

*SRP are essential
persons in the
educational process
and shall be
treated with dignity
and respect...*

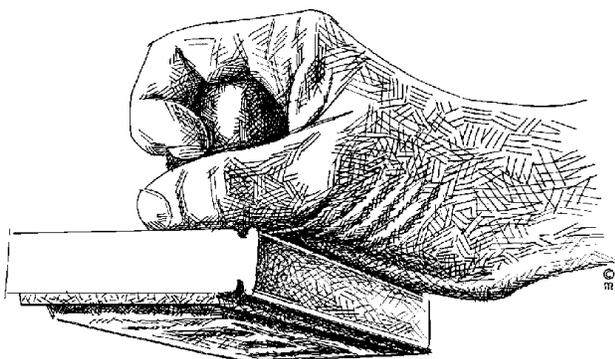
SRP Master Contract, Article VII, Section T

The United School Employees of Pasco

Presents

SRP

Secrets of Success



If you can survive the first **day**, the first **week**, the first **month**, the first **year** of working in public education, you should indulge yourself in all the pride our profession deserves. But USEP wants to help you do more than merely survive: **we want to help you thrive!**

The following pages are the result of many suggestions about what new SRP (school related personnel)--or SRP new to our school district--need to know in order to be successful.

TOP SECRET

Where Should You Start?

Feeling lost or maybe a bit overwhelmed? Let USEP point you in the right direction. Talk to your USEP Building Representative or call the USEP office 813-996-2119.

What is a Building Representative?



The Building Representative is the union at the work site. He/she is elected by the union members at the worksite and ensures that two-way communication exists between the member and union leadership. He/she is an advocate to protect members' rights and interests, and a builder to develop support for the union's programs and create a strong union presence at the worksite. Your Building Representative can help identify names of co-workers who are willing to:

Help understand your worksite's Administrative standards and requirements:

Name _____ Room Number _____

Show you the ropes and help you get oriented:

Name _____ Room Number _____

Share ideas and offer suggestions:

Name _____ Room Number _____

Tell you the most effective ways to handle discipline at your worksite (if applicable):

Name _____ Room Number _____

Questions to ask your-self *right away*:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| ? | Do I have all the necessary equipment? | ? | Do I know the attire that is appropriate at this worksite? |
| ? | Have I received the forms for my employee benefits? | ? | Do I have a copy of the school board-approved description of my job? |
| ? | Have I filled out and returned my employee benefits forms? | ? | Do I have a copy of my data sheet, and is the information on it correct? |
| ? | Do I need a copy of my school's discipline policy? | ? | Have I received a copy of the Educational Supplemental Pay Plan? |
| ? | Do I understand how to handle emergencies at this worksite? | ? | Have I been given the opportunity for an orientation to my work area? |
| ? | Have I spoken to other employees who are assigned to my area? | | |



Key People to Identify at Your Worksite

Often times, the **key** to success is knowing the right person to go to when you need assistance and/or information. There is a certain amount of truth to the old saying, “It’s not what you know, but who.”

- **USEP Building Representative(s):** _____
- **Principal or Director:** _____
- **Asst. Principal(s) or Supervisor(s):** _____
- **Plant Manager and Asst Plant Manager:** _____
- **Food & Nutrition Services Manager and Asst :** _____
- **Bookkeeper/Secretary:** _____
- **Media Specialist(s) & Assistant(s):** _____
- **School Nurse/Clinic Asst.:** _____
- **Place Manager and Asst:** _____
- **Team Leader/Dept. Chairperson(s):** _____
- **Technology Specialist:** _____



Ready Reference

Navigating your way through the procedures and rules of your worksite and district is challenging but crucial to your success. Let USEP help you chart your course. Ask your USEP Building Representative to help you identify the contact person(s) and procedures to follow for the activities listed on this ready reference form.

- Attending staff meetings
 - Contact person(s):
- Calling in absent/Tardy
 - Contact person(s):
- Utilizing email and other technology or equipment.
 - Contact person(s):
- Copying materials for job-related use
 - Contact person(s):
- Following emergency procedures during fire drills, lock-downs, tornado/hurricane drills, bomb threats, etc.
 - Contact person(s):
- Following lunchroom/student dismissal procedures
 - Contact person(s):

Avoiding trouble-- What to do if you don't



As a new employee, here is some information you should know which might save your job or career.

