, and no movie rated NC-17 (no one 17 and under admitted) shall be shown under any circumstances. These restrictions apply to television programs and other media with equivalent ratings. The Executive Director or designee shall give parents/guardians an opportunity to request that their child not participate in a class showing a movie, television program, or other media with an R or equivalent rating.

Instructional Materials Selection and Adoption

The Executive Director shall approve the selection of all textbooks and instructional materials according to the standards described in this policy. The School Code governs the adoption and purchase of textbooks and instructional materials.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.8 and 5/28-19.1.

CROSS REF.: 6:30 (Organization of Instruction), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:80 (Teaching About Controversial Issues), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:230 Library Media Program

The Executive Director or designee shall manage the Cooperative's library media program to comply with (1) State law and Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rule and (2) the following standards:

1. The program includes an organized collection of resources available to students and staff to supplement classroom instruction, foster reading for pleasure, enhance information literacy, and support research, as appropriate to students of all abilities in the grade levels served.
2. Financial resources for the program's resources and supplies are allocated to meet students' needs.
3. Students in all grades served have equitable access to library media resources.
4. The advice of an individual who is qualified according to ISBE rule is sought regarding the overall direction of the program, including the selection and organization of materials, provision of instruction in information and technology literacy, and structuring the work of library paraprofessionals.
5. The program adheres to the principles of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, which indicate that materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
6. Staff members are invited to recommend additions to the collection.
7. Students may freely select resource center materials as well as receive guided selection of materials appropriate to specific, planned learning experiences.

Parents/guardians, employees, and community members who believe that library media program resources violate rights guaranteed by any law or Executive Council policy may file a complaint using Executive Council policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

The Executive Director or designee shall establish criteria consistent with this policy for the review of objections. Parents/guardians, employees, and community members with suggestions or complaints about library media program resources may complete a *Library Media Resource Objection Form*. The Executive Director or designee shall inform the parent/guardian, employee, or community member, as applicable, of the Cooperative's decision.

LEGAL REF.:

75 ILCS 10/8.7.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(o).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:210 (Instructional Materials), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:235 Access to Electronic Networks

Electronic networks are a part of the Cooperative's instructional program and serve to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The term *electronic networks* includes all of the Cooperative's technology resources, including, but not limited to:

1. The Cooperative's local-area and wide-area networks, including wireless networks (Wi-Fi), Cooperative-issued Wi-Fi hotspots, and any Cooperative servers or other networking infrastructure;
2. Access to the Internet or other online resources via the Cooperative's networks or to any Cooperative-issued online account from any computer or device, regardless of location;
3. Cooperative-owned or Cooperative-issued computers, laptops, tablets, phones, or similar devices.

The Executive Director shall develop an implementation plan for this policy and appoint system administrator(s).

The Cooperative is not responsible for any information that may be lost or damaged, or become unavailable when using the network, or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. Furthermore, the Cooperative will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

Curriculum and Appropriate Online Behavior

The use of the Cooperative's electronic networks shall: (1) be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the Cooperative as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students, and (2) comply with the selection criteria for instructional materials and library resource center materials. As required by federal law and Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, students will be educated about appropriate online behavior, including but not limited to: (1) interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and (2) cyberbullying awareness and response. Staff members may, consistent with the Executive Director's implementation plan, use the Internet throughout the curriculum.

The Cooperative's electronic network is part of the curriculum and is not a public forum for general use.

Acceptable Use

All use of the Cooperative's electronic networks must be: (1) in support of education and/or research, and be in furtherance of the goals stated herein, or (2) for a legitimate school business purpose. Use is a privilege, not a right. Users of the Cooperative's electronic networks have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored on, transmitted, or received via the Cooperative's electronic networks. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using electronic networks. The Cooperative's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the Cooperative's Electronic Networks*, contains the appropriate uses, ethics, and protocol. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account but not erased, may be monitored or read by school officials.

Internet Safety

Technology protection measures shall be used on each Cooperative computer with Internet access. They shall include a filtering device that protects against Internet access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by federal law and as determined by the Executive Director or designee. The Executive

Director or designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices. The Executive Director or designee shall include measures in this policy's implementation plan to address the following:

1. Ensure staff supervision of student access to online electronic networks,
2. Restrict student access to inappropriate matter as well as restricting access to harmful materials,
3. Ensure student and staff privacy, safety, and security when using electronic communications,
4. Restrict unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities, and
5. Restrict unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information, such as, names and addresses.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-Enabled Tools

The Board recognizes that AI-enabled tools are important to enhance student learning, educator effectiveness, and school operations. The use of AI-enabled tools in the Cooperative shall be implemented in a safe, ethical, and equitable manner and in accordance with Board policies 1:30, *Cooperative Philosophy*, and 7:345, *Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security*.

To implement the use of AI-enabled tools in the Cooperative, the Executive Director or designee shall:

1. Develop a Cooperative-wide AI Plan that addresses the Cooperative's approach to the integration of AI;
2. Based on the Cooperative-wide AI Plan, establish AI Responsible Use Guidelines to address the responsible use of AI in the Cooperative by students and staff;
3. Ensure that AI-enabled tools comply with State and federal law;
4. Ensure that staff receive training and students receive instruction on the use of AI, as appropriate; and
5. Review the Cooperative's AI Plan and AI Responsible Use Guidelines on an annual basis and update them as needed.

Authorization for Electronic Network Access

Each staff member must sign the *Authorization for Access to the Cooperative's Electronic Networks* as a condition for using the Cooperative's electronic network. Each student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign the *Authorization* before being granted unsupervised use.

Confidentiality

All users of the Cooperative's computers to access the Internet shall maintain the confidentiality of student records. Reasonable measures to protect against unreasonable access shall be taken before confidential student information is loaded onto the network.

Violations

The failure of any user to follow the terms of the Cooperative's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the Cooperative's Electronic Networks*, or this policy, will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7131, Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

47 U.S.C. §254(h) and (l), Children's Internet Protection Act.

47 C.F.R. Part 54, Subpart F, Universal Service Support for Schools and Libraries.

115 ILCS 5/14(c-5), III. Educational Labor Relations Act.

720 ILCS 5/26.5.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:170 (Copyright), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:210 (Instructional Materials), 6:230 (Library Media Program), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:240 Field Trips and Recreational Class Trips

Field trips are permissible when the experiences are a part of the school curriculum and/or contribute to the Cooperative's educational objectives.

All field trips must have the Executive Director or designee's prior approval, except that field trips beyond a 200-mile radius of the school or extending overnight must have the prior approval of the Executive Council. The Executive Director or designee shall analyze the following factors to determine whether to approve a field trip: educational value, student safety, parent concerns, heightened security alerts, and liability concerns. On all field trips, a bus fee set by the Executive Director or designee may be charged to help defray the transportation costs.

Parents/guardians of students: (1) shall be given the opportunity to consent to their child's participation in any field trip, and (2) are responsible for all entrance fees, food, lodging, or other costs, except that the Cooperative will pay such costs for students who qualify for a fee waiver under Board policy 4:140, *Waiver of Student Fees*. All non-participating students shall be provided with an alternative experience. Any field trip may be cancelled without notice due to an unforeseen event or condition.

Privately arranged trips, including those led by District staff members, shall not be represented as or construed to be sponsored by the Cooperative or school. The Cooperative does not provide liability protection for privately arranged trips and is not responsible for any damages arising from them.

Recreational Class Trips

Recreational class trips are permissible provided they do not interfere with the Cooperative's educational goals. The provisions in this policy concerning field trips are also applicable to recreational class trips, except those regarding educational value.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/29-3.1.

CROSS REF.: 4:140 (Waiver of Student Fees), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:250 Community Resource Persons and Volunteers

The Executive Council encourages the use of resource persons and volunteers to: (1) increase students' educational attainment; (2) provide enrichment experiences for students; (3) increase the effective utilization of staff time and skills; (4) give more individual attention to students; and (5) promote greater community involvement.

Resource persons and volunteers may be used:

1. For non-teaching duties not requiring instructional judgment or evaluation of students;
2. For supervising study halls, long distance teaching reception areas used incident to instructional programs transmitted by electronic media (such as computers, video, and audio), detention and discipline areas, and school-sponsored extracurricular activities;
3. To assist with academic programs under a licensed teacher's immediate supervision;
4. To assist in times of violence or other traumatic incidents within the Cooperative by providing crisis intervention services to lessen the effects of emotional trauma on staff, students, and the community, provided the volunteer meets the qualifications established by the Ill. School Crisis Assistance Team Steering Committee;
5. As a guest lecturer or resource person under a licensed teacher's direction and with the administration's approval; or
6. As supervisors, chaperones, or sponsors for non-academic school activities.

The Executive Director shall follow policy 4:175, *Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications*, to establish procedures for securing and screening resource persons and volunteers. A person who is a *sex offender*, as defined by the Sex Offender Registration Act, or a *violent offender against youth*, as defined in the Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registration Act, is prohibited from being a resource person or volunteer. All volunteer coaches must comply with the requirement to report hazing in policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-22.34, 5/10-22.34a, and 5/10-22.34b.

720 ILCS 5/12C-50.1, Failure to Report Hazing.

730 ILCS 150/1 *et seq.*, Sex Offender Registration Act.

730 ILCS 152/101 *et seq.*, Sex Offender Community Notification Law.

730 ILCS 154/75 *et seq.*, Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Community Notification Law.

730 ILCS 154/101 *et seq.*, Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registration Act.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety), 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:280 (Duties and Qualifications), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property), 8:95 (Parental Involvement)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

6:255 Assemblies and Ceremonies

Assemblies must be approved by the Executive Director or designee and be consistent with the Cooperative's educational objectives.

While the Cooperative respects an individual's brief, quiet, personal religious observance(s), it shall not endorse or otherwise promote invocations, benedictions, and group prayers at any school assembly, ceremony, or other school-sponsored activity.

LEGAL REF.:

Lee v. Weisman, 505 U.S. 577 (1992).

Santa Fe Independent Sch. Dist. v. Doe, 530 U.S. 290 (2000).

Kennedy v. Bremerton Sch. Dist., 142 S.Ct. 2407 (2022).

Jones v. Clear Creek Independent Sch. Dist., 930 F.2d 416 (5th Cir. 1991), *cert. granted, judgement vacated*, 505 U.S. 1215 (1992), *remand*, 977 F.2d 963, *reh'g denied*, 983 F.2d 234 (5th Cir. 1992), and *cert. denied*, 508 U.S. 967 (1993).

CROSS REF.: 6:70 (Teaching About Religion), 6:80 (Teaching About Controversial Issues)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:260 Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum pursuant to policy 7:15, *Student and Family Privacy Rights*.

Parents/guardians, employees, and community members who believe that curriculum, instructional materials, or programs violate rights guaranteed by any law or policy may file a complaint using policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Parents/guardians, employees, and community members with other suggestions or complaints about curriculum, instructional materials, or programs should complete a *Curriculum Objection Form*. A parent/guardian may request that his/her child be exempt from using a particular instructional material or program by completing a *Curriculum Objection Form*. The Executive Director or designee shall establish criteria for the review of objections and inform the parent/guardian, employee, or community member, as applicable, of the Cooperative's decision.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1232h, Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment.

Mahmoud v. Taylor, 145 S.Ct. 2332 (2025).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:270 Guidance and Counseling Program

The Cooperative provides a guidance and counseling program for students. The Executive Director or designee shall direct the Cooperative's guidance and counseling program. School counseling services, as described by State law, may be performed by school counselors or licensed educators with a school support personnel endorsement in the area of school counseling.

Each staff member is responsible for effectively guiding students under his/her supervision in order to provide early identification of intellectual, emotional, social, or physical needs, diagnosis of any learning disabilities, and development of educational potential. The Cooperative's counselors shall offer counseling to those students who require additional assistance.

The guidance program will assist students to identify career options consistent with their abilities, interests, and personal values. Students shall be encouraged to seek the help of counselors to develop specific curriculum goals that conform to the student's career objectives. High school juniors and seniors will have the opportunity to receive career-oriented information. Representatives from colleges and universities, occupational training institutions and career-oriented recruiters, including the military, may be given access to the school campus in order to provide students and parents/guardians with information.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-22.24a and 5/10-22.24b.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(q).

CROSS REF.: 6:50 (School Wellness), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:290 (Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:280 Grading and Promotion

The Executive Director or designee shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents/guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, and performance on the standardized tests required by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) and/or other assessments. A student shall not be promoted based upon age or any other social reason not related to academic performance. The administration shall determine remedial assistance for a student who is not promoted.

Every teacher shall maintain an evaluation record for each student in the teacher's classroom. A Cooperative administrator cannot change the final grade assigned by the teacher without notifying the teacher. Reasons for changing a student's final grade include:

- A miscalculation of test scores,
- A technical error in assigning a particular grade or score,
- The teacher agrees to allow the student to do extra work that may impact the grade,
- An inappropriate grading system used to determine the grade, or
- An inappropriate grade based on an appropriate grading system.

Should a grade change be made, the administrator making the change must sign the changed record.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.64a-5, 5/10-20.9a, 5/10-21.8, and 5/27-27.

CROSS REF.: 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements), 6:340 (Student Testing and Assessment Program), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:290 Homework

Homework is part of the Cooperative's instructional program and has the overarching goal of increasing student achievement. Homework is assigned to further a student's educational development and is an application or adaptation of a classroom experience. The Executive Director shall provide guidance to ensure that homework:

1. Is used to reinforce and apply previously covered concepts, principles, and skills;
2. Is not assigned for disciplinary purposes;
3. Serves as a communication link between the school and parents/guardians;
4. Encourages independent thought, self-direction, and self-discipline; and
5. Is of appropriate frequency and length, and does not become excessive, according to the teacher's best professional judgment.

Missed Homework

Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework in a reasonable timeframe per policy 7:70, *Attendance and Truancy*.

CROSS REF.: 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:300 Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements will be determined by the student's Individualized Education Program and the student's home district.

Certificate of Completion

A student with a disability who has an Individualized Education Program prescribing special education, transition planning, transition services, or related services beyond the student's 4 years of high school, qualifies for a certificate of completion after the student has completed 4 years of high school. The student is encouraged to participate in the graduation ceremony of his or her high school graduation class. The Superintendent or designee shall provide timely written notice of this requirement to children with disabilities and their parents/guardians.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.64a-5, 5/22-27, 5/22-87, 5/27-510, 5/27-605, and 5/27-615.

