



Educational Cooperative

Serving From the Heart

PERSONNEL POLICY HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Approved on

July 15, 2026

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FORMS BELOW WILL BE PROVIDED ELECTRONICALLY AT WWW.CORE.K12.SD.US

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MAINTENANCE FORM	PURCHASE REQUISITION	MEDICAID THERAPY LOG	DISTANCE LEARNING PLAN
RELEASE OF INFORMATION	ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.....	PERSONNEL HANDBOOK.....	VEHICLE USE AGREEMENT

Welcome to Core Educational Cooperative

Congratulations and thank you for joining the staff of Core. Our purpose is to provide services to our member districts that ensure the continued progress of students. Our philosophy is to serve from the heart with the best interest of our children, families and community's as the focus. This cannot be accomplished without a dedicated and exemplary staff.

PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint employees with a common reference to the basic information that governs an individual's employment with the organization. Realizing that a policy to cover every contingency is impossible, the following is offered to give guidance in many of your day to day responsibilities.

The authority to enforce the provisions set forth in this handbook rests with the Director. The handbook neither implies nor establishes a contract between Core Educational Cooperative and the employee.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Core Educational Cooperative is a multi-service agency consisting of thirteen school districts. The cooperative provides specialized services identified as needed by the member schools.

It is primary function of the Core Educational Cooperative to assist member schools in providing a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive educational environment for children with special needs from birth through 21. The cooperative also works with the schools to help serve the needs of all children grades K-12.

The Cooperative strives to provide any new services that the majority of member schools deems appropriate and which is in the best interest of the majority of the cooperative schools. Core Educational Cooperative will provide assistance to neighboring schools when the personnel and resources are available. In all cases the governing board must approve the new services.

The Cooperative will cooperate and coordinate services with other agencies so as to maximize benefits to children and families served by member schools.

PURPOSE OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Core Educational Cooperative, through the Governing Board's approval, adopts the Personnel Policy Handbook to ensure all personnel issues are adhered to and to provide personnel administration. The Board has given personnel administration authority decisions to the Director. In the event a question arises out of the Personnel Policy Handbook, please forward any questions to your supervisor (Organizational Chart) or the Director.

Core adopts the policies and procedures for personnel administration in order to further the following goals:

1. To provide uniform and sound personnel administrative systems.
2. To inform employees of the general policies and procedures of Core and the benefits and obligations of employment with Core Educational Cooperative.
3. To ensure that all personnel actions are based upon employee qualification (knowledge, skills and abilities) and job performance, and comply with federal and state law.
4. To serve as written documentation of Core's commitment to fair employment practices and equal employment opportunity.
5. To promote and encourage communication between the supervisors, Director and employees.
6. To protect the rights of the employee and employer throughout the employment relationship and to ensure the responsibilities of both parties are carried out.

The Board has approved the adoption and implementation of this Personal Policy Handbook. The Board reserves the exclusive right to hire, promote or release the Director. The Board invests in the Director the authority and responsibility for carrying out the policies, procedures and intent of this handbook to include power to assign duties and responsibilities, train, discipline or reward employees within the guidelines of this handbook. Situations not covered by written policies will be the responsibility of the Director. All policies within this handbook shall comply with Board policies and state and federal law. In the event of a conflict the state or federal law shall prevail.

This handbook does not confer a contract of employment. The policies, procedures, rules and benefits are subject to change. These policies are provided as a reference of present policies and not a guarantee of employment or specific employment benefits.

Core Educational Cooperative does not recognize verbal or implied contracts for employment. Only the Director with approval of the Board has the authority to enter into any agreement of employment for a specified duration. Such employment agreement will only be valid and binding when the agreement is set forth in a written document signed by the employee, the Business Manager and the Board President.

Chain of Command

The success and effectiveness within an organization are linked to communication between all facets of the organization. Two-way communication and overall cohesiveness are two essential items to the goal of providing quality services to our member districts.