Not all employees who lose their jobs are evil or incompetent. Many good employees with the best of intentions find themselves in trouble and facing disciplinary action because they **fail to use good judgment and common sense**. Here are a few hints and suggestions that USEP hopes will serve as a reminder as you face some of these situations.

Union Representation at Employee Discipline and Investigation Meetings

If you are a member of USEP, you have an absolute right to the presence and counsel of a union representative at any meeting at which **your** conduct is being questioned and from which **you** believe disciplinary action could result. *If you are in doubt whether you are entitled to union representation, ask for it anyway.*

Remember, if your conduct is being questioned, or you believe disciplinary action could result from a meeting with your supervisor, **clearly tell your supervisor that you want union representation** and then contact the USEP office or your Building Representative immediately.

Sex, Emails, Texts, Notes, and Jokes

Do not discuss sexual topics with students or co-workers. Generally, personal notes, emails, or text messages should **not** be written to students unless they deal solely with educational matters. Jokes and stories can be misinterpreted and may be offensive to certain co-workers, students or groups.



Avoid discussing your personal life or the personal lives of others, especially as it relates to sexual or marital situations. Be aware of how your demeanor and manner of dress can be perceived by others. Notes, emails, text messages, and jokes can get you into trouble and **should be used only within the educational context of your assignment**. Something that is funny to you may be insulting to someone else.

Social Networking

If you do choose to use social networking sites take certain steps to ensure that your information remains private. Do not post any material that may be considered offensive-including photos, references to adult behavior, obscenity, links to articles or websites that may be “not safe for work,” or especially, any posts about your students.

It is best if you do not “friend” your students or permit students to become friends with you on any social networking site.

Handling Money

Regardless of the circumstances, do not handle money unless you first understand the procedures required by your district and worksite for doing so. Consult your handbook, contract, USEP Building Representative, bookkeeper, and/or principal.

More than likely, at some point in your employment, you will be asked to handle money. It might be as simple as holding lunch money for students or as significant as collecting money for a major fund raiser at your school. If the procedures for handling money are not in writing, ask to get them reduced to writing and then follow the procedures exactly. ***The only way a school board employee can forfeit his or her state retirement is by stealing or misappropriating school funds.*** Sometimes it is hard to draw a distinction between mishandling and misappropriating, so be careful when you handle money.

Alone with or Touching Students

Anytime you are alone with a student, you are at a greater risk than when you are with a group of students and/or in the presence of adults. If you are alone with a student, and then an allegation is made that misconduct occurred, there are only two witnesses--you and the student. ***What really happened no longer becomes the issue. The issue becomes credibility***--whose version of the incident is more believable? Your version or the student's?

In addition, anytime you touch a student and that touch is unwanted by the student, you risk being charged with excessive force and/or assault and battery. Plus, you could face possible disciplinary action and a civil suit for damages. It is especially important to avoid touching students when you are angry or are in a reprimanding mode. Such a touch can easily be misinterpreted. Everyone knows that it is inappropriate to touch a student's private parts, but it is also inappropriate to grab students by their arms, tap them on their heads, guide them with a gentle shove, push them down in their seats, etc.

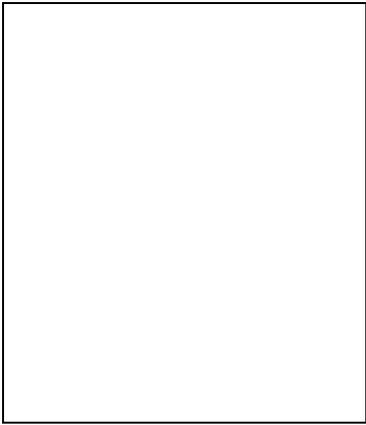
Do not place yourself in situations in which you could be alone with a student, including tutoring individual students, giving a student a ride in your car, taking a student home with you, or taking a student out for a bite to eat, to a movie, camping, etc. Any time you touch a student you place yourself at risk. Use common sense when you touch a student, and--to the extent that it's possible--avoid physical contact of any kind in a situation involving only you and the student and when there are no adult witnesses or in situations which involve discipline.

USEP hopes that providing you with this information will help you understand that good employees get in trouble too. ***Good judgment and common sense are the best defense***, but when you need help, you need to know that you are not alone.