105 ILCS 70/, Educational Opportunity for Military Children Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.440.

CROSS REF.: 6:30 (Organization of Instruction), 7:50 (School Admissions)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

6:340 Student Testing and Assessment Program

The Cooperative student assessment program provides information for determining individual student achievement and instructional needs, curriculum and instruction effectiveness, and school performance measured against Cooperative student learning objectives and statewide norms.

The Executive Director or designee shall manage the student assessment program that, at a minimum:

1. Administers to students all standardized assessments required by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) and/or any other appropriate assessment methods and instruments, including norm and criterion-referenced achievement tests, aptitude tests, proficiency tests, and teacher-developed tests.
2. Informs students of the timelines and procedures applicable to their participation in every State assessment.
3. Provides each student's parents/guardians with the results or scores of each State assessment and an evaluation of the student's progress. See policy 6:280, *Grading and Promotion*.
4. Utilizes professional testing practices.

Overall student assessment data on tests required by State law will be aggregated by the Cooperative and reported, along with other information, on the Cooperative's annual report card. All reliable assessments administered by the Cooperative and scored by entities outside of the Cooperative must be (1) reported to ISBE on its form by the 30th day of each school year, and (2) made publicly available to parents/guardians of students. Board policy 7:340, *Student Records*, and its implementing procedures govern recordkeeping and access issues.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

105 ILCS 10/, Illinois School Student Records Act.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.63, 5/2-3.64a-5, 5/2-3.64a-10, 5/2-3.64a-15, 5/2-3.107, 5/2-3.153, 5/10-17a, 5/22-82, and 5/27-1.

23 Ill. Admin. Code §§1.30(b) and 375.10.

CROSS REF.: 6:280 (Grading and Promotion), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 7 - STUDENTS

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to color, race, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, gender identity, status of being homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, military status, unfavorable military discharge, reproductive health decisions, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. Further, the Cooperative will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status, except that the Cooperative remains viewpoint neutral when granting access to school facilities under policy 8:20, *Community Use of School Facilities*. Any student may file a discrimination complaint by using policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, or in the case of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*.

Sex Equity

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A student may appeal the resolution of the complaint to the Regional Superintendent (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/3-10) and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent of Education (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.8).

Any student may file a sexual harassment complaint by using Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*.

Administrative Implementation

The Executive Director shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator and a Title IX Coordinator. The Executive Director and Building Principal shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy and related grievance procedures.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

29 U.S.C. §791 *et seq.*, Rehabilitation Act of 1973; 34 C.F.R. Part 104.

42 U.S.C. §2000d, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 34 C.F.R. Part 100.

42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982).

Good News Club v. Milford Central Sch., 533 U.S. 98 (2001).

Ill. Constitution, Art. I, §18.

105 ILCS 5/3.25b, 5/3.25d(b), 5/10-20.12, 5/10-20.60, 5/10-20.63, 5/10-22.5, 5/22-105, 5/26A, and 5/27-1.

775 ILCS 5/1-101 *et seq.*, Illinois Human Rights Act.

775 ILCS 35/5, Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240 and Part 200.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:50 (School Admissions), 7:60 (Residence), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:150 (Agency and Law Enforcement Requests), 7:160 (Student Appearance), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:330 (Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access), 7:340 (Student Records), 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:15 Student and Family Privacy Rights

Surveys

All surveys requesting personal information from students, as well as any other instrument used to collect personal information from students, must advance or relate to the Cooperative's educational objectives as identified in policy 6:10, *Educational Philosophy and Objectives*, or assist students' career choices. This applies to all surveys, regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified or who created the survey.

Surveys Created by a Third Party

Before a school official or staff member administers or distributes a survey or evaluation created by a third party to a student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may inspect the survey or evaluation, upon their request and within a reasonable time of their request.

This section applies to every survey: (1) that is created by a person or entity other than a Cooperative official, staff member, or student, (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Surveys Requesting Personal Information

School officials and staff members shall not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the Cooperative) containing one or more of the following items:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Behavior or attitudes about sex.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
8. Income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may:

1. Inspect the survey or evaluation upon, and within a reasonable time of, their request, and/or
2. Refuse to allow their child to participate in the activity described above. The school shall not penalize any student whose parent(s)/guardian(s) exercised this option.

Instructional Material

A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may inspect, upon their request, any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum within a reasonable time of their request.

The term "instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the Internet). The term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.

Physical Exams or Screenings

No school official or staff member shall subject a student to a non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as a condition of school attendance. The term *invasive physical examination* means any medical examination that involves the exposure of private body parts, or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but does not include a hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.

The above paragraph does not apply to any physical examination or screening that:

1. Is permitted or required by an applicable State law, including physical examinations or screenings that are permitted without parental notification.
2. Is administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq.*).
3. Is administered pursuant to the Cooperative's extracurricular drug and alcohol testing program.
4. Is otherwise authorized by policy.

Prohibition on Selling or Marketing Students' Personal Information

No school official or staff member shall market or sell personal information concerning students (or otherwise provide that information to others for that purpose). The term *personal information* means individually identifiable information including: (1) a student or parent's first and last name, (2) a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town), (3) a telephone number, (4) a Social Security identification number or (5) driver's license number or State identification card.

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the above paragraph does not apply: (1) if the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) have consented; or (2) to the collection, disclosure or, use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions, such as the following:

1. College or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment.
2. Book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products.
3. Curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools.
4. Tests and assessments to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments.
5. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities.
6. Student recognition programs.

Under no circumstances may a school official or staff member provide a student's *personal information* to a business organization or financial institution that issues credit or debit cards.

Notification of Rights and Procedures

The Executive Director or designee shall notify students' parents/guardians of:

1. This policy as well as its availability upon request from the general administration office.
2. How to opt their child out of participation in activities as provided in this policy.
3. The approximate dates during the school year when a survey requesting personal information, as described above, is scheduled or expected to be scheduled.
4. How to request access to any survey or other material described in this policy.

This notification shall be given to parents/guardians at least annually, at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period after any substantive change in this policy.

Transfer of Rights

The rights provided to parents/guardians in this policy transfer to the student when the student turns 18 years old, or is an emancipated minor.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1232h, Protection of Pupil Rights Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.38.

325 ILCS 17/, Children's Privacy Protection and Parental Empowerment Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 6:210 (Instructional Materials), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:16 Student with Disabilities: Recording of Meetings

It shall be the policy of the Vermilion Association for Special Education to prohibit the audio- or video-recording of meetings conducted pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA"), 20 U.S.C. §1401 *et seq.*, or Article 14 of the *Illinois School Code*, 105 ILCS 5/14, and the implementing regulations thereto, including but not limited to Individualized Education Program ("IEP") meetings, domain meetings, eligibility determination meetings, manifestation determination meetings, or other special education meetings.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the uninhibited and free exchange of information regarding students, which the Cooperative believes would be hindered and quashed by the audio- or video-recording of meetings. Without a free exchange of information, the decision-making of parents and the IEP team may be obstructed.

The Executive Director shall develop administrative procedures to ensure that this policy is uniformly applied.

This policy shall further provide for limited exceptions to this prohibition if recording of a meeting is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the IEP or the IEP process or to implement other parental rights guaranteed under the IDEIA. If a parent can demonstrate a *bona fide* requirement to record a meeting, the parent must provide the Cooperative prior notice of their intent to record a particular meeting in order to ensure that the Cooperative will also have the opportunity to record the meeting. Failure of a parent to provide this notice may result in a rescheduling of the meeting.

Any recording of an IEP meeting that is maintained by the public agency is an "education record," within the meaning of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"; 20 U.S.C. 1232g) and the Illinois School Student Records Act ("ISSRA"; 105 ILCS 10/1 *et seq.*), and would, therefore, be subject to the requirements of the regulations under FERPA (34 CFR Part 99), IDEIA (§§300.560-300.575), and the Illinois School Student Records Act ("ISSRA"; 105 ILCS 10/1 *et seq.*).

LEGAL REF:

Horen v. Board of Education of the City of Toledo Public School District, -- F.Supp.2d --, 2009 WL 2922297 (N.D. Ohio 2009).

Letter to Anonymous, 40 IDELR 70 (U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Special Education Programs, June 4, 2003).

Letter to Savit, 67 IDELR 216 (U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Special Education Programs, 2016).

Adopted: May 6, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:18 Student and Parents: Recordings of Meetings

It shall be the policy of the Vermilion Association for Special Education to prohibit the audio- or video-recording of meetings conducted with any student or parent with any school staff member, except as otherwise provided in Policy No. 7:16 ("Students with Disabilities: Recording of Meetings"). The purpose of this policy is to ensure the uninhibited and free exchange of information regarding students, which the Cooperative believes would be hindered and quashed by the audio- or video-recording of meetings.

The policy shall not apply in certain limited circumstances when a recording is specifically required by law or cooperative policy, including student disciplinary hearings conducted before the Board of Education. The Executive Director shall develop administrative procedures consistent with this policy to ensure that this policy is uniformly applied.

Adopted: May 6, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:20 Harassment of Students Prohibited

No person, including a Cooperative employee, agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; physical appearance; socioeconomic status; academic status; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. The Cooperative will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Sexual Harassment Prohibited

The Cooperative shall provide an educational environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law. See policies 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Making a Report or Complaint

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidents of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking.

Reports under this policy will be considered a report under policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and/or Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the report according to the appropriate grievance procedure.

The Executive Director shall insert into this policy the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the Cooperative's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Title IX Coordinator:

Kristin Dunker

Kristin Dunker

15009 Catlin Tilton Rd.,
Tilton, IL 61833

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dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

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Complaint Managers:

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217-443-8273

217-443-8273

The Executive Director shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy by including:

1. For students, age-appropriate information about the contents of this policy in the Cooperative's student handbook(s), on the Cooperative's website, and, if applicable, in any other areas where policies, rules, and standards of conduct are otherwise posted in each school.
2. For staff members, this policy in the appropriate employee handbook(s), if applicable, and/or in any other areas where policies, rules, and standards of conduct are otherwise made available to staff.

Investigation Process

Any Cooperative employee who receives a report or complaint of harassment must promptly forward the report or complaint to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, or a Complaint Manager. Any employee who fails to promptly comply may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Reports and complaints of harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the Cooperative's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

For any report or complaint alleging sexual harassment that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall consider whether action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, should be initiated.

For any report or complaint alleging harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall investigate under Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*.

For any other alleged student harassment that does not require action under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall consider whether an investigation under policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or 7:190, *Student Behavior*, should be initiated, regardless of whether a written report or complaint is filed.

Reports That Involve Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse of a Child by School Personnel

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A(b), that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

Any complaint alleging an incident of sexual abuse shall be processed and reviewed according to policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. In addition to reporting the suspected abuse, the complaint shall also be processed under policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Enforcement

Any Cooperative employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the Cooperative, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc. Any Cooperative student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the behavior policy. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints or providing information about harassment is prohibited (see policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*).

Students should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

29 U.S.C. §791 *et seq.*, Rehabilitation Act of 1973; 34 C.F.R. Part 104.

42 U.S.C. §2000d, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 34 C.F.R. Part 100.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.12, 5/10-22.5, 5/10-23.13, 5/26A, 5/27-1, and 5/27-23.7.

775 ILCS 5/1-101 *et seq.*, Illinois Human Rights Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240 and Part 200.

Davis v. Monroe County Bd. of Educ., 526 U.S. 629 (1999).

Franklin v. Gwinnett Co. Public Schs., 503 U.S. 60 (1992).

Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent Sch. Dist., 524 U.S. 274 (1998).

West v. Derby Unified Sch. Dist. No. 260, 206 F.3d 1358 (10th Cir. 2000).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:30 Student Assignment

The Executive Director or designee shall assign students to classes. Homeless children shall be assigned according to policy 6:140, Homeless children shall be assigned according to policy 6:140, *Education of Homeless Children*.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-21.3, 5/10-21.3a, and 5/10-22.5.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety), 6:30 (Organization of Instruction), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:50 School Admissions

Special education services shall be available to identified disabled children between the ages of three (3) and twenty-two (22) years who are enrolled in the Member Districts. The special education student who becomes twenty-two (22) years of age during the school year shall be allowed to finish the school year.

The student who has successfully completed a secondary program shall be granted a diploma from the home school district and all eligibility for public school education is terminated. The parent, and, if appropriate, the student shall participate in the decision to terminate public school responsibility prior to age twenty-two (22) by accepting a high school diploma.

LEGAL REF.:

8 U.S.C. §1101 *et seq.*, Illegal Immigrant and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996.

20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq.*, Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

29 U.S.C. §794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504.

42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.13a, 5/10-20.12, 5/10-20.59, 5/10-22.5a, 5/14-1.02, 5/14-1.03a, 5/26-1, 5/26-2, and 5/27-8.1.

105 ILCS 10/8.1, Ill. School Student Records Act.

105 ILCS 45/, Education for Homeless Children Act.

105 ILCS 70/, Educational Opportunity for Military Children Act.

325 ILCS 50/, Missing Children Records Act.

325 ILCS 55/, Missing Children Registration Law.

410 ILCS 315/2, Communicable Disease Prevention Act.

20 Ill.Admin.Code Part 1290, Missing Person Birth Records and School Registration.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 226, Special Education.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 375, Student Records.

CROSS REF.: 4:110 (Transportation), 6:30 (Organization of Instruction), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements), 7:60 (Residence), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

7:60 Residence

Requests

Students who are residents of Member Districts may participate in the programs available through the Vermilion Association for Special Education Joint Agreement.

Residence of Students with Disabilities

The residence of a child with a disability is determined in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/14-1.11, 5.14-1.11a, and 5/14-1.11b.

Requests for Nonresident Student Admission

Nonresident students may attend Cooperative school upon the approval of a request submitted by the student's district of residence. The Executive Director may approve the request subject to the following:

1. The student will attend on a year-to-year basis. Approval for any one year is not authorization to attend a following year.
2. The student will be accepted only if there is sufficient room.
3. The student's district of residence will be charged the maximum amount of tuition as allowed by State law.
4. The student's district of residence will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.12a, 5/10-20.12b, 5/10-22.5, 5/10-22.5a, 5/14-1.11, 5/14-1.11a, 5/14-1.11b, and 5/26A.

105 ILCS 45/, Education for Homeless Children Act.

105 ILCS 70/, Educational Opportunity for Military Children Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240.

Israel S. by Owens v. Bd. of Educ. of Oak Park and River Forest High Sch. Dist. 200, 235 Ill.App.3d 652 (5th Dist. 1992).

