

Employee Handbook

Ira Independent School District

2023-2024



“God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline” **2Timothy 1:7**

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are have been summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome. This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. It is not intended to alter the at-will status of employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies. District policies and procedures can change at any time. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the Superintendent's office. Policy manuals are located in the Business office and are available for employee review during normal working hours or are online.

Ira Vision Statement

*"We send **our students** into the world prepared to excel at their **goals**, be it the work force or higher education, with **great pride** in **where they received their knowledge.**"*

Guidelines

- Consider Children and Students
- Develop "Shared Vision" of Learning Community
- Consider Community, District, Classrooms, Home

The Leadership roles and Management roles working together to strengthen the district of Ira in educating students based on a purpose and direction

Employee Handbook Receipt

Name _____

Campus/department _____ Ira ISD _____

I hereby acknowledge receipt of my personal copy of the Ira ISD Employee Handbook. 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 this handbook intends no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will relationships.

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

Below you will find a list of directory type information. If you will mark through the information you do not wish the district to release, we will see that it is not given out.

Address, telephone number, date of birth, place of birth, social security number, marital status, names and number of dependents.

Signature _____

Date _____

Note: This handbook includes two copies of this form. Please sign and date one and keep it in the handbook. Sign and date the other copy and forward it to the principal.

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Campus/department _____ Ira ISD _____

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Date _____

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School Motto

“STRIVING TOGETHER FOR EXCELLENCE”

Vision Statement:

Work together to make sure each and every student is achieving at their maximum potential in an engaging, inspiring, and challenging learning environment.

Board of Trustees’ Goals

Goal I The percent of Ira ISD 3rd grade students that meets grade level or above on STAAR Reading will increase from 70% to 80% by June 2024. **Ongoing**

Goal II The percent of Ira ISD 3rd grade students that score meets grade level or above on STAAR Math will increase from 75% to 85% by June 2024. **Ongoing**

Goal III The percent of Ira ISD graduates that meet the criteria for CCMR will increase from 85% to 95% by August 2024. **Ongoing**

Goal IV Ira ISD will continue to provide a safe learning environment for all students with an emphasis placed on student safety and security.

Goal V Ira ISD will continue to implement the latest advances in technological hardware and software to provide teachers and students with the tools necessary to achieve maximum success in today’s digital marketplace.

Goal VI The district will increase the involvement of parents and community members in the educational process. **Ongoing**

Goal VII The district will develop and implement strategies to ensure the successful completion of high school for all students.

Goal VIII The district will utilize sound financial practices and procedures in support of the Goals I - VII. **FIRST Rating Superior 4 Years Consecutives**

Goal IX To aspire to be more and better than you were when you graduate the current class. Make a reputation of honest and hardworking. **Needs Reinforcement**

Goal X To direct focus on obtaining financial security and possible athletic track. **Priority**

Working with Higher Education Agencies

Focus Areas

Pathways

The HB 5 Program is to assist in the development of a student's educational tract early in high school.

STAAR Remediation

As accountability for student performance increases our school and administration will help to provide the teacher with valuable information on student progress and valuable data from previous year's progress.

Texas Scholars

The Texas Scholars Program is a new effort for our school to help our students compete for scholarships outside this area and attend a higher education school.

Career Preparation Programs

The district offers career preparation in cooperation with WTC and TSTC for better preparing our students for jobs and the work force.

UIL Academic Competition

Combining with others to improve and extend the student academic understanding. Students in all our schools are encouraged to train and compete in the University Interscholastic League's

Character Education

Since the urgency to teach values is the focus in today's news we employ teachers and staff that encourage and expect character and respect from everyone based on values as human beings.

Board of Trustees

Policies BA, BAA, BBA, BBB, BE, BEC, BED, BEF

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 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 law and State Board of Education rules.

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the district to ensure a strong educational program for the district's children. Trustees are elected by place and serve three-year terms. Trustees serve without compensation, must be registered voters, and must reside in the district.

Board members

Russell Wall, President
JJ Caswell, Vice President
Tanner Poole, Secretary

Justin Donelson
Jerry Jamison
Dennis Taylor

Regular trustee meetings are scheduled for 6:30 P.M. the last of the month at the Roy Salee Gymnasium Board Room. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted at the Administrator's office at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place and subject of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a two-hour notice.

All meetings are open to the public. Under the following circumstances, Texas law permits the board to go into a closed session: to discuss prospective gifts or donations, property acquisition, personnel issues including conferences with employees and employee complaints and security matters.

Helpful Contacts and Compliance Coordinators

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department as listed below:

Mr. Brian Patterson	Superintendent	573-2628 ext 122
Mr. Dale Jones	Principal	573-2628 ext 113
Mrs. Keeli Hines	Chief Financial Officer	573-2628 ext 123
Mrs. Erin Evans	School Secretary	573-2628 ext 121
Mr. Dave Hanes	Director of Technology	573-2628 ext 103
Mrs. Bobbie Hale	Ira School Counselor	573-2628 ext 124
Mrs. Brittney Lomax	Cafeteria Manager	573-2628 ext 104
Mr. Amanda Anderson	Agriculture Teacher	574-2628 ext 147
Mrs. Cati Patrick	School Nurse	573-2628 ext 125

Explanation of District Alternative Programs

1. I.S.S. A student may be assigned to in-school suspension for any number of days specified by an administrator.
2. Alternative School It is an alternative educational placement serving students in the secondary level who have persistently or seriously violated the Zero Tolerance Plan. Students receive instruction in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Reading.

Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity (*Policy DAA*)

The Ira Independent School District does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, military status, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to discrimination on any basis listed above should contact Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal.

Job Vacancy Announcements (*Policy DC*)

To the extent possible, announcements of job vacancies by position and location are distributed on a regular basis and posted at the central administration building, website & Counselor's Facebook page.

Contract and Non-Contract Employment (*Policies DC, DCA, DCB, DCD*)

State law requires the district to employ all full-time professional and administrative employees in positions requiring a certificate and nurses under probationary and term contracts. Employees in all other positions are employed at-will or by a contract that is not subject to the procedures for non-renewal 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. All full-time, professional employees employed in positions requiring certification and nurses who are new to the district receive probationary contracts during their first three years of employment. The probationary period for those who have been employed in public schools for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district is three years. For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three years, with an optional fourth year if the district has doubts about whether a term or continuing contract should be given.

Term Contracts. Full-time teachers and professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses who have successfully completed the probationary period will be employed by term contracts. Campus principal and central office administrator are employed under two and/or three-year term contracts. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract and employment policies.

Non-Certified Professional and Administrative Employees. Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require certification (such as non-instructional administrators) are not employed by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district.

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.

Alcohol and Drug Testing (Policy DBBA)

The purpose of alcohol and drug testing is to ensure safety and prevent accidents and injuries resulting from the misuse of alcohol and drugs by drivers of commercial motor vehicles. Any employee who is required to have 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 when they are driving.

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

All employees 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 policies and related educational material should contact Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal.

Reassignments and Transfers (Policy DK)

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the Administrator/Principal. When reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or program changes, the administrator has final placement authority. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be reassigned at any time. Employees who object to a reassignment may follow the district process for employee complaints as outlined in this handbook and district policy DGBA.