USEP members have peace of mind knowing that their union has a professional staff ready to assist them at a moment's notice.

Your local union, USEP, and its affiliates, provide competent and experienced professionals to assist you in protecting your job and your career.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT YOUR UNION CONTRACT



Evaluations

Prior to September 15, all SRP shall receive a copy of the assessment instrument and an explanation of the assessment process shall be provided.

All SRP will be evaluated at least once during the school year...by worksite supervisors, their designees, or district-level supervisors. The worksite supervisor or designee making the evaluation shall meet with the SRP to discuss the SRP's strengths and weaknesses.

After each assessment of an SRP, the SRP shall sign and be given a copy of the assessment instrument. The signature of the SRP shall not necessarily indicate agreement with the assessment but only acknowledges that he/she has read the report. An SRP shall be given the opportunity to include his/her comments in writing concerning the assessment report. These comments shall be placed in the SRP's personnel file.

In the event an SRP is not performing satisfactorily, the worksite supervisor shall advise the SRP in writing of the specific deficiencies and shall give the SRP reasonable time and assistance to overcome these deficiencies.

Sick Leave

Each SRP employed on a full-time basis shall be credited with four (4) days of sick leave at the end of the first month of employment during each year of employment and shall earn one (1) day of sick leave for each month of employment thereafter. Sick leave shall not be used prior to the time it is earned.

The number of sick days earned during any one year shall be equal to one day for each month of employment completed during the regular school year.



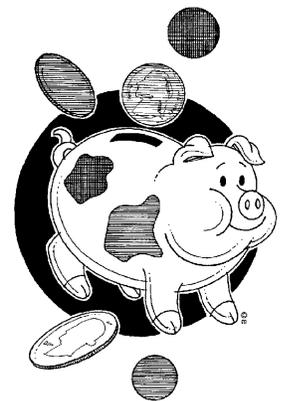
Personal Leave

SRP shall be allowed up to six (6) days of personal leave at full compensation during each year of employment. Such leave will not be cumulative and shall be deducted from accrued sick leave when used. Such leave will not be used for recreational purposes, and the SRP may be required to give the reason for requesting leave to the worksite supervisor or designee. Said reasons may include family problems, household emergencies, legal business, transportation problems, or other stated reasons. When the SRP cites one of the four reasons stated above, no additional explanation will be required. One day of personal leave may be used to attend a school-related event in which an SRP's child is attending. (NOTE: Personal leave is not to be used to extend holidays.)

Sick Leave Bank

A sick leave bank exists for the purpose of providing income protection to participating employees suffering personal illness or injury not otherwise compensated by the School Board or Workers' Compensation. SRP holding sick leave-earning positions shall be eligible to participate in this bank after one year of employment in the district and accumulating at least four days of unused sick leave.

To become a member, eligible SRP shall contribute one day of sick leave to the bank (enrollment is in September). If the bank is depleted, members shall contribute one additional day--but not more than once per year.



Workday

Each SRP shall be granted at least a thirty (30) minute duty-free non-paid lunch period. At an alternative school for disruptive students, the thirty (30) minute lunch period for Instructional Assistants may not be duty-free and shall be included within their eight (8) hour work day.

Paid relief/break periods are intended to provide relief from the work schedule so as to reduce employee fatigue and to allow SRP to attend to personal needs. As such, paid relief/break periods should not be taken at either the start or end of the work day. SRP who work six (6) to eight (8) hours a day shall be granted two (2) fifteen (15) minute relief periods during the work day, and SRP who work less than six (6) hours, but at least three (3) hours a day shall be granted one (1) fifteen (15) minute relief period during the work day. However, at an alternative school for disruptive students, the Bus Driver/ Paraprofessional shall be granted at least thirty (30) minutes of relief/break time.



No SRP shall be required to work beyond his/her normal work day without additional pay. When overtime is necessary, an SRP who is not an exempt employee within the meaning of the Fair Labor Standards Act who works such overtime shall be paid at a rate of one and one-half (1 1/2) times his/her regular hourly rate for each hour in excess of forty (40) hours per week. With mutual agreement, compensatory time-off may be substituted for overtime pay.

A change in working hours will be announced to affected SRP as soon as it has been determined.