Joel R. v. Board of Education of Manheim Cooperative 83, 292 Ill.App.3d 607 (1st Dist. 1997).

Kraut v. Rachford, 51 Ill.App.3d 206 (1st Dist. 1977).

CROSS REF.: 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

7:70 Attendance and Truancy

Compulsory School Attendance

This policy applies to individuals who have custody or control of a child: (a) between the ages of six (on or before September 1) and 17 years (unless the child has graduated from high school), or (b) who is enrolled in any of grades kindergarten through 12 in the public school regardless of age.

Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

The parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled must authorize all absences from school and notify the school in advance or at the time of the student's absence. A valid cause for absence includes illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student), attendance at a verified medical or therapeutic appointment (including a victim services provider), observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, attendance at a civic event, family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the Board, voting pursuant to Board policy 7:90, *Release During School Hours* (10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15), other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reason as approved by the Executive Director or designee. For students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence, valid cause for absence also includes the fulfillment of a parenting responsibility and addressing circumstances resulting from domestic or sexual violence. Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework and classwork assignments in a reasonable timeframe.

Absenteeism and Truancy Program

The Executive Director or designee shall manage an absenteeism and truancy program in accordance with the School Code and Executive Council policy. The program shall include but not be limited to:

1. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance who is necessarily and lawfully employed. The Executive Director or designee is authorized to determine when the student's absence is justified.
2. A protocol for excusing a student in grades 6 through 12 from attendance to sound *Taps* at a military honors funeral held in Illinois for a deceased veteran.
3. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance on a particular day(s) or at a particular time of day when his/her parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings.
4. A process to telephone, within two hours after the first class, the parents/guardians of students in grade 8 or below who are absent without prior parent/guardian notification.
5. A process to identify and track students who are truants, chronic or habitual truants, or truant minors as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26-2a.
6. A description of diagnostic procedures for identifying the cause(s) of a student's unexcused absenteeism, including interviews with the student, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff members or other people who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.

7. The identification of supportive services that may be offered to truant, chronically truant, or chronically absent students, including parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, and information about available community services relevant to such students' needs. See policy 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*.
8. A process for the collection and review of chronic absence data and to:
 - a. Determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families, and
 - b. Encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success.
9. Reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to all school personnel, Board members, and school resource officers on the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement.
10. A process to request the assistance and resources of outside agencies, such as, the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the appropriate Regional Office of Education, if truancy continues after supportive services have been offered.
11. A protocol for cooperating with non-Cooperative agencies including County or municipal authorities, the Regional Superintendent, truant officers, the Community Truancy Review Board, and a comprehensive community-based youth service agency. Any disclosure of school student records must be consistent with policy 7:340, Student Records, as well as State and federal law concerning school student records.
12. An acknowledgement that no punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.
13. The criteria to determine whether a student's non-attendance is due to extraordinary circumstances shall include economic or medical necessity or family hardship and such other criteria that the Executive Director believes qualifies.
14. An approval process for students to attend activities allowed under 105 ILCS 5/10-19.05(k), including provisions for making up missed coursework that do not penalize students.
15. A process for a 17-year-old resident to participate in the Cooperative's various programs and resources for truant students. The student must provide documentation of his/her dropout status for the previous six months. A request from an individual 19 years of age or older to re-enroll after having dropped out of school is handled according to provisions in Board policy 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-Cooperative Schools*.
16. A process for the temporary exclusion of a student 17 years of age or older for failing to meet minimum attendance standards according to provisions in State law. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal a decision to exclude a student.

Updating

Pursuant to State law and Board policy 2:240, *Council Policy Development*, the Executive Council updates this policy at least once every two years. The Executive Director or designee shall assist the Council with its update.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-19.05(k), 5/22-92, 5/26-1 through 5/26-3, 5/26-5 through 5/26-16, 5/26-18, and 5/26A.

705 ILCS 405/3-33.5, Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.242 and Part 207.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:150 (Home and Hospital Instruction), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:50 (School Admissions), 7:60 (Residence), 7:80 (Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance), 7:90 (Release During School Hours), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:80 Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance

A student shall be released from school, as an excused absence, to because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because the student's religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day. The student's parent/guardian must give written notice to the Building Principal at least five calendar days before the student's anticipated absence(s).

The Executive Director or designee shall develop and distribute to teachers appropriate procedures regarding student absences for religious reasons, including how teachers are notified of a student's impending absence, and the State law requirement that teachers provide the student with an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirement.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/26-1 and 5/26-2b.

775 ILCS 35/, Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

CROSS REF.: 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:90 Release During School Hours

For safety and security reasons, a prior written or oral consent of a student's custodial parent/guardian is required before a student is released during school hours: (1) at any time before the regular dismissal time or at any time before school is otherwise officially closed, and/or (2) to any person other than a custodial parent/guardian.

Early Dismissal Announcement

The Executive Director or designee shall make reasonable efforts to issue an announcement whenever it is necessary to close school early due to inclement weather or other reason.

Voting

The Executive Director or designee shall specify the hours during which students who are entitled to vote at a primary, general, or special election, or any election at which propositions are submitted to a popular vote in Illinois, may be absent from school for a period of two hours to vote. Students are entitled to be absent from school to vote beginning the 15th day before the primary, general, or special election, or any election at which propositions are submitted to a popular vote in Illinois, or on the day of such election.

LEGAL REF.:

10 ILCS 5/7-42(b) and 5/17-15(b), Election Code.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:100 Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students

Required Health Examinations and Immunizations

A student's parents/guardians shall present proof that the student received a health examination, with proof of the immunizations against, and screenings for, preventable communicable diseases, as required by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), within one year prior to:

1. Entering kindergarten or the first grade;
2. Entering the sixth and ninth grades; and
3. Enrolling in an Illinois school, regardless of the student's grade (including nursery school, special education, Head Start programs operated by elementary or secondary schools, and students transferring into Illinois from out-of-state or out-of-country).

Proof of immunization against meningococcal disease is required for students in grades 6 and 12.

As required by State law:

1. Health examinations must be performed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches, an advanced practice registered nurse, or a physician assistant who has been delegated the performance of health examinations by a supervising physician.
2. A diabetes screening is a required part of each health examination; diabetes testing is not required.
3. An age-appropriate developmental screening and an age-appropriate social and emotional screening are required parts of each health examination. A student will not be excluded from school due to his or her parent/guardian's failure to obtain a developmental screening or a social and emotional screening.
4. Before admission and in conjunction with required physical examinations, parents/guardians of children between the ages of one and seven years must provide a statement from a physician that their child was *risk-assessed* or screened for lead poisoning.
5. The IDPH will provide all students entering sixth grade and their parents/guardians information about the link between human papillomavirus (HPV) and HPV-related cancers and the availability of the HPV vaccine.
6. The Cooperative will provide informational materials regarding influenza and influenza vaccinations developed, provided, or approved by the IDPH when it provides information on immunizations, infectious diseases, medications, or other school health issues to students' parents/guardians.

Unless an exemption or extension applies, the failure to comply with the above requirements by October 15 of the current school year will result in the student's exclusion from school until the required health forms are presented to the Cooperative. New students who register after October 15 of the current school year shall have 30 days following registration to comply with the health examination and immunization regulations. If a medical reason prevents a student from receiving a required immunization by October 15, the student must present, by October 15, an immunization schedule and a statement of the medical reasons causing the delay. The schedule and statement of medical reasons must be signed by the physician, advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant, or local health department responsible for administering the immunizations.

A student transferring from out-of-state who does not have the required proof of immunizations by October 15 may attend classes only if he or she has proof that an appointment for the required vaccinations is scheduled with a party authorized to submit proof of the required vaccinations. If the required proof of vaccination is not submitted within 30 days after the student is permitted to attend classes, the student may no longer attend classes until proof of the vaccinations is properly submitted.

Eye Examination

Parents/guardians are encouraged to have their children undergo an eye examination whenever health examinations are required.

Parents/guardians of students entering kindergarten or an Illinois school for the first time shall present proof before October 15 of the current school year that the student received an eye examination within one year prior to entry of kindergarten or the school. A physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches, or a licensed optometrist, must perform the required eye examination.

If a student fails to present proof by October 15, the school may hold the student's report card until the student presents proof: (1) of a completed eye examination, or (2) that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after October 15. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that parents/guardians are notified of this eye examination requirement in compliance with the rules of the IDPH. Schools shall not exclude a student from attending school due to failure to obtain an eye examination.

Dental Examination

All children in kindergarten and the second, sixth, and ninth grades must present proof of having been examined by a licensed dentist before May 15 of the current school year in accordance with rules adopted by the IDPH.

If a child in the second, sixth, or ninth grade fails to present proof by May 15, the school may hold the child's report card until the child presents proof: (1) of a completed dental examination, or (2) that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that parents/guardians are notified of this dental examination requirement at least 60 days before May 15 of each school year.

Exemptions

In accordance with rules adopted by the IDPH, a student will be exempted from this policy's requirements for:

1. Religious grounds, if the student's parents/guardians present the IDPH's Certificate of Religious Exemption form to the Executive Director or designee. When a Certificate of Religious Exemption form is presented, the Executive Director or designee shall immediately inform the parents/guardians of exclusion procedures pursuant to policy 7:280, *Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease*, and State rules if there is an outbreak of one or more diseases from which the student is not protected.
2. Health examination or immunization requirements on medical grounds, if the examining physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant provides written verification.
3. Eye examination requirement, if the student's parents/guardians show an undue burden or lack of access to a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches who provides eye examinations or a licensed optometrist.
4. Dental examination requirement, if the student's parents/guardians show an undue burden or a lack of access to a dentist.

Homeless Child

Any homeless child shall be immediately admitted, even if the child or child's parent/guardian is unable to produce immunization and health records normally required for enrollment. Council policy 6:140, *Education of Homeless Children*, governs the enrollment of homeless children.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

105 ILCS 5/27-8.1 and 45/1-20.

410 ILCS 45/7.1, Lead Poisoning Prevention Act.

315/2e, Communicable Disease Prevention Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.530.

77 Ill. Admin. Code Part 664, Socio-Emotional and Developmental Screening.

77 Ill.Admin.Code Part 665, Child and Student Health Examination and Immunization.

77 Ill.Admin.Code Part 690, Control of Notifiable Diseases and Conditions Code.

CROSS REF.: 6:30 (Organization of Instruction), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 6:180 (Extended Instructional Programs), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:280 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:130 Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students are entitled to enjoy the rights protected by the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions and laws for persons of their age and maturity in a school setting. Students should exercise these rights reasonably and avoid violating the rights of others. Students who violate the rights of others or violate Cooperative policies or rules will be subject to disciplinary measures.

Students may, during the school day, during noninstructional time, voluntarily engage in individually or collectively initiated, non-disruptive prayer or religious-based meetings that, consistent with the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses of the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions, are not sponsored, promoted, or endorsed in any manner by the school or any school employee. *Noninstructional time* means time set aside by a school before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7904.

105 ILCS 20/5.

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Cooperative, 89 S.Ct. 733 (1969).

CROSS REF.: 7:140 (Search and Seizure), 7:150 (Agency and Police Interviews), 7:160 (Student Appearance), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:330 (Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:140 Search and Seizure

In order to maintain order and security in the school, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. "School authorities" includes school liaison police officers.

School Property and Equipment as well as Personal Effects Left on School Property by Students

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as, lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The Executive Director may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

Students

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the Cooperative's student conduct rules. The search itself must be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

When feasible, the search should be conducted as follows:

1. Outside the view of others, including students,
2. In the presence of a school administrator or adult witness, and
3. By a licensed employee or liaison police officer of the same sex as the student.

Immediately following a search, a written report shall be made by the school authority who conducted the search and given to the Executive Director.

Seizure of Property

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the Cooperative's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

Notification Regarding Student Accounts or Profiles on Social Networking Websites

The Executive Director or designee shall notify students and their parents/guardians of each of the following in accordance with the Right to Privacy in the School Setting Act, 105 ILCS 75/:

1. School officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.
2. School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

LEGAL REF.:

T.L.O. v. New Jersey, 469 U.S. 325 (1985).

Vernonia Sch. Dist. 47J v. Acton, 515 U.S. 646 (1995).

Safford Unified Sch. Dist. No. 1 v. Redding, 557 U.S. 364 (2009).

Cornfield v. Consolidated High Sch. Dist. No. 230, 991 F.2d 1316 (7th Cir. 1993).

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6, and 5/10-22.10a.

105 ILCS 75/, Right to Privacy in the School Setting Act.

People v. Dilworth, 169 Ill.2d 195 (1996), *cert. denied*, 517 U.S. 1197 (1996).

People v. Pruitt, 278 Ill.App.3d 194 (1st Dist. 1996), *app. denied*, 167 Ill.2d 564 (1996).

CROSS REF.: 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:150 (Agency and Law Enforcement Requests), 7:190 (Student Behavior)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:150 Agency and Law Enforcement Requests

The District recognizes the right of every student to equal access to a free public education under State and federal law, consistent with Board policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*. District administrators and staff stand *in loco parentis* when government agency and law enforcement authority requests occur at school.

Federal and State Law Requirements Regarding Citizenship and Immigration Status in Schools

No student shall be denied an education based on the student's, or their parent's/guardian's, actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status. Based on such status, the District will not:

1. Exclude a student from participating in, or deny them the benefits of, any District program or activity.
2. Use policies or procedures or engage in practices that have the effect of excluding a student from participating in or denying the benefits of any District program or activity.
3. Use policies or procedures or engage in practices that have the effect of excluding participation of a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) from District parental engagement activities or programs.
4. Threaten to disclose information related to the actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status of a student or a person associated with the student to any other person, entity, or immigration or law enforcement agency.
5. Disclose information related to the perceived citizenship or immigration status of a student or a person associated with the student to any other person, entity, or immigration or law enforcement agency if the District does not have direct knowledge of the student's or associated person's actual citizenship or immigration status, subject to the requirements in 105 ILCS 5/22-105(c)(3).
6. Disclose information related to the actual citizenship or immigration status of a student or a person associated with the student to any other person or nongovernmental entity if the District has direct knowledge of the student's or associated person's actual citizenship status, subject to the requirements in 105 ILCS 5/22-105(c)(3).