Employees with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. Teachers requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit their request by July 1st. 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 administrator's office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

Teacher Listing

Kindergarten Emily Rollins

First Grade Jodi Dunn

Second Grade Ashton Taylor

Third Grade Candice Poole

Fourth Grade Tosha Callaway

Fifth Grade Cheyenne Thomas

Sixth Grade Denise Lewis

RTI Debbie Herring

Special Education Alison Johnson

JH Social Studies Rilee Burtchell

Jr. High Math Keely Green

Jr High Science Marcy Reneau

Jr. High English Anna Fonville

High School SS Mike Holmes

High School Math Morgan Moore

High School English Mari Gault

High School Science Liesel
Gruben

**Computer Technology and
Business** Brock Barbee

Spanish Toby Goodwin

Agricultural Sciences Amanda
Anderson

IT Director Dave Hanes

P.E. Todd Wall

Teacher Aide

Cafeteria Karen Gruban

Custodian Angel Mcglouthlin

Cafeteria Brittney Lomax

Custodian Curtis Sharp

Cafeteria Nancy Lomax

Custodian Martina Gonzalez

Cafeteria Tara White

Librarian Sharon Juarez

School Secretary Erin Evans

Nurse Cati Patrick

Counselor Bobbie Hale

Local Policy DGBA (Complaints)

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees an orderly process for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. The Board intends that, whenever feasible, complaints be resolved at the lowest possible administrative level. Complaints shall be heard in informal administrative conferences. All complaints arising out of an event must be addressed in one complaint. The appropriate administrator at each level shall respond to the employee within seven days of a complaint conference. Written complaints shall receive a written response. The employee has seven days after receiving a response to appeal to the next level. The complaint shall be considered concluded if the employee does not appeal within that limit.

LEVEL ONE:

An employee who has a complaint shall meet with the principal or immediate supervisor within 15 days of the time the employee first knew or should have known of the event causing the complaint. At this meeting, the employee shall submit the complaint in writing on a form provided by the District.

LEVEL TWO:

If the outcome of the conference at Level One is not to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may request, in writing on a form provided by the district, to meet with the administrator or a designee. The meeting shall be held within seven days after the administrator or designee received the request to discuss the complaint.

LEVEL THREE:

If the outcome at Level Two is not to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may submit a written request to place the matter on the agenda of a future Board meeting. See BE(LEGAL) The superintendent shall inform the employee of the date, time, and place of the meeting. If the Board conducts the hearing, it shall make and communicate its decision at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. (Complete procedures are located in the policy manual)

Workload and Work Schedules (Policy DL)

Professional Employees. Professional and administrative employees 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 days of service and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation and 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. Teachers are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees- Support employees are employed at will and will be notified of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees are not exempt from overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule

without prior approval from their supervisor.

Standard Work Hours - Full time employees will work an eight (8) hour day. Most employees' daily schedules reflect a **7:40 a.m.** – 15 minutes after the bell rings and students are gone for the day. **Please make every effort to arrive at the appropriate time.**

Performance Evaluation (Policy DNA)

Evaluation of an employee's job performance should be a continual process that focuses on 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, have a performance conference with their supervisor, and get the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

Employee Involvement (Policy BQA, BQB)

At both the campus and district levels, Ira ISD offers opportunities for involvement in matters that affect employees. As part of the district's 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 the campus office or from the administration office.

Staff Development

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the district. Staff development is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, and developed and approved by district-and campus-level advisory committees.

Compensation and Benefits

Salaries, Wages, and Stipends (Policy DEA)

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and a pay structure established for each position. 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 and administrative employees 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 based on hourly wages or provided compensatory time for each overtime hour worked.

Salaries and wages are reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted according to the budgeted amounts approved by the board. All employees will receive written notice of their pay and work schedules before the start of each school year. Classroom teachers and librarian will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplementary duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra duty pay schedule.

Employees should contact Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal or Keeli Hines for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

Paychecks

All employees are paid monthly. Automatic deposit is required for all employees. All employees will be paid in 12 equal monthly payments.

An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated.

The schedule of pay dates for the school year follows:

On or before the 15th day of each month.

Automatic Payroll Deposit

The district's method of payroll is automatic payroll deposit. Employee's paychecks will be electronically deposited into an account at the bank of their choice. This service will be activated at the time of employment. With automatic deposit, an employee's paycheck is immediately available on the pay date. Contact Keeli Hines CFO if there is a question about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll Deductions (Policy CFEA)

Automatic payroll deductions for the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and federal income tax are required for all full-time employees. Medicare tax deductions are required for all employees hired after March 31, 1986. Temporary and part-time employees who are not eligible for TRS membership must have their Social Security

contributions deducted.

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance; annuities. Employees may also request payroll deduction for payment of membership dues to professional organizations. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

Local Policy CFEA (Allowable Deductions)

In addition to legally required deductions and voluntary deductions for approved insurance and deferred compensation programs, the Board shall also permit voluntary deductions for area teachers' credit unions.

Employees may request approved voluntary salary deductions or change the amount(s) of those deductions in accordance with administrative regulations.

Deductions shall be made for unauthorized or excess personal leave or sick leave. [SEE DEC in Policy Manual]

Overtime Compensation

Policy DEA (Nonexempt employees)

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 and some paraprofessional employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. **Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from the administrator/principal.**

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours weekly and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Employees who must work beyond their normal schedule but less than 40 hours per week will be compensated in straight-time pay or compensatory time off. Employees must work more than 40 total hours in a week to earn overtime compensation.

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 or direct pay at time-and-a-half rates. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

Employees can accumulate up to 240 hours of compensatory time.

Compensatory time earned must be used according to a schedule that is mutually agreeable to the employee and superintendent. Weekly time sheets will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

Health, Dental, and Life Insurance

Group health insurance coverage is available through US Employee Benefits to employees who are employed full time. The State Legislation and the board of trustees determine the district's health contribution for employee insurance premiums annually.

The insurance plan year is from September through August. New employees must complete enrollment before September 1st. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage for the September 1st deadline. Employees should contact Keeli Hines, Chief Financial Officer, for more information.

Ira ISD full time employees will receive a term life insurance policy paid for by the district in the amount of \$50,000. Additional life insurance may be purchased by the individual employee through TASB in increments of \$10,000 up to a maximum of \$500,000 (not to exceed five times your annual salary). Premiums are conveniently payroll deducted from your paycheck. (This is a one-time enrollment period without any health questions or physicals)

Supplemental Insurance Benefits (Policy CRG)

At their own expense, employees can enroll in supplemental insurance programs. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact Keeli Hines CFO, 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., disability, accidental death and dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, 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 employment. 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. Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Law depending on the circumstances of each case prescribes specific benefits. All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to Keeli Hines CFO. 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.

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 under the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. 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 reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact Keeli Hines CFO.

Teacher Retirement (Policy DEG)

All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least one-half time of the normal work schedule are members of the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS). Substitutes who work at least 85 days a year are also eligible for TRS membership and to purchase a year of creditable service. 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 Keeli Hines CFO, as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available in the Business office. 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 512-397-6400. TRS information is also available on the web (www.trs.state.tx.us).

Other Benefit Programs (Policy DEB(Local))

Any District provisions regarding insurance programs and/or deferred compensation programs are found in policies CRD (Local) and CRG (LOCAL), respectively.

