

TREKNORTH JUNIOR & SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
STAFF HANDBOOK

*Preparing Young People to Make a Positive Difference in Their Local &  
Global Communities*

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## **SECTION 1**

### **Section 1.1 - WELCOME**

We welcome you as an employee of TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School! You have been given a unique opportunity to work in an innovative school environment. TrekNorth is an employer that encourages creativity, innovation, and accountability while expecting more than teaching responsibilities. TrekNorth is a "teacher as owner" model where teachers serve as the ultimate source of accountability through their membership on the Board of Directors.

It is vital that all employees of TrekNorth understand and believe in the following statements:

#### **TrekNorth Mission**

The mission of TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School is to prepare young people to make a positive difference in their local and global community. TrekNorth will maximize student academic success by challenging and supporting individual students on an academic path that includes participation in a spectrum of vertically aligned college-readiness courses, including AP courses. TrekNorth will develop leadership skills in all students through required participation in wilderness experiences and a value for serving others through service experiences. TrekNorth will support students by requiring parental collaboration in key areas, and by providing parents the necessary education and training to be an effective partner. TrekNorth will actively guide students in their process of developing a positive self-identity and a responsibility to serve their community. TrekNorth will graduate students who have the desire and ability to build community.

#### **TrekNorth Vision**

TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School is a place where all students pursue a rigorous course of study, as well as challenging service and wilderness experiences designed to prepare them for college and life beyond. Students are nourished by a supportive, healthy, and safe learning community of engaged peers, teachers and families. Students develop strong academic and life skills that give to them a positive self-identity and a strong connection to their community and to the world at large. *TrekNorth is a community* and graduates are capable of deliberately creating other communities similarly characterized by compassion, sustainability, challenge, and global thinking.

This manual is designed to acquaint you with TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School and provide you with information about working conditions, benefits, and policies affecting your employment.

The manual is a summary of TrekNorth policies, which are presented here only as a matter of information. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions of this manual. Our objective is to provide you with a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

### **1.2 CHANGES IN POLICY**

This manual supersedes all previous employee manuals and memos that may have been issued from time to time on subjects covered in this manual.

However, since our business and our organization are subject to change, TrekNorth Administration reserves the right to interpret, change, suspend, cancel, or dispute with or without notice all or any part of our policies, procedures, and benefits at any time. We will notify all employees of these changes. Changes will

be effective on the dates determined by the administration of TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School, and after those dates all superseded policies will be null and void.

### **1.3 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS**

We rely upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application/resume and the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or if the person has been hired, termination of employment. Employees are responsible to have, maintain, and renew licenses/certificates required for their position.

### **1.4 "AT-WILL" EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP**

You enter into employment voluntarily, and you are free to resign at any time for any reason or no reason. Similarly, TrekNorth is free to conclude its relationship with any employee at any time for any reason or no reason. Following a 30-day introductory period, employees are required to follow the Employment Termination Policy (See Section 3.14).

## SECTION 2 DEFINITIONS OF EMPLOYEES STATUS

### **2.1 EMPLOYEE DEFINED**

An employee of TrekNorth is a person who regularly works on a wage or salary basis. Employees may include Salaried Exempt, non-exempt, full-time, part-time, and temporary persons, and others employed with the school that are subject to the control and direction of TrekNorth in the performance of their duties. The term “employee” is synonymous with “employee.”

#### *SALARIED EXEMPT*

Employees whose positions meet specific criteria established by the Fair Labor Standards that are exempt from overtime pay requirements.

#### *FULL-TIME*

Full-time employees are those who have completed the 30-day introductory period and are regularly scheduled to work 20 or more hours per week or are assigned a teaching load 50% or more. Generally, full-time employees are eligible for the benefit package after 30 days of employment, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

#### *PART-TIME (SALARIED, HOURLY, OR COMBINATION)*

Part-time employees are those who are scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week or on an intermittent basis. Part-time, hourly employees are not eligible for benefits provided by TrekNorth High School.

#### *TEMPORARY (FULL-TIME or PART TIME)*

Those whose performance is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position is appropriate during the 30 day evaluation period, or individuals who are hired as interim replacements to assist in the completion of a specific project, work period or for vacation relief. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status until they are notified of a change. Temporary employees are not eligible for any of the benefit programs.

## **SECTION 3 EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

### **3.1 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT**

It is TrekNorth's policy to provide equal employment opportunity for all applicants and employees. TrekNorth does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, genetic information, reprisal for protected activities, family care leave status or veteran status. The school also makes reasonable accommodations for disabled employees. The school prohibits discrimination and discrimination in the form of harassment of any individual for any of the categories listed above. For information about the types of conduct that constitute impermissible harassment and the school's internal procedures for addressing complaints of harassment, please refer to TrekNorth's Harassment and Violence Policy, Policy #413. More information about non-discrimination, whistleblowing, and reporting can be found in Policy #402. This policy applies to all areas of employment including hiring, discharge, promotion, compensation, facilities or privileges of employment. Any person wishing to report complaints regarding discrimination may contact the Director or another key employee such as the school's Assistant Director or Human Rights Officer (School Social Worker). In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at TrekNorth will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. TrekNorth does not discriminate in opportunities or practices because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability or any other reason as defined by law.

### **3.2 DISABILITY NON-DISCRIMINATION**

TrekNorth shall not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities, or because of the disabilities, with regard to job application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, job training, or any other term, condition or privilege of employment. The School shall not engage in contractual or other arrangements that have the effect of subjecting its qualified applicants or employees with disabilities to discrimination on the basis of disability. The School shall not exclude or otherwise deny equal jobs or job benefits to a qualified individual because of the known disability of an individual with whom the qualified individual is known to have a relationship or association. TrekNorth shall make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or employee, unless the accommodation would impose undue hardship on the operation of the business of the school. Any job applicant or employee wishing to discuss the need for a reasonable accommodation, or other matters related to a disability or the enforcement and application of this policy, should contact the Director. Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these to the attention of the Executive Director or directly to the TrekNorth School Board. Employees may bring concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **3.3 NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION**

Orientation is a welcoming process that is designed to make the new employee feel comfortable, informed about the School, and prepared for their position. New Employee orientation is conducted by the Executive Director or a designee, and includes an overview of the curricular design and goals, policy governance, school history, an explanation of the school's core values, vision, and mission, goals and objectives as well as school policies and procedures, and it may take place as part of a larger staff training. The new employee will be given an overview of benefits, tax, and legal issues, their job description and scope of position, an explanation of the evaluation procedures, and instructions on how to complete necessary paperwork.

Employees will be introduced to staff at TrekNorth and be presented with all codes, keys, and procedures needed to navigate within the workplace.

### **3.4 SCHOOL HOURS**

TrekNorth is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday - Friday when school is in session (see school calendar). School staff are expected to be at their job station either 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. or 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on each day of student contact. Work hours on non-student contact days may vary. Staff will select their hours at the beginning of each school year and notify the Operations Manager of their selection. Staff are encouraged to use the morning pre-school hours, and the after-school time to be available to interact with parents and students, when not attending mandatory staff meetings. During after-school time, employees are required to attend staff meetings for their duration, even when these meetings go beyond the employees end time. The standard workweek is 40 hours of work (See Section 5.3, Overtime). In the computation of various employee benefits, the employee workweek is considered to begin on Sunday (starting at 12:01 a.m.) through Saturday (ending at 12:00 a.m.), unless the Administration makes prior other arrangements with the employee.

### **3.5 LUNCH PERIODS**

Employees are not guaranteed a duty-free lunch break. Each employee will be assigned times during the year to monitoring the lunch period and this is a required duty. When not scheduled to monitor lunch, lunch breaks generally are taken during the same time period as the student lunch. When employees need to use the lunch period for errands, they are to return in time so that there is no disruption of instruction or supervision.

### **3.6 BREAK PERIODS**

Break/Prep periods are paid and therefore the employee cannot leave school grounds unless they notify the Executive Director/Operations Manager and provide acceptable reason/s for leaving.

If employees have unexpected personal business to take care of, they must notify the Executive Director or other Administration in advance to discuss time away from work and make provisions as necessary. Personal business should be conducted on the employee's own time.

Employees who do not adhere to the break policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **3.7 PERSONNEL FILES**

Employee personnel files may include the following working documents: job application, job description, resume, records of participation in training events, salary history, records of disciplinary action and working documents related to employee performance reviews, coaching, and mentoring.

Personnel files are the property of TrekNorth and access to the information is restricted. Management personnel of TrekNorth who have a legitimate reason to review the file are allowed to do so.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact the Executive Director or the Business Manager. With reasonable notice, the employee may review his/her personnel file in the school office and in the presence of Director or the Business Manager.

### **3.8 PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES**

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Business Manager of any changes in personnel data such as:

- Mailing address
- Telephone numbers
- Name and number of dependents, and
- Individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency.

An employee's personnel data should be accurate and current at all times. It is the responsibility of each employee to maintain and update the license/certification required for their position.

### **3.9 INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, or power failures can disrupt school operations. The decision to close the school will be made by the Executive Director and this decision will be communicated to employees by the Executive Director through notification on the school website.

Time off from scheduled work due to emergency closings will be unpaid for all hourly and other *non-exempt* employees. However, if employees would like to be paid, they are permitted to use sick leave or personal leave, if it is available to them.

### **3.10 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Director and/or a designee will conduct performance reviews and planning sessions with all full-time and part-time employees.

Every employee will receive an annual Performance Review in March, April, or May. The exception is that teachers who have less than three years of TrekNorth experience will have a Performance review twice per year. The Director or individuals designated by the Director may conduct formal or informal evaluations and planning sessions more often if they, or the employee, so choose. Staff should understand that lesson plans are not due to the Director on a weekly basis, but that unannounced evaluations will be common as a means of ensuring meaningful, goal-oriented teaching.

One component of the TrekNorth salary schedule directly links wage and salary increases to performance and a personal data goal. Your annual Performance Review and planning sessions will have a direct effect on any changes in your compensation and/or employment status. Any Performance Review with a cumulative score of less than 3.0 will result in some degree of corrective action. For this reason among others, it is important to prepare for these reviews carefully, and participate in them fully. Goals and strategies derived from the planning sessions will be incorporated into the employee Professional Development Plan and the Performance Review that will guide further planning sessions and assessments for the purpose of determining performance effectiveness and salary compensation.

New teachers to TrekNorth will be assigned to the Leadership Team (LT) for three years, where they will receive a minimum of two coaching evaluations a year. After three years, a teacher's PDP might include additional LT coaching as necessary upon request of administration or teacher. Teachers who have taught for more than three years will create their coaching with the Director.

### 3.11 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees may hold outside jobs as long as the employee meets the performance standards of their job description with TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School. Unless the Director/Administration approves an alternative work schedule to accommodate outside employment, employees will be subject to TrekNorth scheduling interests.

TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School office space, equipment, and materials are not to be used for outside employment.

### 3.12 CORRECTIVE ACTION

TrekNorth holds each of its employees to certain work rules and standards of conduct (see Section 4). When an employee deviates from these rules and standards, TrekNorth expects the school administration to take corrective action.

Corrective action is progressive. That is, the action taken in response to a rule infraction or violation of standards typically follows a pattern of increasing in seriousness until the infraction or violation is corrected or the employee contract is terminated.

The usual sequence of corrective actions includes coaching (oral warning), a written warning, mentorship, probation, suspension without pay and/or termination of employment. In deciding which initial corrective action would be appropriate the administration will consider the seriousness of the infraction, the circumstances surrounding the infraction, and the employee's previous record.

Though committed to a progressive approach to corrective action, TrekNorth considers some rule infractions and violations of standards as grounds for immediate termination of employment. These include but are not limited to: theft in any form, insubordinate behavior, vandalism or destruction of school property, the use of school equipment and/or school vehicles without prior authorization, untruthfulness about work history, skills, or training, divulging school business practices or other sensitive information, undermining of school decisions, practices, or policies, and misrepresentations of TrekNorth to a student, parent, a prospective student/parent, the general public, and/or another employee.

### 3.13 EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of the personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are a few examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- **Resignation-** voluntary employment termination initiated by a employee

When a non-exempt/hourly employee intends to terminate his/her employment with TrekNorth, he/she shall give the Executive Director at least two (2) weeks written notice. Exempt/salaried employees shall give at least four (4) weeks written notice. The notice should be submitted to the Director.

- **Termination-** involuntary employment termination initiated by the recommendation of the Director and/or administrative team
- **Layoff-** involuntary employment termination initiated by the Director for non-disciplinary reasons

Since employment with TrekNorth is based on mutual consent, both the employee and TrekNorth have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause.

The payroll check date will be considered for all termination. Should the employee not work after the 20th of the month and receive a check for the full month, the employee will be required to return to the School the appropriate amount or wages paid for time not worked.

Any employee who terminates employment with TrekNorth shall return all files, employment manual, records, keys, and any other equipment or materials that are property of TrekNorth. The cost of replacing non-returned items will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Any outstanding financial obligations owed to TrekNorth will also be deducted from the employee's final check, or the employee will be required to reimburse TrekNorth for the outstanding amount.

Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner. Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense (See Section 6, Benefits) if the employee elects to do so. The employee will be notified of their COBRA benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations.

### **3.14 CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

TrekNorth provides information to the school and its employees about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication such as:

- . Training sessions
- . Team meetings
- . Bulletin board and e-mail postings
- . Memorandums paper or e-mail
- . Other written communications

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution and common sense in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe conditions to the Executive Director. Employees who violate safety standards, including cleanliness of work space, classrooms, school grounds, school vehicles, etc., cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or fail to report, or where appropriate, remedy such situation, may be subject to disciplinary action including termination of employment.

In the case of an accident that results in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear employees should notify the Director immediately.

Because the Outdoor Adventure Program is a unique aspect of the TrekNorth program that carries with it inherent risks, TrekNorth has developed an Emergency Response Plan specific to the activities of that program. Staff may be asked to participate in this plan.

In addition to routine safety policies described above, the TrekNorth Emergency Management Plan is included on the following pages.

#### **Emergency Telephone Numbers**

<b>Ambulance</b>	<b>911</b>
<b>Police</b>	<b>911</b>
<b>Fire</b>	<b>911</b>

**District #31 Transportation Services  
Minnesota Poison Control Center  
Beltrami County Social Services  
Hospital     North Country Regional Hospital  
1300 Anne St. NW  
Bemidji, MN 56601**

**333-3225  
1-800-222-1222  
759-8300  
(218) 751-5430**

### **3.15 REASONABLE FORCE STATEMENT**

According to Minn. Stat. 121A.582, teachers, principals, or other agents of the district in exercising the person's lawful authority, may use reasonable force when it is necessary under the circumstances to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to themselves or another. Only staff members with current CPI Certification may use restraining holds on Special Education students.

### **3.16 HEALTH-RELATED ISSUES**

Employees who become aware of any health-related issue, including pregnancy, should give notice to school administration of health condition and/or restrictions. This policy has been instituted strictly to protect the employee. A written "permission to work" from the employee's doctor may be required at the time or shortly after notice has been given and in some cases may be required before returning to work if the absence is more than 3 days. The doctor's note should specify whether the employee is able to perform regular duties as outlined in his/her job description.

A leave of absence may be granted on a case-by-case basis. If the need arises for a leave of absence, employees should notify the Director. Leaves of absence are unpaid.

### **3.17 BUILDING SECURITY**

All employees who are issued keys to the schools are responsible for their safekeeping. The last employee, or a designated employee, who leaves the school at the end of the business day assumes the responsibility to ensure that all doors are securely locked, the alarm system is armed, and all appliances and lights are turned off with the exception of lights normally left on for security purposes. Administration reserves the right to charge employees for the cost of lost keys, including the re-keying of the building.

### **3.18 MONITORING OF BUILDING DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

In order to promote a safe and violence-free school, TrekNorth staff is expected to monitor their classrooms or offices as well as school hallways, restrooms, and general commons areas. Any staff member who has a student or students in their workspace is expected to monitor those students. When the staff member is leaving their workspace the door to the room should be locked so that students cannot be in the room without staff supervision. Additionally, staff is responsible for the monitoring of hallways or commons areas in the vicinity of their workspace, particularly during passing times and before and after school.

Each staff member will be assigned to one of two Monitoring Teams: Morning or Afternoon. These teams will work together to create a fair schedule for monitoring students in commons areas during their assigned time. Staff are to be in their assigned places, available to and interacting with students during their time. Each staff member will be assigned to monitor Lunch Period during various weeks throughout the school year. Each staff member is required to be in their designated monitoring area during his/her designated time.

### **3.19 MONITORING OF STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

Staff who have students assigned to them during school hours are directly responsible for monitoring those students. Staff should not send students out of the classroom to an unsupervised area of the school, and should not send students off-campus without first gaining informed parental consent.

### **3.20 DATA PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TrekNorth staff are expected to follow the guidelines for data privacy as dictated by the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA). Staff shall not allow inappropriate disclosure of a student's education records. Teachers assigned Teaching Assistants will insure that private data is protected, including grades and other components of education records.

### **3.21 DATA PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY RELATED TO STAFF**

All data on individuals collected, created, received, maintained or disseminated by the school, which is classified by statute or federal law as public, shall be accessible to the public pursuant to the procedures established by the school. All other data on individuals is private or confidential.

### **3.22 MANDATED REPORTING**

It is the policy of TrekNorth to fully comply with Minn. Stat. 626.556 requiring school personnel to report suspected child neglect or physical or sexual abuse. It shall be a violation of this policy for any school personnel to fail to immediately report instances of child neglect, or physical or sexual abuse when the school personnel knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years.

Forms for making a report are available through the School Social Worker. The report must be made to the local police department, the county sheriff, or the local county social services agency.

### **3.23 CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINNESOTA TEACHERS**

Each teacher, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics, which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation. This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to rules established by the Board of Teaching.

**Standards of professional conduct:** The standards of professional conduct are as follows:

- A. A teacher shall provide professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- B. A teacher shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.
- C. In accordance with state and federal laws, a teacher shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law.
- D. A teacher shall take reasonable disciplinary action in exercising the authority to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- E. A teacher shall not use professional relationships with students, parents, and colleagues to private advantage.
- F. A teacher shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to licensed personnel.
- G. A teacher shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter.
- H. A teacher shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to that teacher's own qualifications or to other teachers' qualifications.
- I. A teacher shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues.

J. A teacher shall accept a contract for a teaching position that requires licensing only if properly or provisionally licensed for that position.

### **3.24 CODE OF ETHICS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

This part applies to all persons licensed as school administrators as defined in part 3512.0100, subparts 5 to 7.

**Standards of professional conduct:** The standards of professional conduct for school administrators are listed in items A to K.

A. A school administrator shall provide professional educational services in a nondiscriminatory manner.

B. A school administrator shall take reasonable action to protect students and staff from conditions harmful to health and safety.

C. A school administrator shall take reasonable action to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.

D. A school administrator shall not misuse professional relationships with students, parents and caregivers, staff, or colleagues to private advantage.

E. A school administrator shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served in accordance with state and federal laws, and school district policies.

F. A school administrator shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to the administrator's qualifications, or to the qualifications of other staff or personnel.

G. A school administrator shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students, students' families, staff, or colleagues.

H. A school administrator shall not accept gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment, nor offer any favor, service, or item of value to obtain special advantage.

I. A school administrator shall only accept a contract for a position when licensed for the position or when a school district is granted a variance by the commissioner of Children, Families, and Learning under Minnesota Statutes, section 121.11, subdivision 7b.

J. A school administrator, in filling positions requiring licensure, shall employ, recommend for employment, and assign only appropriately licensed personnel, or persons for whom the school district has been granted a variance by the appropriate state board or agency, unless, after making reasonable efforts to obtain a variance, an appropriately licensed person cannot be assigned and the position must be filled to meet a legitimate emergency educational need.

K. A school administrator shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, or misrepresentation in the performance of professional duties.

### **3.25 ANTI-NEPOTISM POLICY**

Per MN State Statute 43A.38 subd. 5-7, TrekNorth will follow the following processes in the event of a conflict of interest.

The following actions by an employee in the executive branch shall be deemed a conflict of interest and subject to procedures regarding resolution of the conflicts, section [43A.39](#) or disciplinary action as appropriate: (1) use or attempted use of the employee's official position to secure benefits, privileges, exemptions or advantages for the employee or the employee's immediate family or an organization with which the employee is associated which are different from those available to the general public; (2) acceptance of other employment or contractual relationship that will affect the employee's independence of judgment in the exercise of official duties; (3) actions as an agent or attorney in any action or matter pending before the employing agency except in the proper discharge of official duties or on the employee's behalf; or (4) the solicitation of a financial agreement for the employee or entity other than the state when the state is

currently engaged in the provision of the services which are the subject of the agreement or where the state has expressed an intention to engage in competition for the provision of the services; unless the affected state agency waives this clause.

#### **Subd. 6. Determination of conflicts of interest.**

When an employee believes the potential for a conflict of interest exists, it is the employee's duty to avoid the situation. A conflict of interest shall be deemed to exist when a review of the situation by the employee, the appointing authority or the commissioner determines any one of the following conditions to be present: (1) the use for private gain or advantage of state time, facilities, equipment or supplies or badge, uniform, prestige or influence of state office or employment; (2) receipt or acceptance by the employee of any money or other thing of value from anyone other than the state for the performance of an act which the employee would be required or expected to perform in the regular course or hours of state employment or as part of the duties as an employee; (3) employment by a business which is subject to the direct or indirect control, inspection, review, audit or enforcement by the employee; (4) the performance of an act in other than the employee's official capacity which may later be subject directly or indirectly to the control, inspection, review, audit or enforcement by the employee.

#### **Subd. 7. Resolution of conflict of interest.**

If the employee, appointing authority or commissioner determine that a conflict of interest exists, the matter shall be assigned to another employee who does not have a conflict of interest. If it is not possible to assign the matter to an employee who does not have a conflict of interest, interested persons shall be notified of the conflict and the employee may proceed with the assignment.

### **3.26 INSURANCE ON PERSONAL EFFECTS**

All employees should be sure that their own personal insurance policies cover the loss of anything occasionally left at or missing from the school or school property. TrekNorth assumes no risk for any loss or damage to personal property.

### **3.27 IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE**

TrekNorth employs only United States citizens and those non-U.S. citizens authorized to work in the United States in compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

Each new employee, as condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form 1-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form.

### **3.28 CRIMINAL AND EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND CHECKS**

A criminal background check will be conducted on all school employees and independent contractors working on the premises. Volunteers may also be required to complete a background check depending on frequency, student contact and/or duties. Employees will be required to pay the initial cost of the background check; volunteers are not required to pay for the background check.

### **3.29 PARKING**

Employees should park their cars in any of the parking spots in the school parking lot.

### **3.30 VISITORS IN THE WORKPLACE**

To provide for the safety and security of employees, visitors, and the facilities, only authorized visitors are allowed in the school workplace and will be required to sign in at the front desk. Restricting unauthorized

visitors helps ensure security, decreases insurance liability, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. All visitors must enter through the main reception area, which is door #1 or #2.

### **3.31 SUPPLIES AND EXPENDITURES OBLIGATING THE SCHOOL**

Only authorized persons may purchase supplies in the name of TrekNorth. Authorized individuals must follow the TrekNorth Financial Accountability Staff Guidelines included on the following page. Employees whose regular duties do not include purchasing shall not incur any expense on behalf of school by any promise or representation without prior written approval.

### **3.32 INVENTORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

TrekNorth staff is expected to keep an on-going record of materials and equipment purchased by the school for their workspace. Staff needs to submit an inventory at the conclusion of each school year to the Business Manager as part of the summer check-out process.

### **3.33 EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

Expenses incurred by employees must have prior approval from the Executive Director. An example of such an expense would include mileage. The reimbursement request will be processed like an invoice/purchase order. All completed reimbursement request forms should be turned into the Business Manager with invoice/receipts of the actual expenses incurred by the employee per the Financial Accountability Staff Guidelines. Reimbursement for pre-approved expenses will be included in payroll checks for the month after the reimbursement form is submitted.

### **Financial Accountability Staff Guidelines**

#### **Purchasing Protocol**

1. Staff member fills out and signs Purchase Requisition
2. Business Manager approves if funds are available in board approved budget, codes (UFARS), signs Purchase Requisition
3. Executive Director approves and signs Purchase Requisition
4. Business Manager generates accounting software (SmartFinance) Purchase Order.
5. Order is placed

#### **Receiving Protocol**

1. Staff Member receives, checks, and enters into inventory the order before signing and dating packing slip and sending to Business Manager.
2. Business Manager gathers all paperwork together and prepares to receive invoice
3. When invoice is received, paperwork is reviewed by Business Manager and placed in monthly pay cycle to be paid.

## **SECTION 4 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

### **4.1 WORK RULES AND STANDARDS**

The work rules and standards of conduct for TrekNorth are important and the school regards them seriously. All employees are urged to become familiar with these rules and standards. In addition, employees are expected to follow the rules and standards faithfully in doing their own jobs and conducting the school's business. Please note that any employee who deviates from these rules and standards will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment (see Section 3.14).