State law does not prohibit or restrict the District from sending or receiving information about the citizenship or immigration status of an individual to or from the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security or any other governmental entity under 8 U.S.C. §§1373 and 1644.

Responding to Agency and Law Enforcement Requests

The Director shall develop procedures to manage requests by government agencies or law enforcement authorities regarding students at school. Procedures will:

1. Recognize individual student rights and privacy.
2. Recognize the potential impact the release of information or an interview may have on an individual student.
3. Minimize potential disruption.
4. Foster a cooperative relationship with government agencies and law enforcement authorities.
5. Maintain discipline and recognize that school employees stand in the relationship of the parents/guardians to the students during the school day.
6. Comply with State law including, but not limited to, ensuring that before a law enforcement agent, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the Director or designee will:
 - a. Notify or attempt to notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and document the time and

manner in writing;

- b. Make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent/guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that school employees (including, but not limited to, a school social worker, psychologist, nurse, counselor, or any other mental health professional) are present during the questioning; and
- c. If practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure a trained law enforcement officer to promote safe interactions and communications with the student is present during questioning.

- 7. Manage reviewing and authorizing requests from law enforcement agents attempting to enter a school or school facility, in accordance with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/22-105(c)(4).

LEGAL REF.:

U.S. Constitution, Amend. IV.

8 U.S.C. §1373 and §1644.

Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982).

III. Constitution, Art. I, §6.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.64, 5/10-20.68, 5/22-88, 5/22-105, and 5/24-24.

55 ILCS 80/, Children's Advocacy Center Act.

325 ILCS 5/, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

720 ILCS 5/31-1 *et seq.*, Interference with Public Officers Act.

725 ILCS 120/, Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:160 (Board Attorney), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), and 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:140 (Search and Seizure), 7:190 (Student Behavior)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:160 Student Appearance

A student's appearance, including dress and hygiene, must not disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety. The Cooperative does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. The Cooperative also does not prohibit the right of a student to wear or accessorize the student's graduation attire with items associated with the student's cultural, ethnic, or religious identity or other characteristic or category protected under the Ill. Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/1-103(Q). Students who disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety must modify their appearance. Procedures for guiding student appearance will be developed by the Executive Director or designee and included in the *Student Handbook(s)*.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.25 and 5/10-22.25b.

Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

CROSS REF.: 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:170 Vandalism

The Executive Council will seek restitution from students and their parents/guardians for vandalism or other student acts that cause damage to school property.

LEGAL REF.:

740 ILCS 115/.

CROSS REF.: 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:180 Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important Cooperative goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, order of protection status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the Cooperative or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Definitions from 105 ILCS 5/22-110

Artificial intelligence means a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. *Artificial intelligence* includes generative artificial intelligence.

Bullying includes *cyberbullying* and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, posting or distributing sexually explicit images, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic

system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. *Cyberbullying* includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*. *Cyberbullying* also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*. *Cyberbullying* also includes the posting or distribution of an unauthorized digital replica by electronic means if the posting or distribution creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

Digital replica means a newly created, electronic representation of the identity of an actual individual created using a computer, algorithm, software, tool, artificial intelligence, or other technology that is fixed in a sound recording or audiovisual work in which that individual did not actually perform or appear and that is so realistic that a reasonable observer would believe it is a performance by the individual being portrayed and no other individual.

Restorative measures means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school, and (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Ill. Human Rights Act.

School personnel means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in a Cooperative, including without limitation school and Cooperative administrators, teachers, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers, and security guards.

Unauthorized digital replica means the use of a digital replica of an individual without the consent of the depicted individual.

Bullying Prevention and Response Plan

The Executive Director or designee shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan that advances the Cooperative's goal of providing all students with a safe learning environment free of bullying and harassment. This plan must be consistent with the requirements listed below.

1. The Cooperative uses the definition of *bullying* as provided in this policy.
2. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of this Cooperative. However, nothing in the Cooperative's bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.
3. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the Cooperative named officials or any staff member. The Cooperative named officials and all staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anonymous reports are also accepted; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the

basis of an anonymous report.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Kristin Dunker

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217-443-8273

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4. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the parents/guardians of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying will be notified of such, along with threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, within 24 hours after the school's administration is made aware of the student's involvement in the incident. As appropriate, the school's administration shall also discuss the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. The school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained within the 24-hour period.
5. The Executive Director or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying, by, among other things:
 - a. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the

date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident.

- b. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
- c. Notifying the Building Principal or school administrator or designee of the reported incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
- d. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Building Principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The Executive Director or designee shall investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of the Cooperative's jurisdiction and shall require that the Cooperative provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the Cooperative and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

- 6. The Executive Director or designee shall use interventions to address bullying, that may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.
- 7. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying **is prohibited**. Any person's act of reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge with regard to employees, or suspension and/or expulsion with regard to students.
- 8. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the Cooperative's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, a person who is found to have falsely accused another of bullying, as a means of retaliation, as a means of bullying, or provided false information will be treated as either: (a) *bullying*, (b) student discipline up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, and/or (c) both (a) and (b) for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
- 9. The Cooperative's bullying prevention and response plan is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.
- 10. The Executive Director or designee shall post this policy on the Cooperative's publicly accessible website, if any, and include it in the student handbook, and, where applicable, post it where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy must be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel (including new employees when hired), and must also be provided periodically throughout the school year to students and faculty.
- 11. Pursuant to State law and policy 2:240, *Council Policy Development*, the Executive Council monitors this policy every two years by conducting a review and re-evaluation of this policy to make any necessary and appropriate revisions. The Executive Director or designee shall assist the Council with its re-evaluation and assessment of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. Updates to this policy will reflect any necessary and appropriate revisions. This process shall include, without limitation:
 - a. The frequency of victimization;
 - b. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
 - c. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
 - d. The types of bullying utilized; and
 - e. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that the Cooperative already collects for other purposes. Acceptable documentation to satisfy the re-evaluated policy submission include one of the following:

- 1) An updated version of the policy with the amendment/modification date specifying the date of adoption (indicated by month, date, and year) included in the reference portion of the policy;
- 2) If no revisions are deemed necessary, a copy of Board minutes indicating that the policy was re-evaluated and no changes were deemed to be necessary; or
- 3) A signed statement from the Executive Council Chairperson indicating that the Board re-evaluated the policy and no changes to it were necessary.

The Executive Director or designee must post the information developed as a result of the policy re-evaluation on the Cooperative's website, or if a website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, Board members, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students. Reviews and re-evaluations in years they are due must be submitted to ISBE by September 30.

12. The Executive Director or designee shall fully implement the Board policies, including without limitation, the following:
 - a. 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A student may use this policy to complain about bullying.
 - b. 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. Any person may use this policy to complain about sexual harassment in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
 - c. 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*. Any person may use this policy to complain about discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and/or the Illinois Human Rights Act.
 - d. 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. Bullying prevention and character instruction is provided in all grades in accordance with State law.
 - e. 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*. Student social and emotional development is incorporated into the Cooperative's educational program as required by State law.
 - f. 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*. This policy states that the use of the Cooperative's electronic networks is limited to: (1) support of education and/or research, or (2) a legitimate business use.
 - g. 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*. This policy prohibits any person from harassing, intimidating, or bullying a student based on an identified actual or perceived characteristic (the list of characteristics in 7:20 is the same as the list in this policy).
 - h. 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*. This policy prohibits teen dating violence on school property, at school sponsored activities, and in vehicles used for school-provided transportation.
 - i. 7:190, *Student Behavior*. This policy prohibits, and provides consequences for, hazing, bullying, or other aggressive behaviors, or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
 - j. 7:310, *Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools*, and 7:315, *Restrictions on Publications; High Schools*. These policies prohibit students from and provide consequences for: (1) accessing and/or distributing at school any written, printed, or electronic material, including material from the Internet, that will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school

activities, and (2) creating and/or distributing written, printed, or electronic material, including photographic material and blogs, that causes substantial disruption to school operations or interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6(b-20), 5/22-110, and 5/24-24.

405 ILCS 49/, Children's Mental Health Act.

775 ILCS 5/1-103, Ill. Human Rights Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.240, 1.280, and 1.295.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 4:170 (Safety), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:285 (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:185 Teen Dating Violence Prohibited

Engaging in teen dating violence that takes place at school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation is prohibited. For purposes of this policy, the term *teen dating violence* occurs whenever a student who is 13 to 19 years of age uses or threatens to use physical, mental, or emotional abuse to control an individual in the dating relationship; or uses or threatens to use sexual violence in the dating relationship.

The Executive Director or designee shall develop and maintain a program to respond to incidents of teen dating violence that:

1. Fully implements and enforces each of the following policies:
 - a. 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. This policy provides a method for any student, parent/guardian, employee, or community member to file a complaint if he or she believes that the Executive Council, its employees, or its agents have violated his or her rights under the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, policy, or various enumerated bases.
 - b. 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. This policy prohibits a Cooperative employee, agent, or student from engaging in sexual harassment in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.
 - c. 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*. This policy prohibits any person, including a Cooperative employee, agent, or student, from harassing, intimidating, or bullying a student based on the student's actual or perceived characteristics of sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; and gender-related identity or expression (this policy includes more protected statuses).
 - d. 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*. This policy prohibits students from engaging in bullying, intimidation, and harassment at school, school-related events and electronically. Prohibited conduct includes threats, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.
2. Encourages anyone with information about incidents of teen dating violence to report them to any of the following individuals:
 - a. Any school staff member. School staff shall respond to incidents of teen dating violence by following the Cooperative's established procedures for the prevention, identification, investigation, and response to bullying and school violence.
 - b. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, or a Complaint Manager identified in policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.
3. Incorporates age-appropriate instruction in grades 7 through 12, in accordance with the Cooperative's comprehensive health education program in policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. This includes incorporating student social and emotional development into the Cooperative's educational program as required by State law and in alignment with policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*.
4. Incorporates education for school staff, as recommended by the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, or a Complaint Manager.
5. Notifies students and parents/guardians of this policy.

Incorporated

by Reference: 7:180-AP1, (Prevention, Identification, Investigation, and Response to Bullying)

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 110/3.10.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bud Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:190 Student Behavior

The goals and objectives of this policy are to provide effective discipline practices that: (1) ensure the safety and dignity of students and staff; (2) maintain a positive, weapons-free, and drug-free learning environment; (3) keep school property and the property of others secure; (4) address the causes of a student's misbehavior and provide opportunities for all individuals involved in an incident to participate in its resolution; and (5) teach students positive behavioral skills to become independent, self-disciplined citizens in the school community and society.

When and Where Conduct Rules Apply

A student is subject to disciplinary action for engaging in *prohibited student conduct*, as described in the section with that name below, whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including, but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

Prohibited Student Conduct

The school administration is authorized to discipline students for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco or nicotine materials, including without limitation, electronic cigarettes.
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or offering for sale:
 - a. Any illegal drug or controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*).
 - b. Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
 - c. Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
 - d. Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician's or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*.
 - e. Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the

student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.

- f. Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed, or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in tablet or powdered form.
- g. Look-alike or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by this policy, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy.
- h. Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.

Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

- 4. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a *weapon* as that term is defined in the **Weapons** section of this policy, or violating the **Weapons** section of this policy.
- 5. Using or possessing an electronic paging device.
- 6. Using or possessing a cellular telephone, two-way radio, video recording device, and/or other telecommunication device, unless authorized and approved by the Building Principal.
- 7. *Sexting*, which, for purposes of this policy, is the act of creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing sexually explicit messages, images, or videos electronically, regardless of whether they are authentic or computer-generated, through the use of a computer, electronic communication device, or cellular phone. *Sexting* also includes creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing *indecent visual depictions*, *non-consensual dissemination of private sexual images*, and *non-consensual dissemination of sexually explicit digitized depictions*, as defined in State law.
- 8. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's direct supervision and in the context of instruction.
- 9. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials. Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a Cooperative staff member's request to stop, present school identification, or submit to a search.
- 10. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, using a writing service and/or generative artificial intelligence technology in place of original work unless specifically authorized by staff, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
- 11. Engaging in hazing or any kind of bullying or aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using a school computer or a school computer network, or other comparable conduct.
- 12. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning), and sexual assault. This does not include the non-disruptive: (a) expression of gender or sexual orientation or preference, or (b) display of affection during non-instructional time.

13. Teen dating violence, as described in policy 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*.
14. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person's personal property.
15. Entering school property or a school facility without proper authorization.
16. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (such as calling 911); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus, or at any school activity.
17. Being absent without a recognized excuse; State law and Executive Council policy regarding truancy control will be used with chronic and habitual truants.
18. Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, by: (a) being a member; (b) promising to join; (c) pledging to become a member; or (d) soliciting any other person to join, promise to join, or be pledged to become a member.
19. Being involved in gangs or gang-related activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
20. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism, and hazing.
21. Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.
22. Operating an unmanned aircraft system (UAS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the Executive Director or designee.
23. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

For purposes of this policy, the term *possession* includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student's person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student's clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school's student locker, desk, or other school property; or (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and supports, shall be made to deter students, while at school or a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that the parent/guardian of a student who engages in aggressive behavior is notified of the incident. The failure to provide such notification does not limit the Executive Council's authority to impose discipline, including suspension or expulsion, for such behavior.

No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student's parent/guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.

Disciplinary Measures

School officials shall limit the number and duration of expulsions and out-of-school suspensions to the greatest extent practicable, and, where practicable and reasonable, shall consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline before using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions. School personnel shall

not advise or encourage students to drop out voluntarily due to behavioral or academic difficulties. Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following:

1. Notifying parent(s)/guardian(s).
2. Disciplinary conference.
3. Withholding of privileges.
4. Temporary removal from the classroom.
5. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen, or damaged property.
6. In-school suspension. The Building Principal or designee shall ensure that the student is properly supervised.
7. After-school study or Saturday study provided the student's parent/guardian has been notified. If transportation arrangements cannot be agreed upon, an alternative disciplinary measure must be used. The student must be supervised by the detaining teacher or the Building Principal or designee.
8. Community service with local public and nonprofit agencies that enhances community efforts to meet human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs. The Cooperative will not provide transportation. School administration shall use this option only as an alternative to another disciplinary measure, giving the student and/or parent/guardian the choice.
9. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of personal property that was used to violate this policy or school disciplinary rules.
10. Suspension of bus riding privileges in accordance with member district policies.
11. Out-of-school suspension from school and all school activities in accordance with policy 7:200, *Suspension Procedures*. A student who has been suspended shall also be restricted from being on school grounds and at school activities.
12. Expulsion from school and all school activities for a definite time period not to exceed two calendar years in accordance with member district procedures. A student who has been expelled shall also be restricted from being on school grounds and at school activities.
13. Transfer to an alternative program if the student is expelled or otherwise qualifies for the transfer under State law. The transfer shall be in the manner provided in Article 13A or 13B of the School Code.
14. Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, including but not limited to, illegal drugs (controlled substances), *look-alikes*, alcohol, or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the Cooperative and local law enforcement agencies.

