

**NON-UNIT STAFF – PERSONNEL POLICIES MANUAL**  
**CERTIFIED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT (COTA) AND PHYSICAL**  
**THERAPY ASSISTANT (PTA)**

Effective July 1, 2013

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to formalize and set forth the primary conditions of employment for all Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTAs) and Physical Therapy Assistants (PTAs) of the North Kingstown School District.

**PHILOSOPHY:**

The North Kingstown School Committee sets forth the foregoing employment parameters, conditions and expectations relating to employee duties, responsibilities, rights, benefits and general conditions of employment for COTA and PTA employees.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

At the discretion of the School Committee, the North Kingstown School Department hereby enacts governance of its COTAs and PTAs in accordance with the provisions of Personnel Policy GCB.1 as enumerated herein. This policy shall become effective upon its date of approval and shall be reviewed annually by the Superintendent of Schools who shall present any proposed changes to the School Committee.

The following positions shall be covered by this policy:  
Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTAs)  
Physical Therapy Assistants (PTAs)

The School Committee recognizes the importance and value of these professional positions to the education goals, objectives and learning process of its students. This policy is intended to ensure the provisions of equitable salaries and conditions of employment as a means of maintaining long-term employee-administration relationships that are bound by mutual respect and that support and promote student growth and development.

**I. APPOINTMENT**

In accepting an appointment by the North Kingstown School Department, it shall be understood that a COTA or a PTA will adhere to the philosophy, purposes, objectives, and policies and procedures of the School Department. The appointee shall reflect professional conduct and acumen and in all professional, interpersonal interactions regarding the school department business. The employee shall exhibit a high level of performance, continue professional

development, and carry out y all assigned duties and responsibilities professionally and effectively.

COTAs and PTAs must be licensed by the State of Rhode Island to be considered for appointment and certified by the National Board of American Occupational Therapists and the American Board of Physical Therapists.

#### **I. A. Appointment to COTA or PTA Positions**

Notification of appointments shall be made in writing by the Superintendent and shall state the terms and conditions of employment provided that terms and conditions contained in generally applicable policies need not be stated other than by reference. The appointee shall notify the Superintendent of his/her intent to accept the appointment in writing.

#### **I. B. Appointment Term**

COTAs and PTAs shall be appointed for the school year. Appointment for the subsequent school year shall be provided to COTAs and PTAs the end of the preceding school year.

### **II. JOB DESCRIPTIONS & PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

All Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTA) and Physical Therapy Assistants (PTA) must follow the position description, duties and responsibilities as outlined by the Human Resources Office.

All COTAs and PTAs shall receive an annual performance review and current position description. Performance reviews will be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year. Performance reviews will be completed by the Director or assistant Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

### **III. SALARIES**

#### **III. A. Initial salary placement**

All COTAs and PTAs shall, for the first year of appointment, be provided a salary as recommended to the School Committee by the Superintendent on the basis of factors including but not limited to prior experience, level of educational preparedness, search committee recommendations, and the relationship to the salaries of other professionals in the School Department.

For the second year of appointment, salary placement shall be determined in accordance with section B below:

#### **III B. Annual salary adjustments**

For each school year, the base amount paid to teachers at step 10 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the school year in question shall first be determined. To that amount shall be added the teachers negotiated amount for that school year for longevity and advanced degree increments as appropriate for each individual COTA and PTA. The total of these amounts will then be multiplied by the appropriate factor to determine the base salary for a full time position for the school year. This amount will be prorated for less than full time positions.

## **IV. WORK SCHEDULES AND AUTHORIZED LEAVE**

### **IV. A. General**

All COTAs and PTAs shall work the approved teacher-contract school calendar schedule for the School Department. This does not include holidays.

### **IV.B. Standard Work Day**

The standard workday for COTAs and PTAs will be six and a half hours.

### **IV. C. Paid Sick Leave**

See Policy GCB.

### **IV. D. Paid Personal Leave**

See Policy GCB.

### **IV. E. Family Illness**

See Policy GCB.

### **IV. F. Bereavement Leave**

See Policy GCB.

### **IV. G. Sick Leave Bank**

See Policy GCB.

### **IV. H. Disability Leave for Pregnancy**

As required by the RIGL Chapter 28-48, Parental Leave and/or the Federal Family and Medical Leave, Act, employees shall be entitled to parental leave as per GCCAC.

### **IV. I. Part-Time Employees**

Part-time employees shall participate in the above noted programs in direct proportion to the amount of hours worked.

## **V. BENEFITS**

### **V. A. Health Insurance**

See Policy GCB.

### **V. B. Life Insurance**

See Policy GCB.

### **V. C. Dental Insurance**

See Policy GCB.

### **V. D. Retirement**

All therapy assistants who are employed on at least a 20 hour basis are eligible for membership in the Municipal Retirement System of Rhode Island.

#### **V. E. Part-Time Employees**

Part-time employees shall participate in the above noted programs and contribute to the cost of such programs in direct proportion to the amount of hours worked.

#### **VI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The North Kingstown School Department seeks to support its COTAs and PTAs through continuance of professional development in areas of study and growth which benefit both the individual and the school or department.

All COTAs and PTAs may attend professional conferences, workshops and/or seminars and to be reimbursed for the same up to a total of \$200 per employee per year provided that the program content is directly related to the COTAs and the PTAs professional work as well as to the benefit of the NK students. All requests for such reimbursement shall be approved in advance by the Superintendent, and shall be processed by the Office of Human Resources.

#### **VII. TRAVEL AND MILEAGE**

For mileage expenses incurred by all COTAs and PTAs using their own personal vehicles in the course of School Department business, compensation will be paid in the amount consistent with the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate on a per mile basis. Individual requests for mileage reimbursement shall be made no less than every three (3) months to the Business Office by the employee. Requests shall include a detailed accounting of the incurred travel, including date of travel, purpose of trip, miles traveled. If the travel is between schools, the mileage shall be computed from the chart below. If the mileage is outside of the district, the mileage shall be computed using an approved search engine such as <http://maps.google.com/> with the approved starting place and ending place.

Adopted: 5/5/08

Revised: 6/25/2013