

We Ditched our Staff Handbook!

By Nathan Kryptavich



About the Author: **Nathan Kryptavich** is in his third year as an assistant principal at Delaware Valley High School in the Delaware Valley School District in Milford, Pennsylvania. Prior to his current position, Mr. Kryptavich was an educator for 17 years, teaching music and orchestra at both the elementary and secondary levels. He is also a doctoral student in the educational leadership program at Wilkes University.

Scrolling through my Twitter feed last July, I came across Kelly Jones' (@kjones_m) tweet about ditching her staff handbook in favor of creating a "Hub" (Jones, 2021). Instead of revising, printing and copying the traditional document to hand out at the beginning of the school year, she created and distributed an online version of the handbook in the form of a Google Sheet. This document was organized in columns by category with cells that contained hyperlinks to related documents. Ms. Jones attributed this idea to a blogpost written by Stephanie McConnell (@principalsteph1) and Brent Coley (@brentcoley) and adapted it from a Google Doc to a Google Sheet.

Inspired by what these principals developed for their buildings, I collaborated with my high school administrative team to create a Hub of our own for the 2021-2022 school year, and it has been an effective tool in curating information for our teachers and support staff. In addition to saving reams of paper, this online document was revised on an as-needed basis, providing our personnel with real-time, up-to-date content. The Hub has become a one-stop-shop for our teachers to check schedules, calendars, duty rosters, evaluation rubrics and other resources from which they pull information on a regular basis throughout the school year.

Just before the beginning of the school year, everyone on our high school team received an email introducing the Hub's purpose and a link to access the cloud-based document. Cells shaded in gray contained links to pages that were part of the original teacher handbook that everyone was expected to review. We also configured Google share settings so that our entire staff could view the Hub and the related documents that it contained. We also ensured that individuals responsible for maintaining certain documents within the Hub had editing rights to make changes directly through the Hub.

Our staff was excited to use this resource because it was an efficient way to organize information they would usually attempt to retrieve from our printed handbook or a cluttered email inbox. One teacher emailed me soon after receiving the link to the Hub:

"Thank you and the administration team so much! I have had a file that I've called 'In case you missed this' for a couple of years, but I never had the time to organize it. What you have created is more than I had hoped to complete myself. Thanks so much for getting this put together. I feel like I just got a little present from my bosses."

Since its inception, numerous teachers have contributed suggestions and relevant content to the Hub, and it will continue to be revised based on the needs of our school.

Figure 1 below is a screenshot that illustrates a portion of the Hub that is used at Delaware Valley High School. If you are interested in creating a Hub for your school and would like to receive a template, please send an email to nkryptavich@dvsd.org

Figure 1

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	DVHS HUB								
2									
3	DVHS	Staff Expectations	Staff Procedures	Co-Curricular Activities	Field Trips	Discipline	Instructional Expectations	Grades & Report Cards	Parents Commur
4	Mission & Slogan	Code of Conduct	Attendance Records	Student Activity Funds	Field Trip Procedures	Teacher Guidelines	Guidelines for Class Changes	Grading System	Public Complain
5	Civil Rights Affirmation	Teacher Attendance	Class Cuts	Eligibility	Bus Accident Procedures	Dress Code	Vocational Advisory Committees	Report Cards & Student Evaluation	Publicit Release
6	Staff Roster	Personal Leave	Classroom Procedures	Advisor Responsibilities		Detention Rules	Curriculum Writing Guidelines	Schoology	Newslett
7	DVHS Counselors	Routine Responsibilities	Frontline	2021-2022 Coaches		ISS Rules	IEP Writer	PowerTeacher	Twitter
8	Voicemail Directory	Classroom Teacher & Guidance	Employee Pavstub Website	2021-2022 Advisors		Student Handbook		PowerTeacher - Creating Assignments	Instagra
9	Classroom Extensions	Public Relations		Club Advisor Checklist				PowerTeacher - Creating Categories	Transper Director (PHILOTE P

Reference

Jones, K. (@kjones_m). (2021, June 23). *I have ditched the staff handbook and created a Hub for this year! Each cell is hyperlinked to the specified document. It's still a work in progress. #LeadLAP #BoldSchool #gcessuperheroes* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/kjones_m/status/1407861748024037377