While not listing all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace, the following are examples of rule infractions or misconduct that may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property;
- Falsification of timekeeping records (See Section 5.2, Timekeeping);
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs (See Section 4.6, Substance Abuse);
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace (See Section 4.7 Substance Abuse);
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace;
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace;
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of school-owned or customer-owned property;
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct toward students, parents, staff, or the school in general. This includes deliberate undermining of school policy and decision making;
- Violation of safety or health rules, including cleanliness of working space;
- Smoking in the workplace, on school grounds, or on/during school sponsored trips;
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment (See Section 4.3, Harassment, including Sexual Harassment);
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice, or excessive lateness (See also, Section 4.2 Attendance/Punctuality and 4.3, Absence without Notice);
- Unauthorized use of telephones, or other School-owned equipment (See Section 4.5, Telephone Use);
- Using school equipment for purposes other than business (ie. playing games on computers or excessive, inappropriate, or unproductive personal internet usage);
- Unauthorized public disclosure of student records, confidential information, and sensitive staff decision making discussions;
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or unsatisfactory or insubordinate conduct.
- Deliberate undermining of staff decisions and policy.

### **4.2 ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY**

TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School expects that every employee will be regular and punctual in attendance. This means being in the school, ready to work, at the assigned starting time each day. Absenteeism and tardiness places a burden on other employees and on the School. Should excessive tardiness become apparent, disciplinary action may be required.

If you are unable to report for work for any reason, notify the Operations Manager at least 45 minutes before regular starting time. You are responsible for speaking directly with the Operations Manager about your absence.

Contact Protocol:

1<sup>st</sup>: call Operations Manager Kirby Ganske

After 7:30AM: call front desk

Between 6:30-7:00AM or before 9:00PM, call cell number

2<sup>nd</sup>: If the Operations Manager cannot be reached, call the Executive Director Kristin Gustafson on cell phone (1<sup>st</sup>) and office phone (2<sup>nd</sup>)

### **4.3 ABSENCE WITHOUT NOTICE**

When you are unable to work owing to illness or an accident, you must notify the Operations Manager who will notify the Director. This will allow the school to arrange for temporary coverage of your duties, and help other employees to continue work in your absence. If you do not report for work and the school is not notified of your status, it will be assumed after two consecutive days of absence that you have resigned, and you will be removed from the payroll. However, an employee is NEVER allowed to miss work without appropriately notifying the Operations Manager in advance. Any absence without notification is subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination depending on the circumstances.

If you become ill while at work or must leave the school for some other reason before the end of the workday, the employee must inform the Operations Manager (or, if the Operations Manager is absent, the Executive Director) of the situation prior to leaving for the purpose of arranging coverage of duties.

### **4.4 HARASSMENT, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

If you believe you have been the victim of harassment, or know of another employee who has, report it immediately. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Any staff employee who becomes aware of possible harassment should promptly advise the Human Rights Officer (School Social Worker), unless the Human Rights Officer is the object of the concern in which case the Executive Director should be advised, and the Executive Director will handle the matter in a timely and confidential manner.

### **4.5 TELEPHONE USE**

TrekNorth telephones are intended for the use of serving our students and in conducting school business.

Personal usage during business hours is discouraged except for extreme emergencies. All personal telephone calls should be kept brief, and staff should support the effort to keep students from using cell phones by using their own cell phones in private areas, and by not using cell phones during times they are responsible for students (i.e. class time).

To respect the rights of all employees and avoid miscommunication in the school, employees must inform family and friends to limit personal telephone calls during working hours.

If an employee is found to be deviating from this policy, he/she will be subject to disciplinary action (See Section 3.13, Corrective Action).

#### **4.6 PUBLIC IMAGE**

A professional appearance is important anytime that you come in contact with students, parents and the general public. While it is understood that staff cannot always be expected to be dressed professionally in public, staff should understand the small-community nature of Bemidji, and staff should understand the challenge of establishing a good reputation in and around Bemidji.

The following dress code applies to all employees of TrekNorth:

TrekNorth staff shall dress in a professional manner that contributes to a business-like and academic atmosphere, and that models appropriate standards for students.

The following are examples of unprofessional attire:

- *faded, torn or patched jeans*
- *tank tops, sweat pants*
- *spaghetti straps*
- *tops that expose the midriff or too much of the chest*
- *exposed undergarments*
- *hats or caps in the building during school hours*
- *clothing with inappropriate slogans or logos*

Employees should be well-groomed and dressed appropriately for our business and for their position in particular. The staff of TrekNorth must always present an image of professionalism and competence to the public. Professional dress, including slacks, neckties, blouses, suits, and dress shoes are encouraged.

Exceptions to this policy include those times staff is participating with the Outdoor Adventure Program, and on Fridays, when school-wear such as t-shirts or sweatshirts with the TrekNorth logo are permitted. Staff violating the dress code are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### **4.7 SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

TrekNorth will provide a safe and productive workplace for its employees and students. In keeping with this commitment, the following rules regarding alcohol and drugs of abuse have been established for all staff employees, regardless of rank or position, including both regular and temporary employees. The rules apply during working hours to all employees of the school while they are on the School premises or elsewhere on School business/field trips.

The manufacture, distribution, possession, sale, or purchase of controlled substances of abuse on school property is prohibited.

Being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances of abuse on school property is prohibited.

Working while under the influence of prescription drugs that impair performance is prohibited.

Consistent with the rules listed above, any of the following actions constitutes a violation of the school's policy on drugs and may subject a employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

Using, selling, possessing, purchasing, transferring, manufacturing, or storing alcohol, an illegal drug or drug paraphernalia, or attempting to or assisting another to do so, while in the course of employment.

Working or reporting to work, conducting school business or being on school property while under the influence of an illegal drug or alcohol, in an impaired condition, or having the appearance (odor on breath, slurred speech, etc.) of being under the influence.

Please refer to the TrekNorth High School Outdoor Adventure Program Policy for specific expectations of staff members on trips.

So that there is no question about what these rules signify, please note the following definitions:

School property: all School owned or leased property including vehicles, parking lots, land and areas occupied during school trips.

Controlled substance abuse: any substance listed in Schedules I-V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act, as amended.

Drug: any chemical substance including alcohol that produces physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral change in the user.

Drug paraphernalia: equipment, a product, or material that is used or intended for use in concealing an illegal drug, or otherwise introducing into the human body an illegal drug or controlled substance.

**Illegal drug:**

- Any drug or derivative thereof whose use, possession, sale, transfer, attempted sale or transfer, manufacture, or storage is illegal or regulated under any federal, state, or local law or regulation.
- Any drug, including - but not limited to - a prescription drug, used for any reason other than that prescribed by a physician.
- Inhalants used illegally.

**Under the Influence:** A state of not having the normal use of mental or physical faculties resulting from the voluntary introduction into the body of an alcoholic beverage or substance of abuse.

**4.8 TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

The use of tobacco products is not permitted anywhere on the school's premises. Employees must follow the rules posted and adhere to all policies associated with this policy (See Sections 3.7, Break Periods and 3.15, Safety).

**4.9 EMPLOYEE COMPUTER & INTERNET USE**

The school provides extensive technological, computer and multimedia equipment to faculty and staff for the purpose of enhancing and facilitating teaching, work-related productivity, and professional development. The equipment is to be used for purposes that are consistent with the role and mission of the school. School computers can also be for limited personal use, provided laws and expectations are met. Those using school equipment are expected to responsibly care for it, modeling acceptable behavior for students.

Technology hardware and media/software that is provided for staff use is the property of the school and is not to be copied, altered, or distributed without authorization. All software may only be installed on school computers and devices by the Technology Coordinator or as designated by the School Director. All content accessed and loaded onto the school computers shall adhere to the approved copyright guidelines. The school is responsible for the content of all computers on its network. Information Systems will be monitored as deemed necessary and appropriate. Each staff member will be given the Staff Network password for use of the email, network, and computer. This password should not be shared with students or persons outside of the school, for security purposes. Staff should also read the policy related to Internet Use.

Computer/technology equipment shall be cleaned as designated by the Technology Coordinator. Be aware that liquids and cleaning solutions can leak into the keyboard and irrevocably damage the electronics. Do not put stickers on school computers or technology equipment. Sticker residue is difficult to remove. Keep food, beverages and other damaging liquids away from school computers. When storing computers off campus, do not keep in an exposed or visible place, such as your vehicle, where it could be stolen. Lock up computers when possible. If a computer is damaged or stolen, staff may be liable for the cost of repair or replacement, up to the cost of the insurance deductible.

## **INTERNET USE**

Employees are allowed use of the Internet and e-mail when necessary to serve our students and conduct the School's business.

Employees may use the Internet when appropriate to access information needed to conduct business of the School. Employees may use e-mail when appropriate for school correspondence.

Use of the Internet must not disrupt operation of the School's computer network and use of the Internet must not interfere with an employee's productivity. Employees are responsible for using the Internet in a manner that is ethical and lawful.

Internet messages are public and not private. TrekNorth reserves the right to access and monitor all files and messages of its employees using school-issued computers (or personal computers used at school for school business on the school network).

## **[Social Media Guidelines for Employees](#)**

TrekNorth recognizes the importance of using social media as a communication and learning tool. Social media has become an increasingly important part of our ability to communicate with families, students, staff and the community. TrekNorth recognizes the need to embrace this valuable avenue of communication and engagement in order to serve our students. TrekNorth also recognizes the need to use these powerful tools responsibly in an ever-changing environment. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist District employees in navigating the appropriate use of social media tools in their professional and personal lives. Social media includes websites and applications where users share and create content and includes blogs, wikis, podcasts, virtual worlds and social networks.

## **4.10 GUIDELINES FOR VISUAL MEDIA SHOWN IN CLASS**

TrekNorth trusts teachers to make wise decisions about visual media shown to students, and TrekNorth also respects the thoughtful choices individual parents/guardians make about images they choose or choose not to have their children witness. As such, the following policy applies to all movies, films, documentaries, and visual documents shown as part of the TrekNorth curricular program:

If a visual document is rated, the rating should not exceed the ages of the students in the course. Generally,

this means that movies, films, and documentaries should not exceed a PG-13 rating. If a document with an R-rating is shown, the following standards must be met:

1. The teacher must gain approval from the Director prior to showing an R-rated visual, and when submitting the request the teacher must demonstrate that an attempt to find a non R-rated visual of similar educational merit was unsuccessful, and must provide a written explanation justifying the R-rated selection
2. After establishing a valid connection between the visual media and the curriculum, a teacher must provide students with the opportunity to opt out of viewing without any negative consequences. Teachers need to provide this option by sending home “opt out” forms, which should explain to parents/guardians the connection between the media and the curriculum, and explain the alternative activities the student may engage in should the parent choose to opt out of having their student view the media.
3. An alternative activity must be available for students and/or parents who opt out of the viewing
4. The regular classroom teacher must have made students aware, prior to viewing, of the substantial connection between the content of the R-rated document and the content of the class
5. The regular classroom teacher must be present during the viewing (R-rated documents cannot be shown as part of plans for a substitute teacher)
6. The regular classroom teacher must have previewed the document and needs to skip through scenes that have gratuitous violence, nudity, or language that do not enhance the educational quality of the document
7. Documents shown at school-related events, but that are not part of the curricular program, are not to exceed the PG-13 rating. Video games are not to exceed a teen rating. If a teacher wants to show visual media that exceeds these ratings they must follow through with standards 1 and 2 as listed above.

#### **4.11 COPYRIGHT LAWS**

TrekNorth staff need to abide by copyright laws as they apply to all intellectual materials, including books and movies.

#### **4.12 TRANSPORTATION POLICIES**

The TrekNorth transportation policy provides guidance and requirements for the operation of TrekNorth vehicles, staff/driver training and expectations for driving behavior. This policy applies to all TrekNorth vehicles, vehicles rented by TrekNorth for school use, and any personal vehicles used to carry students for school business. TrekNorth vehicles are intended for TrekNorth business only (student travel, staff professional development). All use of TrekNorth vehicles must have the approval of the Transportation Supervisor. Please keep in mind that vehicles are available on a first come, first serve basis.

##### **A. Driver Requirements and Training Policies**

1. The vehicle driver must
  - a. be at least 21 years of age;
  - b. have in their possession a valid driver’s license and a copy of that license on file with the school;
  - c. have permission of the TrekNorth Transportation Supervisor;
  - d. have a Criminal Background Check on file with the school;

- e. have completed the Dept. of Public Safety Type III School Bus training, including completing a Driving Evaluation with the Transportation Supervisor and submitting a copy of their Driving Record.