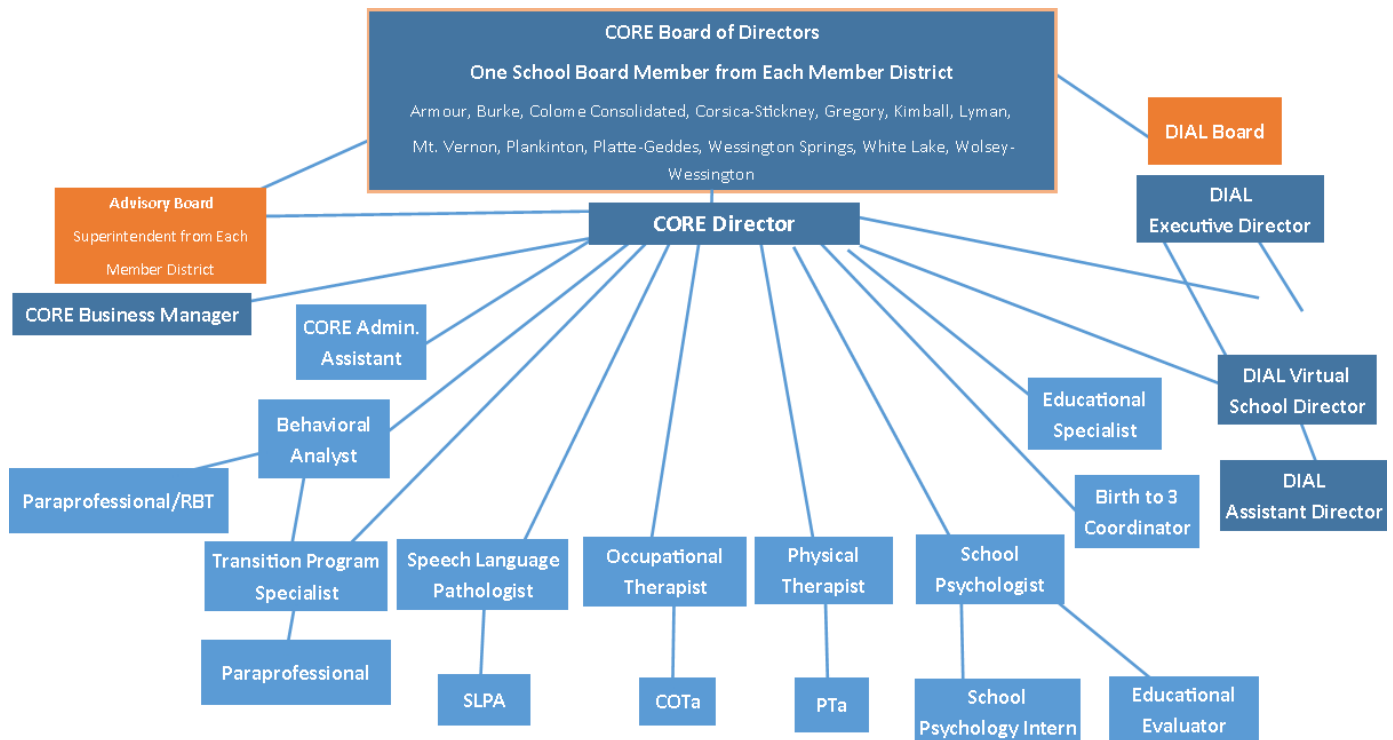
If you need assistance, or have questions or concerns, ask or forward them to the appropriate level. If a complaint exists, direct it to the lowest level or individual person(s) first. Formalize a possible or acceptable solution to the situation before proceeding. This is an essential part of the process.

The first level in the chain of command is you. Determine what you can do to solve or rectify a situation. The next level is your immediate supervisor. Starting at the lowest level possible in the chain of command saves time and energy on all concerned. This is not only a professional courtesy, but also a professional requirement. The process of jumping or bypassing links in the chain hinders the solution process.

If solutions cannot be accomplished at the lowest levels, formal complaint procedures are adopted through Board Policy and forms can be found within those policies. A summary of the levels of chain of command are as follows: the first level is yourself; the second level is your immediate supervisor; third level is the Director and the fourth level is the cooperative board. Attempt to create and establish solutions and agreements at each of these levels.

The golden rule is the professional way to deal with individuals, concerns and complaints. Treat and work with your co-workers as you would want to be dealt with.

2025-2026 CORE Organizational Chart



EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal Employment Opportunity

Core Educational Cooperative is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all persons regardless of religion, sex, age, national origin or disability. Equal opportunity extends to all aspects of the employment relationship, including hiring, transfers, recruiting, layoff and recall, promotions, training, terminations, working conditions, compensation, fringe benefits, retirement plans, disability leave and other terms and conditions of employment.

Core subscribes, to the fullest extent, to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their age, race, creed, color, sex, marital status, political affiliation, disability, or national origin. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit, and the ability to successfully do the job assigned.

Core complies with federal and state equal employment laws and strives to keep the workplace free from all forms of harassment. Core considers harassment and discrimination in all forms to be a serious offense. Employees who have been subject to prohibited discrimination or harassment should immediately report the incident to his/her Supervisor or the Director.

Veteran's Preference – GBAA

If a veteran possesses the qualifications necessary to discharge the duties of the position involved, the veteran shall receive preference for employment and promotion. For the purposes of this policy, the term "veteran" means any person who:

1. has served the full obligation for active duty, reserve, or National Guard service in the military, or received an early discharge for a medical condition, hardship, reduction in force, or at the convenience of the military; and
2. has been separated or discharged from such service honorably or under honorable conditions. In order to determine if the veteran's preference applies, each applicant for employment shall complete an employment application on which the applicant is asked if the applicant is a veteran. All veterans are subject to criminal background check requirements as set forth in state law.

