



TEXARKANA ISD

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2022-2023



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Employee Handbook Receipt	2
District Information.....	3
Description of the District	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
§25.0811 Uniform School Start Date.....	5
<i>Proposed</i>	5
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	5
§25.112 Class Size and Notice of Class Size.....	5
<i>Proposed</i>	5
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	5
§25.036 Inter-district Transfers.....	6
<i>Proposed</i>	6
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	6
§21.002 Employment Contracts	6
<i>Proposed</i>	6
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	6
<i>Proposed</i>	7
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	7
§37.005 Out-of-School Suspension for Students Below Grade 3.....	8
<i>Proposed</i>	8
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	8
§37.105 Unauthorized Persons: Refusal of Entry, Ejection, Identification	9
<i>Proposed</i>	9
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	9
§45.205, 45.206 Bank Depository Contract	9
<i>Proposed</i>	9
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	9
§21.203, 21.352 Teacher Evaluations	10
<i>Proposed</i>	10
<i>Local Guidelines</i>	10
Annual Local Specialized Alternative Appraisal Exception.....	10
Less Than Annual Eligibility.....	11
Frequency	11
Action Plan	11
COMMENTS.....	11

Mission Statement	12
Board of Trustees	13
Central Office Administrative Staff	14
Directory of Schools	15
Employment	18
Equal Employment Opportunity	18
Job Vacancy Announcements	18
Employment After Retirement	18
Contract and Non-Contract Employment.....	18
Certification and Licenses	19
Recertification of Employment Authorization	19
Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing	19
Health Safety Training	20
Reassignments and Transfers	20
Workload and Work Schedules.....	21
Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk.....	21
Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications	21
Outside employment and tutoring.....	22
Performance Evaluation	22
Employee Involvement	22
Staff Development.....	22
Travel	23
Compensation and Benefits	25
Salaries, Wages, and Stipends	25
Paychecks	25
Automatic Payroll Deposit	25
Payroll Deductions.....	26
Overtime Compensation.....	26
Time Clocks/Hourly Employees.....	26
Travel Expense Reimbursement.....	27
Health Insurance	27
Supplemental Insurance Benefits	28
Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)	28
Workers' Compensation Insurance	28
Unemployment Compensation Insurance	28

Teacher Retirement.....	28
Annuities – Section 403(b).....	29
Tuition-Free Attendance.....	29
Child Care.....	29
Leaves and Absences.....	30
State Personal Leave.....	31
State Sick Leave.....	32
Local Leave.....	32
Vacation for Employees Working 261 Day Schedules.....	32
Holiday Pay for Employees Working 261 Day Schedules.....	32
Non-Duty Leave.....	33
Catastrophic Leave Bank.....	33
Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) – General Provisions.....	34
Temporary Disability Leave.....	36
Extended Illness Leave.....	37
Workers' Compensation Benefits.....	37
Assault Leave.....	37
Bereavement Leave (Family Death).....	37
Jury Duty.....	38
Compliance with a Subpoena.....	38
Truancy Court Appearances.....	38
Religious Observance.....	38
Military Leave.....	38
Leave for Peace Officers.....	38
Expiration of Available Leave.....	39
Docking Pay.....	39
Working While on Leave.....	39
Frequent or Prolonged Absence.....	40
Sanctions for Abuse.....	40
Termination of Employment and Leave.....	40
Employee Relations and Communications.....	41
Employee Recognition and Appreciation.....	41
District Communications.....	41
Community Relations.....	41
Complaints and Grievances.....	42

Employee Conduct and Welfare	43
Standards of Conduct.....	43
Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation	45
Harassment of Students.....	46
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	47
Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children	48
Reporting Crime.....	48
Scope and Sequence.....	48
Technology Resources.....	48
Public Information on Private Devices	59
Criminal History Background Checks	59
Employee Arrests and Convictions.....	59
Alcohol and Drug - Abuse Prevention.....	60
Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use.....	60
Fraud and Financial Impropriety.....	60
Cash Handling Procedures.....	61
Conflict of Interest	61
Gifts and Favors.....	61
Copyrighted Materials.....	61
Charitable Contributions	61
Associations and Political Activities	62
Safety	62
Possession of Firearms and Weapons	62
Visitors in the Workplace	62
Asbestos Management Plan	63
Pest Control Treatment.....	63
Employee Identification Badges	63
Employee Dress Code	63
Cell Phone Use.....	65
General Procedures	66
Emergency School Closing	66
Emergencies.....	66
Purchasing Procedures.....	66
Name and Address Changes	66
Personnel Records.....	66

Facility Use	67
Termination of Employment	68
Resignations	68
Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees.....	68
Dismissal of Noncontract Employees	69
Discharge of Convicted Employees	69
Exit Interviews and Procedures	69
Final Paycheck Procedures	69
Reports to Texas Education Agency	70
Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding	70
Student Issues	71
Equal Educational Opportunities.....	71
Student Records	71
Parent and Student Complaints.....	72
Administering Medication to Students.....	72
Dietary Supplements.....	72
Psychotropic Drugs	72
Student Conduct and Discipline	72
Student Attendance	73
Bullying.....	73
Hazing	73
District Policies.....	74

Introduction

Outstanding people are the key to the success of Texarkana Independent School District. Through the efforts of our people, TISD has become a leader in the education community in this region.

To ensure continued success, all employees must understand TISD's policies and procedures. This handbook should be used as a reference guide to those policies and procedures. Not all TISD policies and procedures are referenced in this handbook. Those that are referenced have been summarized. Manuals containing policies and procedures approved by the Board of Trustees are available for any employee's review in the Central Office during normal working hours and on the District web-site <http://www.txkisd.net>. If any conflict exists between the language of this handbook and the language of a Board-approved policy or procedure, the formal language of the Board policies and procedures govern, not the informal wording of this handbook.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official District policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of non-contract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of District policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate District office. District policies can be accessed online at www.txkisd.net.

We welcome suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook. Please send any suggestions you may have to the Human Resources Department in the Central Office.



Texarkana
Independent School District

Employee Handbook Receipt

ID Number _____

Employee Name _____ Campus/Dept. _____

I hereby acknowledge I have been informed that I have computer access to the Texarkana ISD Employee Handbook, located on Texarkana ISD’s home web page address at <http://www.txkisd.net>. I am also aware that I have access to a hard copy of the employee handbook located at the District administrative central office.

Employees have the option of receiving the handbook in electronic format or hard copy.

I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document. The information in this handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in District policies may supersede, modify, or eliminate the information summarized in this booklet. As the District provides updated policy information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes.

I understand that no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will employment relationships are intended by this handbook.

I understand that I have an obligation to inform my supervisor or department head of any changes in personal information, such as phone number, address, etc. I also accept responsibility for contacting my supervisor or the TISD Human Resources Department if I have any questions, concerns, or need further explanation.

Signature Date

SIGN AND DATE THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT.

If you would like Human Resources to provide you with a hardcopy of the Employee Handbook, initial here _____.

District Information

Description of the District

Texarkana Independent School District was established in 1886 and is accredited by the Texas Education Agency. The District provides quality education for pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, as well as vocational and special education for pre-school and school age children. Additionally, the District operates the Tiger Learning Center that provides childcare services for children ages three and up. The District strives to provide a variety of educational opportunities and involvement for the entire community.

The District philosophy expresses a desire for students to achieve intellectual, social, physical, and occupational competence through their learning activities. Emphasis on academic and vocational activities provides students with opportunities for total development.

Personnel in TISD receive extensive, on-going professional development opportunities. As the school staff is provided with new and better tools for instruction and management, the District believes it will be better able to guarantee that all students will be exposed to a quality environment that will ensure learning.

The District enrollment is approximately 7,100 students. Texarkana ISD serves the student population with a staff of approximately 1,200 teachers, administrators, and support personnel.

INTRODUCTION

HB 1842 was passed during the 84th Texas legislative Session in Spring 2015, and provides Texas public school districts the opportunity to be designated as a District of Innovation. To access these flexibilities, a school district must adopt an innovation plan, as set forth in Texas Education Code Chapter 12A.

Districts of Innovation may be exempted from a number of state statutes and will have:

- Greater local control as the decision makers over the educational and instructional model for students;
- Increased freedom and flexibility, with accountability, relative to state mandates that govern educational programming; and
- Empowerment to innovate and think differently.

Districts are not exempt from statutes including curriculum and graduation requirements and academic and financial accountability.

PROCESS

On October 16, 2018 the Texarkana Independent School District's Board of Trustees initiated the process by passing a Resolution to Adopt a District of Innovation in order to support innovation and local initiatives to improve student learning.

On November 27, 2018 the Texarkana ISD Board of Trustees held a public hearing for public discussion on whether the District should develop a local innovation plan for the designation of the District as a District of Innovation. With there being no objection from the hearing, the Board of Trustees appointed the District Quality Improvement Council (DQIC) to discuss and draft this Local Innovation Plan. This committee represents various stakeholders across the district, including teachers, parents, campus administration, district administration and local business owners. The committee met initially on November 29, 2018, to discuss and develop the plan. A follow up meeting to finalize the plan was held on December 6, 2018.

The plan will be posted on the District website for 30 days, effective December 7, 2018. The DQIC will vote on the final District of Innovation Plan on January 8, 2019. Texarkana ISD will notify the Texas Commissioner of Education of the District's final District of Innovation Plan and the plan will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval on January 15th.

TERM

The District of Innovation Plan will become effective in January 2019 and will remain in effect for five years, through January 2024, unless terminated or amended earlier by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law. The DQIC will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan and recommend to the Board of Trustees any suggested modifications to the Plan.

AMENDED PLAN

On May 3, 2022, the Local Innovation Committee will vote to approve an amendment to our existing District of Innovation. The plan will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval May 25, 2022.

Texarkana ISD will notify the Texas Commissioner of Education of the District's final Amended District of Innovation Plan on May 26, 2022.

EXEMPTIONS

§25.0811 Uniform School Start Date

A district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August unless the district operates a year-round system. A district may not receive a waiver for this requirement.

Proposed

This flexibility of start date allows the district to determine locally, on an annual basis, what best meets the needs of the students and local community. It also offers the below opportunities:

- An improved balanced instructional calendar results from being able to begin school earlier in August each year. With this exemption, the 2018-19 calendar for TISD has 83 fall semester student days and 89 spring semester student days. Without this exemption, the semesters would likely have been 75/97, creating a significant instructional imbalance.
- Students participating in Dual Enrollment opportunities will work with balanced semesters, which align with our local colleges.
- An early start date permits students an additional week of instruction prior to state assessments.
- Students will be afforded opportunities to enroll in summer college sessions with finalized official transcripts and staff will be able to attend summer school classes as well.
- Creates Flexibility for District to pursue other calendar options for identified populations.

Local Guidelines

The district will determine, on an annual basis, when each school year will begin.

§25.112 Class Size and Notice of Class Size

Texas Education Code 25.112 limits the number of students in grades Pre- Kindergarten through 4th grade to 22. While the maximum number of students in PK-4 classrooms may be addressed by a state waiver, the waivers must be applied for annually. Texas Education Code 25.113 requires districts to notify each parent in the class section that exceeds the 22:1 ratio, and inform them the waiver has been submitted.

Proposed

By seeking an exception from TEC 25.112, the District would have flexibility for all campuses and classrooms for the duration of the District of Innovation Designation and would not be required to seek waivers annually. While the District intends to remain within the guidelines of the current education code as much as possible, the District seeks flexibility to provide the best learning environment for our PK-4 students, including more flexibility when teaching, creative ways of delivering instruction, and ability to manage increases in class sizes. Research shows it is the teacher in the classroom that has the greatest impact on student learning and not the absolute class size. Small class sizes may have a positive effect in the classroom, but must also be balanced with the timing of adding staff, the qualifications of staff available, the makeup and chemistry of the classroom and other classroom influences.

Local Guidelines

In the event a classroom exceeds the 22:1 ratio in grades PK-4, the class sizes will be reviewed by appropriate district and campus administration. The Board of Trustees will be informed of PK-4 classes that exceed 22:1. TEA waivers for class sizes exceeding 22 will not be required. An exemption from TEC 25.113 is also requested.

§25.036 Inter-district Transfers

Under Texas Education Code 25.036, a district may choose to accept, as transfers, students who are not entitled to enroll in the district. Under TEC 25.036, a transfer is interpreted to be for a period of one school year.

Proposed

Texarkana ISD maintains a transfer policy under FDA (Local) requiring nonresident students wishing to transfer to file a transfer application each school year. In approving transfer requests, the availability of space and instructional staff, availability of programs and services, the student's disciplinary history records, work habits, and attendance records are also evaluated. Transfer students are expected to follow the attendance requirements, rules and regulations of the District. TEC

25.36 has been interpreted to establish the acceptance of a transfer as a one year commitment by the District. The District is seeking to eliminate the provision of a one year commitment in accepting transfer applicants. On rare occasions, student behavior warrants suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, student attendance may fall below the TEA truancy standard. In these rare cases, Texarkana ISD seeks exemption from the one year transfer commitment.

Local Guidelines

Nonresident students who have been accepted as inter-district transfer may have such transfer status revoked by the Superintendent at any time during the year if the student is assigned discipline consequences of suspension (in or out of school), placement in a disciplinary alternative program, or expulsion. In addition, students not meeting the State's 90% attendance standard may also be subject to immediate revocation of the transfer status.

§21.002 Employment Contracts

Currently, experienced teachers new to the district have a probationary period that may not exceed one year if the person has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the previous eight years.

Proposed

Under current guidelines, probationary periods for newly hired teachers and counselors who have been in public education for at least five of the previous eight years cannot exceed one year. This limited time period is insufficient in some cases to fully determine the staff member's effectiveness. Relief from Texas Education Code 21.102 will permit the district the option to issue a probationary contract for a period of up to two years for experienced teachers and counselors newly hired in Texarkana ISD.

Local Guidelines

At the time of contract recommendation consideration, newly hired teachers and counselors with the district, who have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years and have completed their first probationary year with the district, may receive a probationary contract for the second year in order to continue to evaluate the staff member's effectiveness.

§21.003 Certification

TEC 21.003(a) states a person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B. TEC21.057 requires districts to provide written notice to parents when an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher is assigned to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.

Proposed

In order to best serve Texarkana ISD students, decisions on certification will be handled locally. The district will maintain its current expectations for employee certification and will make every attempt to hire individuals with appropriate certifications. However, when that is not reasonably possible, the district will have the flexibility to hire individuals who are knowledgeable in the area and equipped to effectively perform the duties of the position. With the current teacher shortage, this exemption from teacher certification requirements will enable greater flexibility in staffing and will enrich applicant pools. The district's exemption from TEC 21.003 will allow the district to consider flexible hiring, such as part time professionals to teach courses, industry expert professionals to transition to the teaching profession in Career and Technology and also assist in staffing high need areas, such as STEM and dual credit. Out of state certified teachers will be considered for positions upon a local review of experience, education and credentials. Often there are experienced certified teachers in our district who could teach a course outside of their certification area due to their education, background and/or experience. Local decisions outside of state certification requirements would allow innovation and flexibility in hiring and scheduling to meet student needs.

Local Guidelines

- a) An administrator may submit to the superintendent a request to allow a certified teacher to teach a subject and/or grade level out of their field.
 - b) An individual may hold a teaching certification in another state. The individual may be recommended for hire based on the out-of-state certification.
 - c) An individual may possess a degree and/or experience or knowledge in a particular content area, including a Career and Technology field. An administrator may submit a request to the superintendent for local certification. The administrator must specify the reason for the request and document credentials/experience the individual possesses qualifying this individual to teach the subject.
 - d) The superintendent will approve or deny requests for local certification.
-

§37.005 Out-of-School Suspension for Students Below Grade 3

Currently, under Texas Education Code 37.005, a student who is enrolled in a grade level below grade 3 may not be placed in out-of-school suspension, unless while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, the student engages in:

- 1. Conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons under Penal Code 46.02 or 46.05;*
- 2. Conduct that contains the elements of a violent offense related under Penal Code 22.01, 22.011, 22.02, 22.021; or;*
- 3. Selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of an amount of:
 - a. Marijuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 481, or by 21 USC Section 801 et seq.;*
 - b. A dangerous drug, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 483; or*
 - c. An alcoholic beverage, as defined by Alcoholic Beverage Code 1.04.**

Proposed

To best serve the students of Texarkana ISD and provide a high quality learning environment for all students, the District proposes that school administrators be able to exercise professional judgment and place students of any grade level in out-of-school suspension when they deem it necessary for safety and in order to maintain an orderly learning environment for all students.