LEAVES AND ABSENCES

Absence from Duty

1. If you are going to miss work, please notify your immediate supervisor as soon as possible.
 - a. You should state the reason for your absence, either illness or personal business.
 - b. If you have a preference for a substitute, please advise at that time. The office will make the arrangements for the substitute.
 - c. If a requested substitute is not available, the office will make the determination as to which substitute will be called.
2. Upon returning to work, it is the responsibility of the employee to sign and date the absence from duty form.
3. From time to time, it may be necessary for us to cover classes for other staff either when no subs are available or in emergency situations.
4. Preparing for Substitute (**Mandatory**)
 - a. If you know in advance that you are going to be absent from duty, you must prepare the appropriate lessons for a substitute to use. These lessons should be left in a folder on top of your desk in an easy to read and use format.
 - b. For emergency absences, each six weeks each teacher will turn in to the office a folder that contains a sufficient amount of work for each class to do while the substitute is taking care of that teacher's classes.

Policy DEC – Leave Policy

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 have personal needs that will require long leaves of absence should call or go see Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal for leave options, continuation of benefits, and communicating with the district.

Employees who take an unpaid leave of absence may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health care benefits for employees on leave authorized under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid by the district, as they were when they were working.

Otherwise, the district does not make benefit contributions for employees who are not on active payroll status.

Employees must follow district and campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate leave request form. Any employee who is absent more than five days because of a personal or 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 fitness to return to work.

Personal leave is available for the employee's use from the beginning of the school year. If an employee leaves the district before the end of the work year, the cost of an unearned leave days shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

Personal Leave

State law requires that all employees receive five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is earned at a rate of one-half workday for each eighteen (18) workdays up to a maximum of five days. A day of earned personal leave is equivalent to an assigned workday. There is no limit on the accumulation of state personal leave, and it can be transferred to other Texas school districts. There are two types of personal leave: non-discretionary and discretionary.

Non-discretionary

Leave that is taken for personal or family illness, emergency, or a death in the family is considered non-discretionary leave. This type of leave allows very little or no advance planning and will be granted to employees in the same manner as 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 notice of the request three days in advance of the anticipated absence to his or her principal or supervisor. Use of discretionary personal leave shall be considered granted unless the principal or supervisor notifies the employee to the contrary within 24 hours of receipt of the request. Discretionary personal leave will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis and will be subject to the following limitations:

A maximum of two campus employees in each job category will be permitted to take discretionary personal leave at the same time. Discretionary leave may not last more than

three (3) consecutive workdays, except with special approval for extenuating circumstances.

Sick Leave

Previously accumulated state sick leave is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. Sick leave can be used only in five-day increments except when coordinated with family and medical leave taken on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis and workers' compensation benefits. If an employee uses more sick leave than he or she has earned, the cost of unearned sick leave will be deducted from the employee's next paycheck. 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

Additional Local Leave

All employees shall earn an **additional 5** days' local leave per school year, concurrently with state leave, at the rate of 1/2 day per each 30 workdays. Local Leave days will have no limit on accumulation and will be used prior to state leave days.

Two Hour Leave Policy

All staff are eligible **for four two period absences during** the school year. This leave may be used for the purpose of the teacher's choosing. The employee must arrange for the person covering the class/classes. The class must be doing educational tasks in the employee's absence. The employee must inform the principal in advance. Employees who do not inform the principal will be charged one half-day personal leave.

Extended Sick Leave

The district may grant additional leave, up to 30 days, for employees who have exhausted all state leave and are absent due to continued illness or disability, including pregnancy-related disability. When extended leave is used, the cost of a substitute shall be deducted from the employee's salary for each day of absence. Days of extended sick leave shall not be offset against workers' compensation benefits.

Accumulated local sick leave, if any, shall be used before state sick leave and under the terms and conditions applicable to state sick leave except as otherwise provided by this policy.

Local sick leave may also be used for first-year care following the birth or adoption of an employee's son or daughter or the placement of a child with the employee for foster care.

Accumulated sick leave shall be recorded in whole workdays and half workdays only, except when coordinated with workers' compensation benefits as provided in this policy.

Except for employees who are receiving workers' compensation wage benefits, the District shall require the use of all applicable accumulated sick leave in the order determined by this policy, followed by temporary disability leave when applicable, concurrently with family and medical leave.

If both spouses are employed by the District, combined family and medical leave for the birth, adoption, or placement of a child, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition may be limited to a combined total of 12 weeks as determined by the needs of the District.

Intermittent leave shall be permitted for the birth of the employee's child or the adoption or placement of a child with the employee.

Temporary Disability

Certified employees

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. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability. A full-time educator may voluntarily request to be placed on temporary disability leave or be placed on leave involuntarily.

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. The leave 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 disability leave is not approved, the employee must return to work or be subject to termination procedures.

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, his/her supervisor and the business office should be notified at least 30 days in advance. The

return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able to do the job. Professional employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned as soon as an appropriate position is available. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, professional employees will be reinstated at the beginning of the following school year.

Family and Medical Leave

Employees who have been employed by the district for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during that time are eligible for family and medical leave. Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year between July 1 and June 30 for the following reasons:

The birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
To care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition
An employee's serious health condition

A husband and wife who are both employed by the district are subject to limits in the amount of leave that they can take to care for a parent with a serious health condition or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child.

Eligible employees are entitled to continue their health care benefits under the same terms and conditions as when they were on the job and are entitled to return to their previous job or an equivalent job at the end of their leave. Under some circumstances, teachers who are able to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue their leave until the end of the semester. Family and medical leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave. Accumulated leave will be used as family and medical leave, except in the case of employees who are receiving workers' compensation wage benefits.

In some circumstances, employees may take family and medical leave in blocks of time or by reducing their normal weekly or daily work schedule. Intermittent leave may be taken under the following circumstances:

To allow an employee to care for a seriously ill spouse, child, or parent
When an employee requires medical treatment for a serious illness
When an employee is seriously ill and unable to work
When an employee becomes a parent or has a foster child placed in his or her home

When the need for family and medical leave is foreseeable, employees who want to use it must provide 30-day advance notice of their need.

When the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must contact supervisor or the business office 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 perform the essential job functions

Employees requiring family and medical leave should contact Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Workers' Compensation Benefits

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related injury may use sick leave or any other leave benefit in conjunction with workers' compensation while recovering, except when the leave is classified as family and medical leave. While on workers' compensation leave, the district will pay the difference between the weekly income benefit and the employee's regular salary and charge available leave proportionately.

Assault Leave

Assault leave provides extended job protection to anyone who is seriously injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take all the leave time necessary (up to two years) to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave or counted against the employee's family and medical leave entitlement, and may be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits.

Bereavement Leave (Local DEC)

Use of state leave for death in the immediate family shall not exceed five workdays per occurrence, subject to the approval of the District.

Jury Duty

Employees will receive leave with pay and without loss of accumulated

leave for jury duty. Employees must present documentation of the service and will be allowed to retain any compensation for this service.

Other Court Appearances

Employees will be granted paid leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding. Absences for court appearances related to an employee's personal business must be taken as personal leave or leave without pay (if no personal leave is available). Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

Military leave

Paid Leave for Military Service

Any employee who is a member of the Texas National guard, Texas State Guard, or reserves component of the armed forces will be granted a paid leave of absence without loss of any accumulated leave for authorized training or duty orders. Paid military leave will not exceed 15 days per year.