Nondiscrimination

Core is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in relation to race, sex, religion, national background, disabilities, and other human differences. Respect for the dignity and worth of each individual will be paramount in the establishment of all policies by the Board and in the administration of those policies. The Constitutions of our nation and state, pertinent legislation enacted at those two levels of government, as well as court interpretations regarding citizens' rights, under gird this statement.

In keeping with these statements, the following will be objectives of the Core Educational Cooperative.

1. To promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the state and federal constitutions, pertinent legislation and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. To encourage positive experiences in human values for children and adults who have differing personal and family characteristics or who come from various socio-economic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. To carefully consider, in all decisions made which affect the schools, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
4. To initiate a process of reviewing all policies and practices of the Core Educational Cooperative in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this policy.

5. To work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as that of groups and agencies, both private and governmental.

Core's policy on nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public and individuals with whom it does business.

Forms and procedures for filing grievances can be found in the Board Policy File GBM-R.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its amendments provide comprehensive civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities in the area of employment public accommodations, state and local government services and programs. Title II of the ADA states in part, that *'no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of such disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in programs or activities sponsored by a public entity.'* Core has adopted this policy to provide prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the US Department of Justice regulations implementing Title II of the ADA.

Grievance Policy

The CORE Educational Cooperative will not violate any of the provisions of applicable federal programs, statutes or regulations, including but not limited to Title IX, ESEA/Title I, Rehabilitation Act Section 504, Title II (Americans with Disabilities Act), NCLB and McKinney-Vento Act (homeless children). The CORE Educational Cooperative will not discriminate in any of its policies and programs on the basis of age, race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex or disability.

The Educational Cooperative will provide the following:

1. an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of complaints, including the opportunity for the complainant and alleged perpetrator to present witnesses and provide evidence;
2. evaluation of all relevant information and documentation relating to a complaint of discrimination;
3. specific, reasonably prompt time frames at each stage of the grievance process;
4. written notice to all parties within a specified timeframe of the outcome or disposition of the grievance at each stage of the process;
5. an opportunity to appeal the findings or remedy, or both;
6. an assurance that the Cooperative will take steps to prevent recurrence of any discrimination and correct discriminatory effects on others; and
7. language in the policies and grievance procedures indicating that any attempts to informally or voluntarily resolve the complaint or grievance should not delay the commencement of the Cooperative's investigation.

In compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations, the Board has appointed the Director as the Cooperative's Compliance Officer to coordinate program compliance with federal programs. The Director can be reached at:

CORE Educational Cooperative
612 S. Main Street
PO Box 518
Platte, SD 57369
Phone #: 605-337-3178

A complaint may also be filed with the United States Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education at: 1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320, Kansas City, Missouri 64106: Telephone: (816) 268-0550; Facsimile: (816)268-0599; Telecommunication Device for the Deaf: (877) 521.2172; E-mail: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov.

The CORE Educational Cooperative has adopted a specific procedure to ensure that parental/student/public complaints related to the provisions of applicable federal programs, statutes or regulations, including claims of retaliation. The Cooperative will not discriminate, in any of its policies and programs, on the basis of age, race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex or disability. (Complaint Procedure can be found in Board Policy AC-E)

Sexual Harassment Policy

The CORE Educational Cooperative is committed to an environment which is free from sexual harassment and conducive to all. Sexual harassment can inhibit a student's educational opportunities and an employee's work. Sexual harassment of cooperative employees, cooperative volunteers, parents, guests, students, visitors and vendors of the cooperative shall also not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited.

All cooperative employees, cooperative volunteers, parents, guests, students, visitors and vendors shall conduct themselves in a civil and responsible manner and in a manner consistent with cooperative policies. This policy prohibiting sexual harassment shall apply to all including students, cooperative employees, cooperative volunteers, parents, guests, visitors and vendors while on cooperative property, while attending or participating in cooperative activities, on cooperative-owned property or on non-cooperative property, while in any cooperative-owned or leased vehicle, or when in a private vehicle located on cooperative property.

The Cooperative shall investigate all reported instances involving sexual harassment. Attempts to informally or voluntarily resolve the complaint should not delay the commencement of the Cooperative's investigation. Unless a different person is designated by the Director to conduct the investigation, the administrator of the attendance center/site where the sexual harassment is alleged to have occurred is responsible for investigating the alleged sexual harassment. Allegations of sexual harassment may also be reported by the administration to other authorities, including but not limited to law enforcement.