Specifically, the District seeks the flexibility to authorize school administrators to suspend students out-of-school below grade 3 when necessary.

The District currently monitors the suspensions of all students, regardless of grade level, to ensure that District policy and the Student Code of Conduct are applied appropriately across the district. Should an exemption from TEC §37.005 be granted, the District would continue to monitor the suspensions of all students, which would now include students in grades below 3, to ensure that suspensions are appropriate.

The benefits of the proposed innovation are to allow for school-based decision making, assist in maintaining an orderly learning environment for all students, and allow school administrators to more effectively ensure the safety and security of all students.

Local Guidelines

Campus principals would have the option to place a student below grade 3 in out-of-school suspension based on violations of the Student Code of Conduct and documented interventions and office referrals.

§37.105 Unauthorized Persons: Refusal of Entry, Ejection, Identification

Currently, a district must maintain a record of each verbal warning issued under Section 37.105 (a)(2)(A), including the name of the person to whom the warning was issued and the date of issuance. At the time a person is refused entry to or ejected from a school district's property under Section 37.105, the district must provide the person a written information explaining how to appeal. Each school board must adopt a policy that uses the district's existing grievance process to permit a person ejected or denied entry to address the Board of Trustees in person within 90 days of the commencement of the appeal, unless the appeal is granted sooner.

Proposed

Texas Education Code section 37.105 includes a process for ejecting or denying entry to a visitor who presents a substantial risk of harm or behaves in a manner inappropriate for the school setting.

To better ensure the safety and security of students and staff in Texarkana ISD, we propose that the District not be required to maintain a record of each verbal warning of potential removal from district property/facilities, nor be required to provide written information explaining the appeal process to those who have been refused entry to district property/facilities or removed from district property/facilities. The District currently attempts to provide written notice to persons who are subject to potential refusal for entry or for removal from district property/facilities. Should an exemption from TEC §37.105 be granted, the District shall continue to provide written notice to persons who are subject to potential refusal for entry or for removal from district property/facilities in situations where the administrator on site feels it is reasonable and safe to do so.

Local Guidelines

Campus and District administrators, as well as school resource officers and District police officers if applicable, may refuse to allow a person to enter or may eject a person from property under the District's control in accordance with law.

An appeal notice must be filed with the Superintendent, in writing, and submitted to the Administration Office for review.

§45.205, 45.206 Bank Depository Contract

Currently, the District must renew its depository contract every two years. The two-year contract term begins and ends in odd-numbered years. In accordance with the Texas Education Code, the District must use a uniform bid or proposal blank in the form prescribed by the State Board of Education.

Proposed

The District is seeking an exemption from TEC 45.205 and 45.206 to allow the District's banking contract to be extended beyond the allowable contract term, if the District determines contract-pricing remains competitive and there is no operational or financial reason to send the District's banking services out for bid. This exemption lessens the administrative burden related to preparing and reviewing a Request for Proposal (RFP) when there is a limited number of banking institutions available to bid on the District's business.

Local Guidelines

The District will only go out for bid if it is determined that contract-pricing is not competitive and there is an operational or financial reason to send the District's banking services out for bid. The District will continue with two year contracts for our banking depository.

§21.203. 21.352 Teacher Evaluations

The State of Texas issued a new teacher appraisal system in 2016-2017, the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (TTESS). Under T-TESS, all teachers on a teacher contract and paid on the teacher payscale are currently evaluated every year utilizing TTESS unless they are exempted under criteria in DNA (Local).

Proposed

Texarkana ISD will continue to utilize TTESS to evaluate identified teachers in the classroom setting. Teachers that are in varied positions not providing whole group instruction but more individualized and varied instruction as well as other duties, need a more defined appraisal tool relevant to their position. Teachers with specialized positions will be exempted from TTESS and a local specialized alternative appraisal tool will be developed to better align with their duties and position. This exemption will allow local flexibility to evaluate performance measures for the particular job duties and expectations.

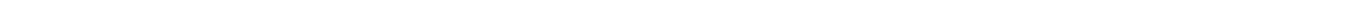
Local Guidelines

The specialized positions exempted and will utilize the local alternative appraisal tool are as follows:

- Interventionist
- Teacher, Dyslexia
- Teacher, ESL
- Instructional Coach
- RTI Specialist
- 504 Specialist
- Teacher, Visually Impaired
- Teacher, Deaf Education, Auditory Impaired
- Teacher, Homebound General and SPED
- Technology Specialist
- Reading/Technology Specialist
- Other Specialized Positions not providing whole group instruction

Annual Local Specialized Alternative Appraisal Exception

Teachers who are eligible for less frequent evaluations in accordance with law [see DNA(LEGAL)] and the local criteria established in this policy shall be appraised in accordance with the provisions below.



Less Than Annual Eligibility

To be eligible for less than annual evaluations under specialized alternative appraisals, a teacher shall:

1. Be employed on an educator term or continuing contract;
2. Hold SBEC certification;
3. Serve on a campus that has not been rated “improvement required” on the basis of state standards;
4. Have been employed by the District for at least one year;
5. Have served in the current content or program assignment for at least one year;
6. Have served at the current campus for at least one year;
7. Have received ratings of at least “proficient” in most dimensions, with no more than one dimension “developing” in each domain on the most recent full appraisal; and
8. Have not received a rating of “improvement needed” on any area in any of the dimensions on the most recent full appraisal.

Frequency

Eligible teachers shall be appraised every three years. During any school year when a complete appraisal is not scheduled for an eligible teacher, either the teacher or the principal may require that an appraisal be conducted by providing written notice to the other party. A teacher’s supervisor shall have the authority to return a teacher to the traditional appraisal cycle as a result of performance deficiencies documented in accordance with state rule.

Action Plan

- Appraisal tools drafted and developed for specific job performance measures relevant to position
- Present and discuss with the DQIC committee
- The Superintendent will notify the Board of the evaluation tool for the specialized positions for board consideration
- Upon board approval, impacted teachers will be notified and provided a copy of the appraisal tool aligned with their position.
- Training will be provided to supervisors utilizing the new appraisal tool for specialized teacher positions.

COMMENTS

If you have any comments or concerns regarding the TISD District of Innovation Plan, we want to hear from you. Please email us your thoughts to: tisdpr@txkisd.net

Thank you.



TEXARKANA

Independent School District

MISSION

The mission of Texarkana ISD, a culturally diverse and premier learning community, is to develop and empower every individual by providing innovative and varied opportunities to lead and excel in a global society through strong family, community, and staff partnerships.

PARAMETERS

1. We will make all decisions based on what is best for ALL students.
 2. We will not tolerate prejudice or discrimination of any kind.
 3. We will ensure an environment that cultivates inclusiveness by honoring each individual's uniqueness.
 4. We will communicate openly and honestly with all stakeholders.
 5. We will ensure collaborative relationships within our community in support of our pursuit of excellence. We will challenge each other to rise to greatness.
 7. We will demonstrate fiscal integrity and responsibility.
 8. We will embrace continuous improvement.
-

OBJECTIVES

1. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Each student will be immersed in innovative, engaging learning experiences that are diverse, flexible and authentic. Each student will have access to career focused pathways and resources that will enrich their career exploration.

2. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT/FACILITIES

Each student will have access to well-maintained state of the art facilities that support innovative learning and creativity in a safe and secure environment.

3. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Each student is guaranteed a learning environment that supports their social, emotional, physical, and mental health.

4. PARENTAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Each student will experience a school and community partnership that provides access to resources designed to anticipate and nourish student needs.

5. TECHNOLOGY

Each student will develop ethical digital citizenship skills.

Each student will have equitable access to technology that is fundamental to student success.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES

Each student will be guided by professional, high performing, dedicated staff who reflect the diversity of the students they serve.

BELIEFS

WE BELIEVE THAT:

1. Every student will have access to the resources available to help them develop the knowledge and skills necessary to become productive members of society.
 2. Education is a shared responsibility of the entire community.
 3. Communication and parental involvement is critical.
 4. Diversity gives value and strength to all individuals contributing to the success of the whole.
 5. Mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health are essential for success.
 6. All will have positive relationships in a nurturing and compassionate environment.
 7. High expectations will be the standard to yield success and growth.
 8. Expectations are inclusive of all stakeholders.
 9. All will be inspired and successful.
 10. All successes will be celebrated.
-

STRATEGY

1. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Immerse each student in innovative, engaging learning experiences that are diverse, flexible and authentic.

Develop for each student access to career focused pathways and resources that will enrich their career exploration.

2. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT/FACILITIES

Provide each student access to well-maintained state of the art facilities that support innovative learning and creativity in a safe and secure environment.

3. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Guarantee each student will have a learning environment that supports their social, emotional, physical and mental health.

4. PARENTAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Ensure each student will experience a school and community partnership that provides access to resources designed to anticipate and nourish student needs.

5. TECHNOLOGY

Develop for each student ethical digital citizenship skills.

Ensure each student will have equitable access to technology that is fundamental to student success.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES

Ensure each student will be guided by professional, high-performing, dedicated staff who reflect and embrace the diversity of the students they serve.

Innovate. Lead. Excel.

Board of Trustees

(Policies [BA](#), [BB](#), [BD](#), [BE](#) Series) Texas law grants the Board of Trustees the power to govern and oversee the management of the District's schools. The Board is the policy-making body within the District and has overall responsibility for the curriculum, school taxes, annual budget, employment of the Superintendent and other professional staff, facilities, and expansions. The Board has complete and final control over school matters within limits established by state and federal law and regulations.

The Board of Trustees is elected by the citizens of the District to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the District's children. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters and must reside in the District. The Board consists of seven members, two elected at large and five elected from single-member Districts in accordance with Texas law, serving terms of three years, with elections held annually. The terms of one-third of the Board members, or as near to one-third as possible, expire each year. Education Code 11.051(b), 11.052, 11.059

Board Members

Gerald Brooks, President; Wanda Boyette, Vice President; Bill Kimbro, Secretary; Amy Bowers, Bryan DePriest, Fred Norton Jr. and Paul Miller.

Trustees usually meet the third Tuesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. in the TISD Services Building, located at 1600 Waterall Street, Texarkana, Texas. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the District Web site and at the Administration Building, located at 4241 Summerhill Road, Texarkana, Texas, or at other designated locations in the District at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a one hour notice.

All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the Board to go into a closed session from which the public and others are excluded. Closed sessions may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real property acquisition, certain personnel matters including employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or to consult with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

Board Policy ([BF](#) Series)

Policies and policy amendments may be initiated by the Superintendent, Board members, school personnel, or community citizens, but generally shall be recommended for the Board's consideration by the Superintendent.

The Board shall designate one copy of the local policy manual as the official policy manual of the District. The official copy shall be kept in the Superintendent's office, and the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for its accuracy and integrity and shall maintain an historical record of the District's policy manual. Local policies become effective upon Board adoption or at a future date designated by the Board at the time of adoption.

The TISD Board Policies can be accessed and viewed through the Internet. This online service can be accessed through the TISD Web Site address: <http://www.txkisd.net>

This online presentation of TISD District policy is an electronic representation of Texas Association of School Board's record of the District's currently adopted policy manual. It does not reflect updating activities in progress. The official authoritative manual is available for inspection in the office of the Superintendent.

Helpful Contacts

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If supervisors cannot answer those questions or concerns, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department or individuals listed in the administrative, support services and campus directories.

Central Office Administrative Staff

4241 Summerhill Road Texarkana, Texas 75503
(903) 794-3651 Fax (903) 792-2632

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Doug Brubaker

Deputy Superintendent

Autumn Thomas

Associate Superintendent of Family and Community Engagement

Jo Ann Rice

Chief Academic Officer

Holly Tucker

Chief Financial Officer

Anita Clay

Chief Operating Officer

Ken Reese

Chief Innovation Officer

Sherry Penix

Executive Directors

Athletics

Gerry Stanford

Human Resources

Amy Nix

Instructional Services

Christy Tidwell

Directors

Chief of Police/Security

Brad Irvin

Communications, Marketing and Development

Todd Marshall

Child Nutrition

Christie Lammers

Construction and Maintenance

Jason Green

Student Information

Amanda Eisley

Information Technology

Rusty Ogburn

Music

Arnie Lawson

Management Information Systems

Kevin McCarty

Purchasing and Special Events

David DeFoy

Special Education

Kay Stickels

STEM and CTE

Lakesha Taylor

Academics

Laurie Pace

Facility Services

Richard Stahl

21st Century-Ace Program

Michelle Hadous

Aspire Program

Becky Graham

Directory of Schools

OPTIONS ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTER**903-793-5632**

905 Martine St
Texarkana, TX 75503
OPTIONS Principal

Fax 903-798-2131**Amy Doss**

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR EARLY ED. CTR.**(Pre-Kindergarten)**

2315 West 10th Street
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Assistant Principal

903-794-8112
Fax 903-794-5841
Tabitha Dudley
Vanessa Buchanan

HIGHLAND PARK ELEMENTARY**(PreK-5)**

401 West 25th Street
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Assistant Principal

903-794-8001
Fax 903-793-1702
Jennifer Cross
Cora Patton

MORRISS ELEMENTARY**(K-5)**

4826 University Park
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal

903-791-2262
Fax 903-798-6875

NASH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**(PreK-5)**

100 Burton
Nash, TX 75569
Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal

903-838-4321
Fax 903-831-7158
Liliana Luna
Jacquelyn Smith
Carmelya Vaughn

THERON JONES EARLY LITERACY CTR**(PreK-2)**

2600 West 15th Street
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Assistant Principal

903-793-4871
Fax 903-793-7596
Melodie White
Deborah Riles

("Directory of Schools" continued on following page)

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL**(9-12)**

4001 Summerhill Road
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Associate Principals
Assistant Principals

903-794-3891
Fax 903-792-8971
Patti O'Bannon
Bettie Stark
Julius Anderson
Debra Campbell
William Harris
Lara Herring
Charlotte Leon
Jo Dee Lott
Erin Davis
Matthew Turner

Assistant Principal Intern

TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL**(6-8)**

2100 College Drive
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Assistant Principals

903-793-5631
Fax 903-792-2935
Shawn Davis
Lindsay Watson
Natosha Jones
Kevin Hamilton
Derek Jenkins

Assistant Principal Intern

6TH GRADE CENTER @ TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL**(6)**

2015 Kennedy Ln
Texarkana, TX 75503
Associate Principal
Assistant Principal

903-255-3300
Fax 903-793-5770
Karen Brown
Franshicka
Banks-Brown

TILC, ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY DAEP & GOREE LEARNING CENTER

3201 Lincoln Street
Principal
Assistant Principal

Bobbie Nichols
Eric Norton

SPRING LAKE PARK ELEMENTARY**(PreK-5)**

4324 Ghio-Fish Boulevard
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Assistant Principal

903-794-7525
Fax 903-794-0633
Anne Slade
Amanda Sumpter

("Directory of Schools" continued on following page)

WAGGONER CREEK ELEMENTARY**(PreK-5)**

*6335 Gibson Lane
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Assistant Principal*

*903-255-3301
Fax 903-223-7945
Angie Griffin
Lindy Davis*

WAKE VILLAGE ELEMENTARY**(PreK-5)**

*400 Wildcat Drive
Wake Village, TX 75501
Principal
Assistant Principals*

*903-838-4261
Fax 903-832-6809
Mindy Gennings
Kristi Lewis
Andrew McCarver*

WESTLAWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**(3-5)**

*410 Westlawn Drive
Texarkana, TX 75503
Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal*

*903-223-4252
Fax 903-223-4262
Elodia Witterstaetter
Theresa Allen
Kedric Jones*

Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity

(Policies [DAA](#), [DIA](#))

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, the Texarkana Independent School District does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), age, national origin, disability, military status, genetic information, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Additionally, the District does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participate in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not discriminate on the basis of sex and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator for employees to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: Amy Nix, Executive Director of Human Resources, 4241 Summerhill Road, Texarkana, Texas 75503, Amy.Nix@txkisd.net, 903-794-8473. For students, the district designates and authorizes the following employee as Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: Sherry Nelson, Coordinator, 3413 Summerhill Road, Texarkana, Texas 75503, Sherry.Nelson@txkisd.net, 903-793-7561.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: Sherry Nelson, Coordinator, 3413 Summerhill Road, Texarkana, Texas 75503, Sherry.Nelson@txkisd.net, 903-793-7561.

Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent.

Job Vacancy Announcements

(Policy [DC](#))

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis and posted at the central administration building, and on the District's Web site at www.txkisd.net.

Employment After Retirement

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed under certain circumstances on a full- or part-time basis without affecting their benefits, according to TRS rules and state law. Detailed information about employment after retirement is available in the TRS publication *Employment After Retirement*. Employees can contact TRS for additional information by calling 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. Information is also available on the TRS Web Site (www.trs.texas.gov).

Contract and Non-Contract Employment

(Policy [DC](#).series)

State law requires the District to employ all full-time professional employees in positions requiring a certificate from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and nurses under probationary, term, or continuing contracts. Employees in all other positions are employed at-will or by a contract that is not subject to the procedures for nonrenewal or termination under Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code. The paragraphs that follow provide a general description of the employment arrangements used by the District.

Probationary Contracts. Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the District and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification must receive a probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after a two-year lapse in District employment or employees who move to a position requiring a new class of certification may also be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one-year contracts. The probationary period for those who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the District may not exceed one school year except as provided in the District of Innovation plan.

Term and continuing contracts. Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses will be employed by term contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. Campus principals and central office administrators may be employed under a two-year term contract. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract annually and upon request. Employment policies can be accessed online or copies will be provided upon request.

Noncertified professional and Administrative Employees. Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as non-instructional administrators) are employed by a one or two year contract that is not subject to the provisions for nonrenewal or termination under the Texas Education Code.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees. All paraprofessional and auxiliary employees, regardless of certification, are employed at will and not by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the District.

Certification and Licenses

(Policies [DBA](#), [DF](#))

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to the Human Resources Offices in a timely manner. Employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) must notify Human Resources when there is action against, or revocation of, their license.

A certified employee's contract may be voided without Chapter 21 due process and employment terminated if the individual does not hold a valid certificate or fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to renew or extend a temporary certificate, emergency certificate, probationary certificate, or permit. A contract may also be voided if SBEC suspends or revokes certification because of an individual's failure to comply with criminal history background checks. Contact Human Resources, at (903) 794-3651 if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

Recertification of Employment Authorization

(Policy [DC](#))

At the time of hire all employees must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (Form I-9) and present documents to verify identity and employment authorization.

Employees whose immigration status, employment authorization, or employment authorization documents have expired must present new documents that show current employment authorization. Employees should file the necessary application or petition sufficiently in advance to ensure that they maintain continuous employment authorization or valid employment authorization documents. Contact Human Resources if you have any questions regarding reverification of employment authorization.

Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing

(Policy [CQ](#), [DHE](#))

Non-investigatory searches in the workplace, including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to

obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the District reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The District may search the employee, the employee's personal items, work areas, including District-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on District premises or work sites or used in District business.

Employees Required to Have a Commercial Driver's License. Any employee whose duties require a commercial driver's license (CDL) is subject to drug and alcohol testing. This includes all drivers who operate a motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more people counting the driver, drivers of large vehicles, or drivers of vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials. Teachers, coaches, or other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements if their duties include driving a commercial motor vehicle.

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted when reasonable suspicion exists, at random, when an employee returns to duty after engaging in prohibited conduct, and as a follow-up measure. Testing may be conducted following accidents. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty.

All employees required to have a CDL, or who otherwise are subject to alcohol and drug testing will receive a copy of the District's policy, the testing requirements, and detailed information on alcohol and drug abuse and the availability of assistance programs.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug testing policies and related educational material should contact Human Resources.

Health Safety Training

(Policies [DBA](#), [DMA](#))

DBA (LEGAL) identifies the requirements for certain employees to maintain and submit health safety training certification to the District. Certain employees who are involved in physical activities for students must maintain and submit to the District proof of current certification or training in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), concussion and extracurricular athletic activity safety. Certification or documentation of training must be issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification to the Coordinator of Risk Management at 1600 Waterall Street, Texarkana, Texas 75501 by the first day of school. School nurses and employees with regular contact with students must complete a Texas Education Agency approved, online training regarding seizure disorder awareness, recognition and related first aid.

Reassignments and Transfers

(Policy [DK](#))

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the Superintendent or designee when the Superintendent or designee determines that the assignment or reassignment is in the best interest of the District. Reassignment is a transfer to another position, department, or facility that does not necessitate a change in the employment contract. Campus reassignments must be approved by the principal at the receiving campus, except when reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or program changes. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be reassigned at any time unless an extracurricular or supplemental duty assignment is part of a dual-assignment contract. Employees who object to a reassignment may follow the District process for employee complaints, as outlined in this handbook and District policy DGBA (Local).

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's

supervisor. An on-line internal application must also be submitted through the human resources software system. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit their request by June 1st. Transfer requests after **July 1st** will require the approval of the Superintendent.

Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Human Resources Department and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

Workload and Work Schedules

(Policies, [DEAB](#), [DK](#), [DL](#))

Professional Employees: Professional employees and academic administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10, 11, or 12 month basis, according to the work schedules set by the District. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including required start, end dates and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation, including conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at least 450 minutes within each two week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The District may require teachers to supervise students during lunch one day a week when no other personnel are available.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees: Support employees are employed at-will and will receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without **prior approval** from their supervisor.

See *Overtime Compensation* for additional information.

The standard workday for instructional staff is from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This workday can be altered as needed by the campus principal as needed for instructional scheduling purposes.

Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk

(Policies [DEAB](#), [DG](#))

The District supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk. A place, other than a multiple user bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from other employees and the public where the employee can express breast milk will be provided.

A reasonable amount of break time will be provided when the employee has a need to express milk. For nonexempt employees, these breaks are unpaid and are not counted as hours worked. Employees should meet with their supervisor to discuss their needs and arrange break times.

Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications

(Policies [DK](#), [DBA](#))

In schools receiving Title I funds, the District is required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to notify parents at the beginning of each school year that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. ESSA also requires that parents be notified if their child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements.

Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request. Employees who have questions about their certification status can call Human

Resources.

Outside employment and tutoring

(Policy [DBD](#))

Employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor any outside employment that may create a potential conflict of interest with their assigned duties and responsibilities or the best interest of the District. Supervisors will consider outside employment on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it should be prohibited because of a conflict of interest. It is a conflict of interest for teachers to tutor students assigned to them outside of the school day and charge them for private tutoring. Teachers may choose to tutor other students outside of the school day and off-site from the District and assume individual liability and responsibility in that private tutoring arrangement. District materials are prohibited from use in teacher private tutoring sessions. Employees shall make their immediate supervisor aware of private tutoring arrangements and the supervisor will determine if there is a conflict of interest.

Performance Evaluation

(Policy [DN](#) series)

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the District. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda can also be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, participate in a performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation. For non-teaching personnel, the overall performance evaluation rating must meet expectations with a minimum rating of 3.0 in order to be eligible for an annual pay raise approved through the budget process by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receiving a report, a nursing review committee may review a nurse's nursing services, qualifications, a quality of patient care, as well as the merits of a complaint concerning a nurse, and a determination or recommendation regarding a complaint. A nurse may request, orally or in writing, a determination by the committee regarding conduct requested of the nurse believed to violate the nurse's duty to a patient.

Employee Involvement

(Policies [BQA](#), [BQB](#))

At both the campus and District levels, Texarkana ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the District. As part of the District's planning and decision making process, employees may either be asked or elected to serve on District- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision making process are available in each campus office or from the Instructional Services Department.

Staff Development

(Policy [DMA](#))

TISD values its employees and believes that professional development is a continuous learning process that begins during an employee's first year of employment and extends to retirement. Professional development should focus on increasing one's knowledge of his/her job, subject area or program as well as improving skills specific to those jobs, subjects or programs. Professional development (and staff development) activities should have a strong basis in research and be an integral part of reforming the whole school" (Richard W. Riley,

Teaching PreK-8, January 1994, Vol. 24, Issue 4, p12.). TISD is committed to providing our employees with professional development opportunities that are standards-based, results-driven, job-embedded, sustained, rigorous, and cumulative. By implementing a high quality professional development program, TISD aspires to continually provide our staff members with opportunities to grow professionally, enhance their abilities and continue to expand their professional lives.

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the District. TISD provides staff development opportunities at the District, campus, and individual levels to meet the needs of all employees. Workshops are scheduled throughout the year and listed in the *Eduphoria: School Objects* program that can be

found at <https://texarkana.schoolobjects.com> under the *Workshop* icon. Training in the use of our online staff development system is provided to all staff.

Teachers employed by TISD are expected to continue to learn and grow throughout their career as educators, so that they may provide the highest quality instruction to students entrusted in their care. As lifelong learners, teachers are expected to attend professional learning as needed to become familiar with advances in programming, ever changing requirements and/or new instructional materials and methods. **Dependent upon position, teachers may be required to attend training as a condition of employment.**

Professional learning may take many forms including traditional staff development sessions, on-line opportunities, book studies, learning as part of the regular instructional day and outside of the school day. It is part of the work of all educators to engage with others in professional learning communities to continually review student progress and to plan for instruction that is designed to meet the unique needs of students.

In TISD, we know that a well-qualified effective teacher in every classroom is critical to student achievement. Therefore, TISD will severely limit the use of student instructional time for adult learning. Teachers are expected to attend training after school, during the summer, and on weekends as well as during days designated in the school calendar. Many opportunities for professional growth will be offered after school and during the summer covering a variety of educational topics. TISD teachers, central staff and invited presenters will offer sessions designed to enhance the knowledge and skill of educators in TISD. Teachers may be required to attend trainings depending upon their teaching assignment.

All teachers are encouraged to attend sessions that will help them continue as life-long learners in the field of education. For more information regarding staff development requirements, please contact Instructional Services at 903-793-7561.

Travel

TISD is committed to providing quality professional development through travel opportunities in a safe and efficient manner. These guidelines and procedures are developed in order to assist staff members with understanding professional travel expectations of the district. Because employees are traveling utilizing district budget monies paid for by tax dollars, we are held to a higher level of accountability for business travel and expenditures. The costs and time away from work for professional development will be used effectively and efficiently. If any employee has concerns regarding travel arrangements, it is very important that they notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible so that other arrangements may be considered. TISD is committed to the safety of our staff and want employees to feel confident in their travel arrangements.

Each District employee who is authorized to travel assumes, with the acceptance of that authorization, a responsibility to limit travel expense claims to those actually incurred on travel that is clearly for the purpose of discharging essential official business of the District. Travel planning should take into consideration the most economical means of accomplishing the authorized task.

Administrators who are responsible for making travel assignments and for approving travel plans have the additional responsibility of limiting travel plans to those trips that are clearly in accordance with Board policy, the District improvement plan, or official Board action.

Employees must secure prior approval for professional development travel through the TISD Learning Opportunity Approval System (LOAS) and receive a LOAS confirmation number. Reasonable departure and return times for overnight travel will be based on when the conference begins and ends with minimal work time lost (see Guidelines for Professional Travel).

- **Vehicle Use:** Vehicles are available to reserve through the LOAS process. When 1-4 persons are traveling to the same conference, one school vehicle will be sent to that conference. Employees choosing to take
-

their own vehicle rather than riding with others attending the conference will do so at their own expense. When a school vehicle is not available and/or rental car is not available, persons will be reimbursed mileage at a rate approved by the District.

- **Hotel and Motel Expenses:** Hotel and motel reimbursement is made based on double occupancy. Employees who choose to stay by themselves or with spouse when traveling to the same conference as other employees will be responsible for the payment of their own room.
- **Overnight Travel Meals:** Meal reimbursement will be according to District regulations for overnight travel. Upon return from travel, meals will be reimbursed up to the allowable daily amount documented with the applicable detailed receipts. Employees will be reimbursed for meals only (does not include snacks or drinks outside of meals). Detailed receipts must be submitted for reimbursement within 7 days from return of travel. If a meal is provided within the cost of the conference and an employee chooses to eat elsewhere, that expense would not be reimbursable.
- **NOTE:** Day travel meal per diem will be treated as taxable income per IRS Publication 463 and reimbursed to employees through payroll procedures.
- **Air Travel:** Air travel will be reimbursed at actual cost when the air travel is required by the District and/or air travel is less expensive than traveling by other means. Air Travel for personal convenience will not be allowed.

For additional information, please see the Administrative Regulation DEE for Professional Travel Guidelines and Procedures.

Compensation and Benefits

Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

(Policies [DEA](#), [DEAA](#), [DEAB](#))

Employees are paid in accordance with the TISD Compensation Plan adopted by the Board of Trustees that outlines administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The District's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All District positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as nonexempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a work week. (See heading: *Overtime Compensation*)

Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time counselors, and full-time nurses will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the District's extra-duty pay schedule.

Employees should contact the Human Resources Department at (903) 794-3651, ext. 1050 for more information about the District's pay schedules or their own pay.

Paychecks

All employees are paid monthly. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the District employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization. During summer break, paychecks will be mailed to the employee's home address unless otherwise instructed in writing by the employee.

An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated. This can be accessed by utilizing the SKYWARD Employee Access Center at www.txkisd.net.

The schedule of pay dates for the new school year is as follows. The dates in bold are early paydays due to school holidays.

PAY DATES

July 25, 2022
August 25, 2022
September 23, 2022
October 25, 2022
November 18, 2022
December 15, 2022
January 25, 2023
February 24, 2023
March 24, 2023
April 25, 2023
May 25, 2023
June 23, 2023

Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account at the bank of their choice. A notification period of twenty (20) days prior to monthly pay date is necessary to activate this service. Regardless of the payment method chosen, a new employee's first pay check from the District will be a paper check. Contact the Business Office at (903) 794-3651 ext. 1021 for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll Deductions

(Policy [CFEA](#))

The District is required to make the following automatic payroll deductions:

- Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) or Social Security employee contributions
- Federal income tax
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired in this District after March 31, 1986).
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, and life insurance; short term disability and other District insurance; annuities; higher education savings plans or prepaid tuition programs; and savings and loan payments through the TEXAR Federal Credit Union. Employees also may request payroll deductions for payment of membership dues to professional organizations and certain charitable contributions approved by the board. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

Overtime Compensation

(Policies [DEAB](#), [DEC](#))

The District compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. All employees are classified as exempt or nonexempt for purposes of overtime compensation. Professional and administrative employees are ineligible for overtime compensation. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour workweek and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours. Police officers will earn overtime for all hours worked in excess of 43 hours in a workweek.

For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. Sunday and ends at 12:00 p.m. Saturday. Employees may be compensated for overtime with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- It is recommended that Compensatory time be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- An employee is required to use comp time before using any other available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, non-duty, vacation, etc.)
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all non-exempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

Time Clocks/Hourly Employees

The Employee Identification Number as listed on your badge will serve as the employee ID for time clock purposes. This number is to be used to clock in and clock out.

Time clocks have been placed at various locations throughout the District and you must clock in and out on the clock that is designated by your supervisor. Be sure to follow the time shown on the time clock and not the time of other clocks. If your clocking terminal does not function properly, you should report this immediately to your supervisor.

Only **YOU** may clock in and out for yourself. Violation of this policy is grounds for immediate involuntary termination of employment for the employee who clocks in or out for another employee, and for the employee who allows another employee to clock in or out for him/her.