Reemployment After State Military Leave

Employees who leave the district to enter into active duty with the Texas National Guard or Texas State Guard may return to employment if they are honorably discharged or released within five years. Employees who wish to return to the district will be re-employed in the same position they previously held or reassigned to a position of similar seniority, status, and pay, provided they are still qualified to perform the required duties of the position. Application for reemployment and evidence of honorable discharge or release must be submitted to personnel office within 90 days of discharge or separation.

Reemployment After Federal Military Leave

Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed in the position they would have held if employment had not been interrupted or reassigned to an equivalent or similar position provided they are still qualified to perform the required duties. To be eligible for reemployment, employees must provide notice of their obligation or intent to perform military service, provide evidence of honorable discharge or release, and submit an application for reemployment to personnel office.

Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage for a period not to exceed 18 months. Employees should contact the central office for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Employee Relations and Communications

Employee Recognition and Appreciation (Policy DJ)

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, in the newspaper, and through special events and activities.

Relations with Educational Entities (Policy GNB(Legal)):

REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER: ESC Region 14 shall be located in an area so that each school district has the opportunity to be served by and to participate in an approved center on a voluntary basis. The center shall, at the direction of the commissioner of education, provide services to assist school districts in improving student performance and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of school operations.

Core Services: ESC shall develop and maintain core services for purchase by school districts and campuses.

1. Training and assistance in teaching reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science
2. Training and assistance in providing special education, compensatory education, bilingual education, and gifted and talented education
3. Assistance specifically designed for an academically unacceptable campus or a campus whose performance is considered unacceptable based on the academic excellence indicators
4. Training and assistance to teachers, administrators, school board members, and members of site-based decision making committees
5. Assistance in complying with state laws and rules in addition to the core services, a regional education service center may offer any service requested and purchased by any school district or campus in the state.

STATE EDUCATION AGENCY: Each District must be accredited by TEA. Accreditation shall be determined in accordance with the Education Code 11.001, 39.071. The State Board shall adopt a set of indicators of the quality of learning on a campus. Campus and District performance on the indicators shall be compared to state-established

standards and the degree of change from one school year to the next on each indicator shall also be considered. The indicators shall include:

1. The results of state assessment instruments aggregated by grade level and subject area
2. Dropout rates
3. Student attendance rates
4. The percentage of graduating students who attain scores on the exit- level assessment that are equivalent to a passing score on the TASP, administered by state institutions of higher education
5. The percentage of graduating students who meet the course requirements established by the State Board for the recommended high school program.
6. The results of the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and the American College Test (ACT)
7. The percentage of students exempted, by exemption category, from the assessment program
8. Any other indicator the State Board adopts.
9. Education Code 39.051 (a) (b)

Annually, the commissioner shall define acceptable and unacceptable performance on each of these indicators and shall project the standards for each level of performance for succeeding years. (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Performance on the indicators shall be based on information that is disaggregated with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status and shall be compared to state standards, required improvement, and comparable improvement, as established by the commissioner. Required improvement is the progress necessary for the campus or district to meet state standards and for its students to meet exit requirements; comparable improvement is derived by measuring campuses and the District against a profile developed from a total state student performance data base that exhibits substantial equivalence to the characteristics of students served by the campus or District, including past academic performance, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and limited English proficiency.

Accreditation ratings: TEA shall evaluate a district's performance and rate it for accreditation purposes as:

Academically acceptable

Academically unacceptable (is below the state's clearly unacceptable performance standard and does not meet required improvement)

District Communications

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

News Releases (Local Policy GBBA)

Only the Administrator/Principal shall make news releases of a political or controversial nature, as well as those concerning the overall operation of the District. Administrators, teachers, and other staff members are urged to submit school news, but all articles must be coordinated centrally in order to avoid duplication of news item, maintain a consistent publicity policy, compile a file of releases for future reference, and serve as protection to the schools.

Complaints and Grievances

Policy DGBA

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 process that all employees must follow when bringing formal complaints and grievances except in the case of sexual harassment complaints. 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 grievances to the board of trustees. For ease of reference, the entire district policy concerning the process of bringing complaints and grievances is reprinted as follows:

Local Policy DGBA

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees an orderly process for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. The Board intends that, whenever feasible, complaints be resolved at the lowest possible administrative level. Some topics are governed by other review processes and are not subject to this policy. Employee termination procedures are found in policy series DO. An employee's dismissal or nonrenewal may be the subject of a complaint under the matter. For complaints against peace officers, see CKE (LEGAL)

The names of District coordinators for compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws are found in DAA(LOCAL). Issues specific to sexual harassment complaints are found in DHC(LOCAL).

The principal of the campus and other supervisory personnel shall

ensure that all employees under their supervision are informed of this policy at the time of employment and whenever it is revised. A complaint under this policy shall include grievances concerning an employee's wages, hours, or conditions of work and specific allegations of unlawful discrimination in employment on the basis of sex (including allegations of sexual harassment), race, religion, national origin, age, or rights. A complaint must specify the individual harm alleged. When the administrator/principal determines that two or more individual complaints are sufficiently similar in nature and remedy to permit their resolution through one proceeding, he or she may consolidate the complaints.

Neither the Board nor the administration shall unlawfully retaliate against any employee for bringing a complaint under this policy. {See DG(Legal)} Employees who allege unlawful discrimination in retaliation for reporting a violation of law to an appropriate authority shall invoke this policy not later than 15 days after the date the alleged violation occurred or was discovered by the employee through the use of reasonable diligence. The complaint shall begin at Level Two. If the complaint is not resolved at that level, the Administrator shall ensure that the matter reaches the Board expeditiously. Time lines for the employee and the District set out in this policy may be shortened to ensure that the Board's final decision is made within 30 days of the initiation of the complaint. Complaints shall be heard in informal administrative conferences. All complaints arising out of an event or related series of events must be addressed in one complaint. An employee is precluded from bringing separate or serial complaints concerning events about which the employee has previously complained. The party incurring them shall pay costs of any complaint. In resolving complaints, time is of the essence. All time limits shall be strictly complied with, unless extended by mutual consent. All references are to calendar days.

The appropriate administrator at each level shall respond to the employee within seven days of a complaint conference. Written complaints shall receive a written response. The complaint shall be considered concluded if the employee does not appeal within that limit. Employees shall be entitled to administrative review conferences as outlined in the Level One and Level Two sections below and to an informal presentation of the complaint to the Board as specified in the Level Three section, unless the Board grants a hearing. If an employee alleges in writing specific facts that, if true, would deny constitutional rights, the Administrator or designee shall investigate the allegations. If the employee does not accept the Administrator's resolution hearing as specified in the Level Three section below. Announcing a decision in the employee's presence constitutes communication of the decision.

LEVEL ONE:

An employee who has a complaint shall meet with the principal

or immediate supervisor within 15 days of the time the employee first knew or should have known of the event or series of events causing the complaint. At this meeting, the employee shall submit the complaint in writing on a form provided by the District.

LEVEL TWO:

If the outcome of the conference at Level One is not to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may request, in writing on a form provided by the District, to meet with the Administrator or a designee. The meeting shall be held within seven days after the Administrator or designee received the request to discuss the complaint. At this meeting the employee shall submit the complaint in writing on a form provided by the District.