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension and expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and/or address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in all circumstances. *Corporal punishment* is defined as a discipline method in which a person deliberately inflicts pain upon a student in response to the student's unacceptable behavior or inappropriate language, with an aim to halt an offense, prevent its recurrence, or set an example for others. It includes slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as permitted by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33.

Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint

Neither isolated time out, time out, nor physical restraint shall be used to discipline or punish a student. These methods are only authorized for use as permitted in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33, III. State Board of

Education (ISBE) rules (23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 1.280, 1.285), and the Cooperative's procedure(s).

Weapons

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of at least one calendar year but not more than two calendar years:

1. A *firearm*, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, or weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code (18 U.S.C. § 921), firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act (430 ILCS 65/), or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 2012 (720 ILCS 5/24-1).
2. A knife, brass knuckles, or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including *look-alikes* of any *firearm* as defined above.

The expulsion requirement under either paragraph one or two above may be modified by the Executive Director, and the Executive Director's determination may be modified by the Executive Council on a case-by-case basis. The Executive Director or designee may grant an exception to this policy, upon the prior request of an adult supervisor, for students in theatre, cooking, ROTC, martial arts, and similar programs, whether or not school-sponsored, provided the item is not equipped, nor intended, to do bodily harm.

This policy's prohibitions concerning weapons apply regardless of whether: (1) a student is licensed to carry a concealed firearm, or (2) the Executive Council permits visitors, who are licensed to carry a concealed firearm, to store a firearm in a locked vehicle in a school parking area.

Re-Engagement of Returning Students

The Executive Director or designee shall maintain a process to facilitate the re-engagement of students who are returning from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or an alternative school setting. The goal of re-engagement shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusionary discipline and shall include the opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make up work for equivalent academic credit.

Required Notices

A school staff member shall immediately notify the office of the Building Principal in the event that he or she: (1) observes any person in possession of a firearm on school grounds, becomes aware of any person in possession of a firearm on school grounds, or becomes aware of any threat of gun violence on school grounds; however, such action may be delayed if immediate notice would endanger students under his or her supervision, (2) observes or has reason to suspect that any person on school grounds is or was involved in a drug-related incident, or (3) observes a battery committed against any staff member or is subject to a battery. *School grounds* includes modes of transportation to school activities and any public way within 1000 feet of the school, as well as school property itself.

Upon receiving a report of (1), above, the Building Principal or designee shall immediately notify local law enforcement. If the report of (1), above, pertains to a threat of firearm violence made by a student, the Building Principal or designee shall attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible and shall further attempt to contact the parent/guardian to ensure that the student does not have access to a firearm. In addition, upon receiving a report on any of the above (1)-(3), the Building Principal or designee shall notify the Executive Director or designee and, if a student is reportedly in possession of a firearm or threatens firearm violence, also any involved student's parent/guardian.

Upon receiving a report on any of the above (1)-(3), the Executive Director or designee shall immediately notify local law enforcement. The Executive Director or designee shall also report these

incidents to ISBE through its web-based School Incident Reporting System as they occur during the year and no later than July 31 for the preceding school year.

Delegation of Authority

Each teacher, and any other school personnel when students are under his or her charge, is authorized to impose any disciplinary measure, other than suspension, expulsion, corporal punishment, or in-school suspension, that is appropriate and in accordance with the policies and rules on student discipline. Teachers, other licensed educational employees, and any other persons (whether or not a licensed employee) providing a related service for or with respect to a student, may only use reasonable force as permitted by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33. Teachers may temporarily remove students from a classroom for disruptive behavior.

The Executive Director, Building Principal is authorized to impose the same disciplinary measures as teachers and may suspend students guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct from school (including all school functions) and from riding the school bus, up to 10 consecutive school days, provided the appropriate procedures are followed. The Executive Council may suspend a student from riding the bus in excess of 10 school days for safety reasons.

Student Handbook

The Executive Director, with input from the parent-teacher advisory committee, shall prepare disciplinary rules implementing the Cooperative's disciplinary policies. These disciplinary rules shall be presented annually to the Executive Council for its review and approval.

A student handbook, including the Cooperative disciplinary policies and rules, shall be distributed to the students' parents/guardians within 15 days of the beginning of the school year or a student's enrollment.

Incorporated

by Reference: 7:190-AP4 (Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint)

LEGAL REF.

20 U.S.C. §7971 *et seq.*, Pro-Children Act of 2004.

20 U.S.C. §7961 *et seq.*, Gun Free Schools Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b, 5/10-20.14, 5/10-20.28, 5/10-20.36, 5/10-21.7, 5/10-21.10, 5/10-22.6, 5/10-27.1A, 5/10-27.1B, 5/22-33, 5/22-100, 5/22-110, 5/24-24, 5/26-12, 5/27-240, and 5/31-3.

410 ILCS 130/, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program.

410 ILCS 647/, Powdered Caffeine Control and Education Act.

430 ILCS 66/, Firearm Concealed Carry Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.280, 1.285.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 2:240 (Council Policy Development), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:140 (Search and Seizure), 7:150 (Agency and Law Enforcement Requests), 7:160 (Student Appearance), 7:170 (Vandalism), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:200 (Suspension Procedures), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools),

7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:200 Suspension Procedures

In-School Suspension

The Executive Director or designee is authorized to maintain an in-school suspension program. The program shall include, at a minimum, each of the following:

1. Before assigning a student to in-school suspension, the charges will be explained and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
2. Students are supervised by licensed school personnel.
3. Students are given the opportunity to complete classroom work during the in-school suspension for equivalent academic credit.

Out-of-School Suspension

The Executive Director or designee, in collaboration with an administrator from the student's district of residence, is authorized to suspend a student and shall implement suspension procedures that provide, at a minimum, for each of the following:

1. A conference during which the charges will be explained and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before he or she may be suspended.
2. A pre-suspension conference is not required, and the student can be immediately suspended when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process. In such cases, the notice and conference shall follow as soon as practicable.
3. An attempted phone call to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. A written notice of the suspension to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student, which shall:
 - a. Provide notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their child's right to a review of the suspension;
 - b. Include information about an opportunity to make up work missed during the suspension for equivalent academic credit;
 - c. Detail the specific act of gross disobedience or misconduct resulting in the decision to suspend;
 - d. Provide rationale or an explanation of how the chosen number of suspension days will address the threat or disruption posed by the student or his or her act of gross disobedience or misconduct; and
 - e. Depending upon the length of the out-of-school suspension, include the following applicable information:
 - i. For a suspension of 3 school days or less, an explanation that the student's continuing presence in school would either pose:
 - a) A threat to school safety, or
 - b) A disruption to other students' learning opportunities.
 - ii. For a suspension of 4 or more school days, an explanation:
 - a) That other appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted,
 - b) As to whether school officials attempted other interventions or determined that no other interventions were available for the student, and

c) That the student's continuing presence in school would either:

- i) Pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community, or
- ii) Substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school.

d) Of what, if any, appropriate and available support services will be provided to the student during the length of his or her suspension, as determined by the Executive Director or designee.

- 5. A summary of the notice, including the reason for the suspension and the suspension length, must be given to the Board of Education of the student's district of residence by the Executive Director or designee.
- 6. Upon request of the parent(s)/guardian(s), a review of the suspension shall be conducted by the student's district of residence, whose relevant policies and procedures will govern.

LEGAL REF.:

Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975).

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bus Conduct)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:220 Bus Conduct

All students must follow the District's *School Bus Safety Rules*.

School Bus Suspensions

The Executive Director, or any designee as permitted in the School Code, is authorized to suspend a student from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

1. Prohibited student conduct as defined in Executive Council policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*.
2. Willful injury or threat of injury to a bus driver or to another rider.
3. Willful and/or repeated defacement of the bus.
4. Repeated use of profanity.
5. Repeated willful disobedience of a directive from a bus driver or other supervisor.
6. Such other behavior as the Executive Director or designee deems to threaten the safe operation of the bus and/or its occupants.

If a student is suspended from riding the bus for gross disobedience or misconduct on a bus, the Executive Council may suspend the student from riding the school bus for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons. The District's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus.

Academic Credit for Missed Classes During School Bus Suspension

A student suspended from riding the bus who does not have alternate transportation to school shall have the opportunity to complete or make up work for equivalent academic credit. It shall be the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to notify the school that the student does not have alternate transportation.

Electronic Recordings on School Buses

Electronic visual and audio recordings may be used on school buses to monitor conduct and to promote and maintain a safe environment for students and employees when transportation is provided for any school related activity. Notice of electronic recordings shall be displayed on the exterior of the vehicle's entrance door and front interior bulkhead in compliance with State law and the rules of the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety.

Students are prohibited from tampering with electronic recording devices. Students who violate this policy shall be disciplined in accordance with the Board's discipline policy and shall reimburse the Cooperative for any necessary repairs or replacement.

LEGAL REF.:

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6, and 10/.

720 ILCS 5/14-3(m).

23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 375, Student Records.

CROSS REF.: 4:110 (Transportation), 4:170 (Safety), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:170 (Vandalism), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:200 (Suspension Procedures), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:230 Misconduct by Students with Disabilities

Behavioral Interventions

Behavioral interventions shall be used with students with disabilities to promote and strengthen desirable behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors. The Executive Council will establish and maintain a committee to develop, implement, and monitor procedures on the use of behavioral interventions for children with disabilities.

Discipline of Special Education Students

The Cooperative shall comply with the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Illinois State Board of Education's *Special Education* rules when disciplining special education students. No special education student shall be expelled if the student's particular act of gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disability.

LEGAL REF.:

Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. §§1412, 1413, and 1415.

Gun-Free Schools Act, 20 U.S.C. §7151 *et seq.*

34 C.F.R. §§300.101, 300.530 - 300.536.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 5/14-8.05.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §226.400.

Honig v. Doe, 108 S.Ct. 592 (1988).

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:200 (Suspension Procedures), 7:220 Bus Conduct

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:250 Student Support Services

The Cooperative provides a liaison to facilitate the enrollment and transfer of records of students in the legal custody of the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services when enrolling in or changing schools.

The following student support services may be provided by the Cooperative:

1. Health services supervised by a qualified school nurse. The Executive Director or designee may implement procedures to further a healthy school environment and prevent or reduce the spread of disease.
2. Educational and psychological testing services and the services of a school psychologist as needed. In all cases, written permission to administer a psychological examination must be obtained from a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The results will be given to the parent(s)/guardian(s), with interpretation, as well as to the appropriate professional staff.
3. The services of a school social worker. A student's parent/guardian must consent to regular or continuing services from a social worker.
4. School counseling services. The Executive Director or designee shall annually inform all school personnel and students 12 years of age and older, in writing, of the availability of counseling without parent/guardian consent under 405 ILCS 5/3-550.

The Executive Director or designee shall develop protocols for responding to students with social, emotional, or mental health needs that impact learning ability. The Cooperative, however, assumes no liability for preventing, identifying, or treating such needs.

Erin's Law Counseling Options, Assistance, and Intervention

The Executive Director or designee will ensure that each school building's Student Support Committee identifies counseling options for students who are affected by sexual abuse and grooming behaviors, along with Cooperative and community-based options for victims of sexual abuse and grooming behaviors to obtain assistance and intervention. Community-based options must include a Children's Advocacy Center and sexual assault crisis center(s) that serve the Cooperative, if any.

Article 26A Domestic or Sexual Violence and Parenting Resource Personnel

The Executive Director or designee will ensure that at least one staff member in each school building is designated as a resource person (Article 26A Resource Person) for students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence and offers those services required by 105 ILCS 5/26A. See Board policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*. The Article 26A Resource Person may be a member of the building's Student Support Committee.

The Executive Director shall ensure that this policy is implemented in a manner consistent with State and federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*, and that it is respectful of student privacy, including that student records are maintained and their confidentiality protected in accordance with Board policy and Cooperative procedures.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-23.13(b), 5/10-20.59, 5/21B-25(G), and 5/26A.

405 ILCS 5/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code.

405 ILCS 49/, Children's Mental Health Act.

740 ILCS 110/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act.

CROSS REF.: 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:270 (Guidance and Counseling Program), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:280 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 7:340 (Student Records)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:260 Exemption from Physical Education

In order to be excused from participation in physical education, a student must present an appropriate excuse from his or her parent/guardian or from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act. The excuse may be based on medical or religious prohibitions. An excuse because of medical reasons must include a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act that corroborates the medical reason for the request. An excuse based on religious reasons must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy that corroborates the religious reason for the request. Upon written notice from a student's parent/guardian, a student will be excused from engaging in the physical activity components of physical education during a period of religious fasting.

Special activities in physical education will be provided for a student whose physical or emotional condition, as determined by a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act, prevents his or her participation in the physical education course.

State law prohibits the Board from honoring parental excuses based upon a student's participation in athletic training, activities, or competitions conducted outside the auspices of the Cooperative.

A student who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses in either of the following situations:

1. He or she (a) is in grades 3-12, (b) his or her IEP requires that special education support and services be provided during physical education time, and (c) the parent/guardian agrees or the IEP team makes the determination; or
2. He or she (a) has an IEP, (b) is participating in an adaptive athletic program outside of the school setting, and (c) the parent/guardian documents the student's participation as required by the Executive Director or designee.

A student requiring adapted physical education must receive that service in accordance with his or her Individualized Educational Program/Plan (IEP).

A student in grades 9-12, unless otherwise stated, may submit a written request to the Building Principal to be excused from physical education courses for the reasons stated in 6:310, *High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students*.

The Executive Director or designee shall maintain records showing that the criteria set forth in this policy were applied to the student's individual circumstances, as appropriate.

Students who have been excused from physical education shall return to the course as soon as practical. The following considerations will be used to determine when a student shall return to a physical education course:

1. The time of year when the student's participation ceases;
2. The student's class schedule; and
3. The student's future or planned additional participation in activities qualifying for substitutions for physical education as outlined in policy 6:310, *High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students*.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/27-6.