NEVER CLOCK ANOTHER EMPLOYEE'S TIME FOR ANY REASON. Willful falsification of work or absence records is grounds for immediate involuntary termination of employment.

If you leave the campus/department for a personal reason, you must clock out. You must have authorization from your supervisor to leave the campus/department for any reason during scheduled work time.

You are expected to report to work promptly at your scheduled time. Students and the jobs of other workers are dependent on you to be timely and to be ready to work at your start time. Hourly employees are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor.

Hourly employees on an accrued payment schedule that have worktime short of schedule and have not designated leave for this time, may be docked for time short of schedule.

You may clock in up to five minutes before the start of your scheduled work time. If you clock in later than five minutes after your scheduled start time, the timekeeping system will record you as "tardy". This five-minute grace period is to be used only on an occasional, emergency basis. Abuse of the grace period may result in corrective action.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) allows rounding of employee work hours. The regulation allows rounding time to the nearest five minutes, six minutes (one-tenth of an hour), or quarter hour. However, the employer must round both up and down. This averages out to be fair to both the employee and the employer. The employer may not round time so that the benefit always accrues to the employer.

Travel Expense Reimbursement

(Policy [DEE](#))

Before an employee incurs any travel expenses, the employee's supervisor must grant approval. Reimbursement rates will be based on the IRS and Board-approved rates which were in effect at the time of the employee travel. For more details, see the Administrative Regulation DEE for Guidelines and Procedures for Professional Travel.

Employees must submit receipts to be reimbursed for allowable expenses other than mileage. Reimbursement remittance of one day travel expenses are considered income by the IRS and will be made through the Payroll Department and other travel reimbursement remittance will be made through the Accounts Payable Department.

Health Insurance

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school employee health insurance program. The District's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the Board of Trustees. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

- Employees who are active, contributing TRS members
- Employees who are not contributing TRS members and who are employed for 10 or more regularly scheduled hours per week

TRS retirees who are enrolled in TRS-Care (retiree health insurance program) are not eligible to participate in TRS-ActiveCare.

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31, each year, as specified by the District. Current employees can make changes on their insurance coverage during open enrollment each year or when they experience a qualifying event (e.g., marriage, divorce, birth). **It is required that all employees in the District complete the enrollment requirements annually in order to either accept or decline coverage.** Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees should contact Human Resources at 903-794-3651 ext. 1009 for more information.

Supplemental Insurance Benefits

(Policy [CRD](#))

The District provides contributions for each full time employee to be covered for basic life insurance in the amount of their annual salary. The District also provides long term disability insurance coverage for each full time employee.

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for dental, cancer, vision, short term disability, and additional life insurance. Premiums for these programs are paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact Human Resources at (903) 794-3651 ext. 1009 for more information.

Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e., cancer, dental and additional term life insurance). A third party administrator handles employee claims made on these accounts. New employees must accept or reject this benefit during their first month of eligibility. **All employees must accept or reject this benefit on an annual basis and during the specified time period.**

Workers' Compensation Insurance

(Policy [CRE](#))

The District, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work related illness or are injured on the job. The District has workers' compensation coverage from Texas Association of School Boards Risk Management Fund, effective 7/1/2019. The District has workers' compensation coverage to help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case.

All work related accidents or injuries should be reported **immediately** to the employee's immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Department at 903-794-3651, ext. 1016. Employees who are unable to work due to a work related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See heading: "*Workers' Compensation Benefits*" for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

Unemployment Compensation Insurance

(Policy [CRF](#))

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have employment contracts or letters of reasonable assurance of returning to work. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact Human Resources at (903) 794-3651 ext. 1050.

Teacher Retirement

All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least four and one-half months are members of the Texas Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). Substitutes not receiving TRS service retirement benefits who work at least 90 days a year are eligible to purchase a year of creditable service in TRS. TRS provides members with an annual statement of their account showing all deposits and the total account balance for the year ending August 31, as well as an estimate of their retirement benefits.

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify Amy Nix, Director of Human Resources, at (903) 794-3651 ext. 1033 as soon as possible. Additional inquiries should be addressed to: Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542- 6400. TRS information is also available at www.trs.texas.gov. See heading: “*Employment After Retirement*” for information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

Annuities – Section 403(b)

(Policy [CRG](#))

An employee may make direct contributions to an annuity or investment product that meets the requirements of Internal Revenue Code section 403(b). An employee may enter into a salary reduction agreement only if the qualified investment product is an eligible qualified investment and is registered with the Teacher Retirement System (TRS).

The IRS requires all employers who provide an optional deduction for a 403(b) Retirement plan for their employees to receive notice of the plan each year. Texarkana ISD offers the option to contribute to a 403(b) retirement plan as an added benefit to employees. The 403(b)/457 retirement plans act very similar to a 401(k) plan and provide several benefits including:

- Contributions to the plan are tax deductible meaning that you do not pay taxes on contributions made to the plan. This also reduces income tax expenses and may very well reduce your tax bracket. Taxes will be paid on the funds when taken from the account at retirement.
- Roth contributions can be made, but taxes are paid at the time of contribution. Account balances grow over time, and taxes are not paid on the contributions, nor on the interest earned on the account once it is taken out.
- Loans or hardship withdrawals can be taken from the account if certain circumstances are met. This will slow the path to retirement but can provide financial relief in time of need.
- Contributions limits are much higher at \$18,000 than the limits in IRA’s (\$6,000).

More information on 403(b) plans, including a list of approved vendors, can be found here:

<https://www.nbsbenefits.com/non-erisa-403b-forms/>

Tuition-Free Attendance

(Policy [FDA](#))

Transfer students who are children of full-time District employees may transfer into TISD schools on a tuition-free basis. For more information, contact the Student Enrollment Office at 903-794-3651 ext. 1030.

Child Care

The District operates Tiger Learning Centers (TLC) for child care after school hours and during school breaks. Children of full-time employees are eligible for reduced tuition rates. Tiger Learning Centers are available at the following elementary school locations: Morriss, Nash, Spring Lake Park, Wake Village and Waggoner Creek. For more information, please contact the TLC Administrative Office at 903-792-7991.

Leaves and Absences

(Policies [DECA](#), [DECB](#))

The District offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of **more than five days** should call Employee Benefits, at (903) 794-3651 ext. 1009, for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums and requirements for communicating with the District.

Use of Leave: Leave is available for the employee's use at the beginning of the year. However, State Leave and Local leave is earned as you work through the course of your work year. If an employee leaves the District before the end of the work year, the cost of any unearned leave taken shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Paid leave will not be approved for more days than an employee has accumulated in prior years, plus those to be earned during the current year.

Leave will be accrued in hours. Hourly non-exempt employees that use the timeclock will take their leave in hours and increments as designated by the District's software. Non-exempt professional employees must use leave in hours equivalent to a whole workday or hours equivalent to a half workday. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave provided. An employee may choose the order in which available state and local leave are used. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

1. Comp Time (if applicable)
2. Non-Duty (if applicable)
3. Vacation (if applicable)
4. Local Leave (used for Sick and reasons outlined under Local Leave)
5. State Sick Leave accumulated before the 1995-1996 school year
6. State Personal Leave
7. Dock Pay

Employees must follow District and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification and required notification process. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated or available paid leave shall result in deduction from the employee's pay.

Immediate Family For purposes of leave other than family and medical leave, immediate family is defined as the following:

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands *in loco parentis*.
- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands *in loco parentis* to the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law.
- Grandparent and grandchild.
- Any person residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death.

For purposes of family and medical leave, the definition of family is limited to spouse, parent, son or daughter, and next of kin. The definition of these is found in Policy DECA (LEGAL).

Medical Certification Any employee who is absent more than **five days** because of a personal illness or three days because of a family illness must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee's fitness to return to work.

The District may require medical certification due to an employee's questionable pattern of absences or when deemed necessary by the supervisor or superintendent. The district may also request medical certification when an employee requests FMLA leave for the employee's serious health condition, a serious health condition of the employee's spouse, parent, or child, or for military caregiver leave.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits covered employers from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we ask that employees and health care providers do not provide any genetic information in any medical certification. 'Genetic information,' as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

Continuation of Health Insurance Employees on an approved leave of absence other than family and medical leave may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid by the District as they were prior to the leave. Otherwise, the District does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave.

Under TRS-Active Care rules, an employee is no longer eligible for insurance through the District after six months of unpaid leave other than FML. If an employee's unpaid leave extends for more than six months, the District will provide the employee with notice of COBRA rights.

State Personal Leave

State law entitles all employees to leave equivalent to five workdays of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is available for use at the beginning of the year. A day of earned personal leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time. State personal leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school Districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. Personal leave may be used for two general purposes: nondiscretionary and discretionary.

Non-Discretionary: Leave that is taken for personal or family illness, family emergency, a death in the family or active military service is considered non-discretionary leave. Reasons for this type of leave requires very little, if any, advance planning. Non-discretionary leave may be used in the same manner as state sick leave.

Discretionary: Leave that is taken at an employee's discretion and that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor in advance of the anticipated absence. In deciding to approve discretionary personal leave, the supervisor or designee shall consider the effect of the employee's absence on the educational program, as well as the availability of substitutes. **Discretionary use of leave shall not exceed three consecutive workdays.** Employees working on a 10 month schedule should schedule extended vacations during breaks. Discretionary leave for extended discretionary vacations during the 10 month work calendar may not be approved. An employee may use no more than five workdays of leave per school year for discretionary leave purposes. Discretionary leave may not be taken on the following key days without approval by the Superintendent or designee:

- Day before a school holiday
- Day after a school holiday
- Days scheduled for end of semester or end of year exams
- The first or last day of a grading period
- Days scheduled for state mandated testing
- Staff or professional development days

Leave Proration: If an employee separates from employment with the District before his or her last duty day of the year, or begins employment after the first duty day, state personal leave will be prorated based on the

actual time employed. When an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck will be reduced by the amount of state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year.

State Sick Leave

State Sick Leave is no longer awarded by the State of Texas; however, state sick leave accumulated before 1995 is available for use and may be transferred to other school Districts in Texas. State Sick leave may be used for the following reasons only:

- Employee illness
- Illness in the employee's immediate family
- Family emergency (i.e., natural disasters or life threatening situations)
- Death in the immediate family
- Active military service

Local Leave

TISD professional employees receive local leave equivalent to three workdays per year. Paraprofessional and support staff receive local leave equivalent to two workday standards per year. Only hours equivalent to 30 workdays may be carried forward from one year to the next. Any excess hours over the equivalent of 30 workdays at year end will be paid at a rate established by the District. Local leave may be used for the following reasons:

- Employee illness
- Illness in the employee's immediate family
- Family emergency (i.e., natural disasters or life threatening situations)
- Death in the immediate family

Vacation for Employees Working 261 Day Schedules

(Policy [DED](#))

Vacation shall be awarded to full-time employees who work a 261-day schedule. Employees must have twelve months of service before they are eligible to begin earning vacation time. Vacation days (hours) for each year are awarded on July 1st. Partial-year vacation days (hours) are awarded on the employee's one-year anniversary date. The amount of Vacation Days (hours) awarded shall be determined by the employee's years of service completed. Employees with 1-4 years of service will be given seven (7) days (56 hours) annually and employees with five (5) or more years will be given 12 days (96 hours) annually.

An employee shall receive prior approval from his or her immediate supervisor to use vacation hours. Approval of all leave requests will be dependent upon the needs of the district.

All full time, 12-month employees who work a 261-day schedule may accumulate up to 30 vacation days (240 hours). Any days (hours) over that will be lost as of July 1st each year. Vacation days (hours) are cumulative from year to year, not to exceed 30 days (240 hours).

An eligible employee who separates from service with the District shall be paid for unused earned vacation hours. If an employee separates from service before his or her last duty day of the work year, the employee's final paycheck shall be reduced for vacation hours the employee used but had not earned as of the date of separation.

Holiday Pay for Employees Working 261 Day Schedules

Employee groups that work a 261-day schedule are eligible for paid holidays and **will be** paid holiday pay if they are in the District's employ the day prior to the holiday. Employees that work a 261 day schedule who are out

on paid leave the day of a holiday **will be** paid for the holiday, if they have sufficient leave to cover the day prior and the day after the holiday. An employee must be in a paid status the day before and the day after the holiday in order to receive the holiday pay.

Employees who work a 261 day schedule and who are out on approved Family Medical Leave and have used all accumulated leave prior to a holiday will **not be** paid for any holiday after all accumulated leave has been used. Employees on a 261 day schedule who are out on approved Catastrophic (CAT) leave **will be** paid holiday pay if a holiday falls during their use of CAT leave. The day will count as CAT leave.

Non-Duty Leave

Professional and paraprofessional employees on a 12-month assignment of 222 days have nonscheduled, Non-Duty leave. These are days remaining in the year after holidays and scheduled duty days have been satisfied. The amount of Non-Duty leave given shall be determined by the amount of days left in the month of June, after 222 work days have been met for the year. Professional and paraprofessional employees shall be paid only for scheduled duty days.

Non-Duty leave shall be awarded to all employees on accrued salary who work a 222-day schedule. Non-Duty leave for each year are awarded on July 1st. Employees will be allowed to carry over Non-Duty leave equivalent to five workdays to the following school year. Any balance above the equivalent of five workdays as of July 1st of the current school year will not carry over, unless an exception is made by the Superintendent.

Use of Vacation or Non-Duty leave shall require advance approval by the employee's immediate supervisor.

Catastrophic Leave Bank

(Policy [DEC Local](#))

An annual Catastrophic Leave Bank is established each year to provide sick leave to employees for an unexpected serious catastrophic illness or injury. A catastrophic illness or injury is a severe, unforeseeable, unexpected, and undesired condition or combination of conditions and their complications. This type of illness or injury is a life altering event beyond the employee's control and affords little or no opportunity to consider or plan for the event. A catastrophic illness or injury is such a severe nature that it directly affects the mental or physical health of the employee to the extent that it requires the services of a licensed health care practitioner and subsequent hospital admittance, and as diagnosed by a licensed health care practitioner, results in the employee's incapacity to perform his or her job functions for a minimum of 30 calendar days. A catastrophic illness or injury forces the employee to exhaust all leave earned by that employee and to lose compensation from the District. Such conditions typically require prolonged hospitalization or recovery or are expected to result in disability or death. It includes a condition or event that creates a financial hardship for the employee, i.e., for which the employee is not receiving or cannot receive any other financial benefits (whether local, state, or federal). Complications resulting from pregnancy or childbirth shall be considered catastrophic if they meet the requirements of this paragraph.

All full time personnel with benefits may become members of the bank. Membership is established by voluntarily donating local leave hours equivalent to one workday to the bank each year. The bank year is the time period of September 1 through August 31. Employees must enroll and make the minimum donation to the bank by September 1 of each bank year in order to be eligible for bank benefits during that year. Leave contributed to the bank shall be solely for the use of participating employees. An employee who is a member of the bank may request leave from the bank if the employee experiences a catastrophic illness or injury and exhausted all other accumulated leave by contacting the TISD Employee Benefits office at 903-794-3651, ext. 1009, providing a request in writing as well as providing the necessary paperwork and documentation. The catastrophic leave bank committee shall approve or disapprove all requests for bank leave. The committee shall consist of the Deputy Superintendent, Associate Superintendent of Family and Community Engagement and the Chief Financial Officer. The employee may appeal a decision regarding the catastrophic leave bank in accordance with DGBA Local.

An initial award of leave bank hours up to the equivalent of 30 workdays may be granted for each separate catastrophic illness or injury. If a member fails to recover within the first 30 days, the member may apply for additional bank leave to be considered by the committee. No member shall be eligible for more leave bank hours than the equivalent of 60 workdays for one or more catastrophic illness or injuries during a bank year. Additionally, no member shall be awarded more leave bank hours than the equivalent of 60 workdays over one of

more bank years for the same catastrophic illness or injury.

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) – General Provisions

The following text is from the federal notice, *Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Leave Act*. Specific information that the District has adopted to implement the FMLA follows this general notice.

Leave Entitlements.

Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken with 1 year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job;

An eligible employee who is a covered service member's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the service member with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Benefits and Protections

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

Eligibility Requirements

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave,* and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite

*Special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

Requesting Leave

Generally, employees must give 30-days' advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days' notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection.

Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

Employer Responsibilities

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA.

Enforcement

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division or may bring a private lawsuit against any employer.

The FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) required FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300 (a) may require additional disclosures.

For additional information:
1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627
www.wagehour.dol.gov

Local Procedures for implementing Family and Medical Leave Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period from July 1st through June 30th.

Use of Paid Leave. FML runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, compensatory time, assault leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The District will designate the leave as FML, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

Combined Leave for Spouses. Spouses who are employed by the District are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FML to care for a parent with a serious health condition; or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

Intermittent Leave. When medically necessary or in the case of a qualifying exigency, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. The District does not permit the use of intermittent or reduced-schedule leave for the care of a newborn child or for adoption or placement of a child with the employee.

Requests for FMLA: When the need for family and medical leave is foreseeable, employees must provide 30-day advance notice of their need to the District. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must contact the Human Resources Office and their immediate supervisor as soon as possible. Employees may be required to provide the following:

- Medical certification from a qualified health care provider supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or an immediate family member
- Second or third medical opinions and periodic re-certification of the need for leave
- Periodic reports during the leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work
- Medical certification from a qualified health care provider at the conclusion of leave of an employee's ability to return to work
- Certification of the need for family military leave

Fitness for Duty: An employee that takes FML due to the employee's own serious health condition shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification from the health care provider. When leave is taken for the employee's own serious health condition, the certification must address the employee's ability to perform essential job functions. The District shall provide a list of essential job functions (e.g., job description) to the employee with the FML designation notice to share with the healthcare provider. Fitness for duty is not required when an employee returns to work following leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition; to care for a child following birth, adoption, or foster care placement; or for qualifying exigency leave.

Reinstatement. An employee returning to work at the end of FML, will be returned to the same position held when the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay and other terms and conditions of employment.

In certain cases, instructional employees desiring to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue on family and medical leave until the end of the semester. The additional time off is not counted against the employee's FML entitlement, and the District will maintain the employees group health insurance and reinstate the employee at the end of the leave according the procedures outlined in policy (see DECA (LEGAL)).

Failure to Return. If, at the expiration of FML, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the District may require the employee to reimburse the District's share of insurance premiums paid during any portion of FML when the employee was on unpaid leave. If the employee fails to return to work for a reason beyond the employee's control, such as a continuing personal or family serious health condition or a spouse being unexpectedly transferred more than 75 miles from the District, the District may not require the employee to reimburse the District's share of premiums paid.

Employees requiring family and medical leave should contact Employee Benefits at 903-794-3651 ext. 1016 for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Temporary Disability Leave

Certified Employees. Any full-time employee whose position requires certification from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is eligible for temporary disability leave. The purpose of temporary disability leave is to provide job protection to full-time educators who cannot work for an extended period of time because of a mental or physical disability of a temporary nature. Temporary disability leave must be taken as a continuous block of time. It may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability.

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be accepted as a request for temporary disability leave. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days.

If an employee is placed on temporary disability leave involuntarily, he or she has the right to request a hearing before the Board of Trustees. The employee may protest the action and present additional evidence of fitness to work.

When an employee is ready to return to work, the Human Resources Department should be notified at least 30 days in advance when possible. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able resume regular duties.

Certified employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned if an appropriate position is available. If an appropriate position is not available, the employee may be assigned to another campus, subject to the approval of the campus principal. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, the employees will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

Extended Illness Leave

Any full-time professional noncontract employee, classified employee, auxiliary employee, or permanent part-time employee shall be eligible for unpaid extended illness leave, if eligible for FMLA, after the expiration of all available paid leave when the employee's condition interferes with the performance of regular duties. The maximum length of unpaid personal illness leave shall be 180 calendar days. This leave is unpaid extended illness leave and shall run concurrently with all other types of leave, including family and medical leave.

Each application for such extended illness leave must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent or designee and must include the District's medical certification form.

Workers' Compensation Benefits

An employee absent from duty because of a job-related injury or illness shall be assigned to family and medical leave, if applicable, and may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits if the absence exceeds seven calendar days.

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use accumulated sick leave or any other paid leave benefits instead. An employee choosing to use paid leave will **not** receive workers' compensation weekly income benefits until all paid leave is exhausted or to the extent that paid leave does not equal the pre-illness or pre-injury wage. If the use of paid leave is not elected, then the employee will only receive worker's compensation wage benefits for any absence resulting from a work-related illness or injury, which may not equal his or her pre-illness or pre-injury wage. The employee shall inform the Employee Benefits Office whether he or she chooses to use available paid leave.

Assault Leave

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to anyone who is injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An incident involving assault is a work-related injury, and should be immediately reported to the Director of Human Resources in the Human Resources Department. An injury is treated as an assault if the person causing the injury could be prosecuted for assault or could not be prosecuted only because that person's age or mental capacity renders the person non-responsible for purposes of criminal liability.

An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take all the leave time medically necessary (up to two years) to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. At the request of an employee, the district will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

Bereavement Leave (Family Death)

Funeral leave requires the use of state leave and/or local leave for death in the immediate family and it shall not exceed leave equivalent to five workdays per occurrence, subject to the approval of the District. An employee absent due to a funeral in the immediate family should submit documentation to their supervisor.

Jury Duty

The District provides paid leave to employees who are summoned to jury duty, including service on a grand jury. The district will not discharge, intimidate, or coerce any regular employee because of juror or grand juror service or for the employee's attendance or scheduled attendance in connection with the service in any court in the United States. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides. An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and may be required to provide the District a copy of the summons to document the need for leave.

An employee may be required to report back to work as soon as they are released from jury duty. The supervisor may consider the travel time required and the nature of the individual's position when determine the need to report to work. A copy of the release from jury duty or documentation of time spent at the court may be required.

Compliance with a Subpoena

Employees will be paid while on leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding and will not be required to use paid leave. Employees will be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

Truancy Court Appearances

An employee who is a parent, guardian of a child or a court-appointed guardian ad litem of a child who is required to miss work to attend a truancy court hearing may use personal leave or a compensatory time for the absence. Employees who do not have paid leave available will be docked for any absence required because of the court appearance.

Religious Observance

The District will reasonably accommodate an employee's request for absence for a religious holiday or observance. Accommodations such as changes to work schedules or approving a day of absence will be made unless they pose an undue hardship to the District. The employee may use any accumulated personal leave for this purpose. Employees who have exhausted applicable paid leave may be granted an unpaid day of absence.

Military Leave

Paid Leave for Military Service. Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserves component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to 15 days of paid leave per fiscal year when engaged in authorized training or duty orders by proper authority. An additional seven days of leave per fiscal year are available if called to state active duty in response to a disaster. In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during active military service.

Reemployment after Military Leave. Employees who leave the District to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the District will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. Employees returning to work following military leave should contact the Human Resources office. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

Continuation of Health Insurance. Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24 months. Employees should contact Human Resources, at (903)794-3651 ext. 1009 for details on eligibility, requirements and limitations.

Leave for Peace Officers

Texarkana ISD provides leave as required for Texas Peace Officers employed with the district. As a newly adopted statute for Texas, contact the Human Resources department for more details at 903-794-3651, ext.

Payment for Accumulated Leave Upon Separation

Local leave remains in the District where earned and does not transfer to other Districts. Local leave is payable upon retirement from TISD at the rate of \$50 per day for professional employees and \$30 per day for nonprofessional employees.

Expiration of Available Leave

Upon the expiration of all leave for which an employee has applied and is eligible, if the employee has not already returned to work, the District shall notify the employee in writing that his or her leave has expired.

The employee has **ten** calendar days within which to apply for any leave for which the employee may be eligible or to notify the District in writing that the employee is ready, willing and able to return to work. A medical clearance showing that the employee is physically able to perform the essential functions of his or her position, with reasonable accommodations if necessary, is required to return to work. Additionally, some jobs may require the employee to submit to a District-paid fitness-for-duty evaluation wherein the employee must demonstrate the ability to meet all the essential physical requirements of his or her job.

At-Will Employees. An at-will employee who does not receive approval of such additional leave and who does not report and document his or her availability and fitness to return to work within such ten-day period shall be deemed to have voluntarily resigned his or her employment with the District, effective immediately upon the expiration of the ten-day period designated in such notice and if applicable, shall be offered health benefits according to COBRA. [See [CRD](#)]

An at-will employee who fails to return to work after 180 calendar days of leave, regardless of the type of leave, shall be deemed to have voluntarily resigned his or her employment with the District, and if applicable, shall be offered health benefits according to COBRA.

Contracted Employees. A contract employee's failure to receive approval of such additional leave and his or her subsequent failure to report and document his or her availability and fitness to return to work, within such ten-day period, shall be considered good cause for termination. A contract employee's failure to return to work after 180 calendar days of leave, regardless of the type of leave, shall be considered good cause for termination. For termination procedures and rights of contract employees, see [DF](#) series and [DCE](#).

Docking Pay

Hourly employees paid on an accrued schedule that have exhausted all available leave, their pay shall be reduced monthly if their time is short of schedule and no leave is available.

Exempt employee's pay will be reduced in whole-day or half-day increments for absences that occur on a scheduled work day after all paid leave benefits have been exhausted. Nonexempt employees will be docked on the basis of their regular daily wage rate. For docking purposes, annual salaries of exempt employees will be converted to daily increments on the basis of all compensable time during the salary period.

For pre-approved medical leave, absence docks may be scheduled over a period ranging from one to six months following the absence(s). For all other absences, the total dock will be scheduled in the month immediately following the absence(s). Regardless of the docking schedule, when an employee leaves employment with the District for any reason, the total dock balance will be deducted from the final paycheck.

Working While on Leave

While on any type of leave status with the District, the employee may not perform work in any capacity; unless it is part of a return-to-work or transitional duty assignment with the District. Exceptions may be granted by the Superintendent or designee. Working during a leave of absence shall be considered a violation of the District's leave policy and may be grounds for immediate termination of at-will employees or recommendation of termination for contract employees.

Frequent or Prolonged Absence

All absences in excess equivalent to eight work days annually shall be investigated by the immediate supervisor who shall take appropriate action as required by District guidelines. The supervisor shall report all absences in excess of eight days in a school year to the Superintendent or designee, who shall take whatever action is deemed necessary. Employees are required to notify their supervisor, in advance, of absences and by the specific procedures of notification outlined by their supervisor. Failure to have absences pre-approved may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

An employee working in a position that requires use of the District's automated online and/or telephonic absence reporting system must use the system to report all absences if so required.

An employee absent more than five consecutive workdays because of personal illness shall submit a medical certification of illness and of his or her fitness to return to work. An employee absent more than three consecutive workdays because of illness in the immediate family shall present medical certification of the family member's illness.

Sanctions for Abuse

Paid leave is provided for the specific purpose stipulated in this policy. It is not intended to be used as a vacation, or for mere convenience. Except for discretionary state personal leave, documentation may be required for any absence at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee. Abuse of the employee leave program is a violation of District policy and may result in disciplinary action up to and including loss of pay, suspension, demotion, or termination of employment, in accordance with appropriate District policies. [See [DCD](#) and [DF](#) series]

Failure to call in and follow proper procedures in requesting and/or notifying supervisors of an absence from work may result in the determination of job abandonment and may be a terminating offense.

Termination of Employment and Leave

Upon termination of employment, an employee is paid through their last physical day to work. An employee may not resign effective the day after a holiday and receive the holiday pay for the holiday. Employees who terminate employment and have unused vacation will be paid for earned vacation on their final paycheck, not to exceed 30 days. Employees who terminate employment and have used more vacation and/or leave than they have earned will be docked for the unearned leave that was taken at their daily rate of pay.

Employee Relations and Communications

Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the District. Employees are recognized at Board meetings, District communications and through special events and activities. The District honors employees for their dedicated years of service as well as recognizing Teacher of the Year awards.

District Communications

Throughout the school year, the Public Relations office publishes newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements. They include the following:

- Web-site: <http://www.txkisd.net>
- Campus Newsletters
- District Calendar
- Board Briefs
- Face Book
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Mobile App
- Tiger 411
- Press Releases
- All employee e-mail communication
- Student Flyers
- Parent/Guardian Communications

Community Relations

Texarkana ISD is committed to working with the Texarkana community to enhance the education of our students. The Partners in Education (PIE) program is designed to enhance educational experiences of students by developing cooperative relationships among businesses, parents, community members and the school District.

The PIE program consists of donations from businesses and individuals as well as volunteers working daily in our schools. It is essential that all TISD employees welcome the volunteers, utilize their skills and value their service to our students. Employees should follow all procedures that pertain to volunteers for the safety and security of our students. Jo Ann Rice, Associate Superintendent, can be reached at 903-794-3651 ext. 1011 to answer any questions about the program.

Complaints and Grievances

(Policy [DBGA](#))

In an effort to hear and resolve employee complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the Board has adopted an orderly grievance process. Employees are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time.

The formal grievance process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative grievance procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the Board of Trustees. For more information or for grievance forms, please contact the Human Resources department at 903-794-3651, ext. 1012. For ease of reference, the District's policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints is reprinted in the Appendix of this handbook. The policy manual may also be accessed online at <http://www.txkisd.net>.

Employee Conduct and Welfare

Standards of Conduct

(Policy [DH](#))

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the District and to be courteous to students, one another, and the public. Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Employees are expected to conduct themselves honestly and with a high degree of integrity to encourage a positive and productive work environment.
- Recognize and respect the rights of student, parents, other employees and members of the community.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and co-workers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor as early as possible (preferably in advance) in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness and failure to follow procedures for reporting any absence may be cause for disciplinary action.
- Know and comply with department and District procedures and policies.
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism through appropriate channels.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
- Use District time, funds, and property for authorized District business and activities only.
- Use access to District resources, curriculum, materials, assessments, lesson plans and other District materials and resources for job related purposes only and not for personal use and/or gain.
- Treat staff members and co-workers with respect, use appropriate language and model courteous behavior for students.
- Maintain a focus on customer service when working with staff members, parents, students, and members of the community.
- Model for students, staff, and parents the characteristics of the District's character education program (Tiger Traits): patience, kindness, honesty, perseverance, responsibility, and respect.

All District employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, District policy, and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a district investigation may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day after the Superintendent knew of the incident. See *Reports to the Texas Education Agency* for additional information. The *Educators' Code of Ethics*, adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification, which all District employees must adhere to, is reprinted below.

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics Purpose and Scope

Purpose and Scope

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification. (19 TAC 247.1(b))

Enforceable Standards

I. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

Standard 1.1 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school District, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process..

Standard 1.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.3 The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

Standard 1.4 The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.5 The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 1.6 The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.7 The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other applicable state and federal laws.

Standard 1.8 The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

Standard 1.9 The educator shall not make threats of violence against school District employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.

Standard 1.10 The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.

Standard 1.11 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.

Standard 1.12 The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.

Standard 1.13 The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

Standard 2.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 2.2 The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

Standard 2.3 The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

Standard 2.4 The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Standard 2.5 The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 2.6 The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

Standard 2.7 The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

Standard 2.8 The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

3. Ethical Conduct toward Students

Standard 3.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 3.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

Standard 3.3 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

Standard 3.4 The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status or sexual orientation.

Standard 3.5 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

Standard 3.6 The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

Standard 3.7 The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

Standard 3.8 The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

Standard 3.9 The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

- (i) The nature, purpose, timing, and amount of communication,
- (ii) The subject matter of communication,
- (iii) Whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication,
- (iv) Whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship,
- (v) Whether the communication was sexually explicit, and
- (vi) Whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

(Policies [DH](#), [DIA](#))

Employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other employees, unpaid interns, student teachers, or students. While acting in the course of their employment, employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment of other persons, including Board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents. A substantiated charge of harassment will result in disciplinary action.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated or retaliated against or harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the campus principal, supervisor or other appropriate District official. If the campus principal, supervisor, or District official is the subject of a complaint, the complaint should be made directly to the Superintendent. A complaint against the Superintendent may be made directly to the Board of Trustees.