LEVEL THREE:

If the outcome at Level Two is not to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may submit a written request, on a form provided by the District, to place the matter on the agenda of a future Board meeting. {See BE(LEGAL)} The Administrator shall inform the employee of the date, time, and place of the meeting. The Board shall listen to the complaint, but is not required to respond or take any action on the matter. The lack of official action by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

Employees who are granted a hearing shall be afforded that hearing either with the Board in a meeting that includes the hearing as an item in the posted agenda or with the Board's designee. If the Board conducts the hearing, it shall make and communicate its decision at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If the complaint involves the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the employee bringing the complaint, it shall be heard by the Board in closed meeting unless the employee bringing the complaint requests it to be heard in public. However, if the complaint constitutes a complaint or charge against another district employee, it shall be heard in closed meeting unless the employee against whom the complaint or charge is brought requests an open hearing in writing.

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:

Recognize and respect the rights and property of students and co-workers and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers. 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, and tardiness may be cause for disciplinary action. Know and comply with department and district procedures and policies. 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.

Local Policy DH (Appropriate Administrative Procedures – Chain of Command)

Employees shall be courteous to one another and the public, working together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the District.

Employees wishing to express criticism or professional concerns shall do so through appropriate administrative procedures or the collaborative process. {See DGB (Local)} Such expressions shall be considered in light of their relation to the implementation of campus goals and objectives and/or the District's mission. {See EAB (LOCAL) and AE (LOCAL)}

All employees shall adhere to District safety rules and regulations and shall report unsafe conditions or practices to the appropriate supervisor.

Employees shall not use tobacco products on District premises, in District vehicles, nor in the presence of students at school or school-related activities. {See GKA (LEGAL)}

A copy of this policy, the purpose of which is to eliminate drug abuse from the workplace, shall be provided each employee at the beginning of each year or upon employment.

Employees shall not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances during working hours while at school or at school-related activities during or outside of usual working hours:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical

substance for inhalation

4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs

An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered “under the influence” of a controlled substance.

An employee who uses a drug authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically for that employee’s use shall not be considered to have violated this policy.

Each employee shall be given a copy of the District’s notice regarding drug-free schools. {See DI (EXHIBIT)}

Employees shall comply with the standards of conduct set out in this policy and with any other policies, regulations, and guidelines that impose duties, requirements, or standards attendant to their status as District employees. Violation of any policies, regulations, and guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. (see DO series)

PERSONNEL DRESS CODE:

The dress and grooming of District employees shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for their assignments, and in accordance with any additional standards established by their supervisors and approved by the administrator/principal and in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Shorts are inappropriate attire in all areas, except physical education classes, or as approved by the administrator/principal.
2. Any attire that may cause disruption of the educational process in the classroom, or would be inappropriate at a public school function, shall not be permitted.
3. Dress should be professional and appropriate to a classroom setting for the purpose of education. If attire is questionable administration will conduct a conference with employee.

Code of Ethics:

All employees, as public servants, must follow the *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*, which is reprinted below:

Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

The Texas educator should strive to create an atmosphere that will nurture to fulfillment the potential of each student.

The educator is responsible for standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, parents, and the community.

The Code is intended to govern the profession, and interpretations of the Code shall be determined by the Professional Practices Commission.

The educator who conducts his affairs with conscientious concern will exemplify the highest standards of professional commitment.

PRINCIPLE I: Professional Ethical Conduct

The Texas educator should endeavor to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, demonstrating personal integrity, and exemplifying honesty.

1. The educator shall not intentionally misrepresent official policies of the school district or educational institution and shall clearly distinguish those views from personal attitudes and opinions.
2. The educator shall honestly account for all funds committed to his charge and shall conduct his financial business with integrity.
3. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
4. The educator shall accept no gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair or appear to impair professional judgment.
5. The educator shall not offer any favor, service, or thing of value to obtain special advantage.
6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

PRINCIPLE II: Professional Practices and Performance

The Texas educator, after qualifying in a manner established by law or regulation, shall assume responsibilities for professional teaching practices and professional performance and shall continually strive to demonstrate competence.

1. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications and shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment.
2. The educator shall possess mental health, physical stamina, and social prudence necessary to perform the duties of his professional assignment.
3. The educator shall organize instruction that seeks to accomplish objectives related to learning.
4. The educator shall continue professional growth.
5. The educator shall comply with written local school board policies,

Texas Education Agency regulations, and applicable state laws.

PRINCIPLE III: Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues

The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.

1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
2. The educator shall not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and legal statutes regarding dismissal, evaluation, and employment practices.
4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities.
5. The educator shall not discriminate against, coerce, or harass a colleague on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, handicap, or marital status.
6. The educator shall not intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of any professional right or privilege.
7. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
8. The educator shall have the academic freedom to teach as a professional privilege, and no educator shall interfere with such privilege except as required by state and/or federal law.

PRINCIPLE IV: Ethical Conduct toward Students

The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, should measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his potential as an effective citizen.

1. The educator shall deal considerately and justly with each student and shall seek to resolve problems including discipline according to law and school board policy.
2. The educator shall not intentionally expose the student to disparagement.
3. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. The educator shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.
5. The educator shall endeavor to present facts without distortion.
6. The educator shall not unfairly 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, sex, handicap, national origin, or marital status.

7. The educator shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning or deny the student access to varying points of view.

PRINCIPLE V: Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community

The Texas educator, in fulfilling citizenship responsibilities in the community, should cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

1. The educator shall make reasonable effort to communicate to parent's information which should be revealed in the interest of the student.
2. The educator shall endeavor to understand community cultures, and relate the home environment of students to the school.
3. The educator shall manifest a positive role in school public relations.

Sexual Harassment (Policies DHC, FNCJ, FFG)

Employee-to-Employee

Sexual harassment of a coworker is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct under the following conditions:

Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.

Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions.

The conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive work environment.

Employees who believe that they have been subject to sexual harassment are encouraged to come forward with complaints and should inform their principal or supervisor.

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. The district will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment and take appropriate disciplinary action.

Employee-to-Student.

Sexual harassment of students by employees is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment of

students includes any welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other oral, written, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. Romantic relationships between district employees and students are strictly prohibited. Once a supervisor or principal has been alerted to the situation, a confidential interview and investigation will be conducted immediately in order to quickly reach a resolution. Immediate and appropriate disciplinary action, including termination, will be taken based upon the results of the investigation. The District will take all necessary steps to ensure that there are no acts of retaliation including interfering with the filing of a complaint, furnishing information, assisting or participating in any manner in an investigation, compliance review, hearing or any other activity related to the administration of employment-related federal, state, or local laws. Other prohibited conduct includes the following:

- *Engaging in sexually oriented conversations for the purpose of personal sexual gratification
- *Telephoning students at home or elsewhere and engaging in inappropriate social relationships
- *Engaging in physical contact that would reasonably be construed as sexual in nature
- *Enticing or threatening students to get them to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for grades or other school-related benefits

Sexual abuse of a student by an employee violates a student's constitutional right to bodily integrity. Sexual abuse may include, but is not limited to, fondling, sexual assault, or sexual intercourse.

Employees who suspect a student is being sexually harassed or abused by another employee are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal. All allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a student will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. Conduct that may be characterized as known or suspected child abuse will also be reported to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. Employees with questions or concerns relating to the alleged sexual harassment of a student would contact the administrator/principal.

Drug-abuse Prevention (Policies DH, DI)

Ira ISD is committed to maintaining a drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of 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 on drug abuse and drug-free schools follows:

Local Policy DH (Drug Abuse)

A copy of this policy, the purpose of which is to eliminate drug abuse from the workplace, shall be provided each employee at the beginning of each year or upon employment.