The Cooperative will maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible under the circumstances. However, a person reporting sexual harassing conduct must understand that should the administrator who is investigating the report determine there is reasonable cause to suspect that sexual harassment did occur which could result in administrative discipline or a referral to the Board, the person alleged to have sexually harassed another person may have the right to know the identity of the person(s) making the report in order that he/ she may have an opportunity to defend himself/herself.

The Cooperative strictly prohibits retaliation against any person because he or she has made a report, testified, assisted, or participated in the investigation of a report of alleged sexual harassment. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of verbal or physical reprisal or adverse pressure. The person(s) alleged to have sexually harassed another person shall not directly or indirectly (such as through a third person) harass, pressure, or retaliate against any other person because of the complaint being reported. A violation of this provision may lead to separate disciplinary action based on the retaliation. Any person who believes he or she is being subjected to retaliation because of his or her involvement with a sexual harassment report should immediately contact the supervisor/Director.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and

including termination of employment. School volunteers, parents, guests, visitors, and vendors who violate this policy may be prohibited from being on school property. (Definitions and complaint procedures are found in Board Policy ACAA)

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employee Responsibility

All Core employees are expected to act ethically and professionally within the workplace. It is the Core Employees' responsibility to report to their supervisor or Director any convictions that would disqualify them from employment or inhibit the performance of their job duties.

Staff Conduct

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws of the State as these affect their work, the policies of the Governing Board, and the regulations designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the Governing Board expects that the specialized certified personnel and other staff will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the Core Educational Cooperative, but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by the students and school personnel.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of on-going Core Educational Cooperative operations and the educational program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:

1. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work and for assigned meetings.
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the Governing Board and regulations of the Core Educational Cooperative administration in regard to the general public.
3. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
4. Care and protection of Core Educational Cooperative property.
5. Concern for the attention to their own and Core Educational Cooperative's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.
6. Professional attire which complies to the dress code of the school districts staff is attending.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Students and employee safety are a paramount concern of the Core Educational Cooperative Governing Board. Employees under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances are a serious risk to themselves, to students, and to other employees.

Therefore, the Core Educational Cooperative Governing Board will not tolerate the unlawful manufacture, use, possession, sale, distribution or being under the influence of drugs or controlled substances. Nor will the Board tolerate the unlawful use of or being under the influence of alcohol by an on-duty employee. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include dismissal, and referral for prosecution. Each employee of the Core Educational Cooperative is hereby notified that, as a condition of employment, the employee must abide by the terms of this policy and will report to the Director any criminal alcohol and/or other drug statute convictions for any alcohol and/or other drug violation. Such notification must be made by the employee to the Director no later than five (5) days after conviction.

Within thirty (30) days after receipt of information concerning an alleged or proven violation of this policy, the Core Educational Cooperative will take appropriate disciplinary action which may include termination of employment or requiring the employee to participate in alcohol and/or other drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation programs, and possible referral for prosecution.

The Governing Board recognizes that employees who have an alcohol and/or other drug use/abuse problem should be encouraged to seek professional assistance. Although the Cooperative does not assume the financial responsibility for rehabilitation and treatment for drug and alcohol abuse, an employee who requests assistance will be provided a listing of available regional treatment facilities or agencies to assist him/her in their choice or a service provider.

When a staff member has consumed alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs off Core Educational Cooperative property and/or before a school activity, the staff member will not be allowed on the property or to participate in school activities. Staff members who violate this regulation will be subject to the same penalties as for possession or consumption on school property.

The Core Educational Cooperative Governing Board hereby commits itself to a continuing good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace.

A copy of this policy shall be given to all present and future employees.

Smoking Policy

Core will abide by the applicable state laws as it pertains to smoking on public property. No smoking is allowed in company owned vehicles.

Abuse and Neglect Policy

Cooperative personnel have the same responsibilities under the law as any school district personnel. Personnel are obligated to report any suspected or actual child abuse or neglect. Any person who intentionally fails to make a required report is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

The following procedure is to be followed:

Personnel suspecting child abuse or neglect, are to contact the principal or superintendent in the school district where that student is attending school. The principal or superintendent shall report the information according to provisions in South Dakota Codified Law. The mandatory reporter who witnessed the disclosure or evidence of the abuse or neglect must be available to answer questions when the initial report is made pursuant to SDCL 26-8A-8.

Cooperative personnel are to report all suspected child/abuse neglect cases to the Director.

Child abuse/neglect matters are confidential. These matters should only be discussed with the proper authorities.

Vehicle Policy

An employee who has a vehicle assigned to them by the Core Educational Cooperative will be responsible for the washing/cleaning both the interior and exterior of that vehicle. Payment for maintenance expenses, i.e. oil changes, repairs, tires, etc. will be the responsibility of Core Educational Cooperative.