Any district employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, or believes that another employee has experienced such prohibited conduct, should immediately report the alleged acts. The employee may report the alleged acts to his or her supervisor, the campus principal, the Title IX coordinator, or the superintendent. The district's Title IX coordinator's name and contact information is listed in the Equal Employment Opportunity section of this handbook.

Employees who believe that they have been subject to harassment are encouraged to come forward with complaints and should inform their principal, supervisor, or Autumn Thomas, Deputy Superintendent, at (903) 794-3651 ext. 1012. Employees must follow the procedures outlined in this handbook for filing a complaint except when it would require presenting a complaint to the alleged harasser. (See "Complaints and Grievances.")

The District's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment and retaliation is located in the Appendix of this handbook and on the District Web site at <https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/206?filter=DIA>.

Harassment of Students

(Policies [DH](#), [DHB](#), [FFG](#), [FFH](#), [FFI](#))

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and District employees are prohibited.

Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate District official. Any district employee who suspects or receives direct or indirect notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, of a student shall immediately notify the district's Title IX coordinator, the ADA/Section 504 coordinator, or superintendent and take any other steps required by district policy.

All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect occurred must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse* and *Bullying* sections for additional information.

District policy defines "Solicitation of a romantic relationship" as deliberate or repeated acts that can be reasonably interpreted as soliciting a relationship characterized by an ardent emotional attachment or pattern of exclusivity. Acts that constitute the solicitation of a romantic relationship include:

1. Behavior, gestures, expressions, communications, or a pattern of communication with a student that is unrelated to the educator's job duties and that may reasonably be interpreted as encouraging the student to form an ardent or exclusive emotional attachment to the educator, including statements of love, affection, or attraction. When evaluating whether communications constitute the solicitation of a romantic relationship, the following may be considered:
 - a. The nature of the communications;
 - b. The timing of the communications;
 - c. The extent of the communications;
 - d. Whether the communications were made openly or secretly;
 - e. The extent to which the educator attempted to conceal the communications;
 - f. If the educator claims to be counseling a student, TEA staff may consider whether the educator's job duties included counseling, whether the educator reported the subject of the counseling to the student's guardians or to the appropriate school personnel, or, in the case of alleged abuse or neglect, whether the educator reported the abuse or neglect to the appropriate law enforcement agencies; and
 - g. Any other communications tending to show that the educator solicited a romantic relationship with a student.
 2. Making inappropriate comments about a student's body.
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3. Making sexually demeaning comments to a student.
4. Making comments about a student's potential sexual performance.
5. Requesting details of a student's sexual history.
6. Requesting a date.
7. Engaging in conversations regarding the sexual problems, preferences, or fantasies of either party.
8. Inappropriate hugging, kissing, or excessive touching.
9. Suggestions that a romantic relationship is desired after the student graduates, including post-graduation plans for dating or marriage.
10. Any other acts tending to show that the educator solicited a romantic relationship with the student, including providing the student with drugs or alcohol.

The District's policy that includes procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is located in the Appendix of this handbook and on the District Web site at <http://www.txkisd.net>.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

(Policies [DG](#), [GRA](#))

All employees with reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code 261.001, are required by state law to make a report to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services (CPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering the facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Alleged abuse or neglect involving a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child (including a teacher) must be reported to CPS.

Employee are also required to make a report if they have reasonable cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or person with a disability.

Reports to CPS can be made online at <https://www.txa-busehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx> or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the District is prohibited from taking an adverse employment action against a certified or licensed professional who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse.

An employee's failure to make the required report may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agency.

Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. In addition, employees must cooperate with child abuse and neglect investigators. Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report to the appropriate state agency. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer's request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children

The District has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed through the campus counselor. As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

Employees are required to follow the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

Reporting Crime

(Policy [DG](#))

The Texas Whistleblower Act protects District employees who make good faith reports of violations of law by the District to an appropriate law enforcement authority. The District is prohibited from suspending, terminating the employment of, or taking other adverse personnel action against, an employee who makes a report under the Act. State law also provides employees with the right to report a crime witnessed at the school to any peace officer with authority to investigate the crime.

Scope and Sequence

(Policy [DG](#))

If a teacher determines that students need more or less time in a specific area to demonstrate proficiency in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for that subject and grade level, the district will not penalize the teacher for not following the district's scope and sequence.

The district may take appropriate action if a teacher does not follow the district's scope and sequence based on documented evidence of a deficiency in classroom instruction. This documentation can be obtained through observation or substantiated and documented third-party information.

Technology Resources

(Policy [CQ](#))

The technology resources at Texarkana Independent School District support the educational, instructional, and administrative activities of the District. These technologies, when properly used, promote educational excellence in the District by facilitating collaboration, innovation, and communication with the support and supervision of parents, teachers, and support staff. The use of Texarkana ISD technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and should be treated as such.

Texarkana ISD believes that the value of providing information, interaction, and resource capabilities far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the District. Texarkana ISD complies with Federal regulations regarding Internet filtering in order to limit user access to inappropriate content. Proper behavior, as it relates to the use of computers, is no different than proper behavior in all other aspects of Texarkana ISD activities. This document is intended to clarify those expectations as they apply to computer and network usage and is consistent with District policy as well as guidelines at the local, state, and national levels. Any user who does not comply with policies and procedures may face appropriate disciplinary actions. Users should not have any expectation of privacy when using District technology resources.

SCOPE

This policy applies to anyone who uses Texarkana Independent School District technology resources. Technology resources include all District owned, licensed, or managed hardware and software as well as the use of the District network via a physical or wireless connection, regardless of the ownership of the computer or device connected to the network.

DEFINITIONS

The District's computer systems and networks include but are not limited to the following:

- Computer hardware and peripherals
- Servers
- Email
- Databases
- Software including operating system software and application software
- Externally accessed data including the Internet
- Network Storage
- Digitized information including stored tests, data files, email, digital images, and video and audio files
- District provided Internet access
- District provided public Wi-Fi
- New technologies as they become available

POLICY

Technology Acceptable Use

The District's technology resources will be used for learning, teaching, and administrative purposes consistent with the District's mission and goals.

Improper Use Includes:

- Submitting, publishing or displaying any defamatory, cyberbullying, inaccurate, racially offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually-oriented, or threatening materials or messages either public or private;
 - Attempting to or physically damaging equipment, materials or data;
 - Attempting to or sending anonymous messages of any kind, except as expressly allowed by the District's Elevate system;
 - Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages;
 - Using District resources for personal and commercial use;
 - Using the network to access inappropriate material;
 - Knowingly placing a computer virus on a computer or the network;
 - Opening email messages from unknown senders, loading data from unprotected computers, and any other risky action that may introduce viruses to the system;
 - Accessing technology resources, files, and documents of another user without authorization;
 - Attempting to or using proxy servers or otherwise bypassing security to gain access to the Internet or network resources;
 - Posting personal information about others without proper authorization;
 - Attempting to "hack" into technology resources;
 - Storing non-work related information (i.e. programs,.exe files, non-work related videos) on the District's storage systems;
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- Attempts to degrade or disrupt resource performance including but not limited to denial of service attacks;
- Any interference with the work of others, with or without malicious intent;
- Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic messages or data;
- Violation of copyright laws; Installing software without proper approval;
- Installing or setting up any device that would alter the network topology including wireless access points, routers, hubs, or switches;
- Inappropriate desktop backgrounds and screensavers;
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to third party networks or systems through the use of District resources;
- Giving your Password or Account Access to anyone - including your own family;
- Setting up a Wi-Fi Hotspot in order to circumvent district wireless settings to bypass the district internet filtering.

Network Access

Access to the District's network systems will be governed as follows:

- Your user account is your own. Do not share your username or password, even with other staff or students.
- You are required to keep your password confidential. It is important to remember that your password allows access to multiple systems, and many of those systems contain FERPA protected information.
- Make sure not to store any passwords in easily accessed locations.
- Do not allow another person to use your account to access Texarkana ISD wireless networks or to log into desktops.
- Any system user identified as a security risk or having violated the Technology Acceptable Use Policy may have their access privileges revoked to the District's system. Other consequences may also be administered.
- You are responsible for all actions taken by your user account.
- The system may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any other activity prohibited by District guidelines.
- For information on accessing the Texarkana ISD wireless network consult the: [Texarkana ISD - Wireless Network Reference](#)

Suspension or Termination of a Network User Account

The District may suspend or terminate a user's access to the District's system upon suspected violation of District policy and/or administrative regulations regarding acceptable use. A user's account will always be disabled once they leave the District's employment.

Data Security

As part of your duties, you may have access to confidential information. Caution must be taken to ensure this data is not exposed to those without a need to know. A data file containing confidential information that is released can damage the financial or professional futures of others, thus this information must be handled appropriately.

- Limit data exports to only the necessary information on the required people.
- Do not leave data files or computer equipment in an unsecured location such as an unattended automobile.
- Employees are required to ensure that all sensitive/confidential information in hardcopy or electronic form is secure in their work area at the end of the day and when they are expected to be gone from their office. This information should be kept in a locked drawer when the desk is unoccupied.
- Printouts containing confidential information should be immediately removed from the printer. Upon disposal, confidential information should be shredded using District shredders.
- Whiteboards, etc. containing sensitive information should be erased after use.
- Lock up portable computing devices including laptops, external drives, and flash drives.
- Access to confidential information should be given on an as-needed basis. If you are able to access confidential information that you do not need, you are required to report it to the manager of that data system.
- Be very cautious in transporting data files. Data transported on flash drives or external drives can be lost easily.
- Cloud-based storage systems like Google Drive are susceptible to leaks especially if users do not correctly configure sharing permissions. Staff should keep in mind what data should be kept confidential when sharing any files or folders with contacts outside the District.
- Confidential information sent via Gmail should always have confidential mode enabled. This feature should be used for all confidential email, including internal District communication.
- Data files containing confidential information that are leaving the District via email or on media should be encrypted (contact the Technology Department for assistance).

Electronic Mail

Email is the primary form of communication in Texarkana ISD. The following guidelines must be understood and adopted in your daily operations.

Electronic mail is a privilege, not a right. User responsibilities and consequences for policy violations apply to email as well as other communication devices (i.e., desk phone, cell phone, two-way radio, etc.).

Public Information Act. The software and hardware that provides us email capabilities has been publicly funded. For that reason, it should not be considered a private, personal form of communication. The contents of any email communications are governed by this Acceptable Use Policy and subject to the Public Information Act. The District must comply with any legal requests for access to email contents.

No Blanket emails. District-wide emails must have prior authorization from a department Chief or designee. The District has established distribution lists to ensure emails are sent only to intended personnel. Select "group" recipients appropriately. The District email system should not be used for mass mailings except when approved by a Chief and for official District business.

Misaddressed emails. Incoming email that is misaddressed will remain “undeliverable”. It is your responsibility to ensure you give out your correct email address.

Requests for Information. Independent verification is required before responding to requests for personal information on students or staff members. All information requests should be directed to the District’s Public Information Officer.

Release of Student Records. No request for student grades, discipline, attendance or related information can be communicated via email unless a signed Release of Student Records is on file on the campus.

Personal emails. Personal email should not impede the conduct of District business; only incidental amounts of employee time (time periods comparable to reasonable coffee breaks during the day) should be used to attend to personal matters. Employee time may be restricted by a supervisor or campus administrator. **District E-Mail accounts should NEVER be used for personal email. District accounts can be used for subscriptions to websites or blogs as long as they are for educational purposes only.**

Chain Letters. Since email access is provided for District related use, please do not forward messages that have no educational or professional value. An example would be any number of messages that show a cute text pattern or follow a “chain letter” concept. These messages should be deleted.

Attachments to email messages should include only data files. At no time should program files (typically labeled “.exe”) be attached due to software licensing requirements. In addition, there exists the real possibility that any program files received as attachments over the internet may include viruses or other very destructive capabilities once they’re “launched” or started. In addition to .exe files, some common types of file extensions that might indicate a file is dangerous include .com, .pif, .bat, and .scr. If you receive an attachment like this, delete the email message immediately without saving or looking at the attachment. If you think you may have opened a suspicious attachment, report the incident to the Technology Department immediately.

Avoid phishing scams. Phishing email will typically direct the user to visit a website where they are asked to update personal information, such as a password, credit card, social security, or bank account numbers, that the legitimate organization already has.

Listservs/Blogs. Subscriptions to an Internet listserv should be limited to information related to your profession.

Records Retention. Each employee shall comply with the District’s requirements for records retention and destruction to the extent those requirements apply to electronic media. [See Board Policy CPC (Local)]

Automatic forwarding of emails to a third-party email system is prohibited. Individual messages which are forwarded must not contain Texarkana ISD confidential information.

No official business using third-party email. Users are prohibited from using third party email and storage servers to conduct Texarkana ISD business. Such communications and transactions should be conducted through proper channels using Texarkana ISD approved methods. Personal email accounts used to conduct District business may be subject to Public Information Requests.

No expectation of privacy. Users should have no expectation of privacy in anything they store, send, or receive on the District’s email system. Messages may be monitored without prior notice.

Email addresses are assigned at the discretion of the Technology Department based on a user’s legal name. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to change your email address. Technology can assign a new address at its discretion.

Local Computer Hard Drives and Data Storage

Some computers may allow access to the local hard drive for storing files. This access does not mean that personal software should be installed on District computers. Only pre-approved software should be installed and only by technology staff.

How and Where to store files:

Texarkana ISD directs all staff to use their District assigned Google Drive for storing all files. These Google Drives have unlimited storage and are fully protected against hardware failure and accidents. If Google Drive is unavailable files can be saved to My Documents (also known as the H: drive), the desktop of the local computer, or a USB flash drive. It is important to remember that anything saved locally to a computer or flash drive is not protected in the event of physical damage or against encryption by computer malware. Google Drive should be the primary storage location for your files, and other locations should be treated as secondary or temporary.

The Texarkana ISD IT Department also reserves the right to reimage District computers when upgrading or in cases of malware infection at a moment's notice. This would result in the complete loss of any files stored on a computer's local hard drive. You are personally responsible for making backups of any files that are stored on your local computer's hard drive.

Hardware Purchasing

The Technology Department must authorize all hardware purchases. The authorization process includes testing of hardware for compatibility and functionality.

- All hardware must be purchased through and shipped to the Technology Department with documentation listing campus name and contact. (Please review the [Texarkana ISD Approved Hardware List](#) prior to placing an order.)
- Campus computer systems may not be modified, upgraded, or replaced with donated equipment without the prior approval of the Director of Information Technology.
- To maintain accurate physical inventory desktop computer systems should not be moved from one campus to another without prior approval of the Technology Department.

Software Purchasing

Step 1: Classroom Instructional Software Approval - All requests for approval to purchase an instructional software must be reviewed by the TISD Instructional Technology Specialists (jennifer.beck@txkisd.net and/or kim.icenhower@txkisd.net)

Step 2: Software Approval for System Alignment - Once a software request has been approved by the Instructional Technology Specialists, the technology department must be review to ensure that the required support and installation process aligns with the district network.

Our goal is to promote the use of appropriate and approved software whenever possible. These guidelines will ensure that the required support and installation process is in place before funds are expended.

To ensure that software will not affect the current network configuration adversely, the following guidelines apply when you want to purchase software.

- Initial approval must be obtained from the TISD Instructional Technology Specialists office at Instructional Services.
 - All software purchases must be purchased through and delivered to the Technology Department for installation.
 - Software will be installed only when there is documentation showing that the software purchase has gone through the process referenced above and that proper licensing has been purchased.
 - Only Technology staff or an authorized vendor shall install computer software on District computers.
 - If a software program is determined to be unsuitable for the network or current environment it should not be purchased.
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Electronic Communication with Students, Staff, and Parents/Guardians

The following definitions apply for the use of electronic communication with students:

Electronic communications mean any communication facilitated by the use of any electronic device, including a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. The term includes e-mail, text messages, instant messages, and any communication made through an Internet website, including any social media website or any social networking website.