## B. Vehicle Operating Policies

1. Vehicle drivers are expected to check vehicle keys in and out through the established process before and after use
2. Hours of Service (HOS (length of time driving or combination of driving and non-driving work). Drivers will not be behind wheel longer than (10) ten hours, or work a combination of driving and other duties totaling more than (15) fifteen hours in any twenty-four hour period. This includes transporting students or staff, pulling trailers, or driving empty vehicles. TrekNorth encourages drivers to rest when fatigued.
3. No alcohol or non-medical drugs may be consumed while operating a TrekNorth vehicle or a personal vehicle being used for TrekNorth business. Additionally, drivers of TrekNorth vehicles must refrain from drinking alcohol for at least 10 hours prior to driving. Drivers also need to be aware of any possible adverse reactions from any prescription or nonprescription drugs, such as antihistamines they may be taking.
4. Drivers must require students to wear seatbelts at all times when the van is moving.
5. All TrekNorth vehicles must be driven with headlights on during operation.
6. Drivers must observe posted speed limits, traffic signs and legal rules of the road. Vehicles pulling trailers or loaded with students will not exceed 70 mph, even if posted speed limits are greater.
7. Avoid driving practices that lead to loss of control such as driving too fast for road conditions and panic steering.
8. Load vehicles and trailers properly. Flammable liquids/materials must not be transported in the passenger compartment of vehicles. When refueling vehicles, students must not be inside the vehicle.
9. TrekNorth vehicles are serviced on a regular schedule. When operating a TrekNorth vehicle, employees are encouraged to routinely check the tires, oil, lights, spare, jack, fluids and belts, and to report any irregularities to the Operations Manager.
10. All other laws and regulations applying to the use of public school vehicles within the state of Minnesota also apply, including the obligation to evaluate the vehicle prior to use

## C. Driving Behavior Expectations

1. TrekNorth will support the decisions of persons acting in a prudent manner. Driving in an unsafe or dangerous manner is unacceptable.
2. Picking up hitchhikers is not allowed.
3. Drivers must avoid distractions while driving
  - a. Driver use of cell phones while operating a TrekNorth vehicle is prohibited while the vehicle is in motion.
  - b. Be prepared to properly handle the vehicle while controlling passenger behavior.
  - c. Use passengers to adjust radio, climate control, answer cell phones or respond to other passenger needs.

**SECTION 5  
WAGE AND SALARY POLICIES**

**5.1 WAGE OR SALARY INCREASES**

Each employee's hourly wage or salary will be reviewed at least once each year. The employee's review date will usually be conducted during the spring of each year. Such reviews may be conducted more frequently for a newly created position, or based on a recent promotion/job change.

Increases will be determined on the basis of school financial status, job performance, adherence to policies and procedures, and ability to meet or exceed duties per job description. Fluctuations in student enrollment can also impact wages and salaries. In all cases of licensed teaching staff, the TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School Salary Schedule will determine employee compensation.

Salary Schedules: Licensed Staff Salary Schedule, Academic Advisor Salary Schedule, Para-Professional Salary Schedule, Business Manager Salary Schedule, Operations Manager Salary Schedule, Facility Maintenance Salary Schedule.

TREKNORTH JR SR HIGH SCHOOL

LICENSED	"Quality Years"	BA 18-19	BA+15* 18-19	BA+30* 18-19	MA/MS BA+45* 18-19	MA/MS+15* 18-19	MA/MS+30 PHD/EPD 18-19
	1	\$35,500	\$37,500	\$40,500	\$42,500	\$44,500	\$46,500
2	\$36,250	\$38,250	\$41,250	\$43,250	\$45,250	\$47,250	
3	\$37,000	\$39,000	\$42,000	\$44,000	\$46,000	\$48,000	
4	\$37,750	\$39,750	\$42,750	\$44,750	\$46,750	\$48,750	
5	\$38,500	\$40,500	\$43,500	\$45,500	\$47,500	\$49,500	
6	\$39,725	\$41,725	\$44,725	\$46,725	\$48,725	\$50,725	
7	\$40,950	\$42,950	\$45,950	\$47,950	\$49,950	\$51,950	
8	\$42,175	\$44,175	\$47,175	\$49,175	\$51,175	\$53,175	
9	\$43,400	\$45,400	\$48,400	\$50,400	\$52,400	\$54,400	
10	\$44,625	\$46,625	\$49,625	\$51,625	\$53,625	\$55,625	
11	\$46,500	\$48,500	\$51,500	\$53,500	\$55,500	\$57,500	
12	\$49,000	\$51,000	\$54,000	\$56,000	\$58,000	\$60,000	
13	\$51,500	\$53,500	\$56,500	\$58,500	\$60,500	\$62,500	
14	\$54,000	\$56,000	\$59,000	\$61,000	\$63,000	\$65,000	
15 (+)	\$56,500	\$58,500	\$61,500	\$63,500	\$65,500	\$67,500	

TREKNORTH JR SR HIGH SCHOOL

ADMIN	"Quality Years"	18-19	19-20	20-21
Asst. Ex Dir		\$75,000-\$85,000	\$76,000-\$86,000	\$77,000-\$87,000
SPED Dir		\$70,000-\$80,000	\$71,000-\$81,000	\$72,000-\$82,000
ADMIN Adjacent				
BUS Man		\$50,000-\$60,000	Hiring range + \$1000/year Trek exp	
DAC		Licensed Scale (at % of time if less than full) + 10%		
Oper. Man		Hiring Range= PARA scale + \$2.00/hr MARRS + \$2.00/hr Meal Coord & 0.35/year Trek Experience		
Tech Coord		\$35,000-\$40,000	Hiring Range+ \$500/year Trek exp	
Acad Adv		\$30,000.00	\$500/year Trek exp	

PARA /CUSTODIAL	"Quality Years"	18-19	19-20	20-21
	1	\$15.97	\$16.21	\$16.45
	2	\$16.33	\$16.57	\$16.82
	3	\$16.69	\$16.94	\$17.20
	4	\$17.05	\$17.31	\$17.57
	5	\$17.42	\$17.68	\$17.94
	6	\$17.78	\$18.05	\$18.32
	7	\$18.14	\$18.41	\$18.69
	8	\$18.50	\$18.78	\$19.06
	9	\$18.87	\$19.15	\$19.44
	10	\$19.23	\$19.52	\$19.81
	11	\$19.59	\$19.88	\$20.18
	12	\$19.95	\$20.25	\$20.56
	13	\$20.32	\$20.62	\$20.93
	14	\$20.68	\$20.99	\$21.30
	15 (+)	\$21.04	\$21.39	\$21.74

**5.2 TIMEKEEPING**

Accurate recording of time worked is the responsibility of every non-exempt/hourly employee. Time worked is the time actually spent on a job(s) performing assigned duties.

The School does not pay for extended breaks or time spent on personal matters.

The timesheet is a legal instrument. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another team employee's time record will result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Authorized personnel will review time records each month. The payroll person or appropriate person must approve any changes to a employee's time record. Questions regarding the payroll should be directed to the business manager.

**Time Sheet** - Non-exempt/hourly employees will be issued a timesheet on their first day of employment. The employee will be given thorough instructions on usage and instructions on what to do should a problem occur.

### **5.3 OVERTIME**

Overtime compensation is paid to nonexempt employees in accordance with federal and state wage and hour restrictions. Overtime is payable for all hours worked over 40 per week at a rate of one and one-half times the non-exempt employee's regular hourly rate. Paid- Time-Off, personal time, holidays, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked when calculating overtime.

All overtime work by an hourly employee must receive the Director's prior authorization. Overtime worked without prior authorization may result in disciplinary action.

### **5.4 PAYDAYS**

All employees are paid monthly. The pay period begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month and ends on the last day of the month. Paychecks are issued on the last business day of the month. If an employee terminates employment after the submission of payroll data for the purpose of printing paychecks, the employee may be required to pay back in the amount equal to that which was overpaid. TrekNorth processes payroll through a direct deposit system.

### **5.5 STUDENT TEACHER SUPERVISION**

Each supervising teacher shall be paid for student teacher supervision by the cooperating post-secondary institution. If this money transfers to the employee through TrekNorth payroll, each supervising teacher shall be paid 100% of the fee paid for student teacher supervision minus payroll expense accrued (e.g. FICA, TRA, WORK COMP, LTD).

### **5.6 OVERLOAD ASSIGNMENTS**

Overload assignments are when a teacher's class load exceeds a 1.0 FTE. The assigning of overload assignments is at the discretion of the Executive Director and is based on student need. Teachers asked by the Executive Director to teach an overload assignment will be paid 1.20 percent based on their position on the salary schedule. The overload assignment does not affect benefits; no employee is eligible for greater than full-time benefits.

## **SECTION 6 BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School offers a benefits program for its full-time employees (See Definitions, Full-time, Sec, 2). However, the existence of these programs does not signify that an employee will necessarily be employed for the required time necessarily to qualify for the benefits included in and administered through these programs. Employees may be required to pay a portion of the premium for health coverage.

### **6.1 GROUP INSURANCE**

TrekNorth offers the following health and life insurance programs for FULL-TIME (20 or more hour per week) employees employed 30 days. For specific information regarding the plan see *Individual Summary Plan Description*.

#### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

This Plan is a fully-insured medical plan. Coverage is subject to all terms and conditions of the Plan.

- Coverage begins following 30 days of employment
- Employees may waive enrollment or elect single or family coverage offered by the company contracted to provide Health Insurance to TrekNorth employees.
- Contact the business manager to arrange for health insurance coverage.

#### **DENTAL**

TrekNorth offers the opportunity to enroll in dental insurance. Coverage is subject to all terms and conditions of the current year administered plan.

- Coverage begins following 30 days of employment.
- Employees may waive enrollment or elect single, single+1 or family coverage as offered by the company contracted to provide Dental Insurance to TrekNorth employees.
- Contact the business manager to arrange for dental insurance coverage.

#### **LIFE INSURANCE**

TrekNorth High School provides a Life Insurance benefit for all full-time (20 hours or more per week) employees. The School will cover 100% of the premium for a basic \$50,000 policy. There is an optional plan to select additional coverage and/or coverage for your dependents. Coverage is subject to all terms and conditions of the Plan.

#### **LONG TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE**

This benefit plan provides for continuation of part of your income during a major illness or injury. The employer pays the premium. If an employee is unable to perform substantially all of his/her essential duties because of a physical or mental condition, illness or injury, for a period more than 90 days, then long-term disability benefits may apply. See the Long- Term Disability Summary Plan Description for details.

The employee's portion of any premium deduction for health and disability insurance begins on the pay period prior to coverage start date.

This Manual does not contain the complete terms and/or conditions of any of the Cooperative's current

insurance benefit plans. It is intended only to provide general explanations. If there is ever any conflict between the Manual and any documents issued by one of the Cooperative's insurance carriers, the carrier's guideline regulations will be regarded as authoritative.

## **AFLAC**

TrekNorth offers the opportunity to purchase AFLAC medical and/or additional life insurance coverage. See the AFLAC Benefit Plan Brochure for details, available upon request from the business manager.

## **FLEXIBLE BENEFITS PLAN**

TrekNorth offers the opportunity to use pre-tax dollars to pay for certain costs pertaining to Medical Expense and Dependent Care Reimbursement by entering into a salary reduction arrangement. This arrangement is a nontaxable benefit, which should save social security and income taxes on the amount of your salary reduction. See the Flexible Benefits Plan Description for details, available upon request from the business manager.

## **6.2 COBRA BENEFITS**

The Federal Consolidated Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the TrekNorth High School health/plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility.

Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of a employee; a reduction in a employee's hours or leave of absence, divorce or legal separation and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at TrekNorth High School group rates plus an administration fee. TrekNorth High School provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under TrekNorth High School health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

## **6.3 SOCIAL SECURITY/MEDICARE**

TrekNorth High School withholds income tax from all employees' earnings and participates in FICA (Social Security) and Medicare withholding and matching programs as required by law.

## **6.4 TEACHERS RETIREMENT PLAN- TRA (Licensed teachers only), PERA**

Teachers contribute 7.5% of their gross income to the Teacher's Retirement Plan and the employer contributes 7.5%. Non-licensed employees contribute 6.5% of their gross income to the PERA and the employer contributes 7.5% of the employee's gross income.

## **6.5 RECORD KEEPING**

The Operations Manager maintains sick days and personal days earned and used. Each employee is responsible for verifying his/her information to make sure the correct amount of available hours is accurate.

Each full-time (20 hours per week or more) employee is responsible for completing an Orange Request Form in a timely manner. Forms are available through the Operations Manager.

## **6.6 LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### ***1. Leave Days***

- a) Salaried-Exempt employees *who are contracted for under 200 days* shall receive ten (10) sick leave days and three (3) personal days each year. (Personal bank of 6)
- b) Employees *who are contracted for 200-210 days* shall receive twelve (12) sick leave days and five (5) personal days each year. (Personal bank of 6)
- c) Employees *who are contracted for over 210 days* shall receive fourteen (14) sick leave days and seven (7) personal days each year. (Personal bank of 10 days)

The number of days will be prorated as necessary for employees who are not full time.

Salaried-Exempt employees may accumulate unused sick leave, up to a maximum credit of 50 days of sick leave per teacher. It is the responsibility of employees to know the status of their leave days before submitting a leave. Your balance is available for viewing at:  
[www.region1.k12.mn.us/smarter/login.aspx?dn+4106](http://www.region1.k12.mn.us/smarter/login.aspx?dn+4106)

### ***2. Sick Leave:***

Employees can bank up to fifty (50) sick leave days. These shall be granted by the school whenever a licensed teacher/salaried employee's absence is due to illness, immediate family illness\* or physical disability which prevents his/her attendance or performance of duties on that day or days. Sick leave may be used in cases of bereavement involving the employee's immediate family. An Orange Leave Request Form for sick leave must be filled out immediately upon employee's return to work after an absence due to illness.