225 ILCS 60/, Medical Practice Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(p) and §1.425(d), (e).

CROSS REF.: 6:60 (Curriculum Content)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:270 Administering Medicines to Students

Students should not take medication during school hours or during school-related activities unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child and otherwise follow the Cooperative's procedures on dispensing medication.

No Cooperative employee shall administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed *School Medication Authorization Form (SMA Form)* is submitted by the student's parent/guardian.

No student shall possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this policy and its implementing procedures.

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

The Building Principal shall include this policy in the Student Handbook and shall provide a copy to the parents/guardians of students.

Self-Administration of Medication

A student may possess and self-administer an epinephrine injector, e.g., EpiPen®, and/or asthma medication prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed an *SMA Form*. The Executive Director or designee will ensure an Emergency Action Plan is developed for each self-administering student.

A student may self-administer medication required under a *qualifying plan*, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed an *SMA Form*. A qualifying plan means: (1) an asthma action plan, (2) an Individual Health Care Action Plan, (3) an allergy emergency action plan, (4) a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or (5) a plan pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. A student may also possess the supplies and equipment necessary to monitor and treat diabetes in accordance with the student's diabetes care plan and/or the supplies, equipment, and medication necessary to treat epilepsy in accordance with the student's seizure action plan.

The Cooperative shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication or epinephrine injectors, or medication required under a qualifying plan. A student's parent/guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the Cooperative and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine injector, asthma medication, and/or a medication required under a qualifying plan.

Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Asthma Medication

The Executive Director or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated asthma medication in the name of the Cooperative and provide or administer them as necessary according to State law. *Undesignated asthma medication* means an asthma medication prescribed in the name of the Cooperative or one of its schools. A school nurse or trained personnel, as defined in State law, may administer an undesignated asthma medication to a person when they, in good faith, believe a person is having *respiratory distress*. Respiratory distress may be characterized as *mild-to-moderate* or *severe*. Each building administrator and/or his or her corresponding school nurse shall maintain the names of trained personnel who have received a statement of certification pursuant to State law.

Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Epinephrine Injectors

The Executive Director or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated epinephrine injectors in the name of the Cooperative and provide or administer them as necessary according to State law. *Undesignated epinephrine injector* means an epinephrine injector prescribed in the name of the Cooperative or one of its schools. A school nurse or trained personnel, as defined in State law, may administer an undesignated epinephrine injector to a person when they, in good faith, believe a person is having an anaphylactic reaction. Each building administrator and/or his or her corresponding school nurse shall maintain the names of trained personnel who have received a statement of certification pursuant to State law.

Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Opioid Antagonists

The Executive Director or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated opioid antagonists and provide or administer them as necessary according to State law. *Opioid antagonist* means a drug that binds to opioid receptors and blocks or inhibits the effect of opioids acting on those receptors, including, but not limited to, naloxone hydrochloride or any other similarly acting drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. *Undesignated opioid antagonist* is not defined by the School Code; for purposes of this policy it means an opioid antagonist prescribed in the name of the Cooperative or one of its schools or obtained by the Cooperative without a prescription. A school nurse or trained personnel, as defined in State law, may administer an undesignated opioid antagonist to a person when they, in good faith, believe a person is having an opioid overdose. Each building administrator and/or his or her corresponding school nurse shall maintain the names of trained personnel who have received a statement of certification pursuant to State law. See the website for the Ill. Dept. of Human Services for information about opioid prevention, abuse, public awareness, and a toll-free number to provide information and referral services for persons with questions concerning substance abuse treatment.

Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Oxygen Tanks

In schools where the Cooperative maintains special educational facilities, the Executive Director or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated oxygen tanks in the name of the Cooperative and provide or administer them as necessary. The supply shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer instructions and local fire department rules.

Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Glucagon

The Executive Director or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 145/27 and maintain a supply of undesignated glucagon in the name of the Cooperative in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

When a student's prescribed glucagon is not available or has expired, a school nurse or delegated care aide may administer undesignated glucagon only if he or she is authorized to do so by a student's diabetes care plan.

Administration of Medical Cannabis

The Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act allows a *medical cannabis infused product* to be administered to a student by one or more of the following individuals:

1. A parent/guardian of a student who is a minor who registers with the Ill. Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) as a *designated caregiver* to administer medical cannabis to their child. A designated caregiver may also be another individual other than the student's parent/guardian. Any designated caregiver must be at least 21 years old and is allowed to administer a *medical cannabis infused product* to a child who is a student on the premises of his or her school or on his or her school bus if:

- a. Both the student and the designated caregiver possess valid registry identification cards issued by IDPH;
 - b. Copies of the registry identification cards are provided to the Cooperative;
 - c. That student's parent/guardian completed, signed, and submitted a *School Medication Authorization Form - Medical Cannabis*; and
 - d. After administering the product to the student, the designated caregiver immediately removes it from school premises or the school bus.
2. A properly trained school nurse or administrator, who shall be allowed to administer the *medical cannabis infused product* to the student on the premises of the child's school, at a school-sponsored activity, or before/after normal school activities, including while the student is in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property or while being transported on a school bus.
 3. The student him or herself when the self-administration takes place under the direct supervision of a school nurse or administrator.

Medical cannabis infused product (product) includes oils, ointments, foods, and other products that contain usable cannabis but are not smoked or vaped. Smoking and/or vaping medical cannabis is prohibited.

The product may not be administered in a manner that, in the opinion of the Cooperative or school, would create a disruption to the educational environment or cause exposure of the product to other students. A school employee shall not be required to administer the product.

Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver, or by a school nurse or administrator, or who self-administers a product under the direct supervision of a school nurse or administrator pursuant to this policy is prohibited. The Cooperative may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

Void Policy

The **Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Asthma Medication** section of the policy is void whenever the Executive Director or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the Cooperative a prescription for undesignated asthma medication from a physician or advanced practice nurse licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, or (2) fill the Cooperative's prescription for undesignated school asthma medication.

The **Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Epinephrine Injectors** section of the policy is void whenever the Executive Director or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the Cooperative a prescription for undesignated epinephrine injectors from a physician or advanced practice nurse licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, or (2) fill the Cooperative's prescription for undesignated school epinephrine injectors.

The **Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Opioid Antagonists** section of the policy is void whenever the Executive Director or designee is unable to obtain a supply of opioid antagonists due to a shortage, in which case the Cooperative shall make reasonable efforts to maintain a supply.

The **Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Oxygen Tanks** section of the policy is void whenever the Executive Director or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the Cooperative a prescription for oxygen tanks from a qualifying prescriber, or (2) fill the Cooperative's prescription for undesignated oxygen tanks.

The **Cooperative Supply of Undesignated Glucagon** section of the policy is void whenever the Executive Director or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the Cooperative a

prescription for glucagon from a qualifying prescriber, or (2) fill the Cooperative's prescription for undesignated school glucagon.

The **Administration of Medical Cannabis** section of the policy is void and the Cooperative reserves the right not to implement it if the Cooperative or school is in danger of losing federal funding.

Administration of Undesignated Medication

Upon any administration of an undesignated medication permitted by State law, the Executive Director or designee(s) must ensure all notifications required by State law and administrative procedures occur.

Undesignated Medication Disclaimers

Upon implementation of this policy, the protections from liability and hold harmless provisions applicable under State law apply.

No one, including without limitation, parents/guardians of students, should rely on the Cooperative for the availability of undesignated medication. This policy does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents/guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s).

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14b, 5/10-22.21b, 5/22-30, and 5/22-33.

105 ILCS 145/, Care of Students with Diabetes Act.

105 ILCS 150/, Seizure Smart School Act.

410 ILCS 130/, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

720 ILCS 550/, Cannabis Control Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540.

CROSS REF.: 7:285 (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:275 Orders to Forgo Life-Sustaining Treatment

Written orders from parent(s)/guardian(s) to forgo life-sustaining treatment for their child must be signed by the student's physician and given to the Executive Director. This policy shall be interpreted in accordance with the Illinois Health Care Surrogate Act. 755 ILCS 40/.

Whenever an order to forgo life-sustaining treatment is received, the Executive Director shall convene a multi-disciplinary team that includes:

1. The student, when appropriate;
2. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
3. Other medical professionals, e.g., licensed physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner;
4. Local first responders for the building in which the student is assigned to attend school;
5. The school nurse;
6. Clergy, if requested by the student or his or her parent(s)/guardians(s);
7. Other individuals to provide support to the student or his or her parent(s)/guardian(s); and
8. School personnel designated by the Executive Director.

The team shall determine guidelines to be used by school staff members in the event the child suffers a life-threatening episode at school or a school event.

Cooperative personnel shall convey orders to forgo life-sustaining treatment to the appropriate emergency or healthcare provider.

LEGAL REF.:

Health Care Surrogate Act, 755 ILCS 40/.

Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Dept. of Health, 497 U.S. 261 (1990).

In re C.A., a minor, 236 Ill.App.3d 594 (1st Dist. 1992).

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:280 Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease

A student with or carrying a communicable and/or chronic infectious disease has all rights, privileges, and services provided by law and the Executive Council's policies. The Executive Director will develop procedures to safeguard these rights while managing health and safety concerns.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-21.11.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 1.610 and 226.300.

77 Ill.Admin.Code Part 690.

20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq.*, Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

29 U.S.C. §794(a), Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504.

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:285 Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program

School attendance may increase a student's risk of exposure to allergens that could trigger anaphylaxis. Students at risk for anaphylaxis benefit from an Executive Council policy that coordinates a planned response in the event of an anaphylactic emergency. Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction from exposure to allergens that is rapid in onset and can cause death. Common allergens include animal dander, fish, latex, milk, shellfish, tree nuts, eggs, insect venom, medications, peanuts, soy, and wheat. A severe allergic reaction usually occurs quickly; death has been reported to occur within minutes. An anaphylactic reaction can also occur up to one to two hours after exposure to the allergen.

While it is not possible for the Cooperative to completely eliminate the risks of an anaphylactic emergency when a student is at school, an Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program using a cooperative effort among students' families, staff members, students, health care providers, emergency medical services, and the community helps the Cooperative reduce these risks and provide accommodations and proper treatment for anaphylactic reactions.

The Executive Director or designee shall develop and implement an Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program for the prevention and treatment of anaphylaxis that:

1. Fully implements the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE)'s model policy required by the School Code that: (a) relates to the care and response to a person having an anaphylaxis reaction, (b) addresses the use of epinephrine in a school setting, (c) provides a full food allergy and prevention of allergen exposure plan, and (d) aligns with 105 ILCS 5/22-30 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540.
2. Ensures staff members receive appropriate training, including: (a) an in-service training program for staff who work with students that is conducted by a person with expertise in anaphylactic reactions and management, and (b) training required by law for those staff members acting as *trained personnel*, as provided in 105 ILCS 5/22-30 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540.
3. Implements and maintains a supply of undesignated epinephrine in the name of the Cooperative, in accordance with policy 7:270, *Administering Medicines to Students*.
4. Follows and references the applicable best practices specific to the Cooperative's needs in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs* and the *National Association of School Nurses Allergies and Anaphylaxis Resources/Checklists*.
5. Provides annual notice to the parents/guardians of all students to make them aware of this policy.
6. Complies with State and federal law and is in alignment with Executive Council policies.

Monitoring

Pursuant to State law and policy 2:240, *Council Policy Development*, the Executive Council reviews and makes any necessary updates to this policy at least once every three years. The Executive Director or designee shall assist the Executive Council with its review and any necessary updates.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.190, 5/10-22.39, and 5/22-30.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540.

Anaphylaxis Response Policy for Illinois Schools, published by ISBE.

CROSS REF.: 4:110 (Transportation), 4:120 (Food Services), 4:170 (Safety), 5:100 (Staff

Development Program), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:240 (Field Trips), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 8:100 (Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies)

Adopted: February 5, 2024

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:290 Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention

Youth suicide impacts the safety of the school environment. It also affects the school community, diminishing the ability of surviving students to learn and the school's ability to educate. Suicide and depression awareness and prevention are important Executive Council goals.

Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention Program

The Executive Director or designee shall develop, implement, and maintain a suicide and depression awareness and prevention program (Program) that advances the Executive Council's goals of increasing awareness and prevention of depression and suicide. This program must be consistent with the requirements of *Ann Marie's Law* listed below; each listed requirement, 1-6, corresponds with the list of required policy components in the School Code Section 5/2-3.166(c)(2)-(7). The Program shall include:

1. Protocols for administering youth suicide awareness and prevention education to students and staff.
 - a. For students, implementation will incorporate Executive Council policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, which implements 105 ILCS 5/27-215 (requiring education for students on mental health and illness).
 - b. For staff, implementation will incorporate Executive Council policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, and teacher's institutes under 105 ILCS 5/3-14.8 (requiring coverage of the warning signs of suicidal behavior).
2. Procedures for methods of suicide prevention with the goal of early identification and referral of students possibly at risk of suicide. Implementation will incorporate:
 - a. The training required by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39 for all Cooperative staff who work with students to identify the warning signs of suicidal behavior in youth along with appropriate intervention and referral techniques, including methods of prevention, procedures for early identification, and referral of students at risk of suicide; and
 - b. Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE)-recommended guidelines and educational materials for staff training and professional development, along with ISBE-recommended resources for students containing age-appropriate educational materials on youth suicide and awareness, if available pursuant to *Ann Marie's Law* on ISBE's website.
3. Methods of intervention, including procedures that address an emotional or mental health safety plan for use during the school day and at school-sponsored events for a student identified as being at increased risk of suicide including those students who: (A) suffer from a mental health disorder; (B) suffer from a substance abuse disorder; (C) engage in self-harm or have previously attempted suicide; (D) reside in an out-of-home placement; (E) are experiencing homelessness; (F) are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ); (G) are bereaved by suicide; or (H) have a medical condition or certain types of disabilities. Implementation will incorporate paragraph number 2, above, along with Board policies:
 - a. 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*, implementing the goals and benchmarks of the Ill. Learning Standards and 405 ILCS 49/15(b) (requiring student social and emotional development in the District's educational program);
 - b. 6:120, *Education of Children with Disabilities*, implementing special education requirements for the District;
 - c. 6:140, *Education of Homeless Children*, implementing provision of District services to students who are homeless;
 - d. 6:270, *Guidance and Counseling Program*, implementing guidance and counseling

program(s) for students, and 105 ILCS 5/10-22.24a and 22.24b, which allow a qualified guidance specialist or any licensed staff member to provide school counseling services;

- e. 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*, and its implementing administrative procedure and exhibit, implementing supports for equal educational opportunities for students who are LGBTQ;
 - f. 7:50, *School Admissions*, implementing State law requirements related to students who are in foster care;
 - g. 7:250, *Student Support Services*, implementing the Children's Mental Health Act, 405 ILCS 49/ (requiring protocols for responding to students with social, emotional, or mental health issues that impact learning ability); and
 - h. State and/or federal resources that address emotional or mental health safety plans for students who are possibly at an increased risk for suicide, if available on the ISBE's website pursuant to *Ann Marie's Law*.
4. Methods of responding to a student or staff suicide or suicide attempt. Implementation of this requirement shall incorporate building-level Student Support Committee(s) established through Board policy 7:250, *Student Support Services*.
 5. Reporting procedures. Implementation of this requirement shall incorporate Board policy 6:270, *Guidance and Counseling Program*, and Board policy 7:250, *Student Support Services*, in addition to other State and/or federal resources that address reporting procedures.
 6. A process to incorporate ISBE-recommended resources on youth suicide awareness and prevention programs, including current contact information for such programs in the District's Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention Program.

