BREAKOUT SESSION

RedRover K-12 HR & PAYROLL LEADERSHIP FORUM

Modernizing School Payroll: Accuracy, Efficiency & Compliance



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Cleveland Hill Union School District, NY

WHY IT MATTERS

Payroll Is One of the Most Critical Functions in Any School District

Every change HR makes eventually shows up in someone’s paycheck. So does every compliance decision.

TODAY'S CONVERSATION

Three Conversations, One Paycheck

01

ACCURACY

It starts upstream

Change volume, position control and the HR-to-payroll handoff

02

EFFICIENCY

Technology that sticks

Time clocks, rollout strategy, and making a new process part of the culture

03

K-12 only

COMPLIANCE

K-12's own FLSA rulebook

Comp time, the teacher exemption, and occasional or sporadic work

Questions are welcome throughout. Drop them in the chat and we'll weave them in, with open discussion at the end.

01 | ACCURACY

Accuracy. Upstream.

Most payroll errors start before payroll ever sees the change.



Constant Change Is the Norm

~900

changes a year flowing from HR to payroll

Brandon's district: ~4,500 employees and about 10% annual turnover, counting both exits and new hires.

Mid-year resignations

Change doesn't follow the school calendar. In Tanya's district (~3,500 employees), resignations land all year.

Ask the panel

Lead: Brandon, then Tanya

How many changes does your payroll team process in a year, and where do they tend to break down?

01 | ACCURACY

Position Control: One Flow From HR to Payroll

Position control

Positions set up and tracked in the system

HR

Hires, exits and changes tied to positions

Payroll

Works from the same information

Ask the panel

Lead: Brandon, then Tanya and Alexandria

Brandon: what does payroll no longer have to chase or re-enter since position control went live? Tanya and Alexandria: how does a change reach payroll in your district today?

HR and Payroll Don’t Always Speak the Same Language

Technology helps, but the systems, and the teams using them, have to work together.

When HR calls it an “assignment change” and payroll calls it a “rate change,” small gaps in language turn into errors on a paycheck.

Ask the panel — One answer from each panelist

What is one specific practice that has done the most to build the working relationship between HR and payroll in your district?

Brandon | **Tanya** | **Alexandria**

02 | EFFICIENCY

Efficiency. Sustained.

The technology is the easy part. Making it stick is the work.



Two Districts, Two Time-Clock Journeys

Brandon’s district

Every employee clocks in, every day.

Sustained by an intentional rollout that explained the why up front.

Tanya’s district

Staff clock in for extra duty, like working games.

Daily clock-in for everyone started, but after several superintendent changes it never became part of the culture.

Ask the panel

Lead: Brandon and Tanya

Same technology, different outcomes. Looking back, what made the difference in each district?

How Daily Clock-In Became Part of the Culture

01

Start with leaders

Met first with high-level leaders and key employee stakeholders.

02

Share the why

Knowing who's in the building each day helped move past the "big brother" mentality.

03

Pilot first

Started with pilot groups before going district-wide.

04

Train in person

Delivered training in groups, face to face.

Ask the panel

Lead: Tanya, then Brandon

Tanya: if you relaunched daily clock-in tomorrow, what would you borrow from this playbook? Brandon: what has kept it going through leadership changes?

THE LESSON

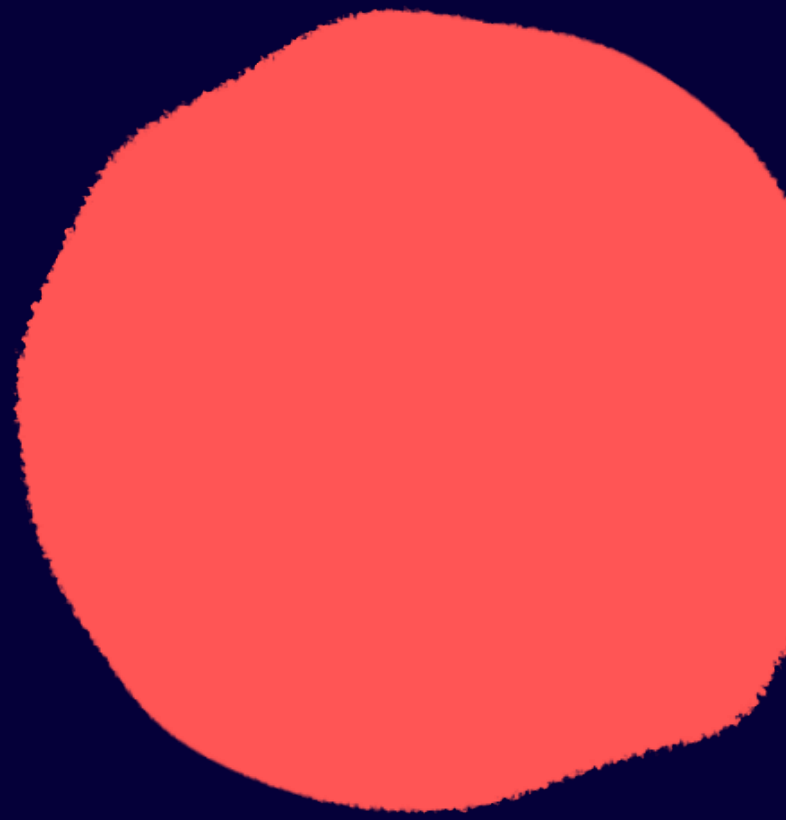
A New Process Lasts When It Becomes Part of How People Work, Through Leadership Changes and All

Both districts had the technology. Intentional rollout, communication and a clear why made the difference.