Employees shall not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances during working hours while at school or at school-related activities during or outside of usual working hours:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage
3. Any glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance or inhalation that can be abused
4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior altering drugs

An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered “under the influence” of a controlled substance”.

The use of E-Cigarettes (vaping) on school grounds or school activities is illegal per Texas Penal code 48.01.

An employee who uses a drug authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically for that employee’s use shall not be considered to have violated this policy.

Each employee shall be given a copy of the District’s notice regarding drug-free schools. SEE DI (EXHIBIT)

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse (Policy FFG)

All employees are required by state law to immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. Teachers and other professional staff are required to file a report within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. 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. Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should report their concerns to the campus principal.

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.

Safety (Local Policy CK)

The District shall take every reasonable precaution regarding the safety of its students, employees, visitors, and all others with whom it conducts business. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing, implementing, and promoting a comprehensive safety program.

The general areas of responsibility include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies.
2. Program activities intended to reduce the frequency of accident and injury, including:
 - a. Inspecting work areas and equipment
 - b. Training front-line and supervisory staff
 - c. Establishing safe work procedures and regulations
 - d. Reporting, investigating, and reviewing accidents
 - e. Promoting responsibility for District property on the part of students, employees, and the community
3. Program activities intended to reduce the ultimate cost of accidents and injuries through investigation and documentation.
4. Program activities that identify and develop prudent methods of financing loss costs on an annual basis, including the purchase of commercial insurance, self-insured retentions, and risk pooling.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons (Policies FNCG, GKA)

Employees, visitors, and students are prohibited from bringing firearms, illegal knives, or other weapons onto school premises or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. 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 Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal.

Visitors in the Workplace (Policy CLA)

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 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.

Copyrighted Materials (Policy EFE)

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.). Rented videotapes are to be used in the classroom for educational purposes only. Duplication or backups of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Computer Use and Data Management (Policy CQ)

The district's electronic communications systems, including its network access to the Internet, are to be used for administrative and instructional purposes only. Electronic mail transmissions and other uses of the electronic communications systems are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees and students who are authorized to use the systems are required to abide by the provisions of the district's communications systems policy and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact Dave Hanes, Technology Director.

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 business office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Pest Control Treatment (Policy DI)

Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a district building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located on campuses and in the administration building. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

Activity Funds Management (Local Policy CFD)

The following guidelines shall govern student activity accounts:

1. All student activity funds will be maintained in the Business Office. Each account shall be kept up-to-date so the bookkeeper can give the club sponsor or club officer a full account of club or organization funds with minimum effort.
2. When you have money to be deposited in an activity account, these funds must be taken to the business office. Your deposit needs to be separated by denominations, both bills and coins.
3. When the club sponsor or club officer submits a check request, the invoice and/or bill must be attached to the request in order for a check to be written.
4. An invoice and a properly signed authorization must be available to back up each check when the accounts are audited.

Agriculture Projects

From time to time, agriculture students will be available to do projects for employees of the district and community members. In order to replace supplies that are used, there will be a fee charged. This fee will be determined by multiplying 10% times the cost of the materials for the project. (Checks for this fee should be made out to Ira ISD. This money will be deposited into the general fund.

School Transportation

Requesting and Use of a School Vehicle:

1. If a school vehicle is to be used, a transportation request must be made out five days prior to the date that the vehicle is required. (In emergencies, contact the administrator/principal)
2. All vehicle requests must be made on the appropriate form and submitted to the administrator/principal for approval and assignment of a vehicle. If the administrator/principal is not available, then the administrative assistant may approve and assign a vehicle.
3. In the event the administrator/principal determines that a school vehicle is not available and your personal vehicle is used, you should submit a reimbursement form to the business office for mileage reimbursement.
4. If you use a school vehicle, then you are responsible for cleaning the vehicle and returning it to the bus shed.

5. If you feel that a vehicle needs maintenance or repair, please inform the administrator/principal in writing so that the required work may be done.
6. School vehicles must be parked in the bus shed when not in use. Please do not park them at the school or at your house. Any exceptions must be pre-approved by the administrator/principal.
7. All keys to vehicles will be kept secured and you must have the appropriate signed paperwork on file or with you in order to request the key from Juan.
8. If you must add fuel or oil to the vehicle when you have it, please be sure that you receive and return a receipt to the business office for the items purchased. A detailed expense report is maintained on all school vehicles in order to determine the cost of operation.
9. Only school personnel and students of Ira I.S.D. are allowed to travel to school functions in a school vehicle.

Student Meals: (Subject to approval by Administration)

1. Meals for student activities may not exceed \$12.00 per person.
2. Athletics--Athletes will have a meal provided as appropriate during that sport's season.
3. Academics -- The school will provide meals during academic competition for participants.
4. Meals will be provided in competition above district level.
 During all day competitions, sandwiches and drinks should be taken for lunch, which will be provided by the school.

Travel Expense Reimbursement (Policy DEE)

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and the superintendent must give approval. Employees must use school vehicles, if available for travel. If an employee desires to travel in their own vehicle, then no mileage reimbursement will be approved. If no school transportation is available, then mileage will be reimbursed for approved travel according to the current rate schedule authorized by the board of trustees and the Internal Revenue Service. Employees must submit receipts to be reimbursed for expenses other than mileage and meals. (Subject to change depending on destination)

Costs:

Mileage: .655 cents per mile - personal car used only if school vehicle
 Is not available
 Per Diem: Breakfast-\$9.00 Lunch-\$12.00 Dinner-\$15.00
 Motel: \$85.00

Staff Workshops and Conventions:

1. Staff workshops must be approved in advance (at least 5 days) by the immediate supervisor. Approval will be based upon relevance to subjects taught, funding, and availability of substitute.
2. Faculty may request only one convention per year that requires travel expenses. These must be approved by the principal and are contingent upon funding.

School Field Trips:

1. Field trips are a very important aspect of the educational process and must be coordinated with the educational material that is being taught in the classroom.
2. Field trips must be approved two weeks in advance by the Principal and notification sent to the parent at least 7 days in advance.
3. Transportation requests must be turned in 10 days prior to the trip.
4. Field trips are limited to three a year.

General Procedures

Bad weather closing (Policy CKC)

The district may close schools for a full day or part of a day because of bad weather or emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the administrative assistant and administrator/principal will make the official decision concerning the closing of the district's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late or to release students early, school officials will notify the following radio and television stations:

**Radio Stations: KSYN—1450 AM, 101.7 FM, Snyder
KBST—95.9 FM, Big Springs**

Television Station: Channel 12, Abilene

Emergencies (Policy CKC)

All employees should be familiar with the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Fire, tornado, and other emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with evacuation procedures. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all district buildings. Employees should know the location of the extinguishers nearest their place of work and how to use them.

Purchasing Procedures (Policy CHA)

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the business office on

an official district purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. 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 Keeli Hines, Business Manager, for additional information on purchasing procedures.

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify their supervisor and business office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, home telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. Forms to process a change in personal information can be obtained from the business office.

Personnel Records (Policy GBA)

Most district records including personnel records are public information and must be released upon request. A limited amount of personal information may be withheld. Employees may choose not to allow public access to or have the following information included in a staff directory by submitting a written request to personnel office:

Address

Phone Number

Social Security number

Information that reveals whether they have family members

Building Use (Policy GKD)

The Principal is responsible for scheduling the use of school building facilities after school hours. Keeli Hines is responsible for scheduling the use of the main gymnasium.