Communicate means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at a student (e.g., a posting on the employee's personal social network page or blog) is not a communication; however, the employee may be subject to District regulations on personal electronic communications. See Personal Internet Postings/Social Media Sites above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not a communication.

Certified or licensed employee in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, licensed therapists, and athletic trainers.

Participation in Social Media Sites

The Internet, along with next-generation communication tools, has expanded the way in which employees can communicate internally and externally. While this creates new opportunities for communication and collaboration, it also creates new responsibilities for District employees. Social media sites include all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and networking websites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn). Social media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications. All of these activities are referred to as "Social Media Sites" in this Acceptable Use Policy. Employees are encouraged to maintain separation between personal and professional postings for Social Media Sites. Conduct on social media sites is governed by [Board Policy DH \(Local\)](#).

Professional Internet Postings/Social Media Sites

Professional Internet Postings/Social Media Sites that are school-based should be designed to address reasonable instructional, educational, or extra-curricular program matters. Employees are required to obtain approval and guidance from the District's Public Relations department before setting up a professional social media presence. The District reserves the right to remove, disable, and provide feedback regarding professional social media sites that do not adhere to District policy or standards of operation. The following guidelines will apply for any employee who uses social media for professional purposes:

- Professional sites should include language identifying the sites as professional social media sites of the District or campus.
 - Employees should exercise caution, sound judgment, and common sense when using professional social media sites. The District's Public Relation department will regularly monitor professional social media sites to protect the school community.
 - When establishing professional social media sites, supervisors and employees should consider the intended audience for the site and consider the level of privacy assigned to the site, specifically, whether the site should be a private network or a public network.
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- The employee is subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators when communicating regarding professional, work-related matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off district/campus property. These restrictions include:
 - Confidentiality of student records [see Board Policy FL ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#))].
 - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law ([see Board Policy DH Exhibit](#)).
 - Confidentiality of District records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses ([see Board Policy GBA](#)).
 - Copyright Laws [see Board Policy CY ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#))].
 - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the District ([see Board Policy DH Exhibit](#)).

Personal Internet Postings/Social Media Sites

As role models for the District's students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as District employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of social media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's personal use of social media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social media site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for Web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content. The following guidelines will apply for any employee who uses social media for personal purposes:

- The employee's use of social media for personal purposes should impose no tangible cost on the District; should not unduly burden the District's technology resources; and should have no adverse effect on an employee's job performance or on a student's academic performance.
 - If an internet posting makes it clear that the author works for the District, it should include a simple and visible disclaimer such as, "these are my personal views and not those of the District." When posting your point of view, you should neither claim nor imply you are speaking on the District's behalf.
 - The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators when communicating regarding professional, work-related matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off district/campus property. These restrictions include:
 - Confidentiality of student records [see Board Policy FL ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#))].
 - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law ([see Board Policy DH Exhibit](#)).
 - Confidentiality of District records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses ([see Board Policy GBA](#)).
 - Copyright Laws [see Board Policy CY ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#))].
 - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the District ([see Board Policy DH Exhibit](#)).
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- The employee should not “tag” photos of other District employees, volunteers, contractors, or vendors without the prior permission of the individuals being tagged.
- The employee shall not use the District’s logo or other copyrighted material of the District without consent of the District’s Public Relations department.
- Photos or videos of students should not be posted on an employee’s personal Social Media pages.

Use of Electronic Media for Communication with Students and Parents/Guardians

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may communicate through electronic media with students and parents/guardians who are currently enrolled in the District about matters within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities. The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students and parents/guardians using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the District without supervisor approval. Currently, the District recommended list of electronic communications include:

- TEAMS
- Gmail
- Google Meet
- Google Chat
- Google Classroom
- Remind

An employee who communicates electronically with students shall observe the following:

- Text messaging from employee cell phones to students is prohibited unless school-related and approved by their supervisor. A teacher, trainer, or other employees who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, with approval from their supervisor. Any text messaging for instructional purposes such as classroom student response systems must be approved by the supervisor prior to use in the classroom. With special approval from their supervisor, a teacher or other employee may use text messaging and then only to communicate with students over which the employee has responsibility regarding school-related information. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:
 - The employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message; or
 - The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
 - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the designated District email address and respective supervisor.
 - The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to classwork, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity.) Employees should exercise caution, sound judgment, and common sense in respect to the appropriate times for communication.
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- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must utilize a District-approved social network page for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration to access the employee's page if electronically communicating with a student. Any page used to communicate with students must be approved by the Superintendent or Designee.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents and maybe monitored at the District's discretion.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics, including:
 - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. *[see Board Policies CPC ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#)) and FL ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#))].*
 - Copyright law *[see Policy CY ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#))].*
 - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. *[see Policy DH ([Legal](#)), ([Local](#)), ([Exhibit](#))].*
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employees shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- All staff is required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the District's record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his/her supervisor, in writing, within one business day if a student engages in improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

All other employees (outside the scope of professional responsibilities) are prohibited from communicating with students who are enrolled in the District through social media sites. An employee is not subject to these provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a family or existing social relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgment by the parent that:

- The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol;
 - The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school;
 - The parent understands that the employee's communications with the student are exempt from District regulation; and
 - The parent is solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the employee and the student.
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Inappropriate Communication with Students

Employees shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social media communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate to include, but are not limited to:

- The nature, purpose, timing, and amount of communication;
- The subject matter of the communication;
- Whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
- Whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- Whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- Whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

EXCEPTIONS

Any requests for exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing and will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Exceptions shall be permitted only after written approval from the Director of Information Technology or responsible Information Technology designee. The list of exceptions shall be reviewed annually and canceled as required.

SANCTIONS

Known violations of the policy will be addressed by disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to the individual.

All known and/or suspected violations must be reported to the applicable department head, who will report, as appropriate, to the applicable department. All such allegations of misuse will be investigated by the appropriate District administrative office with the assistance of Information Technology and the Office of Human Resources.

Penalties may include:

- Suspension or termination of access to a computer and/or network resources;
 - Suspension or termination of employment, to the extent authorized by other Texarkana ISD published policies and procedures;
 - Suspension or termination of contract, computer, and/or network services; or
 - Prosecution to the full extent of the law.
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DISCLAIMER

The District's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitation, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein. The District does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, or that defects will be corrected. Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third-party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the District. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's Technology Resources.

The District will, at its own discretion, monitor any technology resource activity without further notice to the end-user.

Headings are for convenience of reference only and shall not be used in the interpretation of this document

TERM

This policy is binding for the duration of an employee's employment with the Texarkana Independent School District and must be reviewed and signed annually at the start of each school year.

Public Information on Private Devices

(Policy [DH](#))

Employees should not maintain district information on privately owned devices. Any district information must be forwarded or transferred to the district to be preserved. The district will take reasonable efforts to obtain public information in compliance with the Public Information Act. Reasonable efforts may include:

- Verbal or written directive
- Remote access to district-owned devices and services

Criminal History Background Checks

(Policy [DBAA](#))

Employees may be subject to a review of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted on certain employees and entered into the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Clearinghouse. This database provides the District and SBEC with access to an employee's current national criminal history and updates to the employee's subsequent criminal history.

Employee Arrests and Convictions

(Policy [DH](#))

An employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony, and any of the other offenses listed as follows:

- Crimes involving school property or funds
 - Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator
 - Crimes that occur wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity
 - Crimes involving moral turpitude
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Moral turpitude includes the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit
- Theft
- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor
- Crimes involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance
- Felonies involving driving while intoxicated (DWI)
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code

Failure to report the offenses listed within the time line may result in disciplinary action or termination. If an educator is arrested or criminally charged, the Superintendent is also required to report the educator's criminal history to the Division of Investigations at Texas Education Agency.

Alcohol and Drug - Abuse Prevention

(Policy [DH](#))

Texarkana ISD is committed to maintaining an alcohol and drug free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act, during working hours may be dismissed. The District's policy regarding employee drug use can be located on the District web-site at <http://www.txkisd.net> and in the Appendix of this handbook under Policy DH (Local).

Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use

(Policies [DH](#), [FNCD](#), [GKA](#))

State law prohibits smoking using tobacco products or e-cigarettes on all District owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off school property. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of District owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco products or e-cigarettes, while inside the vehicle.

"E-Cigarette" means any oral device that provides a vapor of liquid nicotine, lobelia, and/or other substance, and the use or inhalation of which simulates smoking. The term shall include any such devices, whether they are manufactured, distributed, marketed or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, or under any other product name or descriptor. Notices stating that smoking is prohibited by law and punishable by a fine are displayed in prominent places in school buildings.

Fraud and Financial Impropriety

(Policy [CAA](#))

All employees should act with integrity and diligence in duties involving the District's financial resources. The District prohibits fraud and financial impropriety, as defined below. Fraud and financial impropriety includes the following:

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the District
 - Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document
 - Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other District assets, including employee time
 - Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of District financial transactions
 - Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of District information or activities
 - Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties
 - Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the District
 - Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the District, except as otherwise permitted by law or District policy
 - Inappropriately destroying, removing, or inappropriately using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
 - Failing to provide financial records required by state or local entities
 - Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by policy
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- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the District
- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards.

Cash Handling Procedures

If employees collect cash for a school activity or requirement, it should be kept in a secured locked location at all times. The money should never left on a desk, be stored in a vehicle or taken home for safekeeping. Once the money is in the employee's possession, the employee is responsible for the money. When collected, the money should be given to the designated campus or departmental personnel and a receipt should be received for the amount of cash provided. Any misappropriation of student or District funds, could be grounds for disciplinary action.

Conflict of Interest

(Policies [CB](#), [DBD](#))

Employees are required to disclose in writing to the District any situation that creates a potential conflict of interest with proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities or creates a potential conflict of interest with the best interests of the District. This includes the following:

- A personal financial interest
- A business interest
- Any other obligation or relationship
- Non-school employment

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

Gifts and Favors

(Policy [DBD](#))

Employees may not accept gifts or favors that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor, or service by an administrator or teacher that might reasonably tend to influence the selection of textbooks, electronic textbooks, instructional materials or technological equipment may result in prosecution of a Class B misdemeanor offense. This does not include staff development, teacher training, or instructional materials, such as maps or worksheets, that convey information to students or contribute to the learning process.

Copyrighted Materials

(Policy [CY](#))

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Electronic media, including motion pictures and other audiovisual works, are to be used in the classroom for instructional purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Charitable Contributions

(Policy [DG](#))

The Board or any employee may not directly or indirectly require or coerce an employee to make a contribution to a charitable organization or in response to a fund-raiser. Employees cannot be required to attend a meeting called for the purpose of soliciting charitable contributions. In addition, the Board or any employee may not directly or indirectly require or coerce an employee to refrain from making a contribution to a charitable organization or in response to a fundraiser or attending a meeting called for the purpose of soliciting charitable contributions.

Associations and Political Activities

(Policy [DGA](#))

The District will not directly or indirectly discourage employees from participating in political affairs or require any employee to join any group, club, committee, organization, or association. Employees may join or refuse to join any professional association or organization. An individual's employment will not be affected by membership or a decision not to be a member of any employee organization that exists for the purpose of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work. Use of District resources, including work time, for political activities is prohibited.

The district encourages personal participation in the political process, including voting. Employees who need to be absent from work to vote during the early voting period or on Election Day must communicate with their immediate supervisor prior to the absence.

Safety

(Policy [CK series](#))

The District has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. See Emergencies for additional information.

To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students, and to protect and conserve District equipment, employees must comply with the following requirement:

- Observe all safety rules
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization

While driving on district business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on district business are prohibited from texting and using other electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgment on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the office of Risk Management at 903-792-7991.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons

(Policies [DH](#), [FNCG](#), [GKA](#))

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage or other district provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the District's weapons policy should report it to their supervisors or call TISD Police at 903-792-4658 immediately.

Visitors in the Workplace

(Policy [GKC](#))

All visitors are expected to enter any District facility through the main entrance and sign in or report to the building's main office. Authorized visitors will receive a visitor's badge and be given directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the District premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge.

Asbestos Management Plan

(Policy [CKA](#))

The District is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for each piece of District property. A copy of the District's management plan is kept in the central administration office. The plan is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Pest Control Treatment

(Policies [CLB](#), [DI](#))

Employees are prohibited from applying any pesticide or herbicide without appropriate training and prior approval of the integrated pest management (IPM) coordinator. Any application of pesticide or herbicide must be done in a manner prescribed by law and the District's integrated pest management program.

Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a District building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located in an area of common access. In addition, individual employees may request in writing to be notified of pesticide applications. An employee who requests an individualized notice will be notified by telephone, written, or electronic means. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

Employee Identification Badges

Employee identification badges are to be worn by employees at all times while on any campus of Texarkana ISD to promote safety and improve employee relations. Employees should keep badges in safekeeping and report any lost or stolen badge to the campus principal or supervisor.

Employee badges are issued in the TISD Human Resources office at 4241 Summerhill Road.

Upon separation from employment with TISD, employee badges are to be returned to the employee's supervisor.

Employee Dress Code

Texarkana ISD recognizes that professional attire helps set the tone of an educational system. Our professional appearance helps reflect the finest traditions of the teaching profession by establishing a sense of trust and confidence within our community. Our professional appearance should be one that enhances our primary goal of student learning and achievement. Employees' attire should at all times be distinguishable from students' attire. Staff should at all times be aware of the example being set for students, parents and the public in general with particular emphasis on modesty, appropriateness, and neatness of dress. Employees are expected to adhere to the dress code outlined in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct, as well as the following guidelines.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:

Employees of the District shall:

1. Maintain a level of personal hygiene necessary to:
 - a. Ensure an appropriate educational environment and to refrain from any mode of dress which is not exemplary for students.
 - b. Ensure a healthy school or work environment.
2. Adhere to administrative regulations related to appropriate dress/equipment for safety purposes.
3. Observe a standard of grooming and appearance consistent with the level of formality of the school or work situation.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

The minimum standards of professional appearance for employees shall be as follows:

4. During the work day and anytime employees attend work-related activities, employees shall exhibit a professional appearance. Examples of clothing fostering a professional appearance include: collared shirts,
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dress slacks, dress coordinates, suits, dresses, ties and sports coats. Exceptions would include those positions which have specified separate dress expectations, such as Food Service, Transportation, and Maintenance.

- a. Body alteration or modification is prohibited if it is intentional and results in a visible, physical effect that detracts from a professional image. Tattoos and brands anywhere on the body that are obscene, advocate sexual, racial, ethnic or religious discrimination or that are of a nature that tends to bring discredit to the District are prohibited. Prohibited alterations, modifications, tattoos or brands must be covered with articles of clothing, or other appropriate material if the tattoo is small, so they are not visible to students or other employees.
 - b. Employees are prohibited from attaching, affixing or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through any exposed body part except for earrings worn only on the ear(s).
5. Some work sites and schools have certain designated days throughout the year commonly referred to as "Casual Friday" or "Spirit Day". Clothing considered acceptable for these designated days includes the following: jeans, wind suits, non-collared shirts with the District/school logo or school colors, high school or college spirit wear, athletic shoes, other items deemed appropriate by the local school administration. Clothing considered acceptable for those locations which recognize "Spirit Day" include those items which are appropriate for "Casual Friday" if that dress supports the theme of the specific spirit day as deemed appropriate by the local school administration.
 6. Some school-sponsored activities, such as laboratory experiences and field trips, necessitate dress other than that appropriate for a normal workday. Employees who have questions regarding acceptable dress for these activities should consult their supervisor or Human Resources.
 7. Some job assignments, such as working with students who have disabilities in the severe and profound range who lack the ability to care for themselves, require interactions with students that warrant dress different than that appropriate for a normal work assignment. Employees who have questions regarding acceptable dress resulting from their job assignment should consult their supervisor or Human Resources.
 8. The minimum standards of employees regarding dress and grooming will exceed those standards required of students in the Student Code of Conduct.