Each employee will have on file in the business office a copy of their current driver's license and personal insurance. Each employee will be issued and expected to review and sign the Motor Vehicle Safety policy. A signed copy of this policy will also be kept in the business office. Cooperative owned vehicles will be housed at a location determined by the director.

Each employee utilizing a cooperative owned vehicle will submit a signed mileage sheet to the Director by the staff meeting of the month following the vehicle usage.

Employees using their own vehicle and receiving mileage will submit a voucher documenting the mileage, including odometer readings, by the first of each month. Employee vehicle use may be granted by the director or business manager in the event of weather-related needs or other situations which have been approved. Use of employee's own vehicles without permission will result in non-payment of mileage requests.

Vehicle Return Condition: When a cooperative owned vehicle is returned to the Core Educational Cooperative office or reassigned to another employee, it must be returned in the same condition in which it was received. This includes cleaning both the interior and exterior of the vehicle and removing all personal belongings and trash. Employees may be responsible for any cleaning costs incurred if a vehicle is returned in an unreasonably dirty condition.

Voyager Fleet Card Policy

Each staff member with a cooperative vehicle will be provided with a voyager fleet card to use for purchasing fuel. Individuals making purchases with the voyager fleet card are required to submit receipts with each month's mileage log. The cooperative board reserves the right to revoke the use of any voyager fleet card if use becomes other than for which it was originally intended.

Staff Meetings

It is the philosophy of the cooperative's director that staff meetings are imperative for developing cohesiveness between the services within the cooperative's member schools and in ensuring continued positive morale within the staff. Considering this philosophy, ***all staff meetings are mandatory***, and staff will only be released from attendance with permission from the director.

Staff meetings will be held every month unless otherwise determined by the director. An initial draft calendar of staff meetings is listed below. Staff meetings will start at 12:30 on the date indicated

August 12th (Schedule will be sent for this day)

September - No Scheduled Meeting – CPR Training - **TBD**

October 16th

November 20th

December 18th - Lunch with Board at 11:30 Meeting to follow

January 22nd

February 19th

March – No Scheduled Meeting

April 9th

May 14th End of Year Meeting

Office Hours

The office hours will be from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Thursday and from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm on Friday during the months of August through May. During the months of June and July, the office hours will be from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. **The office will be closed on Fridays during this period.**

If all thirteen districts are closed, the Core office will also be closed. This determination will be made by the Director in consultation with the member school's calendars. In the case of inclement weather, the director will

determine closure of the office and notify employees and member districts. An office calendar can be found on the cooperative's website. <https://Core.k12.sd.us>

Communicable Diseases

The Governing Board recognizes its responsibility to provide a clean and healthy environment for students and school employees.

The determination of whether an infected employee be excluded from work activities shall be made on a case-by-case basis, under the direction of the Director or designee. In situations where the decision requires additional knowledge and expertise, the Director will refer the case to an advisory committee for assistance in determining the proper course of actions.

The advisory committee may be composed of:

- 1) A representative from the State Health department;
- 2) The employee's physician;
- 3) The employee and/or designee;
- 4) The Director or designee; and
- 5) Other appropriate Cooperative personnel

In making the determination, the advisory committee shall consider:

- 1) The physical condition of the employee(s).
- 2) The expected type(s) of interaction with others in the school or Core setting;
- 3) The impact on both the infected employee and others in that setting;
- 4) The South Dakota Department of Health guidelines and policies;
- 5) The status of certification of the employee as is promulgated in SDCL 13-43-3 and SDCL 13-43-3.3;
- 6) The recommendation of the County Health Officer, which may be controlling;
- 7) Information regarding the infected employee which is deemed part of his/her personnel records, therefore is classified as "Confidential" as required by SDCL 1-27-3.

The advisory committee may officially request assistance form the State Department of Health.

If the employment of an infected employee is to be interrupted or discontinued, the employee will be entitled to use available medical leave and receive available benefits.

Public information will not be revealed about the employee who may be infected. If the employee is permitted to remain in the Cooperative setting the following procedure will be followed by the Director or his designee:

Information will be provided, as appropriate to Core Employees who have regular contact with the employee, as to the employee's medical condition and other factors needed for consideration in carrying out job responsibilities.

Health guidelines for work attendance will be established and interpreted within the context of the case. The guidelines are not inclusive but are available to be used as a resource. Core personnel will refer to school health professionals for specific judgments in interpreting the guidelines.

Instructions in appropriate handling of blood and body fluids will be provided. Hand washing after contamination, food preparation and health/hygiene care performed in different sink and work areas, maintenance cleaning and other personal hygiene measures are part of creating a healthy environment.

Specific health concerns may require the advisory committee to make a determination on attendance or participation in Core activities.

