

# **Welcome to Stillwater Public Schools**



**STILLWATER PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK  
2022-2023**



We welcome you to Stillwater Public Schools! We are pleased you have chosen to work with us and hope you find fulfillment, enjoyment and satisfaction in your employment!

The goal of all Stillwater Public Schools employees is to further the education of all children. Whether you are a certified teacher or a support employee, you play an important role in impacting the students of Stillwater Public Schools.

We ask you to assist us in creating a warm, friendly atmosphere for yourself, fellow co-workers, and most of all our students. You are an important part of our ability to offer high quality education to our students. You have been selected for your job because we believe you are uniquely qualified to work in our schools.

This employee handbook explains many of the benefits Stillwater Public Schools offers. It also explains what Stillwater Public Schools expects of you and what to expect from us.

Please familiarize yourself with this handbook. If you have questions regarding personnel policies, or benefits, please feel free to discuss these issues with your principal/director. You may also contact the Human Resource Department for further information.

Congratulations on your employment with Stillwater Public Schools!

Sincerely,

Uwe Gordon  
Superintendent



## GENERAL INFORMATION

All Stillwater Public School employees must be approved and hired by the Stillwater Board of Education. Unless specified in the negotiated agreement, nothing in this handbook shall constitute a contract of employment between the school district and any employee. The Board of Education reserves the right to amend, rescind or add any provisions to this handbook at any time, without prior notice, for any reason necessary for the proper operation of the school district.

The most up-to-date policies, procedures and information will always be located online at [www.stillwaterschools.com](http://www.stillwaterschools.com). This handbook is not all-inclusive, there are additional policies that affect employees. As a new employee you are expected to review and maintain an understanding of all Stillwater Public School policies. The Employee Handbook is available at [www.stillwaterschools.com](http://www.stillwaterschools.com).

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## HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

The Human Resource Department serves you and Stillwater Public Schools. This office maintains master records of employment, classification, and benefits offered to Stillwater Public School personnel.

Notify Human Resources of any change in your address, telephone number, marital status, name, insurance, or retirement beneficiaries. Most of these can be completed by submitting a Blank Doc through TalentEd Records.

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## NONDISCRIMINATION

Stillwater Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender expression or identity, genetic information, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status in its programs, services, activities and employment. The district also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. This policy will prevail in all matters concerning staff, students, the public, employment, admissions, financial aid, educational programs, events, services, facilities access, individuals, companies, and firms with whom the board does business. Racial discrimination shall include racial slurs or other demeaning remarks concerning another person's race, ancestry, or country of origin and directed toward an employee, student, or visitor. ([Nondiscrimination Policy - DAA](#))

Inquiries concerning application of this policy may be referred to the superintendent or designee at:

Stillwater Public Schools  
314 S. Lewis  
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074  
405-533-6300

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## HARASSMENT OF EMPLOYEES AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT STUDENTS

Stillwater Public Schools will not tolerate or condone any form of harassment by employees, students, or third parties. Harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, directed towards an individual based on that individual's race, color, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, disability, or sex and shall include, but not be limited to, sexual harassment. ([Harassment of Employees & Other Individuals Who Are Not Students - DA](#))

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## ATTENDANCE

Each job in our district is accompanied by a contract that outlines the number of contract days and hours per day. We expect all employees to work their scheduled days and hours and be on time. Supervisors must be notified in advance if you are to be absent or late.

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## PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

The clothing that you wear to work should conform to your job duties. District provided clothing should be laundered. Questions about proper attire should be directed to your supervisor.

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## PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

You will be issued a photo identification card. The card identifies you as a Stillwater Public Schools employee. The card should be worn above the waist on a lapel, breast pocket or lanyard so you can easily be identified. Additionally, when entering district buildings other than your own, each employee must sign in and out as a visitor.

Damaged identification cards will be replaced for free, with proof of damaged card, while there will be a \$5 charge for lost cards. ([Identification Badges for Employees Requirements - CLCA](#))

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## TOBACCO/SMOKE FREE CAMPUS

Federal and state law prohibits smoking in any indoor facility, or the grounds thereof, which is used to provide educational services to children. Therefore, the use of tobacco or tobacco simulating products by staff, students, visitors, and members of the public is prohibited 24 hours a day, seven days a week while on, or in school property. The use of tobacco or tobacco simulating products at any school-sponsored event outside school premises, school-authorized vehicles or in personal vehicles while on school property is prohibited at all times. Tobacco and tobacco simulating products and devices include, but are not limited to cigarettes, cigarette papers, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vapor products or any other form of said products and devices. ([Tobacco/Smoke Free Campus - CKDA](#))

The district will refer employees, parents/guardians, family members and students to the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline (1-800-QUIT-NOW or OkHelpline.com) and other available cessation resources. The district will communicate and promote the available tobacco cessation benefits and insurance coverage to all prospective and current employees.