Paid Holidays

All SRP shall receive six (6) paid holidays if they work a full work year for their position. Those SRP who work less than a full work year shall receive the paid holidays that fall within their period of employment. If an SRP is in a non-paid status both before and after a paid holiday, he/she shall not receive pay for the holiday.

Student Discipline

Insofar as SRP are involved in disciplinary matters concerning students, administrators shall support SRP in a manner consistent with the facts of each incident, the disciplinary record of the student involved, the provisions of the Code of Student Conduct, and any other factors which have a bearing on the matter.

If a student is disrupting regular activities, the SRP may report the action to the teacher responsible for the student. If the SRP is unable to identify the teacher responsible, the SRP may submit a discipline referral form to the worksite supervisor. Transportation employees shall submit a written report of the incident to the principal. The employee copy of the form shall be returned to the SRP when action is completed.

Why should you join USEP?

Besides promoting professional issues, USEP also provides its members with **benefits and representation**. In addition, your joining gives USEP a stronger voice in the district.

Benefits: As a USEP member, you receive many benefits available to *only* its members. USEP members get a lot for their buck. The list below identifies just a few of these benefits.

- § One million dollar **liability protection**
- § **Free** \$10,000 life insurance for one year
- § **\$5,000** “up-front” for the defense of job-related criminal charges
- § **Free and discounted** travel, magazines, prescription drugs, tourist attractions, and computers
- § Low interest **loans** for autos and mortgages
- § **Free USEP representation** at conferences, meetings, and grievances
- § An application for the **Union MasterCard** with no annual fee and low interest rate
- § **Discounted auto and homeowner’s insurance** from Liberty Mutual/California Casualty
- § **Free individualized financial planning** from Valic Financial Services and **many more benefits**.

Representation: As required by law, USEP represents all members of the unit at the bargaining table. However, *only dues-paying members of USEP are eligible for all other services* provided by the Union, including processing of grievances and legal counsel in the event of duty-related difficulties.

SRP who are new to the Pasco County school system and who have not previously been eligible for USEP membership will be entitled to receive the immediate benefit of the services described above **if they join USEP during the first fifteen (15) working days of their employment.** Otherwise, to be represented free of charge, the individual seeking assistance must have been a dues-paying member in good standing for a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the date upon which the problem occurred.

If you are a member and need Union representation, USEP is just a phone call away. USEP members have peace of mind knowing that their union has a professional staff ready to assist them at a moment's notice.

Dues: are paid through payroll deductions and qualify as a business expense on your federal income tax. SRP members of USEP pay dues each pay period (bi-weekly). Dues are assessed at 2% of an SRP's standard time salary. (Dues are not affected or increased by overtime, field trips, and shift differential pay.) For the specific amount of your dues, call the USEP office. **By starting your membership at the beginning of your employment, you'll hardly notice the deduction.**

How Can You Join USEP?



Becoming a member of USEP is as easy as completing the membership card below and **dropping it in the courier** or mailing it to the USEP office: P. O. Box 1098, Land O' Lakes, FL 34639.

Because the first days of a new job are so hectic, don't delay-- make USEP your Union--today! *(If you do not have a USEP application card, fill out the one printed below and return it to the USEP office through the school courier.)*

UNITED SCHOOL EMPLOYEES OF PASCO

Secrets of Success

<small>Employee ID or SSN</small>	<small>PRINT NAME (LAST NAME, FIRST NAME)</small>	<small>WORKSITE</small>	<small>JOBTITLE</small>
<small>ADDRESS</small>		<small>CITY</small>	<small>STATE</small> <small>ZIP CODE</small>
<small>()</small>	<small>PERSONAL E-MAIL ADDRESS (not your @pasco.k12.fl.us e-mail)</small>		For USEP Use Only
<small>HOME PHONE</small>			
<input type="checkbox"/> PAYROLL DEDUCTION <small>I authorize the District School Board of Pasco County to deduct membership dues from my paycheck to be remitted to the United School Employees of Pasco. I understand that I may terminate these deductions at any time by submitting thirty (30) days written notice to the School Board and USEP.</small>			<small>Sent to District: ___/___/___</small> <small>Entered in DB: ___/___/___</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> CASH PAY			
IRS TAX DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT <small>Dues paid to United School Employees of Pasco may not be deductible for federal income purposes; however, under limited circumstances, dues may qualify as a business expense.</small>			

Recruiting Member (please print)

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND RETURN THROUGH THE COURIER