Communicable Disease Guidelines

Health guidelines for work attendance are established and interpreted with the context of situation. The guidelines are not inclusive but are available to be used as a resource. Specific needs will be addressed individually. Core Educational Cooperative personnel will refer to health professionals for specific judgments in interpreting the guidelines.

DISEASE AND INCUBATION PERIOD	RULES FOR WORK ATTENDANCE
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) 6 months – 5 years	Determination should be made by the team process as outlines in the Communicable Disease Policy. The State Department of Health guidelines on AIDS shall be used as reference.
Chicken Pox: 14-21 days	The employee may attend work after all pox are dry and scabbed.
Cytomegalovirus (CMV) Salivary Gland Viruses	The employee may attend work. Precautions should be taken by contacts with immunosuppressant as anti-cancer or organ transplants as well as anyone with suspected or known pregnancy. Good hand washing in all cases should eliminate risk of transfer of infection.
Giardiasis and Infectious Enteric Diseases: 5-25 days or longer	The employee may attend work. Food handlers must remain at home until they have three negative stool specimens. Good hand washing in all cases should eliminate risk of transfer of infection.
Herpes Simplex: 2-12 days	The employee may attend work during active case. Good hand washing in all cases should eliminate risk of transfer of infection.
Impetigo: Variable 4-10 days	The employee may attend work if under treatment and dry.
Infectious Hepatitis: 15-40 days Average 25 days	The employee may attend work as directed by the physician. Appropriate personal hygiene precautions should eliminate risk of transfer of infection.
Measles (Red, Hard, Rubella, 7-day) 8-14 days	The employee may attend work after a minimum of seven days. Employees who have had contact with measles may attend work if the employee has had the measles or if immunization is up to date.
Infectious Mononucleosis (Glandular Fever) 2-6 weeks	The employee may attend work as directed by the physician.
Mumps: 12-21 days	The employee may attend work after swelling has disappeared.
Pediculosis (Lice, Crabs)	The employee may attend work after treatment.
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) 5-12 days	The employee may attend work after the eye is clear, under treatment or with physician's written permission.
Planter's Warts	The employee may attend work.
Ring Worm (Scalp, Body, Athlete's Foot)	The employee may attend work if the area is under treatment.

Rubella (3-day, German Measles) 14-21 days	The employee may attend work after a minimum of four days. Prevent exposure of pregnant women.
Scabies (7-year itch, Mites)	The employee may attend work after treatment.
Streptococcal Infections (Scarlet Fever, Scarletina, Strep Throat) 1-3 days	The employee may attend work 24 hours after initiating oral antibiotic therapy and clinically well.
Co-Vid 19	Per Policy

- Time interval between initial contact with an infectious agent and the first sign of symptom of the disease.

Employees' Personal Property

Core is not responsible for employee personal property, which may be damaged or stolen at work. Employees are encouraged to leave valuables at home. Employees who allow students access to any personal property will be responsible for any damage expenses. Reimbursement for work-related damage to clothing, eyeglasses, vehicles or other personal property will be considered by the Director on an individual basis.

Conflict of Interest

Employees will not use privileged information obtained through work at Core Educational Cooperative for business dealings or for other means of personal gain. Any employee involved in the selection of new employees will not participate in the selection process should a family member apply for a position. Employees should not supervise immediate family members who are also employed by the cooperative.

All employees must avoid activities or relationships that conflict with Core's interests or adversely affect the cooperative's reputation. Employees must disclose actual or potential conflicts to the Director as soon as they become aware of them. Failure to make required disclosures or resolve conflicts of interest satisfactorily can result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Employees will not have any direct pecuniary interest in or receive direct benefit from any public contract or federal monies awarded to the cooperative. This includes directly furnishing any labor, equipment or supplies to the cooperative unless the amount involved is less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

The Director and Business Manager will disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the Governing Board in writing following Board Policy {AH, AH-E (1 & 2)}.

Complaint Against An Employee Procedure

Constructive criticism of the school and its employees will be welcomed by the administration and board when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program or to equip the cooperative to do their tasks more effectively. Whenever a complaint is made directly to the board, the administration, or the staff either as a whole or as individuals, the complaining person or group will be advised to take their concern or complaint to the appropriate staff member. The procedure for handling complaints that cannot be solved informally, regarding the performance, conduct or actions of any employee shall be handled according to the guidelines found in Board Policy File GBM-R.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SERVICES

All Core Employees will review and sign the Responsible Use Policy on an annual basis. This policy can be found on the website under Employee Forms www.core.k12.sd.us

Cell Phone Policy

Cooperative staff will receive a monthly stipend of \$60.00 for using their personal cell phones for work related calls/texts. This will be paid on a biannual basis following the submission of a voucher and verification of a personal cell phone plan. The only exceptions to this policy are those granted by the Governing Board.