*\*According to Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)*

A request for medical leave of absence of more than three (3) consecutive days under this section, shall be accompanied by a written doctor's statement outlining the condition of health and an estimated date for which the teacher is expected to be able to resume normal responsibilities. (See also Sec. 6.7, #7 Child Care/Family Medical Leave)

Full-time licensed teachers/salaried employees may be granted leave for a major family event, at the discretion of the Executive Director for up to **five (5) days**. These days are deducted from Sick Leave.

- d) Full-time staff who have banked over twenty-five (25) days (200 hours) of sick leave at the end of a school year, may sell a minimum of one half (½) day (4 hours) to maximum of five (5) days (40 hours) in four (4) hour increments. The form must be completed by June 1st, to be paid at the current sub rate on the June paycheck.

### ***3. Sick Leave Bank***

A sick leave bank shall be established and may only be used by staff who are physically incapable of performing their duties with the following guidelines:

- Absence due to accident, childbearing (up to a maximum of six weeks inclusive of any personal sick leave accrual used), or serious illness or immediate family illness\* *\*According to Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)*
- Complete use of personally accumulated sick leave. May retain maximum personal leave balance of eight (8) hours.
- It may not be used for any other type of leave provided in the document.
- All deductions from this bank will be made only with the approval of the Executive Director.

- No staff shall be allowed to use more than 50 days per year from the sick leave bank during any fiscal year.

a) Implementation. The sick leave bank shall be maintained in the following manner. Any teacher who will lose sick days because their max bank is reached, shall automatically contribute any lost days to the sick leave bank. Staff may donate their sick days to the sick leave bank. When a staff member leaves TrekNorth, their remainder of sick days will be donated to the sick leave bank. Staff may only gift sick days to the sick leave bank and not to other staff.

b) Process: Staff requesting a donation will complete an orange sheet for a meeting with the Executive Director to discuss the request. After the face-to-face meeting, the Executive Director will notify the Business Manager if approved and how many hours to transfer or if the request is denied. This information will be completed in writing on the orange sheet and retained with the payroll records. The Business Manager will update the sick leave donation/bank to reflect the leave change if approved and notify the Operations Manager that the request is finalized. *Staff members are responsible for their own balances and requesting sick bank donations by the 14th of the month to assure leave without pay does not occur.* NO LEAVE WITHOUT PAY WILL BE REVERSED, so if there is a question on balance prior to the request please discuss current balance with the Operations Manager.

c) Limitation. Following the use of the sick leave bank days, the staff may submit additional requests to the Executive Director who is authorized to grant the use of sick leave bank days. Staff who have exhausted their personal sick leave as well as fifty (50) days in the sick leave bank, shall no longer be eligible for paid sick leave.

#### **4. Personal Leave\*:**

a) Personal leave is to be used at the discretion of the teacher and contingent upon the school's ability to find a substitute teacher. Employees may "bank" unused personal days to a total of no more than six (6) in a single contract period for a & b employees, max 10 days for c employees.

b) TrekNorth staff may not take Personal Leave on any day before or after a scheduled school break. For example, if the December holiday-break starts on Tuesday, staff cannot take Monday as a personal day. Staff may use personal days on a Friday or Monday that is part of a regular, 2-day weekend.

c) Staff may not request days off the first and last weeks of school.

d) Full-time staff who wish to sell any unused personal days in their bank at the end of a school year, may sell in eight (8) hour increments. The form must be completed by June 1st, to be paid at the rate of \$150 per day, on the June paycheck.

*\*Director Discretion.*

**Personal Salary Deduct:** A licensed teacher/salaried employee may request additional personal time off beyond their days of Personal Leave. This requested leave time may be granted if a substitute teacher can be found. The equivalent of one day's pay will be deducted for each day of salary deduction leave. Up to a maximum three (3) consecutive salary deduct days for personal time.

#### **1. Deaths and Funerals**

Deaths and funerals other than within the immediate family, court appearances, and estate settlements are examples of situations where the leave may be used.

#### **2. Voting**

Employees will be granted time-off on Election Day to vote in any statewide election or to fill a vacancy in Congress. Employees are encouraged to vote prior to normal working hours if it is at all possible.

### **3. Absences for Child's School Activities (Minnesota State Law)**

Employees who have worked at least one year and work at least 20 hours per week may use up to **sixteen unpaid** (16) hours each twelve (12)-month period to attend school conferences, classroom activities, or pre-school activities, if those conferences or activities cannot be scheduled outside the employee's work schedule. The employee must give Administration reasonable notice of the upcoming absence and make a reasonable effort to schedule time off so as not to disrupt work. This will be deducted from the sick leave days.

### **4. Absences for Sick Child Care**

Employees may use accumulated sick leave if the employee must be absent from work to care for the employee's sick child or sick dependent child. Dependent child is defined the same as the Employer's Health Insurance Policy, See 6.7 if child's illness is three days, or longer.

### **5. Jury Duty**

An employee who has completed 90 days of employment and has been summoned for jury duty will be allowed time off with pay for jury duty. The employee will show evidence of selection and any fees received are to be given to the employer except for allowance for transportation to and from jury duty.

The employee is expected to work as much of the regularly scheduled assigned day as possible when not actually on jury duty. You are required to work before and after jury duty if able to work a minimum of two consecutive hours. It is necessary for you give the Employer as much advance notice as possible.

Employees who are already off work and receiving Disability Leave pay are not eligible to receive additional paid time due to serving on jury duty.

### **6. Military Leave**

Time off without pay will be granted to employees who are required to report for military duty, including Reserve and National Guard duty. Disability Leave will be used during this time off.

### **7. Child Care/Family and Medical Leave**

Child Care/Family Medical Leaves are to affirm TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School's commitment to children and families. This parenting/child care leave and family medical leave policy is hereby created to provide all staff with a clear understanding and interpretation of the use and administration of Minnesota Statutes (Parenting /Child Care Leave and Federal Public Law) ([Family and Medical Leave Act](#)).

Furthermore, the TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School staff will provide its employees with support and assistance in reviewing and selecting the most appropriate options available to them. For the purposes of this policy, "parent" shall be an eligible staff employee who is a natural or adoptive parent or guardian.

All leaves covered by the Child Care/Family and Medical Leave policies, except as provided for in Federal law, Minnesota Statute and/or TrekNorth Paid Time Off policy, shall be unpaid leave. The statutory leaves benefits set forth benefits must be provided to all staff employees who are eligible for the leaves. Below are the details of the statutory guidelines/procedures and the Request for Family Medical Leave Form to be prepared and submitted to the Executive Director for consideration.

### **Six-week Leave**

A staff employee who does not qualify for leave under the [Family Medical Leave Act](#) (12 week leave -see below) may qualify for a six-week unpaid leave for birth or adoption of a child. The employee needs to request the leave at least 30 days in advance. The school will continue to provide health insurance benefits under its group health plan under the same conditions coverage would have been provided had the staff employee not taken a leave. A staff employee's failure to pay their portion of the premium on time may result in termination of coverage. Repayment of the school's contribution may be required should the employee not return from the leave. This leave is separate and exclusive of the family and medical leave described in the preceding paragraphs.

### **Twelve-week Leave**

Regular full-time staff employees who have been employed by the School for at-least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave are entitled to a total of 12 workweeks of unpaid family or medical leave during the applicable 12-month period as defined below, plus any additional leave as required by law. Leave may be taken for one or more of the following reasons in accordance with applicable law:

- Birth of the staff employee's child
- Placement of an adopted or foster child with the staff employee;
- To care for the staff employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; and/or the staff employee's serious health condition make the person unable to perform the functions of the staff employee's job.

For the purposes of this policy, "year" is defined as a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date the staff employee uses any leave.

1. A "serious health condition" typically requires either inpatient care, an absence of three or more days for a serious health condition or continuing treatment by or under the supervision of a health care provider, as defined by applicable law. Family and medical leave generally is not intended to cover short-term conditions for which treatment and recovery are very brief.
2. Eligible spouses employed by the school are limited to an aggregate of twelve weeks of leave during any 12-month period for the birth or adoption of a child, the placement of a child for foster care or to care for a parent. This limitation for spouses employed by the school does not apply to leave taken by one spouse to care for the other spouse who is seriously ill, to care for a child with a serious health condition, or because of the staff employee's own serious health condition.
3. Depending on the type of leave, intermittent or reduced schedule leave may be granted at the discretion of the Director when medically necessary. However, part-time staff employees are only eligible for a prorated portion of leave to be used on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis, based on their average hours worked per week.
4. If a staff employee requests a leave for a serious health condition of the staff employee or the staff employee's spouse, child or parent, the staff employee will be required to submit sufficient certification. In such a case, the staff employee must submit the medical certification within 15 days from the date of the request or as soon as practicable under the circumstances.
5. Requests for leave shall be made to the TrekNorth Director. Staff employees must give 30 days written notice of a leave of absence where practicable. Staff employees are expected to make a

reasonable effort to schedule leaves resulting from planned medical treatment so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the school site, subject to and in coordination with the health care provider.

6. During the period of a leave permitted under this policy (which does not exceed a total 12 work weeks in the applicable 12 month period), the school will provide health insurance under its group health plan under the same conditions coverage would have been provided had the staff employee not taken the leave. The staff employee will be responsible for payment of the staff employee contribution to continue group health insurance coverage during the leave. A staff employee's failure to make necessary and timely contributions may result in termination of coverage. The staff employee may be allowed to substitute earned PTO leave for unpaid leave: the eligible PTO days must have been earned in the months prior to the implementation of the unpaid leave.
7. Employees returning from leave permitted under this policy (which does not exceed a total of 12 work weeks in the applicable 12 month period) are eligible for reinstatement in the same or equivalent position as provided by law. However, the staff employee has no greater right to reinstatement or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the staff employee had been continuously employed during the leave.
8. A staff employee who does not return to work after leave or does not return for at least 30 working days, may, in some situations, be required to reimburse the school for the cost of the health plan premiums paid by it.
9. The provisions of this policy are intended to comply with applicable law, including the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) and applicable regulations. Any terms used from the FMLA will have the same meaning as defined by that act and/or applicable regulations. To the extent that this policy is ambiguous or contradicts applicable law, that language of the applicable law will prevail.
10. Extended Personal Leave: there may be a situation that arises that does not fit in one of the above categories. If that is the case you should contact the Executive Director to determine options for an unpaid personal leave up to 4 weeks.

Contact the TrekNorth Director or Operations Manager for Leave (Orange) Request Forms.

## **SECTION 7 EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS**

### **7.1 STAFF MEETINGS**

Regular staff meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 8:00am and punctual attendance is required. Generally, teachers will also participate in two Research Team meetings per month. Administration will give notice of additional meetings or changes to this meeting schedule as much in advance as possible. These informative meetings allow employees to be informed on student and community concerns, recent school activities, changes in the workplace, professional development and growth activities, and employee recognition. Information disseminated at staff meetings is considered as formal notification of policies, expectations and standards of operation that are to be followed. Employees are responsible for adhering to directives set forth during staff meetings. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including employment termination.

### **7.2 LEAVE (ORANGE) REQUEST FORMS**

TrekNorth provides an “Orange Request Form” for employees to use to make requests. The forms are part of a system that helps requests get responded to in an efficient and effective manner. If an employee would like to request leave, request attention to a facility issue, request a meeting with administration, request an event be placed on the school calendar, or make any other general request, they need to start the process by completing a Leave (Orange) Request Form. Forms are available in the Staff Workroom. Forms will be collected each day and processed within 24 hours, except in the event of the Director being absent from school. An online version of an “Leave (Orange) Request Form” is also available by emailing [orangesheet@treknorth.org](mailto:orangesheet@treknorth.org) with your request. Once a form has been reviewed, paper forms will be returned with response included in staff mailbox or emails will be replied to with response.

### **7.3 E-MAIL and BULLETIN BOARDS**

In most instances, e-mail will be used to disseminate necessary information and e-mail notification from administration to employees is considered formal notification. Bulletin boards may be used to provide employees access to important posted information and announcements. Each employee is responsible for reading necessary information posted in e-mails and on the bulletin boards.

### **7.4 SUGGESTIONS**

TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School encourages employees to make suggestions to help the school be a pleasant, efficient and cost-effective employer. If they do not want to offer these orally or in person, write them down and leave them with the Operations Manager or another administrative employee. If this is done anonymously, every care will be taken to preserve the employee's privacy.

### **7.5 PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS: Grievance Process**

Under normal working conditions, employees who have a job-related problem, question or complaint should first discuss it with the appropriate person or school committee. At this level, employees usually reach the simplest, quickest, and most satisfactory solution. If this does not solve the problem, or if mediation is required, the employee may talk with the Executive Director who will work to resolve the situation. The Director will keep the Business Manager of TrekNorth High School and the School Board informed of any final written warnings or possible serious/legal issues and concerns.