Illinois Suicide Prevention Strategic Planning Committee

The Executive Director or designee shall attempt to develop a relationship between the Cooperative and the Illinois Suicide Prevention Strategic Planning Committee, the Illinois Suicide Prevention Coalition Alliance, and/or a community mental health agency. The purpose of the relationship is to discuss how to incorporate the goals and objectives of the Illinois Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan into the Cooperative's Suicide Prevention and Depression Awareness Program.

Monitoring

The Executive Council will review and update this policy pursuant to *Ann Marie's Law* and policy 2:240, *Council Policy Development*.

Information to Staff, Parents/Guardians, and Students

The Executive Director shall inform each Cooperative employee about this policy and ensure its posting on the Cooperative's website. The Executive Director or designee shall provide a copy of this policy to the parent or legal guardian of each student enrolled in the Cooperative. Student and staff identification (ID) cards, the Cooperative's website, and student handbooks and planners will contain the support information as required by State law.

Implementation

This policy shall be implemented in a manner consistent with State and federal laws, including the Student Confidential Reporting Act, 5 ILCS 860/, Children's Mental Health Act, 405 ILCS 49/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act, 740 ILCS 110/, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*

The Cooperative, Executive Council, and its staff are protected from liability by the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act. Services provided pursuant to this

policy: (1) do not replace the care of a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches or a licensed medical practitioner or professional trained in suicide prevention, assessments and counseling services, (2) are strictly limited to the available resources within the Cooperative, (3) do not extend beyond the school day and/or school-sponsored events, and (4) cannot guarantee or ensure the safety of a student or the student body.

LEGAL REF.:

42 U.S.C. § 1201 *et seq.*, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.166, 5/3-14.8, 5/10-20.81, 5/10-22.24a, 5/10-22.24b, 5/10-22.39, 5/14-1.01 *et seq.*, 5/14-7.02, 5/14-7.02b, and 5/27-215.

5 ILCS 860/, Student Confidential Reporting Act.

405 ILCS 49, Children's Mental Health Act.

740 ILCS 110/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act.

745 ILCS 10/, Local Governmental and Governmental Tort Immunity Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:270 (Guidance and Counseling Program), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:250 (Student Support Services)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:310 Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools

School-Sponsored Publications and Websites

School-sponsored publications, productions, and websites are part of the curriculum and are not a public forum for general student use. School authorities may edit or delete material that is inconsistent with the Cooperative's educational mission.

All school-sponsored communications shall comply with the ethics and rules of responsible journalism. Text that is libelous, obscene, vulgar, lewd, invades the privacy of others, conflicts with the basic educational mission of the school, is socially inappropriate, is inappropriate due to the maturity of the students, or is materially disruptive to the educational process will not be tolerated.

The author's name will accompany personal opinions and editorial statements. An opportunity for the expression of differing opinions from those published/produced will be provided within the same media.

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed On-Campus

For purposes of this section and the following section, a *publication* includes, without limitation: (1) written or electronic print material, (2) audio-visual material on any medium including electromagnetic media (e.g., images, digital files, flash memory, etc.), or combinations of these whether off-line (e.g., a printed book, digital files, etc.) or online (e.g., any website, social networking site, database for information retrieval, etc.), or (3) information or material on electronic devices (e.g., text or voice messages delivered by cell phones, tablets, and other hand-held devices).

Creating, distributing, and/or accessing non-school sponsored publications shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the publication is endorsed by the Cooperative.

Students are prohibited from creating, distributing, and/or accessing at school any publication that:

1. Will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;
3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or *sexting* as defined by Executive Council policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*, and/or Student Handbooks;
4. Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use; or
5. Is distributed in kindergarten through eighth grade and is primarily prepared by non-students, unless it is being used for school purposes. Nothing herein shall be interpreted to prevent the inclusion of material from outside sources or the citation to such sources as long as the material to be distributed or accessed is primarily prepared by students.

Accessing or distributing *on-campus* includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed Off-Campus

A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing a publication that: (1) causes a substantial disruption or a foreseeable risk of a substantial

disruption to school operations, or (2) interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

The Executive Director or designee shall treat behavior that is *bullying* and/or *cyberbullying* according to policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/22-110.

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988).

Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

CROSS REF.: 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:315 Restrictions on Publications; High Schools

Definitions

Libel means the willful or negligent publication of provably false and unprivileged statements of fact that do demonstrable harm to a living person's reputation.

Obscene means lewd; impure; indecent; calculated to shock the moral sense of humans by a disregard of chastity or modesty. Objectionable or offensive to accepted standards of decency.

School official means a Building Principal or designee.

School-sponsored media means any material that is prepared, substantially written, published, or broadcast by a student journalist, distributed or generally made available to members of the student body, and prepared under the direction of a student media advisor. It does not include media intended for distribution or transmission solely in the classroom in which the media is produced.

Slander means the speaking of false statements of fact that seriously harm a living person's reputation.

Student journalist means a public high school student who gathers, compiles, writes, edits, photographs, records, or prepares information for dissemination in school-sponsored media.

Student media adviser means an individual employed, appointed, or designated by the Cooperative to supervise or provide instruction relating to school-sponsored media.

School-Sponsored Media

School-sponsored publications, productions, and websites are governed by the Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act and Executive Council policies, and student journalists are responsible for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of those publications, productions, and websites.

Student journalists must:

1. Make decisions based upon news value and guided by the Code of Ethics provided by the Society of Professional Journalists, National Scholastic Press Association, Journalism Education Association, or other relevant group;
2. Produce media based upon professional standards of accuracy, objectivity, and fairness;
3. Review material to improve sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
4. Check and verify all facts and verify the accuracy of all quotations;
5. In the use of personal opinions, editorial statements, and/or letters to the editor, provide opportunity and space for the expression of differing opinions within the same media to align with the Cooperative's media literacy curriculum; and
6. Include an author's name with any personal opinions and editorial statements, if appropriate.

Student journalists may not create, produce, or distribute school-sponsored media that:

1. Is libelous, slanderous, or obscene;
2. Constitutes an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
3. Violates federal or State law, including the Constitutional rights of third parties; or
4. Incites students to:
 - a. Commit an unlawful act;

- b. Violate any of the Cooperative's policies; or
- c. Materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

The Cooperative will not engage in prior restraint of material prepared by student journalists for school-sponsored media, unless the material fits into one of the four prohibited categories listed above, in which case the Executive Director or designee and/or student media adviser may review, edit, and delete such media material before publication or distribution of the media.

No expression made by students in the exercise of freedom of speech or freedom of the press under this policy shall be deemed to be an expression of the Cooperative or an expression of Executive Council policy.

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed On Campus

For purposes of this section and the following section, a *publication* includes, without limitation: (1) written or electronic print material, (2) audio-visual material on any medium including electromagnetic media (e.g., images, digital files, flash memory, etc.), or combinations of these whether off-line (e.g., a printed book, digital files, etc.) or online (e.g., any website, social networking site, database for information retrieval, etc.), or (3) information or material on electronic devices (e.g., text or voice messages delivered by cell phones, tablets, and other hand-held devices).

Creating, distributing, and/or accessing non-school sponsored publications shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the publication is endorsed by the Cooperative.

Students are prohibited from creating, distributing, and/or accessing at school any publication that:

1. Will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, slanderous or obscene, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;
3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or *sexting* as defined by Executive Council policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*, and/or Student Handbooks;
4. Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use;
5. Is distributed in kindergarten through eighth grade and is primarily prepared by non-students, unless it is being used for school purposes. However, material from outside sources or the citation to such sources may be allowed, as long as the material to be distributed or accessed is primarily prepared by students; or
6. Encourages or incites students to violate any Executive Council policies.

Accessing or distributing *on-campus* includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed Off-Campus

A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing a publication that: (1) causes a substantial disruption or a foreseeable risk of a substantial disruption to school operations, or (2) interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

The Executive Director or designee shall treat behavior that is *bullying* and/or *cyberbullying* according to policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/22-110, 5/27-405, and 5/27-415 (scheduled for repeal on 7-1-27).

105 ILCS 80/, Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act.

Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988).

Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007).

Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

CROSS REF.: 1:30 (Cooperative Philosophy), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:330 Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access

Student groups or clubs that are not school sponsored are granted free use of school premises for a meeting or series of meetings under the following conditions:

1. The meeting is held during those non-instructional times identified by the Executive Director or designee for noncurricular student groups, clubs, or organizations to meet. *Non-instructional time* means time set aside by the school before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends. *Noncurricular student groups* are those student groups, clubs, or organizations that do not directly relate to the curriculum.
2. All non-curriculum related student groups that are not Cooperative sponsored receive substantially the same treatment.
3. The meeting is student-initiated, meaning that the request is made by a student.
4. Attendance at the meeting is voluntary.
5. The school will not sponsor the meeting.
6. School employees are present at religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity.
7. The meeting and/or any activities during the meeting do not materially or substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities.
8. Non-school persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend the meetings.
9. The school retains its authority to maintain order and discipline.
10. A school staff member or other responsible adult is present in a supervisory capacity.
11. The Executive Director or designee approves the meeting or series of meetings.

The Executive Director or designee shall develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §4071 *et seq.*, Equal Access Act.

Bd. of Ed. of Westside Community Sch. Dist. v. Mergens, 496 U.S. 226 (1990).

Gernetzke v. Kenosha Unified Sch. Dist. No. 1, 274 F.3d 464 (7th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 535 U.S. 1017.

CROSS REF.: 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:340 Student Records

School student records are confidential. Information from them shall not be released other than as provided by law. A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except as provided in State or federal law as summarized below:

1. Records kept in a staff member's sole possession.
2. Records maintained by law enforcement professionals working in the school.
3. Video and other electronic recordings (including without limitation, electronic recordings made on school buses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes. The content of these recordings may become part of a school student record to the extent school officials create, use, and maintain this content, or it becomes available to them by law enforcement professionals, for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.
4. Any information, either written or oral, received from law enforcement officials concerning a student less than the age of 18 years who has been arrested or taken into custody.

State and federal law grants students, parents/guardians, and when applicable, the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services' Office of Education and Transition Services, certain rights, including the right to inspect, copy, and/or challenge school student records. The information contained in school student records shall be kept current, accurate, clear, and relevant. All information maintained concerning a student receiving special education services shall be directly related to the provision of services to that child. The Cooperative may release directory information as permitted by law, but a parent/guardian shall have the right to opt-out of the release of directory information regarding his or her child. The Cooperative will comply with State or federal law with regard to release of a student's school records, including, where applicable, without notice to, or the consent of, the student's parent/guardian or eligible student. Upon request, the Cooperative discloses school student records without parent consent to the official records custodian of another school in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any other person as specifically required or permitted by State or federal law.

The Executive Director shall fully implement this policy and designate an *official records custodian* for each school who shall maintain and protect the confidentiality of school student records, inform staff members of this policy, and inform students and their parents/guardians of their rights regarding school student records.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; 34 C.F.R. Part 99.

50 ILCS 205/7, Local Records Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b, 5/10-20.40, 5/14-1.01 *et seq.*, and 5/26A-30.

105 ILCS 10/, Ill. School Student Records Act.

105 ILCS 85/, Student Online Personal Protection Act.

325 ILCS 17/, Children's Privacy Protection and Parental Empowerment Act.

750 ILCS 5/602.11, Ill. Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code Parts 226 and 375.

Owasso I.S.D. No. I-011 v. Falvo, 534 U.S. 426 (2002).

Chicago Tribune Co. v. Chicago Bd. of Ed., 332 Ill.App.3d 60 (1st Dist. 2002).

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:130 (Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

7:345 Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security

Educational technologies used in the Cooperative shall further the objectives of the Cooperative's educational program, as set forth in policy 6:10, *Educational Philosophy and Objectives*, align with the curriculum criteria in policy 6:40, *Curriculum Development*, and/or support efficient Cooperative operations. The Executive Director shall ensure that the use of educational technologies in the Cooperative meets the above criteria.

The Cooperative and/or vendors under its control may need to collect and maintain data that personally identifies students in order to use certain educational technologies for the benefit of student learning or Cooperative operations.

Federal and State law govern the protection of student data, including school student records and/or *covered information*. The sale, rental, lease, or trading of any school student records or covered information by the Cooperative is prohibited. Protecting such information is important for legal compliance, Cooperative operations, and maintaining the trust of Cooperative stakeholders, including parents, students and staff.

Definitions

Covered information means personally identifiable information (PII) or information linked to PII in any media or format that is not publicly available and is any of the following: (1) created by or provided to an operator by a student or the student's parent/guardian in the course of the student's or parent/guardian's use of the operator's site, service or application; (2) created by or provided to an operator by an employee or agent of the Cooperative; or (3) gathered by an operator through the operation of its site, service, or application.

Operators are entities (such as educational technology vendors) that operate Internet websites, online services, online applications, or mobile applications that are designed, marketed, and primarily used for K-12 school purposes.

Breach means the unauthorized acquisition of computerized data that compromises the security, confidentiality or integrity of covered information maintained by an operator or the Cooperative.

Operator Contracts

The Executive Director or designee designates which Cooperative employees are authorized to enter into written agreements with operators for those contracts that do not require separate Executive Council approval. Contracts between the Council and operators shall be entered into in accordance with State law and policy 4:60, *Purchases and Contracts*, and shall include any specific provisions required by State law.