Purchases and Purchase Orders

The cooperative's business manager and director are the sole designee for all purchases. All items purchased for the Core Educational Cooperative must follow proper procedures and be approved by the designated purchasing agent for the cooperative. Any purchases made without proper authorization are considered personal purchases and will not be paid by the cooperative. When seeking to purchase any or all supplies/equipment, adhere to the following procedures: (This includes Teachers Pay Teachers)

1. Contact direct supervisor for discussion of the purchase and verbal approval.
2. Complete and submit a requisition request through WebLink.
3. The direct supervisor will review and approve the requisition request in WebLink.
4. Following supervisor approval, the Business Manager will review the request and determine whether funds are available to purchase within the applicable budget.
5. If the funds are available the business manager will complete the purchase order, authorize the purchase and place the order for the item.

Leave and Travel Policy

It is the policy of the Core Educational Governing Board that any professional travel or meetings that may be contemplated that require an employee to attend an event that is to be held out of the state of South Dakota, shall have Governing Board approval.

Events held in South Dakota and travel to and from said event shall be approved by the Director of the Core Educational Cooperative.

All requests for travel or professional development should be discussed with direct supervisor for verbal approval and then submitted to director for written approval utilizing the Professional Leave Request form. Determination of days allowed toward contract will be at the discretion of the Director.

Meals (not provided by the conference) will be reimbursed based on the state rates only when overnight travel is necessary.

When overnight travel is required for approved business and the destination is more than 60 miles from the employee's primary work location, the Cooperative will pay for hotel lodging expenses.

All other leave will be documented utilizing the Absence Leave Request form. These forms should be submitted to your director/supervisor who will sign and submit it to the Director. The Director will then submit the form to the Business Manager to be filed and documented to ensure accurate accounting of employee leave.

Personal Leave

1. Personal leave will be awarded at a rate of 3 days a year with the option to carry over 1 day accumulative to four. This is not deducted from other leaves.
2. A request must be submitted to the director for Personal Leave prior to the date requested.
3. A number of employees may not take Personal Leave at the same time. (Director's Discretion).

Wellness Day

One wellness day a year will be given to employees and cannot be used in conjunction with other personal or sick leave days.

Sick Leave and Bereavement

1. Sick Leave: Sick leave will be twelve days (12) per year and may be accumulated up to 60 days. Sick leave may apply to illness within the immediate family, with the immediate family defined as: spouse, children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law, stepchildren, and long term foster care children.
2. Bereavement:
 - a. Upon notice to the director, each employee shall be allowed up to three (3) days of paid bereavement leave at the time of the death of any immediate family member.
 - b. The director may grant up to two (2) additional days in the event of unusual problems (e.g., travel) related to using bereavement leave.
 - c. Leave of up to two (2) days shall be allowed to attend the funeral of others close to the employee. These days will be taken from the employee's sick leave or accumulated sick leave.
 - d. The immediate family shall be defined as a parent, child, husband, wife, brother, sister, parent-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or any other member of the employee's household.
3. If a teacher is injured on the job, available sick days may be used by the teacher regardless of workmen's compensation coverage.
4. A voluntary sick leave bank will be established for all full-time employees who are employed by the Core Educational Cooperative.
 - Such sick leave bank shall be inaugurated the first day of September **each year**, provided that a minimum of 85% of the eligible personnel elect to become participants in the bank.
 - Each participating person shall contribute 1 day of his / her sick leave per year to the bank, regardless of the number of days in the bank. The deadline for sick leave bank enrollment shall be on September 20th of each year. Eligible personnel declining to become participants in the bank by August 1st shall be ineligible for participation that year. The total number of days in the bank shall not go below 60 days or exceed 100 days.
 - If, on September 1st of a given year, the sick leave bank is not able to absorb one day of sick leave from each participating employee, without exceeding the 100-day accumulation limit, each participating employee will then designate one day of their sick leave to be added to the sick leave bank at such time during the year when the bank is able to absorb the total of 100 days. If the bank is not able to absorb the total number of days so designated by the participating employees, during a school year without exceeding the limit of 100 days, no sick leave days designated for the sick leave bank will be deducted from the total accumulated sick leave days of the individual employees at the end of the school year. In any given year either all participating employees contribute a day to the bank, or none will be asked to do so.
 - A committee, consisting of the Core Educational Cooperative Director and 2 employees, will determine who will be given sick day loans from the bank. All requests for use of the bank must be submitted in writing to the Sick Leave Bank Committee. The Core Educational Cooperative Director shall be a permanent member, but the employees shall be elected each year at the opening staff meeting of the Core Educational Cooperative.
 - To be eligible to borrow from the Sick Leave Bank, an employee must have used all of their own sick leave and personal leave.
 - Days in the bank shall be withdrawn on first come, first served basis, and, if the total days in the bank are exhausted in any year, use of the bank is ended for that year. Unused days in the bank shall be carried over to the next succeeding school year.