Community Use of School Facilities

School facilities shall be available for community use under conditions prescribed or permitted by law and in accordance with the adopted policies in this handbook.

School facilities are provided primarily for use of student, faculty, and patrons of the school comprising groups or organizations operating within the boundaries of the District. However, area-wide or statewide groups and organizations with which local units are closely affiliated

may be granted use of school facilities in accordance with provisions below.

Rates shall be determined by classification of groups. The groups are school-related, community-based (nonprofit), and fund raising or commercial ventures:

1. School-related groups--no charge:
 - a. School and school-related use
 - b. Educational organizations
 - c. Parent/school groups, PTA
2. Community-based, nonprofit groups—minimum charge (cost of custodial services):
 - a. Civic clubs
 - b. Church groups
 - c. Ex-student organizations
3. Fund-raising and commercial ventures for profit or groups where admission is charged: fees to be charged as scheduled.

Facilities shall not be rented to an outside organization that does not have a local sponsoring group.

Use of buildings and facilities shall be cleared with Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal.

The use of school facilities shall be requested in writing to Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal no less than ten days prior to the event.

School buildings and facilities are available for use by the public provided that:

1. The user's conduct does not violate state law.
2. The building and/or facility is not in use by the school.
3. A request for use of building or facility is submitted to the Principal's office, at least ten days in advance, stating the name of the group, purpose, length of time to be used, and date.
4. The request does not ask for regular and continued use.
5. No alcoholic beverages or tobacco may be brought on or consumed on the premises.
6. Any organization or group using the buildings and facilities designates one member of the group as being in full charge and responsible for the activity.
7. The building or facility has not been previously scheduled by another group.
8. Food and/or nonalcoholic drinks are permitted only in designated areas and outside the building.
9. The organization or group using the facility agrees to

clean up the facility and leave it as it was found, or pays school personnel to do so.

Requirements: The Superintendent or Principal shall require the lessee to provide any information necessary to determine facilities, arrangements, and any special services necessary to the staging and proper management of any event scheduled in a school facility and said information should be set forth in the letter of application.

Persons reserving the facilities shall be held responsible for any damage done to the facility.

The person designated as being in full charge of the group or organization requesting facility use shall be required to sign any rental agreement or release from liability provided by the District. Any forms provided must be signed prior to use of the facility.

In no case will the lessee permit more persons to enter the facilities than the number of seats available.

Fees: The fee schedule for leasing school facilities is as follows:

New School Fee is Undetermined Currently

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Salee Gymnasium | Available as approved by Administrator |
| 2. New Gym | \$75 per day, \$40 per half-day,
\$100 refundable deposit required |
| 3. Classroom/Library | \$50 per use per day |
| 4. Football Field - outside areas | \$150 per use per day |

In addition to the lease fee, the lessee shall be charged for the employment of school personnel to open the area, supervise the activity, secure the area at the completion of the event, and clean the area if needed.

The rate for school personnel shall be \$20.00 per hour (minimum of two hours).

Use of Furniture, Equipment: School furniture and equipment shall not be loaned to non-school groups without approval of the Administrator/Principal. The person designated as being in full charge of the group or organization shall be asked to sign a form assuming full responsibility for any damage to the furniture or equipment.

School-owned vehicles may be used only by authorized school personnel for specific school purposes. No exceptions may be made to this policy.

Board policy GKD provides guidelines for use of school facilities.

The policy includes a statement that the Board shall set fees to be applied when fees are applicable. Recent increases in utility cost, garbage rates, and custodial care shall require significantly higher fees to recover the District's cost. Generally, facilities shall not be available on Sundays. Exceptions may be made for special services or for unusual circumstances

Termination of Employment (Resignations--Policy DFE)

Contract employees.

Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the Principal. Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the board of trustees. Resignation without consent of the board may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification.

The Principal will notify the Texas Commissioner of Education when an employee resigns and reasonable evidence exists to indicate that the employee has engaged in any of the acts listed in Policy DF.

Non-Contract Employees.

Non-contract employees may resign their positions at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the Principal 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.

Dismissal or Non-renewal of Contract Employees (Policies DCD, DFAA, DFAB, DFBA, DFBB, DFBC, DFD)

Employees on probationary or term contracts can be dismissed during the school year or non-renewed at the end of the year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. 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. Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the DF policies that are provided to employees or in the policy manuals located on all campuses and administration office.

Dismissal of Non-Contract 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, religion, sex, national origin, disability, military status, 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 before the board. To present a grievance, the employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook.

Exit Interviews and Procedures (Policy DC)

Exit interviews will 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, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment. The district may withhold the cost of any items not returned from the final paycheck.

Local Policy DC (Exit Interview)

An exit interview shall be conducted and a report prepared, if possible, for every employee who leaves employment with the District. These interviews shall be conducted in accordance with administrative procedures.

Reports to the Commissioner (Policy DF)

The dismissal or resignation of a certified employee will be reported to the Texas Commissioner of Education if there is reasonable evidence that the employee's conduct involves the following:

- *Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other illegal conduct with a minor.
- *The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance.
- *The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of school property or funds.
- *An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position.
- *Committing a crime on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

Equal Educational Opportunities (Policy FB)

The Ira Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational 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 on any of the basis listed above should be directed to Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal, 6190 West FM 1606 Ira, Texas 79527. Telephone number 325-573-2628.

Student

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 student's records:

- *Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes
- *The student (if 18 or older)
- *School officials with legitimate educational interests

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.

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 campus principal for assistance.

Extracurricular Absences

Sponsors and coaches must have all extracurricular absences, including arrival and departure times, approved by the principal in advance. After approval, and as early as possible, coaches should communicate to all teachers which students will be absent and when.

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. The campus office can provide parents and students with information on filing a complaint. 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 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. Once all administrative complaint procedures are exhausted, parents and students can bring complaints to the board of trustees.

Administering Medication to Students (Policy FFAC)

No District employee will give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, or dietary supplements except authorized employees, in accordance with policy, and:

If the medication is prescription, it must be provided by the parent, along with a written request, and be in the original, properly labeled container.

If the medication is nonprescription, it must be provided by the parent, along with a written request, and be in the original, properly labeled container.

If the substance is herbal or a dietary supplement, it must be provided by the parent and will be administered only if it is required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or § 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

In certain emergency situations, for which the District will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only: In accordance with the guidelines developed with the District's medical advisor for treatment of the particular emergency; and when the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the District's form.

A student with asthma who has written authorization from his or her parent and physician or other licensed health care provider may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma medication at school or school-related events as long as the student and parents have seen the school nurse, school secretary, or principal.

Student 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 procedures 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.

Teachers must file a written report with the principal or another appropriate administrator when they have knowledge that a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct. A copy of this report will be sent by the administrative assistant or principal to the student's parents within 24 hours.

A Teacher's Guide to Student Discipline

This general overview of discipline is designed to inform teachers of issues that arise in disciplinary situations. This is a supplementary document that complements the District's Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook. When in doubt, consult with Brian Patterson Superintendent or Dale Jones Principal. regarding disciplinary decisions.

Where can I get a copy of our Student Code of Conduct?

Teachers will be given a student handbook which contains the Student Code of Conduct or there is a copy available in the administrative assistant's office. There is a copy on the Ira website.