Security Standards

The Executive Director or designee shall ensure the Cooperative implements and maintains reasonable security procedures and practices that otherwise meet or exceed industry standards designed to protect covered information from unauthorized access, destruction, use, modification, or disclosure. In the event the Cooperative receives notice from an operator of a breach or has determined a breach has occurred, the Executive Director or designee shall also ensure that the Cooperative provides any breach notifications required by State law.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act; 34 C.F.R. Part 99.

105 ILCS 10/, Ill. School Student Records Act.

105 ILCS 85/, Student Online Personal Protection Act.

23 Ill. Admin. Code Part 380.

CROSS REF.: 4:15 (Identity Protection), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:340 (Student Records)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

SECTION 8 - COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:10 Connection with the Community

Public Relations

The Executive Council Chairperson is the official spokesperson for the Executive Council. The Executive Director is the Cooperative's chief spokesperson. The Executive Council, in collaboration with the Executive Director or designee, shall plan and implement a Cooperative public relations program that will:

1. Develop community understanding of school operation.
2. Gather community attitudes and desires for the Cooperative.
3. Ensure adequate financial support for a sound educational program.
4. Help the community feel a more direct responsibility for the quality of education provided by their school.
5. Earn the community's goodwill, respect, and trust.
6. Promote a genuine spirit of cooperation between the school and the community.
7. Keep the news media and community accurately informed.

The public relations program should include:

1. Regular news releases concerning Cooperative programs, policies, activities, and special event management for distribution by, for example, posting on the Cooperative website, using Cooperative social media accounts, and/or sending to the news media.
2. News conferences, interviews, and official Executive Council or Cooperative statements, as requested or needed. The Executive Council Chairperson and Executive Director will coordinate their respective media relations efforts. As official spokesperson for the Executive Council, the Executive Council Chairperson will communicate on behalf of the Executive Council to the news media and community. Statements made by Executive Council members when not authorized by the Executive Council will be considered personal comments of the Executive Council member, and Executive Council members are encouraged to identify such statements as their personal opinions. Official Council or Cooperative statements (other than those made directly to the media) will be made through the Cooperative website and/or its social media accounts, at official Cooperative events, or through other official communication methods, such as Cooperative email or mailings. Individuals may speak for the Cooperative only with prior approval from the Executive Director.
3. Publications having a high quality of editorial content and effective format. All publications shall identify the Cooperative, school, department, or classroom and shall include the name of the Executive Director, the Building Principal, and/or the author and the publication date.
4. Other efforts that highlight the Cooperative's programs and activities.

CROSS REF.: 2:110 (Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Council Officers)

Adopted: January 13, 2025

8:20 Community Use of School Facilities

School facilities are available to community organizations during non-school hours when such use does not: (1) interfere with any school function or affect the safety of students or employees, or (2) affect the property or liability of the Cooperative. The use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses. The Cooperative reserves the right to cancel previously scheduled use of facilities by community organizations and other groups. The use of school facilities requires the prior approval of the Executive Director or designee and is subject to applicable procedures.

Persons on school premises must abide by the Cooperative's conduct rules at all times.

Student groups, school-related organizations, government agencies, and non-profit organizations are granted the use of school facilities at no costs during regularly staffed hours. Fees and costs shall apply during non-regularly staffed hours and to other organizations granted use of facilities at any time. A fee schedule and other terms of use shall be prepared by the Executive Director and be subject to annual approval by the Executive Council.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7905, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.

10 ILCS 5/11-4.1, Election Code.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.41, 5/10-22.10, and 5/29-3.5.

Good News Club v. Milford Central School, 533 U.S. 98 (2001).

Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District, 508 U.S. 384 (1993).

Rosenberger v. Rector and Visitors of Univ. of Va., 515 U.S. 819 (1995).

CROSS REF.: 7:330 (Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access), 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

Adopted: September 11, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:25 Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities

No material or literature shall be posted or distributed that would: (1) disrupt the educational process, (2) violate the rights or invade the privacy of others, (3) infringe on a trademark or copyright, or (4) be defamatory, obscene, vulgar, or indecent. No material, literature, or advertisement shall be posted or distributed without advance approval as described in this policy.

Community, Educational, Charitable, or Recreational Organizations

Community, educational, charitable, recreational, or similar groups may, under procedures established by the Executive Director, advertise events pertinent to students' interests or involvement. All advertisements must (1) be student-oriented, (2) prominently display the sponsoring organization's name, and (3) be approved in advance by the Executive Director or designee. The Cooperative reserves the right to decide where and when any advertisement or flyer is distributed, displayed, or posted.

Commercial Companies and Political Candidates or Parties

Commercial companies and political candidates or organizations are prohibited from advertising in schools, on the school grounds, or on school or Cooperative websites.

LEGAL REF.:

Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free Sch. Dist., 508 U.S. 384 (1993).

Berger v. Rensselaer Central Sch. Corp., 982 F.2d 1160 (7th Cir. 1993), *cert. denied*, 113 S.Ct. 2344 (1993).

Sherman v. Community Consolidated Sch. Dist. 21, 8 F.3d 1160 (7th Cir. 1993), *cert. denied*, 8 F.3d 1160 (1994).

Hedges v. Wauconda Community Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

Victory Through Jesus Sports Ministry v. Lee's Summit R-7 Sch. Dist., 640 F.3d 329 (8th Cir. 2011), *cert. denied*, 565 U.S. 1036 (2011).

DiLoreto v. Downey Unified Sch. Dist., 196 F.3d 958 (9th Cir. 1999).

CROSS REF.: 7:330 (Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:30 Visitors to and Conduct on School Property

The following definitions apply to this policy:

School property - Cooperative and school buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for an Executive Council meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.

Visitor - Any person other than an enrolled student or Cooperative employee.

All visitors to school property are required to report to the Building Principal's office and receive permission to remain on school property. All visitors must sign a visitors' log, show identification, and wear a visitor's badge. When leaving the school, visitors must return their badge. On those occasions when large groups of parents/guardians, friends, and/or community members are invited onto school property or when community members are attending Council meetings or events, visitors are not required to sign in but must follow school officials' instructions. Persons on school property without permission will be directed to leave and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Except as provided in the next paragraph, any person wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member to make an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held, to the extent possible, outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Requests to access a school building, facility, and/or educational program, or to interview personnel or a student for purposes of assessing the student's special education needs, should be made at the appropriate building. Access shall be facilitated according to guidelines from the Executive Director or designee.

The Cooperative expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on school property or at a school event. No person on school property or at a school event (including visitors, students, and employees) shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, Council member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law, or town or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectable, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis, unless he or she has complied with policy 7:270, *Administering Medicines to Students*, implementing *Ashley's Law*.
11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the Council.
13. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized Cooperative employee's directive.

14. Engage in any risky behavior, including rollerblading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
15. Violate other Cooperative policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or Cooperative employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the Cooperative or a School function.

Convicted Child Sex Offender

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender is:

1. A parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or
2. Has permission to be present from the Council, Executive Director, or Executive Director's designee. If permission is granted, the Executive Director or Executive Council Chairperson shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal.

In all cases, the Executive Director, or designee who is a licensed employee, shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity.

Exclusive Bargaining Representative Agent

Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

For employees whose collective bargaining agreement does not address this subject:

Upon notifying the Building Principal's office, authorized agents of an exclusive bargaining representative will be provided reasonable access to employees in the bargaining unit they represent in accordance with State law. Such access shall be conducted in a manner that will not impede the normal operations of the Cooperative.

Enforcement

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school property; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act. The Building Principal or designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who refuses to provide requested identification.

Any person who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy may be ejected from school property. The person is also subject to being denied admission to school events or meetings for up to one calendar year.

Procedures to Deny Future Admission to School Events or Meetings

Before any person may be denied admission to school events or meetings as provided in this policy, the person has a right to a hearing before the Council. The Executive Director may refuse the person admission pending such hearing. The Executive Director or designee must provide the person with a hearing notice, delivered, or sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, at least ten days before the Council hearing date. The hearing notice must contain:

1. The date, time, and place of the Council hearing;
2. A description of the prohibited conduct;

3. The proposed time period that admission to school events will be denied; and
4. Instructions on how to waive a hearing.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §7971 *et seq.*, Pro-Children Act of 2001.

Nuding v. Cerro Gordo Community Unit School Dist., 313 Ill. App.3d 344 (4th Dist. 2000).

105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b, 5/22-33, 5/22-110, and 5/24-25.

115 ILCS 5/3(c), Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act.

410 ILCS 130/, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

430 ILCS 66/, Firearm Concealed Carry Act.

410 ILCS 705/, Cannabis Tax and Regulation Act.

720 ILCS 5/11-9.3.

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety), 5:50 (Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)

Adopted: December 8, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:70 Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities shall be provided an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities and will not be subject to illegal discrimination. When appropriate, the Cooperative may provide to persons with disabilities aids, benefits, or services that are separate or different from, but as effective as, those provided to others.

The Cooperative will provide auxiliary aids and services when necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in or enjoy the benefits of a service, program, or activity.

Each service, program, website, or activity operated in existing facilities shall be readily accessible to, and useable by, individuals with disabilities. New construction and alterations to facilities existing before January 26, 1992, will be accessible when viewed in their entirety.

The Executive Director or designee is designated the Title II Coordinator and shall:

1. Oversee the Cooperative's compliance efforts, recommend necessary modifications to the Executive Council, and maintain the Cooperative's final Title II self-evaluation document, update it to the extent necessary, and keep it available for public inspection for at least three years after its completion date.
2. Institute plans to make information regarding Title II's protection available to any interested party.

Individuals with disabilities should notify the Executive Director or Building Principal if they have a disability that will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far in advance as possible of the school-sponsored function, program, or meeting.

Individuals with disabilities may allege a violation of this policy or federal law by reporting it to the Executive Director or designated Title II Coordinator, or by filing a grievance under the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

LEGAL REF.:

Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§12101 *et seq.* and 12131 *et seq.*; 28 C.F.R. Part 35.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 §104, 29 U.S.C. §794 (2006).

105 ILCS 5/10-20.51.

410 ILCS 25/, Environmental Barriers Act.

71 Ill.Admin.Code Part 400, Illinois Accessibility Code.

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 4:150 (Facility Management and Building Programs)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:80 Gifts to the Cooperative

The Executive Council appreciates gifts from any education foundation, other entities, or individuals. All gifts must adhere to each of the following:

1. Be accepted by the Council or, if less than \$500.00 in value, the Executive Director or designee. Individuals should obtain a pre-acceptance commitment before identifying the Cooperative, any school, or school program or activity as a beneficiary in any fundraising attempt, including without limitation, any Internet fundraising attempt.
2. Be given without a stated purpose or with a purpose deemed by the party with authority to accept the gift to be compatible with the Council's educational objectives and policies.
3. Be consistent with the Cooperative's mandate to provide equal educational and extracurricular opportunities to all students in the Cooperative as provided in Council policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*. State and Federal laws require the Cooperative to provide equal treatment for members of both sexes to educational programming, extracurricular activities, and athletics. This includes the distribution of athletic benefits and opportunities.
4. Permit the Cooperative to maintain resource equity among its learning centers.
5. Be viewpoint neutral when the gift involves the incorporation of any messages. The Executive Director or designee shall manage a process for the review and approval of donations involving the incorporation of messages into or placing messages upon school property.
6. Comply with all laws applicable to the Cooperative including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Prevailing Wage Act, the Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools, and all applicable procurement and bidding requirements.

The Cooperative will provide equal treatment to all individuals and entities seeking to donate money or a gift. Upon acceptance, all gifts become the Cooperative's property. The acceptance of a gift is not an endorsement by the Council, Cooperative, or school of any product, service, activity, or program. The method of recognition is determined by the party accepting the gift.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Education Amendments; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

105 ILCS 5/16-1.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40.

CROSS REF.: 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 4:150 (Facility Management and Building Programs), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:210 (Instructional Materials), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities)

Adopted: August 4, 2025

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:95 Parental Involvement

In order to assure collaborative relationships between students' families and the Cooperative, and to enable parents/guardians to become active partners in their children's education, the Executive Director shall:

1. Keep parents/guardians thoroughly informed about their child's school and education.
2. Encourage parents/guardians to be involved in their child's school and education.
3. Establish effective two-way communication between parents/guardians and the Cooperative.
4. Seek input from parents/guardians on significant school-related issues.
5. Inform parents/guardians on how they can assist their children's learning.

The Executive Director shall periodically report to the Executive Council on the implementation of this policy.

CROSS REF.: 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers), 8:10 (Connection with the Community)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:100 Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies

The Cooperative shall cooperate with other organizations and agencies, including but not limited to:

- County Health Department
- Law enforcement agencies
- Fire authorities
- Planning authorities
- Zoning authorities
- Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), local organizations for civil defense, and other appropriate disaster relief organizations concerned with civil defense
- Other Cooperatives

CROSS REF.: 1:20 (Cooperative Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements), 4:170 (Safety), 4:180 (Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 7:150 (Agency and Law Enforcement Requests)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

8:110 Public Suggestions and Concerns

The Executive Council is interested in receiving suggestions and concerns from members of the community. Any individual may make a suggestion or express a concern by contacting any Cooperative or School office. Community members who e-mail the Cooperative or any Cooperative employee or Council member are expected to abide by the standards in Council policy 6:235, Access to Electronic Networks, and should, to the extent possible, limit their communications to relevant individuals. All suggestions and/or concerns will be referred to the appropriate level staff member or Cooperative administrator who is most able to respond in a timely manner. Each concern or suggestion shall be considered on its merit.

An individual who is not satisfied may file a grievance under Council policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. The Council encourages, but does not require, individuals to follow the channels of authority prior to filing a grievance. Neither this policy nor the *Uniform Grievance Procedure* create an independent right to a hearing before the Council.

LEGAL REF.:


115 ILCS 5/14(c-5), Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:140 (Communications To and From the Council), 2:230 (Public Participation at Executive Council Meetings and Petitions to the Council), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 3:30 (Chain of Command), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials and Programs), 8:10 (Connection with the Community)

ADOPTED: June 5, 2023

Vermilion Association for Special Education

QUICK START INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions on the use of your online school board policies are located at the Help page, accessible by clicking the icon in the upper right corner .

Vermilion Association for Special Education