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## TELEPHONE, FAX MACHINES, COPIERS, PRINTERS, COMPUTERS AND EMAIL

Telephones, fax machines, copiers, printers, computers and email are available to employees for the purpose of performing job duties. Personal use should be limited and must not interfere with job performance. Stillwater Public Schools reserves the right to monitor all phone, fax and e-mail communications. ([Internet & Other Computer Networks Acceptable Use & Internet Agreement - EFBCA](#))

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## CONFIDENTIALITY

Working for a school district will regularly put you in contact with confidential information about students. Federal law dictates that you must not share this information with others. All employees must respect the confidentiality of information obtained either by accident or through the course of their job duties. ([Compliance with Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 - FL-R](#))

Employees are also responsible for understanding the confidentiality involved with Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA). The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act prohibits a school from disclosing personally identifiable information from students' education records without the consent of a parent or eligible student ([Compliance with Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 - FL-R](#)). Improper use of personal information may result in disciplinary action and/or legal action as appropriate.

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## LICENSED/CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

If you are required to be licensed or certified by virtue of your job description to perform your job at Stillwater Public Schools, proof of licensure/certification must be provided to the Human Resource Department upon hire or prior to renewal date. **You are responsible for maintaining your license or certification in an active status.** Stillwater Public Schools is under no obligation to hold a licensed/certified position for an employee whose license or certification is not active. Employees are required to immediately notify their supervisor or the Human Resource Department if their license or certification is restricted, lapsed, or any other circumstances that result in their license/certification not being considered *active* and in good standing. Disregard of licensure/certification requirements may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

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## NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS

All teachers and most support employees are covered by the contents of a negotiated agreement. These agreements are negotiated each year and are valid for the following school year. They are found at [www.stillwaterschools.com](http://www.stillwaterschools.com). It is the responsibility of each employee to read and understand his or her respective negotiated agreement. Administrators and employees not otherwise covered by a negotiated agreement should refer to the Board of Education Policy Manual for guidance.

## BENEFITS

As an employee, the health benefits available to you represent a significant component of your compensation package. They also provide important protection for you and your family in the case of illness or injury.

Your plan offers a series of health coverage options. Choosing a health coverage option is an important decision. To help you make an informed choice, your plan makes available a Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC), which summarizes important information about any health coverage option in a standard format, to help you compare across options.

The SBC may be found on the OMES web site under [Summary of Benefits and Coverage](#) section.

## HEALTH INSURANCE

New employees have 30 days from the date of employment to enroll in health insurance. Stillwater Public Schools will pay the amount of Health Choice high option; the employee will cover any additional premiums. If an employee chooses not to take health insurance they will be given a cash flex benefit in lieu of the medical flex benefit. This amount is to be determined by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. The health plan follows the calendar year and has an option period enrollment once a year, usually starting in mid-October with a deadline for new enrollment or plan changes by early November. Certain *Qualifying Events* are considered for changes or enrollment during the course of the year that do not fall into the *new employee* or *option period* enrollment times. If you have questions please contact the Stillwater Public Schools Benefits Specialist, Gale Henry, [ghenry@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:ghenry@stillwaterschools.com) or visit the website listed for information and forms. [Health Insurance Information Link](#)

## RETIREMENT

All classified employees are required to participate in the Oklahoma state Teachers Retirement System (OTRS). All nonclassified optional personnel regularly employed for twenty (20) or more hours per week may participate in the Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System (OTRS), and they would have thirty (30) days from their initial hire date to make a one-time irrevocable election to opt in or opt out of participation in OTRS. Should no election be made, employees will be deemed to participate. Finally, nonclassified employees who opt out will be ineligible for any future participation, unless hired in a classified position, but in that event would not be eligible for prior service credit. *Effective: July 1, 2021.* Questions about retirement should be directed to Desiree Burnsed at [dburnsed@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:dburnsed@stillwaterschools.com) or 405-533-6300 x5033.

## SECTION 125

All employees may elect on an annual basis to deduct certain amounts from their salary before taxes to pay for childcare or unreimbursed medical expenses. The enrollment period is during the spring and will also include options to invest in additional types of insurance and investment plans. Questions about Section 125 should be directed to Gale Henry at [ghenry@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:ghenry@stillwaterschools.com) or 405-707-5039.

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## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

For employees who may need assistance to overcome issues that are interfering with their ability to function in the workplace, available access to outside counseling and referrals to appropriate community and professional resources is important. Stillwater Public Schools has arranged with the licensed professional EAP counselors of **Grand Lake Mental Health Center, Inc.** to provide some of these services to our employees at no cost to the employee.

This voluntary, employee-focused intervention program offers assessment, counseling, referrals and follow-up services to employees who have personal or work-related issues and want assistance to identify solutions.

Issues that may threaten the employee's health, effectiveness on the job, and work attendance sometimes include but may not be limited to;

- Stress
- Grief
- Marriage and divorce
- Child/spouse abuse
- Eating disorders
- Family
- Smoking cessation
- Depression
- Aging
- Financial stress, credit problems
- Work
- Alcohol & drug abuse
- Parent-child relationships
- Eldercare

Stillwater Public Schools will fully support the initial visit and some subsequent visits with our EAP provider. Extended services requested by the employee may be at the expense of the individual. Insurance may apply.

Grand Lake Mental Health Center, Inc. has offices in Stillwater.

The EAP provider does not inform Stillwater Public Schools of the identity of employees inquiring about or accessing these services. The EAP provider will supply Human Resources with utilization and activity reports showing number of requests for service and type of service provided without any personal identification.

**Grand Lake Mental Health Center, Inc.** shall provide guaranteed complete privacy and protection for EAP client records.

**To access the services of Grand Lake Mental Health Center, Inc. please complete a referral form [here](#), indicating 'SPS- EAP' as the reason for referral. Urgent requests for service are expected to be addressed within 24 hours. Non-urgent requests will be scheduled within 10 business days. *Grand Lake Mental Health Center, Inc. shall provide guaranteed complete privacy and protection for EAP client records.***

**If you need assistance accessing services please call 405-372-2202 or email [abeard@glmhc.net](mailto:abeard@glmhc.net).**

In addition, an excellent resource for assistance is **United Way of Payne County**.

**United Way of Payne County** identifies more than twenty Partner Agencies whose mission is to provide support in a variety of areas, including counseling, legal aid, household necessities, adult day care, healthcare, transitional living services, meals, training and others.

United Way of Payne County can be contacted at **405-377-2161**, or by visiting at **109 E. Ninth Ave in Stillwater**.

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## WORKER'S COMPENSATION

If you are injured on the job, it is your responsibility to immediately report the injury to your supervisor. You must go to your supervisor and fill out worker's compensation paperwork within 24 hours. If you choose to go to the doctor, you must go to Stillwater Medical Urgent Care and Occupational Medicine at 518 East Lakeview Road Stillwater, OK 74075 and take the Medical Care Authorization Form and the First Fill Prescription form with you. Send all receipts and doctor's forms to Gale Henry at the Administration Building.

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## LEAVE

Negotiated agreements and policy allow for several options regarding paid and unpaid leave. Please refer to your negotiated agreement or policy manual to learn about all the various leaves available to you at [www.stillwaterschools.com](http://www.stillwaterschools.com). Employees who have questions about his or her leave should contact Gale Henry at [ghenry@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:ghenry@stillwaterschools.com) or 405-707-5039.

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## FMLA – FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Stillwater Public Schools complies with the requirements of the [Family Medical Leave Act](#) of 1993. This Act requires that a covered employer provide up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave to eligible employees. In order for the school district employees to qualify for FMLA leave they must have been employed by the school district for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours during their first year. All eligible employees who meet the Act's requirements may be granted a total of twelve (12) weeks of unpaid family leave and paid sick, vacation, and personal leave combined. Questions or inquiries regarding FMLA should be directed to Gale Henry at [ghenry@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:ghenry@stillwaterschools.com) or at 405-707-5039.

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## CERTIFIED LEAVE

All certified leave should be entered into Frontline Absence Management prior to the date you will be gone. If you are unable to enter it before your absence, you will need to have your supervisor enter it for you. Refer to the Certified Master Contract to find the amount of leave you receive each year.

1. Accessing the Frontline Absence Management website: From the Stillwater Public Schools website, select *Frontline* and then select *Login*. You may also go directly to the Frontline website at <https://login.frontlineeducation.com/login?signin>



2. Monitoring absence approvals: You may monitor your absences and your approval status from the homepage.
3. Creating an absence: To create an absence, select *Create An Absence*. You will enter the dates, reason, length, if a sub is needed and select *Next*. Review your information and select *Save*.
4. Monitoring absence leave balances: To monitor your absence leave balances, select *Account*, then *Absence Reason Balances*. It will show what your balance is as of that day. Any future balances are not deducted until the absence date arrives.
5. Changing Personal Information: To change your Login ID, select *Change Personal Information*. Select *Edit Info* and enter your home phone number including the area code. Select *Apply Changes* and you will be able to log on with your phone number. To change your PIN, select *Change PIN*. Enter the required information and select *Apply Changes*.
6. Creating Preferred Substitutes: To set up a list of substitutes you would like for the system to call first, select *Add New Substitutes*. Select the *On List* box and the *Include* box next to each substitute you would like to add to your list. Select *Apply Changes*.

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## SUPPORT LEAVE

All support leave should be entered into the time and attendance system prior to the date you will be gone. If you are unable to enter it before your absence, you may need to have your supervisor enter it for you. Refer to the Support Master Contract to find the amount of leave you receive each year.

1. Accessing the TimeClock Plus website: Go to the Stillwater Public School website ([www.stillwaterschools.com](http://www.stillwaterschools.com)). Click on the "Staff" link in the upper right-hand corner. Select *TimeClock Plus Clock* from the list of icons. Enter your employee id and click login.
2. Monitoring leave balances: Select *View* on the right-hand side of the screen. Select *View* and choose *Accruals* from the drop down box. This will show all leave available to you and how many hours you have left for the school year.
3. Entering leave when you will be absent: Click on the *Request* button. Enter the *date* you are requesting off, *start time* and *end time*. Select the *Leave Code* from the drop down menu, Click *OK* and Click *Yes*. An email will be sent to your supervisor. Once your supervisor approves, the leave will be entered on your timecard.

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## SICK LEAVE BANK

The sick leave bank is an extension of the Stillwater Public Schools sick leave policy. It covers sick leave beyond an employee's accumulated sick leave and may be used in the event of an extended illness, disability or injury. You may choose to join the sick leave bank by giving an initial donation of 2 sick leave days within the first 30 days of the school year. To use days from the sick leave bank, you must submit a letter of request to the superintendent for his/her approval along with a doctor's written verification. You may apply for 10 days for each year you have been employed with Stillwater Public Schools but may not borrow more than 60 days. After you have used 20 days from the sick leave bank, you must provide another statement from your doctor further verifying the illness. When you use the sick leave bank, you must pay back 3 days of sick leave each year until all of the days are paid back.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSIGNMENT - CERTIFIED

If you would like to attend a workshop or training, you may enter the absence into Frontline. You must provide the name of the workshop, location and any cost to the district. This information can be entered in the *Notes to Administrator* section when entering the absence and will require the principal's approval.

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## PAYROLL

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### PAY DAY

Payroll is released on the last day of the month that the Administration Building is open with the exception of December. The Administration Building will open for a partial day towards the end of December to release payroll. All employees are encouraged to request direct deposit of their paychecks.

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### DEDUCTIONS

The only deductions automatically made from your payroll check are those required by law. The deductions are: Social Security (FICA), Medicare, federal income tax and state income tax.

Other items that may be deducted with your authorization include: organization dues, retirement savings, SPEF, United Way, health, dental and vision insurance premiums, and life insurance. Your direct deposit record/pay check stub shows your earnings before deductions. Deductions are itemized showing your net pay.

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### WAGE GARNISHMENTS

A garnishment is a court order requiring an employer to withhold part of an employee's earned wages to satisfy unpaid creditors. If a garnishment is received, the employee will be notified and the garnishment will be processed by the payroll department.

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### OVERTIME

An employee is not to work more than their contracted hours without prior approval from their supervisor. If an hourly employee, with the supervisor's approval, has worked additional time beyond their contracted amount they are entitled to payment for their work. The employee must decide if they want financial compensation or comp time for the additional hours worked. They must notify payroll by completing the Request for Comp Time form in [Talent Ed Records](#).

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## CAFETERIA

Employees are encouraged to take advantage of the high quality, high value meals served in school cafeterias.

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### ADULT PORTION SIZES

Adults may receive an entrée and any or all side items offered, including milk. Adult meals can no longer be more than the largest portions allotted to students.

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## PAYMENTS

Meals are available to adults with pre-paid meal accounts or who pay cash. Stillwater Public Schools encourages the use of prepayment through [www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com) for breakfast and lunch.

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## CHARGE POLICY FOR ADULTS

Faculty and staff are allowed to charge up to \$6.50. Adults are not allowed to charge a la carte items such as bottled water, pizza or snacks.

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## MEAL PRICES

Nutrition Services staff is not charged for meals. All other adults must pay the board approved price for meals. All staff may purchase additional a la carte items, if available, at the listed price.

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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### DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION

When multiple vehicles are required for staff traveling to the same event, it is required that a request be submitted for use of a district vehicle. If it is determined that a district vehicle is not available, mileage reimbursements for use of personal vehicles may be allowed. However, a vehicle must be requested before mileage reimbursement will be considered.

In order to drive a school vehicle, an employee must have a valid Oklahoma driver's license and a clean Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) on file in the transportation office. To obtain a MVR, employees must submit a valid Oklahoma driver's license at least two weeks before their planned trip. For long distance trips, a PIN should be requested at the time the driver's license is submitted in order to use the fuel card. All requests must be submitted a minimum of 5 business days in advance and must be approved by the site administrator.

Vehicles are to be picked up at the transportation office and are expected to be returned in a timely manner after the trip. Drivers are expected to remove all belongings, trash, etc. and return the vehicle in the condition it was received.

All accidents are to be reported to the transportation office as soon as possible. Obtain all relevant information – people involved, officer writing report, agency of reporting officer, etc. Major accidents should be reported as soon as emergencies are handled. Minor accidents can be reported the next business day. ([Requirements to Drive a Stillwater Public Schools Vehicle - CN-R1](#))

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## KEYS

Employees will be issued keys for those doors appropriate to their job duties. Lost keys must be reported immediately. All keys must be turned in to the supervisor upon request or when leaving employment with the school district.

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## EVALUATION

All district employees must have their job performance evaluated on an annual basis. Negotiated agreements and district policies outline evaluation procedures for different classifications of employees. ([Teacher Evaluation - DNA](#)) ([Support Staff Evaluation - DNAB](#))

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## CONTACTS

Dr. Janet Vinson  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
405-707-5030  
[jvinson@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:jvinson@stillwaterschools.com)

Desiree Burnsed  
Payroll, Retirement, Employee Badges  
405-707-5033  
[dburnsed@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:dburnsed@stillwaterschools.com)

Gale Henry  
Benefits Specialist  
TimeClock Plus, health, dental, and vision insurance, life insurance, COBRA, Frontline Absence Management, FMLA, employee leave, flex spending  
405-707-5039  
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Kerri Justus  
Administrative Assistant for Human Resources  
Personnel files, onboarding, unemployment  
405-707-5029  
[kjustus@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:kjustus@stillwaterschools.com)

Melinda Tharp  
Administration Building Receptionist  
Employment Verification, background checks  
405-533-6300  
[mtharp@stillwaterschools.com](mailto:mtharp@stillwaterschools.com)

## EXTERNAL WEBSITES & CONTACTS

EGID-OMES	<a href="https://omes.ok.gov/">https://omes.ok.gov/</a> or 1-800-543-6044
American Fidelity	<a href="http://www.americanfidelity.com">http://www.americanfidelity.com</a> or 1-800-933-1853
Oklahoma Teacher Retirement	<a href="http://www.ok.gov/trs/">http://www.ok.gov/trs/</a> or (405) 521-2387
Stillwater Public Education Foundation	<a href="http://www.spef.stillwaterschools.com/">http://www.spef.stillwaterschools.com/</a> or 707-5006

## FREQUENTLY VIEWED POLICIES

All Stillwater Public School employees are required to review all policies as an employee of Stillwater Public Schools. The policies listed below are the most common policies.

[Negotiated Agreements - DDF](#)

[Teacher Qualifications - DPA](#)

[Teachers Duties & Responsibilities \(Regulation\): DB-R](#)

[Standards of Performance & Conduct for Teachers: DBCA](#)

[Sick Leave Regulations: DEC-R1](#)

[Sick Leave Bank: DEFA](#)

[Family Medical Leave: DECA](#)

[Drug & Alcohol-Free Workplace: DCC](#)

[Workplace Drug & Alcohol Testing \(Employees & Applicants for Employment other than Bus Drivers\): DCC-R](#)

[Teacher Evaluation: DNA](#)

[Support Staff Evaluation: DNAB](#)

[Termination of Employment Teachers: DO](#)

[Support Personnel Suspension, Demotion, Termination or Non-reemployment: DOAC](#)

[Reduction-In-Force Support Personnel: DOCB](#)