Does the Student Code of Conduct change from year to year?

There are several ways that the SCOC could change. First, the Texas Legislature meets every other year and may enact legislation that requires changes in the SCOC. TASB revises the Model Student Code of Conduct as needed after a legislative session and district administrators incorporate those changes into the local SCOC. TASB also incorporates other changes that are required by law, including relevant federal legislation, federal and state regulations, and federal and state court decisions. Finally, district administrators, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, might make changes that affect the local SCOC at any time. Generally, however, changes are made in order to start the school year with a new Student Code of Conduct.

How does the district go about revising the Student Code of Conduct?

Revisions to the district's SCOC are usually initiated by the administrators with input from the faculty. The SCOC must be adopted by the Board and has the same weight as any policy in the district's Local Policy Manual. All changes to the SCOC must be presented to the Board for adoption.

What happened to the discipline management plan some districts had?

The legislature amended the Education Code in 1995 mandating a shift from the discipline management plan to a discipline management program anchored by the Student Code of Conduct. The district-level planning and decision-making

committee is now tasked to include a discipline management program in the district improvement plan and the Board is required to adopt an SCOC.

Is it a good idea to categorize disciplinary offenses and punishments by “levels”?

In the past, some plans and codes were organized into categories of offenses, such as “level 1” offenses, “level 2” offenses, and so on. The use of “levels” is no longer workable for an SCOC due to the structure and complexity of the Education Code’s provisions related to discipline. Now, particular disciplinary measures, including expulsion or placement in a DAEP, are prescribed for a series of specific offenses. As a result, TASB Legal Services recommends that districts eliminate the use of, or reference to, levels in their SCOC. The TASB Model Student Code of Conduct does not categorize disciplinary actions by levels of offenses.

Classroom Discipline

Besides the Student Code of Conduct, what else is relevant in disciplinary situations?

There may be campus and classroom rules in addition to expectations and requirements found in the SCOC. The rules may be posted in the classroom, given to students, or printed in the Student Handbook and may overlap with some behaviors listed in the SCOC. For instance, the dress code is referred to in the SCOC and it is disseminated in the Student Handbook as well.

For violations of campus and classroom rules or SCOC behaviors that do not have mandatory consequences, the district strongly suggests that the teacher employ discipline management techniques, such as the following:

- Verbal correction
- Seating changes within the classroom
- Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- “Cooling off” time
- Rewards or demerits
- Behavioral contracts
- Detention
- Counseling by teachers, counselors, or the principal
- Parent-teacher conferences

When can I remove a student from the classroom?

Teachers may use discipline management techniques such as a "time out" either in or out of the classroom when a student misbehaves or is disruptive. If you place a student in the hall and I walk by, I will take that student to the office and, depending on the behavior that caused the student to be placed there, take disciplinary action.

There are also three categories of teacher removals to the principal's office:

- Informal removal
- Discretionary formal removal
- Mandatory formal removal

What is an informal removal to the principal's office?

An informal removal occurs when a student exhibits problem behavior and the teacher sends the student to the principal's office for a short period of time. The principal uses an appropriate discipline management technique consistent with the district's SCOC, such as detention, notification of parent, parent/teacher conference, corporal punishment, in school suspension (ISS), withdrawal of privileges, or others as deemed. Generally, the student returns to the classroom later the same day/period or the next school day.

What is a discretionary formal removal to the principal's office?

In some instances, a teacher has the discretion to remove a student from the classroom. Such discretionary formal removals may result in a longer student absence from the classroom. A teacher may initiate a discretionary formal removal from the classroom in one of two circumstances:

1. The student's behavior has been documented by the teacher as repeatedly interfering with the teacher's ability to teach the class; or
2. The student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that the teacher cannot teach, and the students in the classroom cannot learn.

When a teacher initiates a formal removal, the principal may place the student into another appropriate classroom, into in-school suspension, or into a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program, depending on the nature of the behavior. The principal may also use other discipline management techniques.

What is a mandatory formal removal to the principal's office?

If the student's behavior requires mandatory placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program or expulsion, the teacher must remove the student from class and send the student to the principal's office. The SCOC lists the offenses that receive mandatory consequences, some of which are identified by law and some of which have been designated by the district.

What is an emergency removal?

The Education Code includes a provision that allows administrators to place a student in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program or to expel the student from the regular classroom in an emergency situation. To order an emergency removal to a DAEP, the principal or his or her designee must reasonably believe that the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with one or more of the following: 1) a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in a class; 2) the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or 3) with the operation of school or a school-sponsored activity.

To order an emergency expulsion, the principal or his or her designee must reasonably believe that the action is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm. At the time of an emergency placement or expulsion, the student must be given oral notice of the reason for the action. It must be a reason for which placement in a DAEP or expulsion could also be made on a non-emergency basis. The district must conduct further due process proceedings as set out in the SCOC. The appropriate administrator should be contacted for direction.

Do I have a choice whether to report a student who violates the Student Code of Conduct?

Many violations of the SCOC are handled through discipline management techniques in the classroom. Violations that carry a mandated consequence through law or district choice, however, must be reported.

What can I do if I object to a student being returned to my classroom after he or she has been removed for disciplinary reasons?

After a formal teacher removal, if the teacher objects to the return of the student to the classroom, a placement review committee will review the situation. The placement review committee consists of three members: two teachers who are chosen by campus faculty and one professional staff member appointed by the campus principal. If the placement review committee determines that returning the student to the teacher's class is the best or only alternative available, then the student shall be returned to the class.

What can I do if I disagree with how a disciplinary situation has been handled?

A teacher should first attempt to resolve the differences informally with the administrator responsible for the disciplinary decision. If the teacher is not satisfied after attempts at informal resolution, he or she may file a grievance by following the process described at DGBA(LOCAL) in the district's Local Policy Manual.

Why do I no longer have to prepare written reports of disciplinary actions?

The law has changed to give districts greater local control over written reports related to discipline. The Education Code requires school boards to include information about written disciplinary reports in their Student Codes of Conduct. Also, the Education Code limits the type of written reports that a teacher can be required to prepare. School districts are not precluded from collecting additional essential information from a classroom teacher upon agreement between a teacher and the district.

How is the educational process continued when a student is placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP), or in-school suspension?

The Education Code obligates districts to provide students in a DAEP and in-school suspension with the opportunity to complete coursework before the beginning of the next school year through some method, which may include correspondence courses, completing the work in the DAEP, or summer school (in another district).

How does discipline in extracurricular activities relate to the Student Code of Conduct?

The SCOC applies to students in extracurricular activities outside of the instructional day and away from district facilities. With the principal's approval, sponsors and coaches may also establish higher standards of discipline and dress for participating students. These standards should be distributed to students upon joining an activity. In addition, when a student's behavior requires placement in a DAEP according to state law, the law also prohibits that student from participating in school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular activities. Local policy may also prohibit a student from participating in these activities if the student is placed in a DAEP for discretionary reasons.

How can I learn more about the law and policy governing student discipline?

Section 37.018 of the Education Code directs all districts to provide each teacher and administrator with a copy of [Education Code Chapter 37 Subchapter A](#) and any local policies relating to this subchapter. The Student Code of Conduct is adopted by the Board and constitutes local policy regarding discipline in the District.

Chapter 37 Subchapter A:

http://www.tasb.org/policy/discipline/chapter37_clean.pdf