ENFORCEMENT OF THE STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE:

9. Schools:

The Principal shall be responsible for enforcing the standards of professional appearance based on his/her evaluation of the impact an individual's appearance has upon the school climate, educational process, or the school's image in the community. The Principal shall be the final judge as to the appropriateness of wearing apparel.

10. Work Sites Other Than Schools:

The work site supervisor shall be responsible for enforcing the standards of professional appearance based on his/her evaluation of the impact an individual's appearance has upon the site's climate, work process, or the site's image in the District and/or community. The supervisor shall be the final judge as to the appropriateness of wearing apparel.

CULTURALLY OR ETHNICALLY-BASED ATTIRE:

The District values the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of its employee base and demonstrates sensitivity to it by establishing as the District's goal that employees of all backgrounds feel welcome.

10. Supervisors and Principals are authorized to approve, on a case-by-case basis, exceptions to the code for employees who want to occasionally wear culturally or ethnically-based clothing. Exceptions must be requested and granted prior to the employee's wearing the clothing to their work site. If a Supervisor or Principal is approached by an employee requesting permission to wear cultural or ethnic-based clothing, he/she should observe the following guidelines:
 - a. Ask the employee to put his/her request in writing to you, specifying what he/she wants to
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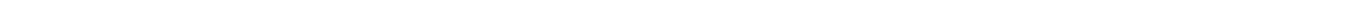
- wear, why and when he/she wants to wear it.
- b. If the request is appropriate, will not present a health or safety hazard and will maintain the professional image of the school or work site, it should be approved.
 - i. Approval should be documented in writing to the employee.
 - ii. A copy of the written approval should be retained in local/site files.
 - c. If the Supervisor/Principal believes the request should be denied:
 - i. The request and the Supervisor/Principal's rationale for the denial should be forwarded to the Executive Director of Human Resources.

UNCERTAINTY:

Employees who have specific questions about a garment's acceptability should consult their supervisor or Human Resources.

Cell Phone Use

If not being utilized for an educational purpose in an instructional activity, instructional personnel are directed to turn off all cellular phones during the instructional hours of the day and while in charge of supervising students at any time.



General Procedures

Emergency School Closing

The District may close schools for a full day or part of a day because of severe weather, epidemics, or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the District's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to release students early, or to cancel school, District officials will post a notice on the District Web site and notify the local radio and television stations. Notification will also go out to active employees through our electronic 411 calling system to notify staff members and parents of school closings.

Emergencies

(Policies [CKC](#), [CKD](#))

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to a medical emergency. Employees should locate evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas and be familiar with shelter in place, lockout and lockdown procedures. Emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with safety and evacuation procedures. Each campus is equipped with an automatic external defibrillator. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all District buildings. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use.

Purchasing Procedures

(Policy [CH](#))

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the Purchasing Department through the SKYWARD System. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the District can be made without a PO number. The District will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the District's business office. Contact the Purchasing Office at (903) 794-3651 for additional information on purchasing procedures.

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees should notify the Human Resources office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. Name changes will not be processed without proof of an updated Social Security Card presented in the Human Resources office. Forms to process a change in personal information can be accessed at www.txkisd.net under Departments – Human Resources – Forms, or by calling Human Resources at 903-794-3651, ext. 1012.

Personnel Records

(Policies [DBA](#), [GBA](#))

Most District records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. In most cases, an employee's personal email address is confidential and may not be released without the employee's permission.

Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

- Address
- Phone number, including personal cell phone number
- Emergency Contact Information
- Information that reveals whether they have family members

The choice to not allow public access to this information or change an existing choice may be made at any time. Employees may choose not to allow public access to or have the information included in a staff directory by

submitting a written request to the Human Resources office. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information may be released to the public until a request to withhold the information is submitted or another exception for release of information under by law applies. An employee is responsible for notifying the district if he or she is subject to any exception for disclosure of personal or confidential information.

Facility Use

(Policies [DGA](#), [GKD](#))

Employees who wish to use District facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. The TISD Purchasing/Special Events Department is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Facilities use applications are available on the District's Web site at <http://www.txkisd.net/facilities/>. Contact the Purchasing/Special Events Department at (903) 794-3651 extension 1025 to obtain additional information.

Termination of Employment

Resignations

(Policy [DFE, DHB](#))

Contract employees: Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received at least 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the superintendent or other persons designated by the board of trustees. Supervisors who have not been designated by the board to accept resignations shall instruct the employee to submit the resignation to the superintendent, or other person designated by board action.

Contract employees may not resign during the school year, after active duty has begun, without the consent of the Superintendent or the Board. Acceptance of a resignation after the deadline established by law is contingent on finding a suitable replacement. Resignation without the consent of the Board may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification.

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of an educator's resignation within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct for any of the acts listed in Reports to Texas Education Agency. The Superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee resigns and there is evidence to indicate that the employee has engaged in such misconduct.

Non-contract employees: Non-contract employees may resign their positions at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to their immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Department at least two weeks prior to the effective date. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so.

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of a noncertified employee's resignation or termination within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct of abuse of a student, or was involved in a romantic relationship with or solicited or engaged in sexual conduct with a student or minor. The superintendent will notify TEA within seven business days of receiving a report from a principal, or of knowing about an employee's resignation or termination following an alleged incident of misconduct described above.

Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

(Policy [DF](#) Series)

Employees on probationary, term, and continuing contracts may be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in District policies. Employees on probationary or term contracts can be nonrenewed at the end of the contract term. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay, or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The timelines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or non-renewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to an employee.

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of an educator's termination within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct for any of the acts listed in Reports to Texas Education Agency listed in this handbook. The superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee is terminated and there is evidence to indicate that the employee has engaged in such misconduct.

Advance notification requirements do not apply when a contract employee is dismissed for failing to obtain or maintain appropriate certification or when the employee's certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the DF policies that are provided to employees or on the TISD Web site at <http://www.txkisd.net>.

Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

(Policy [DCD](#))

Non-contract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the District to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights.

Non-contract employees who are dismissed have the right to a grievance hearing. To present a grievance, the employee must follow the District process outlined in Board Policy. (See *Complaints and Grievances* [DGBA Local](#))

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of a noncertified employee's resignation or termination within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct of abuse of a student, or was involved in a romantic relationship with or solicited or engaged in sexual conduct with a student or minor. The superintendent will notify TEA within seven business days of receiving a report from a principal, or of knowing about an employee's resignation or termination following an alleged incident of misconduct described above.

Discharge of Convicted Employees

(Policy [DF](#))

The district shall discharge any employee who has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for an offense requiring the registration as a sex offender or convicted of a felony under Title 5 Penal Code if the victim was a minor. If the offense is more than 30 years before the date the person's employment began or the person satisfied all terms of the court order entered on conviction the requirement to discharge does not apply.

Exit Interviews and Procedures

Exit interviews may be scheduled for all employees leaving the District. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at this time. Separating employees are asked to provide the District with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the District with feedback on their employment experience.

All District keys, books, property, including intellectual property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment. The final payroll check may not be distributed until all equipment and property is returned to the District.

Final Paycheck Procedures

The Human Resources and Payroll offices calculate all final paycheck amounts based upon actual hours and days worked prior to termination. For separation from employment mid-year, final paychecks will be issued on the next regular payroll following the last day of work. For ten or eleven month salaried employees working until the end of the year, paychecks will continue through the last scheduled pay date of the contract period.

After submitting a resignation letter, employees must continue to follow District absence policies until the last date of work, which includes no more than five (5) consecutive discretionary absences, unless Family Medical Leave is approved. Any leave taken, but not earned, will be deducted from the final paycheck. Leave balances on final paychecks will be calculated as follows:

- State leave – Balance is adjusted for days worked and documented on the employee's service record. These days remain in the state where earned and may transfer to other Districts, but are not payable to the employee.
 - Local leave – Balance is adjusted for days worked and documented on the employee's service record. This leave remains in the District where earned, does not transfer to other Districts and is payable upon retirement from TISD at the rate of \$50 per day for professional employees and \$30 per day for
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nonprofessional employees.

- Non-Duty leave– 222 day employees must work through June 30th to earn all non-duty leave possible for the year. The balance is payable to the employee at their daily rate based upon the last date of work.
- Vacation leave– 261 day employees with vacation balances will receive pay equal to their daily rate for unused earned vacation leave up to a maximum of the equivalent of 30 work days on their final check.

Reports to Texas Education Agency

(Policy [DE](#), [DHB](#), [DHC](#))

Certified Employees. The dismissal of a certified employee must be reported to the Division of Investigations at TEA whenever the termination is based on evidence that the employee was involved in any of the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other unlawful conduct with student or a minor
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual contact or a romantic relationship with a student or minor
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of District property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit for the purpose of promotion or additional compensation
- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on District property or at a school-sponsored event

The reporting requirements above are in addition to the superintendent's ongoing duty to notify TEA when a certified employee or an applicant for certification has a reported criminal history or engaged in conduct violating the assessment security procedures established under TEC 39.0301. "Reported criminal history" means any formal criminal justice system charges and dispositions including arrests, detentions, indictments, criminal information, convictions, deferred adjudications, and probations in any state or federal jurisdiction that is obtained by a means other than the Fingerprint-based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT).

Noncertified Employees. The voluntary or involuntary separation of a noncertified employee from the District must be reported to the Division of Investigations at TEA by superintendent if there is evidence the employee abused or otherwise committed an unlawful act with a student or minor, was involved in a romantic relationship with a student or minor, or solicited or engaged in sexual contact with a student or minor.

Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding

The District is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance to the court and the individual receiving the support (Texas Family Code 8.210, 158.211). Notice of the following must be sent to the court and support recipient:

- Termination of employment not later than the seventh day after the date of termination
 - Employee's last known address
 - Name and address of the employee's new employer, if known
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Student Issues

Equal Educational Opportunities

(Policies [FB](#), [FFH](#))

In an effort to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Texarkana Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination of students based on sex, including sexual harassment, should be directed to the District Title IX Coordinator: Autumn Thomas, Deputy Superintendent, at (903) 794-3651 ext. 1010. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Jamie Friday, the District ADA/Section 504 coordinator for students at (903) 793-7561 ext. 1322. All other questions or concerns related to discrimination based on any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent.

Student Records

(Policy [FL](#))

Student records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records. The following people are the only people who have general access to a student's records:

- Parents: Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights
- The student: The rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A District is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student's records before this time
- School officials with legitimate educational interests

The student handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the Student Enrollment Office in the Administration Building for assistance.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) defines education records as any records, documents, files, or other material containing personally identifiable information about students, that are maintained by a school District or by someone on behalf of a school District [See Board Policy [FL LEGAL](#)]. Some information about students is "directory information" and is available upon request by any person, unless a parent has asked that it not be released. Other types of records can only be released with a parent's express permission. Material containing personally identifiable information about students should not be sent through the Internet or E-mail either in the body of electronic messages or as enclosures or attachments to the messages.

E-mail messages about a student or employee may be accessible--to the extent that FERPA allows--through an open records request in accordance with the Public Information Act (formerly called the "Texas Open Records Act"), if the messages have been retained or are retrievable in the computer system. Each user should take care not to send or store any message he or she would not want made available to others.

Any student information sent by Internet or E-mail is considered public information and, therefore, could be subpoenaed in court. Therefore, no confidential information about students should be sent through Internet or E-Mail unless the written permission of the parent is given. Materials that are not considered educational records and do not have to be made available to a parent or student include teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher.

Parent and Student Complaints

(Policy [FNG](#))

In an effort to hear and resolve parent and student complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the Board has adopted orderly processes for handling complaints on different issues. Parents are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with the teachers or the appropriate administrator at any time. Parents and students with complaints that cannot be resolved to their satisfaction should be directed to the campus principal. The formal complaint process provides parents and students with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with a principal's response. Any campus office or the TISD Administrative office can provide parents and students with information on filing a complaint. Contact Jo Ann Rice, Assistant Superintendent for Student and Community Development, at 903- 794-3651 ext. 1035 for more information on parent complaint procedures.

Administering Medication to Students

(Policy [FFAC](#))

Only designated employees may administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. Exceptions apply to the self-administration of asthma medication, medication for anaphylaxis (e.g., EpiPen), medication for diabetes management, if the medication is self-administered in accordance with District policy and procedures. A student who must take any other medicine during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine, in its original, properly labeled container. Students may self-administer medication only if the District has written permission from the student's parent or guardian allowing the student to self-administer medication. Contact the principal or school nurse for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

Dietary Supplements

(Policies [DH](#), [FFAC](#))

District employees are prohibited by state law from knowingly selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to a student with whom the employee has contact as part of his or her school District duties. In addition, employees may not knowingly endorse or suggest the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

Psychotropic Drugs

(Policy [FFAC](#))

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood – or behavior-altering substance. District employees are prohibited by state law from doing the following:

- Recommending that a student use a psychotropic drug
- Suggesting a particular diagnosis
- Excluding from class or school-related activity a student whose parent refuses to consent to a psychiatric evaluation or to authorize the administration of a psychotropic drug to a student

Student Conduct and Discipline

(Policies in the [FN](#) series and [FO](#) series)

Students are expected to follow the campus rules, classroom rules, and rules listed in the Student Code of Conduct and student handbook. Teachers and administrators are responsible for taking disciplinary action based on a range of discipline management strategies that have been adopted by the District. Other employees that have concerns about a particular student's conduct should contact the classroom teacher or campus principal.

Student Attendance

(Policy [FEB](#))

Teachers and staff should be familiar with the District's policies and procedures for attendance accounting. These procedures require minor students to have parental consent before they are allowed to leave campus. When absent from school, the student, upon returning to school, must follow the procedures outlined by the campus for parental consent and documenting student absences. These requirements are addressed in campus training and in the student handbook. Contact the campus principal for additional information.

Bullying

(Policy [FFI](#))

Bullying is defined by TEC §37.0832. All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying, including cyberbullying, to the campus administrator. Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District and a school District's board of trustees or the board's designee determines that the behavior:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physical harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the student.
- Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator who is engaging in bullying and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
- Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, and ostracism. The District's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and is available on the District's Web site at www.txkisd.net and at each campus location.

Hazing

(Policy [FNCC](#))

Students must have prior approval from the principal or designee for any type of "initiation rites" of a school club or organization. While most initiation rites are permissible, engaging in or permitting "hazing" is a criminal offense. Any teacher, administrator or employee who observes a student engaged in any form of hazing, which has reason to know or suspect that a student intends to engage in hazing, or has engaged in hazing must report that fact or suspicion to the designated campus administrator.

District Policies

The official, authoritative policy manual is available for inspection in the office of the Superintendent. Also, the complete TISD Board Policies can be accessed and viewed through the Internet. This online service can be accessed through the TISD Web site at <http://www.txkisd.net>.

The following policies have been summarized for easy reference. If you need a hard copy of these policies, please contact Human Resources at 903-794-3651, ext. 1012.

DAA – Equal employment opportunity

DAB – Genetic nondiscrimination

DBA – Certifications and Licenses

DBAA – Criminal history and credit reports

DBD – Conflict of interest

DC Series – Employment practices

DCB – Term Contracts

DEA series – Salaries and wages; stipends and incentives

DEC series - Leaves and Absences

DF – Termination of Employment

DFA Series – Termination of, or return to,
probationary contract

DFB Series – Termination of Term Contracts

DFD – Hearings before hearing examiner

DFE – Resignations

DFF – Reduction in Force

DFFA- Reduction in Force due to Financial Exigency

DFFB- Reduction in Force due to Program Change

DG – Employee rights and privileges

DGBA - Employee Complaints and Grievance Forms

DH – Employee standards of conduct

DHB – SBEC Reporting

DHE – Searches and Drug/Alcohol Testing

DI – Employee welfare

DIA – Freedom from Discrimination, harassment,
and retaliation

DK – Assignments and schedules

DN Series – Performance Appraisal

FFG – Student Welfare: Child Abuse and Neglect

FFH (Local) – Student Welfare: Freedom from Harassment

FN – Students' Rights and Responsibilities

FO – Student Discipline