03 | COMPLIANCE

Compliance. Decoded.

Three FLSA rules that work differently in public school districts.



K-12 Plays by FLSA Rules Most Employers Never Use

Private-sector payroll teams rarely see these. Getting them wrong is a quiet, costly risk.

FLSA §7(o)

Comp time in lieu of overtime

Public employers can give time off instead of cash overtime, at time and a half and within caps.

29 CFR 541.303

The “imparting knowledge” exemption

Teachers are exempt professionals with no minimum salary and no salary basis test.

FLSA §7(p)(2)

Occasional or sporadic work

Some voluntary extra work for the same district can stay out of the overtime calculation.

Comp time and the occasional-or-sporadic rule apply only to public employers. The teacher exemption applies only in educational establishments.

Federal FLSA overview. State law and local agreements may add requirements. Not legal advice.

Comp Time: Flexible for Districts, Strict on Details

Time and a half, in time

Each overtime hour earns 1.5 hours of comp time. Hour-for-hour only works by flexing hours inside the same workweek.

Agreement before the work

Through a collective bargaining agreement, MOU, or individual agreement in place before the overtime is worked.

Capped at 240 hours

For most district staff (480 for public safety, emergency response and seasonal work). Overtime past the cap is paid in cash.

Honored and paid out

Grant use within a reasonable time unless unduly disruptive. At separation, pay at the higher of the final rate or 3-year average rate.

WHERE DISTRICTS GET TRIPPED UP

- Hour-for-hour comp across weeks
- Balances on paper, building by building
- No agreement on file outside the CBA
- FLSA comp mixed with informal exempt comp

Ask the panel Open to all

Where do comp time balances live in your district, and who watches the cap?

Federal FLSA overview. State law and local agreements may add requirements. Not legal advice.

“Imparting Knowledge”: The Teacher Exemption

Primary duty decides, not title, pay, or certificate. An employee whose primary duty is teaching, tutoring, instructing or lecturing in an educational establishment is an exempt professional. No minimum salary and no salary basis test apply.

Generally exempt

- Classroom, special education and gifted teachers
- CTE, music and driver’s ed instructors
- Tutors and substitutes whose primary duty is teaching

Needs a closer look

- Paraprofessionals and aides who assist rather than teach
- Salaried classified staff: a salary alone doesn’t make a role exempt
- Principals and counselors: a separate academic administrative test

Ask the panel Open to all

Who makes the exempt vs. non-exempt call in your district, and what triggers a second look when a job changes?

Federal FLSA overview. State law and local agreements may add requirements. Not legal advice.

Occasional or Sporadic Work: Three Tests, All Required

1

Truly voluntary

The employee chooses it and can say no without penalty and without having to explain why.

2

Occasional or sporadic

Infrequent, irregular or scattered. Seasonal events can qualify; a standing weekly shift can't.

3

A different capacity

Not in the same general occupational category as the employee's regular job.

WHEN ALL THREE ARE MET

Those hours stay out of the overtime calculation for the regular job. They still must be paid, and can carry their own rate.

Ask the panel

Open to all

How do you document that extra event work was truly voluntary?

Federal FLSA overview. State law and local agreements may add requirements. Not legal advice.

Counted or Excluded? Real K-12 Examples

Likely excluded from overtime

- A bookkeeper who signs up to take tickets at a few home football games
- A school secretary who occasionally fills in as a basketball coach
- A bus driver who helps with crowd control at a district event

Counts toward overtime

- A custodian who cleans the gym after the evening game (same capacity)
- A bus driver who drives the team to an away game (same capacity)
- A para working a standing weekly after-school shift (not sporadic)

Teachers who coach? Not a different capacity, but exempt teachers aren't owed overtime anyway.

Ask the panel

Poll the room first: which of these would your district have counted?

Federal FLSA overview. State law and local agreements may add requirements. Not legal advice.

LIGHTNING ROUND

One Move to Make in the Next 90 Days

Brandon Seigman
Jefferson County Schools

Tanya Hirsch
North Kansas City Schools

Alexandria Bess
Cleveland Hill Union

30 seconds each. Accuracy, efficiency, or compliance: panelist's choice.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

What We Heard From the Panel



Make the systems work together

Use the technology, and make sure HR and payroll systems work together or are the same system.



Communicate constantly

Between HR and payroll, and with every employee a change affects.



Roll out with intention

Engage leaders, share the why, pilot, and train in person.



Know K-12's own FLSA rules

Comp time, the teacher exemption and occasional work each have tests. Document how you meet them.

YOUR TURN

What's Working in Your District?

1. How are you building a strong working relationship between HR and payroll?
2. What has helped a new process stick, even through leadership changes?
3. Which K-12 FLSA rule raises the most questions in your district?

THANK YOU

Thank you for joining us

RedRover K-12 HR & PAYROLL LEADERSHIP FORUM

Accuracy, efficiency, and compliance aren't three goals. They're one outcome: employees paid right and on time.

UP NEXT

Bringing Control & Clarity to School Workforce Planning

2:55 – 3:25 PM EST



Len Reed

Tigard-Tualatin



Nick Rawson

Central Valley