Grievance Process for an employee with a job-related problem or complaint:

1. Discuss problem or complaint with appropriate staff member

2. If the matter cannot be resolved, discuss the problem with the Executive Director, who may use mediation, and who can be an arbiter in making a decision
3. If the resolution reached by the Executive Director is not satisfactory, the staff member with the complaint should go to the School Board, who will be the final arbiter in the grievance process. If the Executive Director is the subject of the grievance, the individual should take the complaint to the Chair of the School Board.

## **7.6 PARENT/GUARDIAN & TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Parents of TrekNorth students are assured upon enrollment that there will be high levels of communication between teachers and parents/guardians. These are the required elements of communication to parents from teachers:

1. Attend all scheduled Parent-Teacher Conferences
2. Inform parents/guardians by phone, in person, or by email if a student's grade drops below 60%, or after any sudden and substantial change in performance or behavior
3. Communicate in order to eliminate surprises: parents should not receive negative news about their student's performance or behavior for the first time at conferences or upon receipt of report cards
4. Prompt communication: respond within two school days to email or phone inquiries from parents/guardians
5. Participate in problem-solving process: attend team meetings and work with parents/guardians and school staff to correct student performance or behavior problems
6. Keep website information up to date and reliable

## **7.7 OFFICIAL VENUE FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION**

The official venue for public information related to TrekNorth Jr. & Sr. High School shall be the school website, [www.treknorth.org](http://www.treknorth.org). School staff are encouraged to keep portions of that site related to their work up to date with current information.

## **7.8 OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF TREKNORTH**

The official newspaper of TrekNorth Jr. & Sr. High School shall be the *Bemidji Pioneer*.

## **7.9 SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To put an announcement in the daily bulletin on PowerSchool, the school website, or on the schoolwide calendar, send information to: [announcements@treknorth.org](mailto:announcements@treknorth.org)

## **SECTION 8 OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM**

### **8.1 MISSION STATEMENT**

The Outdoor Adventure Program of TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School aims to develop confidence, leadership, and integrity amongst student citizens by providing challenging and educational experiences in a wilderness setting.

### **8.2 VALUES**

The Outdoor Adventure Program values wilderness, leadership, education, community, and risk management.

### **8.3 DEFINITIONS**

#### **Wilderness**

TrekNorth defines wilderness as any natural setting with real challenges and consequences, and as a place free from the distractions and technological conveniences of modern life. Navigating through wilderness demands self-sufficiency, determination, technical skills, respect for the environment and our partners, and delicate decision-making that balances risk and safety. Wilderness also provides the opportunity for formative experiences based on challenge, perseverance, beauty, and reflection.

#### **Leadership**

TrekNorth believes leadership is a developed rather than inherent trait. Leadership evolves after experience, and TrekNorth values a leadership style amongst staff and students that incorporates personal accountability, awareness of consequences, awareness of group needs, awareness of environment, and humility in the midst

#### **Education**

TrekNorth believes education is grounded in experience, and that experiences which provide challenge, excitement, critical-thinking, and the demand for communication are the best teachers. The challenges we create for our students will teach them the skills they need for safe wilderness navigation and the ability to ethically navigate through the realms of their family, peer groups, school, daily decision-making, and career path. TrekNorth staff will serve as Instructors rather than guides, and these Instructors are committed to providing educational wilderness experiences for students.

#### **Community**

TrekNorth is a community first, a community dedicated to young people who are striving to become positive contributors to their local and global communities. TrekNorth values its student, staff, family, and community members, and appreciates teamwork, critical-thinking, personal responsibility, diversity, integrity, humor, and a commitment to one another.

#### **Risk Management**

Risk is an inherent and valuable component of wilderness experiences and the learning process. TrekNorth recognizes and appreciates this risk through risk management that incorporates experience, sound judgment, the evaluation of consequences, and the consideration of the group. TrekNorth Instructors are committed foremost to keeping students safe through a demonstration of wilderness skills, medical knowledge, and successful risk management.

## **8.4 SEQUENTIAL SKILL BUILDING**

In an effort to achieve the stated mission, the Outdoor Adventure Program will provide experiences of increasing challenge and duration. All students will have the opportunity to develop technical skills through single-day Skills Seminars prior to participating in a longer and more rigorous course, unless an agreement is made with an Instructor, and this agreement is to be based upon a demonstration of previous experience, skills and maturity.

## **8.5 STAFF AND STUDENT OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM POLICIES**

### **8.5.1 Trip Leadership**

#### **8.5.1.0**

Trip leadership will be under the direction of the Outdoor Adventure Program Director and the Executive Director of TrekNorth. Only those staff or chaperones who have “Trip Leader/Outdoor Instructor” status will plan and lead trips, although non-leaders may assist leaders in planning or conducting trips. The Trip Leader/Outdoor Instructor will hold the authority and decision-making that takes place on any Outdoor Adventure Program trip.

#### **8.5.1.1**

TrekNorth will promote the development of Student Leaders for the Outdoor Adventure Program. Accordingly, students who hold a WFA, WAFA, or WFR certification, and who demonstrate a mastery of the technical skills, a mastery of Leave No Trace practices, a capacity for risk vs. benefit decision-making, and a consistent mature presence on outings will be considered eligible for Student Leader positions. Selected Student Leaders will be given the opportunity to lead and instruct Skills Seminars and to assist with longer outings under the supervision of a staff Outdoor Instructor.

#### **8.5.1.2**

The Outdoor Adventure Program Director will determine the status of each TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School staff member in regards to trip leadership. Only staff who have been designated as “Trip Leader/Outdoor Instructor” by the Program Director are allowed to plan and execute trips through the Outdoor Adventure Program.

### **8.5.2 Funding and Fundraising**

#### **8.5.2.0**

Each fiscal year TrekNorth will allocate funds for travel, instruction, and equipment as it relates to the Outdoor Adventure Program. It is the duty of the Director of the OAP to designate these funds in a manner that promotes sequential skill building and educational opportunities for the greatest number of students. TrekNorth realizes that students participating in advanced courses require more financial investment. TrekNorth may also grant a travel-allowance to each TrekNorth student. This money is to be used for school trips and is not available for personal use or refund at the end of the year. Students not using their allowance will forfeit the money at the end of the academic year, and the forfeited money will go back into the general fund.

#### **8.5.2.1**

TrekNorth will offer many trips at little to no cost to students and families. No student will be denied participation in this required program for financial reasons.

### **8.5.2.2**

TrekNorth may ask students and families to cover a portion or all of trip expenses, including food, transportation, lodging, or contracted instructional services. This money will be received and recorded with the Business Manager and put into the appropriate fund. Trip Instructors are to follow the established protocol when using school money.

## **8.5.3 Trip Planning**

### **8.5.3.0**

The Director of the OAP at TrekNorth will propose a Trip Calendar by August 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. He/She will solicit Trip Leaders from the eligible pool within the staff, and Trip Leaders are to notify the Director of the OAP regarding their availability and willingness to lead the proposed trips.

### **8.5.3.1**

For budgetary purposes OAP trips must be proposed to the Director of the OAP before February 1st of the previous year and approved before any planning or advertising of the trip can occur.

### **8.5.3.2**

Trips are to be well planned and students and parents should be well informed far in advance of any OAP trip. For any trip longer than four days an Informative Meeting for Parents must occur at least seven days prior to trip departure. This meeting should review the destination and itinerary for the trip. Parent/Guardian attendance is mandatory. Prior to the meeting parents/guardians must have received a gear-list, a liability waiver, a medical release/history form, and a proof of insurance form. Parents should be instructed to come to the meeting with these forms completed. Trips that are four days or less also need the waiver, medical, and insurance forms, and an itinerary and description must also be sent home. The forms must be completed and signed before the student may depart for the trip.

### **8.5.3.3**

Trip Leaders/Outdoor Instructors will inventory food and gear prior to departure to insure students will be properly prepared for the trip. Each student will have three meals per day, a place in a tent, and a sleeping bag and sleeping pad for the duration of the trip. It is the responsibility of the Trip Leader/Outdoor Instructor to insure students have proper footwear, raingear, insulation, personal medication and toiletries.

### **8.5.3.4**

All OAP trip must have specific [permission forms](#) based on this sample form.

## **8.5.4 Traveling**

### **8.5.4.1**

The TrekNorth transportation policy provides guidance and requirements for the operation of TrekNorth vehicles, staff/driver training and expectations for driving behavior. This policy applies to all TrekNorth vehicles. No personals are allowed to be used for transportation of students unless the vehicle is currently state certified. TrekNorth vehicles are intended for TrekNorth business only (student travel, staff professional development) and must be signed out on the TrekNorth Vehicle Calendar.

#### **D. Driver Requirements and Training Policies**

1. The vehicle driver must
  - a. be at least 21 years of age
  - b. have in their possession a valid driver's license

- c. have permission of the TrekNorth Business Manager
- d. have a Criminal Background Check on file with the school
- e. meet all the requirements described in Section **4.12 Transportation**

#### E. Vehicle Operating Policies

1. Hours of Service (HOS (length of time driving or combination of driving and non-driving work). Drivers will not be behind wheel longer than (10) ten hours, or work a combination of driving and other duties totaling more than (15) fifteen hours in any twenty-four hour period. This includes transporting students or staff, pulling trailers, or driving empty vehicles. TrekNorth encourages drivers to rest when fatigued.
2. No alcohol or non-medical drugs may be consumed while operating a TrekNorth vehicle or a personal vehicle being used for TrekNorth business. Additionally, drivers of TrekNorth vehicles must refrain from drinking alcohol for at least 10 hours prior to driving. Drivers also need to be aware of any possible adverse reactions from any prescription or non-prescription drugs, such as antihistamines they may be taking.
3. Drivers must require students to wear seatbelts at all times when the van is moving.
4. All TrekNorth vehicles must be driven with headlights on during operation.
5. Drivers must observe posted speed limits, traffic signs and legal rules of the road. Vehicles pulling trailers or loaded with students will not exceed 70 mph, even if posted speed limits are greater.
6. Avoid driving practices that lead to loss of control such as driving too fast for road conditions and panic steering.
7. Load vehicles and trailers properly. Flammable liquids/materials must not be transported in the passenger compartment of vehicles.
8. TrekNorth vehicles are serviced on a regular schedule. When operating a TrekNorth vehicle, employees are encouraged to routinely check the tires, oil, lights, spare, jack, fluids and belts, and to report any irregularities to the Operations Manager or Outdoor Program Director.

#### F. Driving Behavior Expectations

1. TrekNorth will support the decisions of persons acting in a prudent manner. Driving in an unsafe or dangerous manner is unacceptable.
2. Picking up hitchhikers is not allowed.
3. Drivers must avoid distractions while driving
  - a. Driver use of cell phones while operating a TrekNorth vehicle is prohibited while the vehicle is in motion.
  - b. Be prepared to properly handle the vehicle while controlling passenger behavior.
  - c. Use passengers to adjust radio, climate control, answer cell phones or respond to other passenger needs.

#### **8.5.4.2**

With the exception of air, train, or boat travel, students traveling with TrekNorth will have a spot on a TrekNorth van or bus, or a spot in a vehicle rented by and driven by a TrekNorth staff member or certified chaperone. Students may not drive personal or school vehicles for a school trip. Any chaperone driving TrekNorth students in any vehicle must have a copy of their driver's license and insurance information, as well as the required criminal background check on file at the school.

### **8.5.5 Trip Leaders, Assistant Leaders, Wilderness Volunteers**

#### **8.5.5.1**

TrekNorth Outdoor Adventure Program trips are to have a 6:1 student to chaperone ratio. Chaperones include the Trip Leader, Assistant Leaders, and Certified Wilderness Volunteers. Exceptions to this ratio will be granted at the Outdoor Adventure Program Director's discretion. Trips that are more technical in nature, such as rock climbing or trips with whitewater, are to have a ratio of 4:1.

#### **8.5.5.2**

Only Wilderness Volunteers who've been certified by the Outdoor Adventure Program Director may assist Trip Leaders on OAP trips. Trip Leaders are responsible for recruiting appropriate volunteers.

#### **8.5.5.3**

To be a Wilderness Volunteer one must be or have the following:

1. 21 years of age or older
2. completed the Criminal Background Check
3. a copy of a driver's license and insurance information on file with the school
4. appropriate medical training (Basic First Aid/CPR, WFR, EMT, etc.)
5. unaccompanied by non-student dependants
6. experience that is relevant to the activity and instruction areas

The Director of the OAP may make exceptions to accommodate school needs or allow for extraordinary circumstances, and people under the age of 21 who've been Student Leaders in the TrekNorth Outdoor Adventure Program may be eligible to be Wilderness Volunteers.

#### **8.5.5.4**

For most trips, Trip Leaders will be responsible for incorporating the cost of volunteers into the cost of the trip. Trips including high travel, lodging, or activity costs may include fees for chaperones. Charging volunteers or incorporating volunteer expenses into the trip costs will be at the discretion of the Director of the OAP.