Policies for Military Leave, Political Activities and Family Medical Leave Act can be found in the Board Policy GBEC, GCBDE.

Payment for Services and Extended Contract

All employees with a contract specifying number of days will complete a Personnel Activity Record and submit it to the Director for signature. This documentation is due by the fifth of the following month.

Employees receiving payment on an hourly contractual basis will submit a voucher to the Director by the first of each month in order to receive payment by the 20th.

Extended Contract work (ESY services), will be paid according to the negotiated agreement. Electronic signatures will be acceptable for all forms.

BACKGROUND CHECK

The Cooperative is committed to the selection of quality staff and to providing a safe environment for students and staff. As part of the commitment, the Cooperative will obtain background checks on all employees and may obtain background checks on volunteers or employees of contracted vendors in accordance with state law.

All information received through these checks will be kept confidential and will not be released except to those entities authorized to receive such information and by written request. All requests for information will be maintained within the business manager's office. Federal background checks will be kept within a locked cabinet and will only be available to those individuals who have received training for maintaining Criminal History Report Investigations (CHRI). Employees may request to see the information received from the state but may not view Federal background information.

An individual may be granted employment on a temporary basis pending the receipt of the results of a criminal background check. In the event that a temporary employee or individual requesting employment is determined to have an unsatisfactory background check, the employee will be notified in writing that employment will be terminated based on a disqualifier identified during the background check.

Political Activity Policy

No partisan political activity shall be permitted on the part of any Core Educational Cooperative employee at any time during regular school hours. Furthermore, no employee may use their official cooperative title to endorse or oppose any candidate, proposition or referendum being voted upon by the electorate.

Furthermore, no federal state or local funds shall be used for partisan political purposes of any kind by any person or organization involved in the administration of federally assisted programs.

Separation and Suspension Policy

Resignations become effective at the end of the school year in which they are submitted. Resignations to become effective earlier than at the end of the school year require a release by the Board and must be considered on an individual basis. Resignations are to be submitted to the Director.

The Board may suspend any employee with pay pending final action to terminate or continue employment if, in its judgement, the character of the charges against the employee warrant such action. The Cooperative Board grants the Director the discretion and authority to suspend any employee with pay up to 90 days and without pay up to 30 days.

Procedures for dismissal of certificated employees are governed by law and all actions of the Board as well as the rights and privileges of employees are clearly identified in the statutes. Certificated employees are

dismissed only when all efforts to assist the employee to achieve professional standards of professional competence have been undertaken.

Evaluation of Staff

In order to assure a high quality of professional staff members and administrator performance to advance the program of the Core Educational Cooperative, a continuous program for professional staff members and administration evaluation shall be established by director and regular reports shall be made to the Governing Board concerning the outcomes of these evaluations.

Professional staff members and administrators new to the Core Educational Cooperative will be observed with feedback at least once each semester during the first two years of employment and at least once every year thereafter. Member districts will be asked for input concerning individuals providing service within their district. A formal evaluation will be completed and discussed with employees at least once during the first two years and every other year thereafter. The Director will compile those results and submit a final document to be reviewed with the staff member.

Evaluations should provide positive feedback to professional staff members and administrators. Strengths, as well as areas needing improvement will be noted.

The evaluation process will include:

1. An ongoing review of the techniques and procedures for making evaluations. New techniques and procedures that would contribute to a professional's understanding of his strengths and weaknesses should be used.
2. Goals and objectives that are understood and agreed upon by the professional staff and the administration. The criteria should be built around the established educational philosophy, goals, objectives and educational program developed and accepted by the professional staff of the Core Educational Cooperative. Job specific criteria will be established within each job description for all professional employees.
3. Application of the information gained for the planning of staff development and in-service training activities, which are designed to improve instruction and increase professional staff member competence.

The evaluation process will include self-evaluation, supervisor-initiated observations, input from member district administration and professional employee initiated observations.

The formal evaluations will be written and will be discussed by the evaluator and the professional employee or administrator. The discussions may either precede or follow the writing of the evaluation document. Copies of the written document will be signed and dated by both parties and incorporated into the personnel files of the professional employee or administrator. The signature of the professional employee or administrator does not indicate approval or disapproval of the evaluation, but that the evaluation has been read and discussed.

The written evaluation should be specific in terms of a person's strengths and weaknesses. Those areas where improvement is needed should be clearly set forth and recommendations for improvement should be made. Subsequent evaluations should address themselves to any improvement or to any continuing difficulty that is observed.

***All professional employee's evaluation forms can be found in the Director's office.