

## **MCPS-MCAAP Work-Life Expectations**

MCPS and MCAAP believe that meaningful communication and collaboration is vital to the success of our schools and offices and that strong partnerships between and amongst administrators is demonstrated through fair treatment, integrity, and open and honest communication. We recognize that the nature of the jobs performed by administrators is such that work beyond the customary eight hours per day and 40 hour work week is frequently required. It is also understood that administrators are frequently called upon to address emergency situations which command prompt attention, priority, and flexibility. We are also mindful that administrators take their work obligations and leadership responsibilities seriously while balancing their personal commitments, relationships and personal priorities as individuals. The tenets and beliefs mutually developed and pledged in the compacts on respect and climate support a positive work environment as well as opportunities to model expected behaviors. To this end, MCAAP and MCPS offer the following general principles and expectations to guide all administrators as they reflect on the balance of their work and personal lives.

Administrative teams and work relationships can take many forms such as central office directors and/or supervisors, principal and assistant principals, coordinators, and other school-based team members, associate superintendent and directors, or associate superintendent and level alike principals. As such, MCPS and MCAAP have identified opportunities and expectations which provide guidance to administrators to exercise professional judgment in decisions that directly impact their immediate work schedule and those whom they supervise.

### **General principles**

- ❖ Communication is key. Each member of an administrative team or within a designated administrative unit has a shared responsibility to discuss, understand, and implement these work-related expectations on an annual basis or more often if necessary. Subordinates have a voice to be heard in the development of these understandings.

- ❖ The assumption should be that administrators are professionals who will complete the work and meet reasonable expectations of a commitment of time and effort to do the work.
- ❖ While we recognize that administrators can exercise and demonstrate professional judgment in addressing the work and balancing their personal lives, we also recognize that providing flexibility in how this is accomplished may be appropriate and does not translate to a reduction in responsibility and accountability.
- ❖ Administrators appreciate and value collaboration and prefer to be accountable for clear, consistent and mutually agreed upon expectations.
- ❖ These guiding principles support and sustain a positive work environment which builds on strong partnerships, promotes trust and advances mutual goals and mutual respect.

### **Communication Expectations**

- 1.0 Administrators in supervisory and subordinate roles will work together to identify and develop communication opportunities, methods, and settings which will work for the administrative group as well as others as appropriate. Examples will include but not be limited to
  - 1.1 Defining circumstances which are emergencies, urgent, routine, 24/7 coverage or availability, next day priorities, etc. and establishing communication methods and timelines for related instances.
  - 1.2 Establishing the preferred method of communication for the administrators as a group and/or individually such as email, text messaging, telephone calls, memos, etc. and under what circumstances.
  - 1.2 Identifying how and when staff should respond to communications. For example, an email late in the late evening or in the very early morning may not require an immediate response but a telephone call may indicate an emergency. Defining expectations of response time and methodology sets forth reasonable expectations and smooth operations.

1.3 Sharing calendars is appropriate. This provides opportunities to plan, anticipate needs and facilitate leadership. Outlook is a recognized and supported district resource.

1.4 Clarifying expectations related to unique circumstances such as working off site, emergency closings or delayed/early dismissals, etc.

1.5 Anticipating exceptions and instances where agreements are not met, not functioning or need revisions should be included in the discussions.

2.0 Administrators recognize that their colleagues have personal commitments, relationships, and priorities and shall work together to establish protocols to support opportunities to balance work and personal lives. Such efforts create an environment which promote the health and well-being of all involved. Examples will include but not be limited to

2.1 Articulating within the administrative team general expectations of duty or work time (i.e. duty day), available time (i.e. after work until 9 pm), and personal time when a person is not available (i.e. after 9 pm or while on leave).

2.2 Recognizing not all administrators have access to technology which enables faster communication. The use and access to personal contact information shall be jointly discussed and mutually agreed upon. Emergency contingency communication plans shall be included in these understandings.

2.3 Providing guidelines and opportunities which support leave such as sick leave or annual leave and which treat such circumstances with respect and clear understanding of when and why leave may be interrupted.

### **Technology Expectations**

3.0 Greater access to technology enables administrators to complete more work and tasks remotely and efficiently.

3.1 Providing administrators assistance to gain access to the type of technology that will enable them to be more flexible and efficient in completing their responsibilities.

3.2 Using technology to effectively and efficiently complete work via approved alternative schedules or locations.

3.3 Using technology to facilitate two-way communication between and amongst administrators under many different circumstances such as emergencies, announcements or change in circumstances.

### **Professional Expectations**

4.0 MCPS and MCAAP recognize that different schools and offices may exercise professional judgment under specific circumstances such as closing an office on a temporary basis or for short durations (i.e. winter break, the afternoon when electricity is not available, cleaning of the carpets throughout the office). It is understood that resources and emergency preparedness will be incorporated into the plans for such contingencies and communicated to the appropriate offices.

5.0 MCPS and MCAAP believe that creating and embracing a positive work environment is achieved through consistent, best practices which demonstrate respect, trust, and collaboration. All supervisors should model and foster the behaviors identified in the culture of respect and climate compacts. Leadership by example includes things as simple as reporting to work on time, honoring another's personal time, and using civility in everyday interactions with others in the workplace.

6.0 MCPS and MCAAP support the sharing of ideas and best practices and value the experiences of others. We support opportunities and situations where administrators can share these with each other in a setting designed for reflections and professional growth. The job-alike professional learning communities (PLCs) may serve to facilitate this professional sharing and growth between and amongst colleagues.

*Reviewed and accepted by JCC: Fall 2013*