### **8.5.6 Staff Responsibilities**

#### **8.5.6.0**

All TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School staff traveling with students and volunteers on a school trip are expected to follow the guidelines for behavior as outlined within the TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School Staff Handbook. School trips are considered "school time" and on the "school's premises."

#### **8.5.6.1**

Staff will help insure student safety and success by being physically fit for OAP trips. Staff will not help lead trips for which they are not prepared. It is each individual staff member's responsibility to know their body and gear well enough to decide what they can and cannot do. Staff is expected to be realistic when planning trips, and to plan according to what they know they are capable of doing in terms of physical strenuousness.

### **8.5.6.2**

When on OAP trips, staff will have their own sleeping quarters. Staff will not share a tent with students, and staff will insure that students have appropriate sleeping accommodations, including the opportunity for privacy and not sharing tents with members of the opposite sex.

### **8.5.6.3**

Staff members will not engage in behaviors that may be deemed irresponsible or immoral, or in behavior that may endanger or neglect students. This includes but is not limited to: using drugs or tobacco while on a trip, engaging in sexual behavior with another adult, allowing students access or use of drugs or tobacco, allowing students to engage in sexual behavior, or leaving students unsupervised for extended periods of time.

### **8.5.6.4**

When traveling in a foreign country, Staff are expected to behave according to the laws of the state of Minnesota and the United States of America, and the policies of TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School.

## **8.5.7 Student Responsibilities**

### **8.5.7.0**

All TrekNorth students traveling with staff and volunteers on a school trip are expected to follow the guidelines for behavior as outlined within the TrekNorth Student Handbook. School trips are considered “school time” and on the “school’s premises.”

### **8.5.7.1**

TrekNorth students may not possess, use, hold for another person, or in any other way obtain or have illegal drugs, tobacco, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol for the duration of a TrekNorth School trip, including travel to and from destinations. Possession or use of these substances may warrant immediate removal from the trip at the expense of the student and/or student’s family.

### **8.5.7.2**

Students on a school trip will participate and play an active role in trip activities. Students will try to maintain a positive attitude and be willing to do the activities and tasks asked of them by Trip Leaders.

### **8.5.7.3**

Students on a school trip will not engage in behavior that is excessively dangerous to themselves or other students or staff.

### **8.5.7.4**

Students on a school trip will follow the directions and heed the requests of Trip Leaders and Wilderness Volunteers at all times.

### **8.5.7.5**

Students traveling with TrekNorth do so knowing that if they violate any of their student responsibilities, the Trip Leader may decide to send them home or terminate the trip for the whole group. If the Trip Leader sends a student home for a policy violation, the student and his/her family are responsible for any costs involved in removing the student from the trip and getting him/her home.

### **8.5.8 Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

#### **8.5.8.0**

Parents/Guardians of students traveling with TrekNorth will sign a liability waiver, medical history/release, and proof of insurance form for their student before the trip departs.

#### **8.5.8.1**

Parents/Guardians of students traveling with TrekNorth agree to make arrangements for the removal of their student if the Trip Leader deems the removal necessary. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for the expenses of any such removal.

### **8.5.9 Wilderness Volunteer Responsibilities**

#### **8.5.9.0**

Wilderness Volunteers traveling with TrekNorth do so knowing their foremost responsibility is to look after and assist students and staff. Volunteers agree to stay with the group for the duration of the trip and to not make any personal plans that may compromise their ability or usefulness as a chaperone.

#### **8.5.9.1**

Volunteers will not engage in behaviors that may be deemed irresponsible or immoral, or in behavior that may endanger students. This includes but is not limited to: using drugs or tobacco while on a trip, engaging in sexual behavior with another adult, allowing students access or use of drugs or tobacco, allowing students to engage in sexual behavior, or leaving students unsupervised for extended periods of time.

#### **8.5.9.2**

Volunteers will not be responsible for their cost of travel, lodging, standard food expense, or the expense of activities associated with the trip, unless notified in advance. Personal expenses, special food purchases, or any expense that is not a part of the school trip will not be covered by TrekNorth.

#### **8.5.9.3**

Volunteers will follow the directions of the Trip Leader.

### **8.5.10 Medication Policy**

#### **8.5.10.0**

Students will give any prescription medication to TrekNorth staff or chaperones for the duration of the trip. Staff will be responsible for dispensing and keeping a record of student medicine.

#### **8.5.10.1**

Staff will keep student medication in a safe and locked container. Medication will be collected prior to leaving for the trip and returned to students when the trip is over. A record will be kept for the duration of the trip, including names, dates, names of medication, and the amount dispensed.

### **8.5.11 Emergency, Medical, and Disciplinary Policy**

#### **8.5.11.0**

In case of a medical emergency, Trip Leaders will follow protocol, including the directions for removal from the field, as consistent with their level of wilderness medicine training (WFA/WFR):

Protocol 1: Anaphylaxis

- Protocol 2: Wound Management
- Protocol 3: Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- Protocol 4: Spine Injuries
- Protocol 5: Joint Dislocations
- Protocol 6: Severe Asthma

#### **8.5.11.1**

Trip Leaders will document any medical attention given to a student or the use of materials from the medical kits while on a trip and prepare a written account to be submitted to the Director of the OAP within 72 hours of return.

#### **8.5.11.2**

Trip Leaders will exercise sound judgment when making decisions regarding emergency medicine while in the field. Trip Leaders will consider the safety of the individual student, the safety and experience of the group, and the resources he/she has at his/her disposal for treatment and possible evacuation, including their level of wilderness medicine training.

#### **8.5.11.3**

Trip Leaders will organize and execute evacuations for students or staff with spinal injuries or possible spinal injuries, unstable musculoskeletal injuries, high-risk wounds or burns, severe hypothermia, heat stroke, full thickness frostbite, or who've experienced a severe asthma attack.

#### **8.5.11.4**

Trip Leaders will hold students to the standards of behavior as outlined in the TrekNorth Student Handbook. Trip Leaders will employ restorative justice practices and conflict resolution strategies to deal with student-discipline problems.

#### **8.5.11.5**

Trip Leaders have the option of arranging for the removal of a student from a trip if the student violates TrekNorth's substance use or possession policy, the firearms policy, or if the student continues disruptive behavior even after attempts to redirect that behavior. Trip Leaders are required to notify parents/guardians that they are responsible for the expenses and logistics associated with such removals prior to the departure of the trip.

### **8.5.12 Gear Use and Rental Policy**

#### **8.5.12.0**

TrekNorth has purchased gear to be used for the Outdoor Adventure Program. This gear will be stored at school or other secure locations. Staff needing the gear for use on student trips will notify the OAP Director two weeks in advance of the date the gear will be needed. The request will be written or emailed to the Director.

#### **8.5.12.1**

Gear purchased by TrekNorth will be available for personal use by the staff at anytime the gear is not needed for trip and/or student purposes. Gear can also be rented by TrekNorth families. Non-staff rentals will have a fee and a damage deposit is required.

## SECTION 9 TREKNORTH SERVICE PROGRAM

### 9.1 MISSION STATEMENT

The Service Program aims to create socially conscious citizens by providing opportunities for students to volunteer in their local and global communities. The mission of the TrekNorth Service Program is to build and strengthen relationships within the school community while creating and building relationships within the community we live and in our extended communities.

### 9.2 VALUES

The Service Program values altruism, education, community, and leadership.

### 9.3 DEFINITIONS

**Retreat:** TrekNorth defines retreat as any service trip lasting longer than a three-day period and taking place outside of the Bemidji area.

**Local Service:** TrekNorth defines local service as service that takes place in and around Bemidji and lasting for one day. Local service trips are scheduled during the school day.

**Urban Retreat:** TrekNorth defines urban retreat as any extended retreat that takes place in an urban setting. Urban setting is defined as being one where the population is dense (over 50,000 people), is access to a variety of resources, and is culturally diverse.

**Rural Retreat:** TrekNorth defines rural retreat as any extended retreat that takes place in a rural setting. Rural setting is defined as an area with low population density, limited access to resources, and a homogeneous culture.

**Leadership:** TrekNorth believes leadership is a developed rather than inherent trait. Leadership evolves after experience, and TrekNorth values a leadership style amongst staff and students that incorporates personal accountability and a willingness and desire to work towards a common goal while possessing awareness of consequences, awareness of community, awareness of group needs, and awareness of environment.

**Education:** TrekNorth believes education is grounded in experience, and the experiences that provide challenge, excitement, critical-thinking, and the demand for communication are the best teachers. The challenges we create for our students on service retreats will teach them the skills they need for the ability to ethically navigate through the realms of their family, peer groups, school, daily decision-making, and career path.

**Community:** TrekNorth is a community first; a community dedicated to young people who are striving to become positive contributors to their local and global communities. TrekNorth values its students, staff, families, and community members. TrekNorth values and appreciates teamwork, critical-thinking, personal responsibility, diversity, integrity, humor, and a commitment to one another.

### Risk Management

Risk is an inherent and valuable component of urban and rural experiences and the learning process. TrekNorth recognizes and appreciates this risk through risk management that incorporates experience, sound judgment, the evaluation of consequences, and the consideration of the group. TrekNorth Instructors are

committed foremost to keeping students safe through a demonstration of urban navigational skills, rural navigational skills, medical knowledge, and successful risk management.

## **9.5 STAFF AND STUDENT SERVICE PROGRAM POLICIES**

### **9.5.1 Trip Leadership**

#### **9.5.1.0**

Trip leadership will be under the direction of the Service Program Director and the Executive Director of TrekNorth. Only those staff or chaperones who have “Trip Leader” status will plan and lead trips, although non-leaders may assist leaders in planning or conducting trips. The Trip Leader will hold the authority and decision-making that takes place on any Service Program trip.

#### **9.5.1.1**

TrekNorth will promote the development of Student Leaders for the Service Program. Students who have demonstrated the skill to be successful leaders will be recruited to serve as junior leaders on extended service trips. These students will be allowed to volunteer again on service retreats.

#### **9.5.1.2**

The Service Program Director will determine the status of each TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School staff member in regards to trip leadership. Only staff who have been designated as “Trip Leader” by the Program Director are allowed to plan and execute trips through the Service Program.

### **9.5.2 Funding and Fundraising**

#### **9.5.2.0**

Each fiscal year TrekNorth will allocate funds for travel and programming, as it relates to the Service Program. It is the duty of the Director of the SLP to designate these funds in a manner that promotes beneficial and educational opportunities for the greatest number of students. TrekNorth realizes that students participating in the extended retreats require more financial investment. TrekNorth may also grant a partial scholarship to a TrekNorth student. This money is to be used for school trips and is not available for personal use or refund at the end of the year. Students not using their allowance/scholarship will forfeit the money at the end of the academic year, and the forfeited money will go back into the general fund.

#### **9.5.2.1**

TrekNorth will offer many trips at little to no cost to students and families. No student will be denied participation in this required program for financial reasons.

#### **9.5.2.2**

TrekNorth may ask students and families to cover a portion or all of trip expenses, including food, transportation, lodging, or contracted instructional services or programming. This money will be received and recorded with the Business Manager and put into the appropriate fund. Trip Instructors are to follow the established protocol when using school money.

### **9.5.3 Trip Planning**

#### **9.5.3.0**

The Director of the SLP at TrekNorth will propose a Trip Calendar by the first day of school of each year.

He/She will solicit Trip Leaders from the eligible pool within the staff, and Trip Leaders are to notify the Director of the SLP by teacher inservice of the current year in regarding their availability and willingness to lead the proposed trips.

#### **9.5.3.1**

For budgetary purposes SLP retreat plans must be proposed to the Director of the SLP before February 1st of the previous year and approved before any planning or advertising of the retreat can occur.

#### **9.5.3.2**

Retreats are to be well planned and students and parents should be well informed far in advance of any extended SLP retreat. For extended retreats, an Informative Meeting for Parents must occur at least fourteen days prior to trip departure. This meeting should review the destination and itinerary for the trip.

Parent/Guardian attendance is mandatory. Prior to the meeting parents/guardians must have received a packing list, a liability waiver, a medical release/history form, a proof of insurance form, and any necessary paperwork from the specific retreat center. Parents should be instructed to come to the meeting with these forms completed. Local service projects also need the waiver, medical, and insurance forms, and any necessary paperwork from the specific agency, and a calendar of service dates must also be sent home. The forms must be completed and signed before the student may depart for the trip.

#### **9.5.3.3**

Trip Leaders will inventory gear prior to departure to insure students will be properly prepared for the trip. Each student will have three meals per day and lodging will be a safe location. Trip Leader to insure students have proper dress and footwear, personal medication, toiletries, money to provide food while traveling to destinations.

#### **9.5.3.4**

Each specific trip will have its own form informing parents/guardians of the specifics of each trip. Local [trip permission forms](#), [advanced trip permission forms](#), and [medical forms](#) should be based on sample form.

### **9.5.4 Traveling**

#### **9.5.4.1**

The TrekNorth transportation policy provides guidance and requirements for the operation of TrekNorth vehicles, staff/driver training and expectations for driving behavior. This policy applies to all TrekNorth vehicles. No personals are allowed to be used for transportation of students unless the vehicle is currently state certified. TrekNorth vehicles are intended for TrekNorth business only (student travel, staff professional development) and must be signed out on the TrekNorth Vehicle Calendar.

#### **A. Driver Requirements and Training Policies**

##### **1. The vehicle driver must**

- a. be at least 21 years of age
- b. have in their possession a valid driver's license
- c. have permission of the TrekNorth Business Manager
- d. have a Criminal Background Check on file with the school

#### **B. Vehicle Operating Policies**

##### **1. Hours of Service (HOS) (length of time driving or combination of driving and non-driving**

work). Drivers will not be behind wheel longer than (10) ten hours, or work a combination of driving and other duties totaling more than (15) fifteen hours in any twenty-four hour period. This includes transporting students or staff, pulling trailers, or driving empty vehicles. TrekNorth encourages drivers to rest when fatigued.

2. No alcohol or non-medical drugs may be consumed while operating a TrekNorth vehicle or a personal vehicle being used for TrekNorth business. Additionally, drivers of TrekNorth vehicles must refrain from drinking alcohol for at least 10 hours prior to driving. Drivers also need to be aware of any possible adverse reactions from any prescription or non-prescription drugs, such as antihistamines they may be taking.
3. Drivers must require students to wear seatbelts at all times when the van is moving.
4. All TrekNorth vehicles must be driven with headlights on during operation.
5. Drivers must observe posted speed limits, traffic signs and legal rules of the road. Vehicles pulling trailers or loaded with students will not exceed 70 mph, even if posted speed limits are greater.
6. Avoid driving practices that lead to loss of control such as driving too fast for road conditions and panic steering.
7. Load vehicles and trailers properly. Flammable liquids/materials must not be transported in the passenger compartment of vehicles.
8. TrekNorth vehicles are serviced on a regular schedule. When operating a TrekNorth vehicle, employees are encouraged to routinely check the tires, oil, lights, spare, jack, fluids and belts, and to report any irregularities to the Operations Manager or Service Program Director.

#### C. Driving Behavior Expectations

1. TrekNorth will support the decisions of persons acting in a prudent manner. Driving in an unsafe or dangerous manner is unacceptable.
2. Picking up hitchhikers is not allowed.
3. Drivers must avoid distractions while driving
  - a. Driver use of cell phones while operating a TrekNorth vehicle is prohibited while the vehicle is in motion.
  - b. Be prepared to properly handle the vehicle while controlling passenger behavior.
  - c. Use passengers to adjust radio, climate control, answer cell phones or respond to other passenger needs.

#### 9.5.4.2

With the exception of air, train, or boat travel, students traveling with TrekNorth Service Program will have a spot on in a TrekNorth vehicle. Students may not drive personal or school vehicles for a school trip. Trip Leaders are responsible for making sure the vehicle is reliable and has a seatbelt for every student. TrekNorth Staff may also use their personal vehicles for transporting students. In this situation, there must be more than one student accompanying the staff driver and the vehicle must be inspected the MN DOT. Staff or volunteers using personal vehicles for school trips are entitled to reimbursement for gas and mileage. To be reimbursed, an expenditure form must be completed and turned into the Business Manager. Trip Leaders are responsible for anticipating this cost and including it in the overall cost of the trip.

#### 9.5.4.3

On extended service retreats, student may ride in either the retreat center vehicle or a specific service agency vehicle. In this situation, parent/ guardians must sign a liability waiver for the specific agency or retreat center granting the agency/center permission to transport the student.

## **9.5.5 Trip Leaders, Assistant Leaders**

### **9.5.5.1**

TrekNorth Service Program trips are to have a max 7:1 student to chaperone ratio. Chaperones include the Trip Leader, Assistant Leaders, Service Volunteers. Exceptions to this ratio will be granted at the Service Program Director's discretion.

### **9.5.5.2**

Other chaperones include the employees of the retreat centers in which TrekNorth partners with during the year. These chaperones are not responsible for the students, but must be respected by students and treated as leaders.

### **9.5.5.3**

To qualify as a Service Volunteer, one must be or have the following:

1. be 21 years of age or older
2. completed the MN BCA criminal background check
3. a copy of a valid driver's license and insurance information on file with the school
4. unaccompanied by non-student dependants
5. experience that is relevant to the activity and instruction areas,
6. have attended the specific service retreat or service project

### **9.5.5.4**

For most trips, Trip Leaders will be responsible for incorporating the cost of volunteers into the cost of the trip. Trips including high travel, lodging, or activity costs may include fees for chaperones. Charging volunteers or incorporating volunteer expenses into the trip costs will be at the discretion of the Director of the SLP.

## **9.5.6 Staff Responsibilities**

### **9.5.6.0**

All TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School staff traveling with students and volunteers on a school trip are expected to follow the guidelines for behavior as outlined within the TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School Staff Handbook. School trips are considered "school time" and on the "school's premises."

### **9.5.6.1**

Staff will not help lead trips for which they are not prepared. It is each individual staff member's responsibility to know their body and mind well enough to decide what they can and cannot do.

### **9.5.6.2**

When on SLP trips, staff will have their own sleeping quarters. Staff will not share a room with students, and staff will insure that students have appropriate sleeping accommodations, including the opportunity for privacy and not sharing rooms with members of the opposite sex.

### **9.5.6.3**

Staff members will not engage in behaviors that may be deemed irresponsible or immoral, or in behavior that may endanger or neglect students. This includes but is not limited to: using drugs or tobacco while on a trip, engaging in sexual behavior with another adult, allowing students access or use of drugs or tobacco, allowing

students to engage in sexual behavior, or leaving students unsupervised for extended periods of time.

#### **9.5.6.4**

When traveling in a foreign country, Staff are expected to behave according to the laws of the state of Minnesota and the United States of America, and the policies of TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School.

#### **9.5.6.5**

TrekNorth staff leading service retreats will be expected to be actively involved in the retreat centers programming, set a positive tone and attitude for the group, be sure students are following retreat centers schedule (breakfast, lunch dinner, arriving on time to agencies). TrekNorth staff leading service retreats must also be flexible and proactive when completing tasks at service sites/agencies, and honor the commitment to work at the agency.

### **9.5.7 Student Responsibilities**

#### **9.5.7.0**

All TrekNorth students traveling with staff and volunteers on a school trip are expected to follow the guidelines for behavior as outlined within the TrekNorth Student Handbook. School trips are considered “school time” and on the “school’s premises.”

#### **9.5.7.1**

TrekNorth students may not possess, use, hold for another person, or in any other way obtain or have illegal drugs, tobacco, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol for the duration of a TrekNorth School trip, including travel to and from destinations. Possession or use of these substances may warrant immediate removal from the trip at the expense of the student and/or student’s family.

#### **9.5.7.2**

Students on a school trip will participate and play an active role in trip activities. Students will try to maintain a positive attitude and be willing to do the activities and tasks asked of them by Trip Leaders, Assistant Leaders, Service Volunteers, Service Agency employees, and Retreat Center employees.

#### **9.5.7.3**

Students on a school trip will not engage in behavior that is excessively dangerous to themselves or other students or staff.

#### **9.5.7.4**

Students on a school trip will follow the directions and heed the requests of Trips Leaders, Assistant Leaders, Service Volunteers, Service Agency employees, and Retreat Center employees.

#### **9.5.7.5**

Students traveling with TrekNorth do so knowing that if they violate any of their student responsibilities, the Trip Leader may decide to send them home or terminate the trip for the whole group. If the Trip Leader sends a student home for a policy violation, the student and his/her family are responsible for any costs involved in removing the student from the trip and getting him/her home.

### **9.5.8 Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

#### **9.5.8.0**

Parents/Guardians of students traveling with TrekNorth will sign a liability waiver, medical history/release, and proof of insurance form for their student before the trip departs. The liability waiver, medical history/release form, and proof of insurance form are attached as addendums B, C, and D. For each specific service retreat, each form required by the Retreat Center must be completed prior to departure for trip. For local service projects, any required forms from the agency must be completed before student participates.

#### **9.5.8.1**

Parents/Guardians of students traveling with TrekNorth agree to make arrangements for the removal of their student if the Trip Leader deems the removal necessary. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for the expenses of any such removal.

### **9.5.9 Service Volunteer Responsibilities**

#### **9.5.9.0**

Service Volunteers traveling with TrekNorth do so knowing their foremost responsibility is to look after and assist students and staff. Volunteers agree to stay with the group for the duration of the trip and to not make any personal plans that may compromise their ability or usefulness as a chaperone.

#### **9.5.9.1**

Volunteers will not engage in behaviors that may be deemed irresponsible or immoral, or in behavior that may endanger students. This includes but is not limited to: using drugs or tobacco while on a trip, engaging in sexual behavior with another adult, allowing students access or use of drugs or tobacco, allowing students to engage in sexual behavior, or leaving students unsupervised for extended periods of time.

#### **9.5.9.2**

Volunteers will not be responsible for their cost of travel, lodging, standard food expense, or the expense of activities associated with the trip, unless notified in advance. Personal expenses, special food purchases, or any expense that is not a part of the school trip will not be covered by TrekNorth.

#### **9.5.9.3**

Volunteers will follow the directions of the Trip Leader.

### **9.5.10 Medication Policy**

#### **9.5.10.0**

Students will give any prescription medication to TrekNorth staff or chaperones for the duration of the trip. Staff will be responsible for dispensing and keeping a record of student medicine.

#### **9.5.10.1**

Staff will keep student medication in a safe and locked container. Medication will be collected prior to leaving for the trip and returned to students when the trip is over. A record will be kept for the duration of the trip, including names, dates, names of medication, and the amount dispensed.

### **9.5.11 Emergency, Medical, and Disciplinary Policy**

#### **9.5.11.0**

In case of a medical emergency, Trip Leaders will follow protocol as directed: If in urban area, and medical attention is needed, student will be brought to the closest medical facility/ emergency room. If in rural setting, student will be brought to the closest medical facility. If local, student will be brought to Bemidji Sanford Hospital.

#### 9.5.11.1

Trip Leaders will document any medical attention given to a student or the use of materials from the medical kits while on a trip and prepare a written account to be submitted to the Director of the SLP within 72 hours of return.

#### 9.5.11.2

Trip Leaders will exercise sound judgment when making decisions regarding emergency medicine while on a service retreat. Trip Leaders will consider the safety of the individual student, the safety and experience of the group, and the resources he/she has at his/her disposal for treatment.

#### 9.5.11.3

Trip Leaders will hold students to the standards of behavior as outlined in the TrekNorth Student Handbook. Trip Leaders will employ restorative justice practices and conflict resolution strategies to deal with student-discipline problems.

#### 9.5.11.4

Trip Leaders have the option of arranging for the removal of a student from a trip if the student violates TrekNorth's substance use or possession policy, the firearms policy, or if the student continues disruptive behavior even after attempts to redirect that behavior. Trip Leaders are required to notify parents/guardians that they are responsible for the expenses and logistics associated with such removals prior to the departure of the trip.

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**For additional school policies, refer to the [TrekNorth Policies website](#).**

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**We look forward to your involvement, participation, and contribution to TrekNorth Junior & Senior High School. If you have any questions do not hesitate to seek information or assistance from your colleagues at the school.**

You may find the following websites useful for information, professional development opportunities and to communicate with educational professionals throughout the country.

TrekNorth website ([www.treknorth.org](http://www.treknorth.org))

Volunteers of America, Minnesota Charter Schools ([www.voamncharters.org](http://www.voamncharters.org))

College Board Advanced Placement Program ([www.collegeboard.com/ap](http://www.collegeboard.com/ap))

Minnesota Association of Charter Schools ([www.mncharterschools.org](http://www.mncharterschools.org))

College Board Advanced Placement Program ([www.collegeboard.com/ap](http://www.collegeboard.com/ap))

ACT Testing/College Information ([www.act.org](http://www.act.org))

SAT Testing/College Information ([www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/reg.html))

Lexile Reading Levels and Strategies ([www.lexile.com](http://www.lexile.com))



TREKNORTH JUNIOR & SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I hereby acknowledge that I have reviewed and have a copy of the TrekNorth Employee Handbook. I understand this handbook has been prepared as a guide and a reference for all employees.

I agree to comply with the policies, procedures and expectations as set forth in the Handbook. I also acknowledge that these policies, procedures and expectations may be changed, interpreted, withdrawn, or added to by TrekNorth at any time at their sole option and without prior notice to me.

I understand that my employment with the School constitutes an "at will" relationship. I may resign at any time for any reason, and TrekNorth and/or its administrative team may terminate my relationship for any reason or no reason so long as it is not violation of law.

I understand that the handbook does not in any way form a contract or imply or promise continuous, long term, or permanent employment.

I agree to abide by the non-disclosure requirements (agreement signed at date of employment).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please sign and return to the Business Manager.

c.c. Employee Personnel file

TREKNORTH JUNIOR & SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL