

Board Approved June 9, 2023

Neshoba County School District



Employee Handbook 2023-2024

THE PERSONNEL POLICIES CONTAINED HEREIN HAVE BEEN ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION. THESE POLICIES ARE SUBJECT TO FUTURE REVIEW AND TO CHANGE BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FROM TIME TO TIME WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. THESE POLICIES ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE A GUIDE FOR REASONABLE AND CONSISTENT TREATMENT OF PERSONNEL. ALL EMPLOYEES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING DISTRICT POLICIES WHICH MAY BE FOUND IN THEIR ENTIRETY at <http://neshoba.msbapolicy.org/>.

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Neshoba County School District

Employee Handbook

2023-2024

PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to convey information regarding your job and district expectations. This handbook provides information regarding the policies and procedures of Neshoba County School District.

It should be noted; however, that this handbook does not and cannot address every question or problem which will arise over the course of a school year. Any questions should be addressed with your principal or supervisor.

Situations will arise which call for exceptions to these policies and procedures. The Superintendent may grant exceptions, when the facts warrant such action. Should you believe that a given set of facts warrant an exception, discuss the situation with your principal or supervisor.

Unauthorized deviation from these standards will be dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. All policies, procedures, and practices of the Neshoba County School District are in accordance with state and federal regulations governing the operation of public schools. Any statutory or policy change effecting the operations of public schools will be reflected in modifications of the District Policies which can be found at the following link: <http://neshoba.msbapolicy.org/>

The Neshoba County School Board shall not discriminate in its policies and practices with respect to compensation, terms or conditions of employment because of an individual's race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, height, weight, age, marital status, political beliefs, disability, or handicap which does not impair an individual's ability to perform adequately in that individual's particular position or activity. (Cross Ref: Policy GAAA)

NESHOPA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Rhonda Holley.....District One	Wyatt Waddell.....District Four
Mary Ann Nicholson.....District Two	Jill Byars.....District Five
Jimmie Joyner.....District Three	Robert Lee Thomas.....Attorney



NESHOPA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
580 EAST MAIN STREET
PHILADELPHIA, MS 39350

CENTRAL OFFICE & SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Josh Perkins	Superintendent of Education
Dr. Penny Hill Sistrunk.....	Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services/Personnel
Tommy Holland.....	Assistant Superintendent of Student Services/Project Manager
Justin Richardson.....	Chief Financial Officer
Stephany Winstead	Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk
Anita Lovern.....	Receptionist/16 th Section
Rita Daugherty.....	Payroll/Human Resources
Sherry Smith.....	Accounts Payable/Purchasing/Fixed Assets
La'Monica Calloway.....	District Test Coordinator/Gifted/504/MSIS/SAM
Mendy Bowen.....	Director of Special Education
Deirdre Manning.....	Director of Federal Programs/Pre-K Program
Chad Penson.....	Director of Technology
Jimmy Rowcliff.....	Director of Transportation/Safety
Jessie Smith.....	Director of Alternative Services
Dana McLain.....	Workforce Development Coordinator
Nicki Tadlock.....	Food Services Administrator
Dudley Winstead.....	Maintenance Supervisor
Shelby Griffin.....	State School Attendance Officer
Tiffany Plott.....	Elementary Principal (K-5)
Jennifer Rawson.....	Elementary Assistant Principal (K-1)
Mindy Hutchison.....	Elementary Assistant Principal (2-3)
Kim Baysinger	Elementary Assistant Principal (4-5)
Jacob Drury.....	Middle School Principal (6-8)
Austin Buchanan.....	Middle School Assistant Principal (6-8)
Jason Gentry.....	High School Principal (9-12)
LaShon Horne.....	High School Assistant Principal (9-12)
Brent Pouncey.....	High School Assistant Principal (9-12)
Jonathan Walker.....	High School Assistant Principal (9-12)

VISION – MISSION - BELIEFS

The **vision** of the NCSD is for all students to graduate college and career ready with courses, certifications, and external opportunities beyond a high school diploma.

The **mission** of the Neshoba County School District is to develop every student intellectually, emotionally, and physically in a safe environment.

We believe:

- ✓ A safe and positive environment is foundational to educational success.
- ✓ All students can learn and grow.
- ✓ Strong educators delivering high-quality instruction are essential to student learning.
- ✓ It is critical to equip every student with an education for an ever-changing world.
- ✓ Schools, students, families, and the community must share the responsibility of ensuring success for our students.
- ✓ All members of the Neshoba family are life-long learners and are called to grow and develop.
- ✓ In understanding and valuing the diverse cultures and interests of our students.

One Community. One Mission. One Neshoba.

Teachers' Duties and Responsibilities

(Cross Ref: Policies GAB, GABAD, GBA, GBRB, GBRG, DM, ID)

It is the policy of the Board of Neshoba County School District to hire the best-trained and qualified teachers available and to pay the best salary possible within the resources available. In turn, a competent job will be expected, and the character and conduct of each teacher should be such that it will be a credit to the school and to the community.

All teachers must accept responsibility for cooperation with the principal and the superintendent in carrying out the rules and regulations of the board and in maintaining reasonable discipline among the members of the student body before, during, and after regular classes and in all extracurricular activities.

Teachers shall be in their classrooms and conducting pertinent instructional activities during all assigned periods unless otherwise directed by the principal. **Students should never be left unsupervised!**

Personal business should not be conducted during school hours. Exceptions may be granted by the principal in cases of emergencies.

Teachers shall prepare a lesson plan of class activities and procedures for all subjects taught. Principals or their designee will review lesson plans weekly. Teachers are expected to work with principals and other administrators to devise relevant and teachable lesson plans that are aligned with Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards and Mississippi Curriculum Framework.

Teachers are responsible for all equipment and school property entrusted to them, and are **personally liable for excessive damages or loss** of that property. Teachers are expected to maintain neat and orderly classrooms. **All employees who are assigned equipment for home use (i.e. cell phones, Ipads, laptops) must complete the appropriate asset liability form(s).**

Teachers shall not engage in gainful employment outside their contract, where employment affects adversely professional status or impairs standing with students, colleagues, or the community.

Teachers shall adhere to the conditions of their contract until the service thereunder has been performed, the contract has been terminated by mutual consent, or the contract has otherwise been legally terminated.

Teachers shall refrain from discussing confidential and official business with unauthorized persons on or off campus. Unauthorized persons is defined as any individual who is not the parent, legal guardian, or their designee and any individual who is not listed on the accession list for student records.

Teachers shall strive to keep parents duly informed of the pupils' progress, and to hold conferences when necessary.

Teachers shall strive at all times to maintain a cordial relationship with the parents. The best public relations we can have are happy, well-disciplined, and well-instructed students.

Teachers shall give reasonable assistance to a student making up work when he/she has been absent because of illness or for any other unavoidable cause.

Teachers should seek to grow professionally through participation in school staff development activities, study, research, conferences, and attendance at professional meetings.

Annual District Accreditation & Accountability

Accreditation

The State Board of Education, acting through the Commission on School Accreditation, is required to establish and implement a process of accountability at the public school district level. School districts are held accountable for Accreditation Policies and Process Standards and receive an accreditation status of ACCREDITED, PROBATION, or WITHDRAWN (does not comply with Accreditation policies and Process Standards or with a Corrective Action Plan). Standards of the performance-based accreditation system recommended by the Commission and adopted by the State Board of Education are contained in the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*. Process Standards address accepted educational principles and practices that are believed to promote educational quality.

Accountability

The accountability system is designed to improve student achievement and increase the level of accountability for both school districts and individual schools. The accountability model focuses on student achievement at each school and at the district level. Performance standards have been established, and student assessment data from the statewide assessment program (Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics, Grades 5 & 8 Science, and Subject-Area Tests of Algebra I, Biology I, English II, and U.S. History, as well as graduation rate, ACT sub-scores, and accelerated coursework) will be used to determine individual school performance classifications and district level performance classifications. Upon full implementation of the statewide testing program, the State Board of Education shall apply an "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" designation to the school and school district statewide accountability performance classification labels. Accountability labels will be assigned based on 700 points for Elementary & Middle School and 1000 points for High School:

Reading Proficiency	(100 points)
Reading Growth (All)	(100 points)
Reading Growth (Low 25%)	(100 points)
Math Proficiency	(100 points)
Math Growth (All)	(100 points)
Math Growth (Low 25%)	(100 points)
Science Proficiency (50 points High School, 100 points Elementary and Middle- Gr. 5 & 8)	
US History Proficiency	(50 points)
Graduation Rate	(200 points)
College & Career Readiness – (Math 50% & ELA 50%)	(50 points)
Acceleration (Participation-50% & Performance-50%)	(50 points)

The Neshoba County School District is excited to be a part of the **Redefining Ready Initiative**:

<u>College Ready Indicators</u>	<u>Career Ready Indicators</u>	<u>Life Ready Indicators</u>
<p>GPA of 2.8 and one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Placement Exam (3+) Advanced Placement Course (A, B, or C) Dual Credit College English or Math (A, B, or C) College Development Remedial English or Math (A, B, or C) Algebra II (A, B, or C) <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College Entrance ACT: English/Reading (17) Math (19) ACT Exam: English (18) Reading (22) Science (23) Math (22) 	<p>Career Cluster Identified and two or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% attendance Apprenticeship or Internship Industry Credential Dual Credit Career Pathway Course Two or more organized Co-Curricular Activities 	<p>Two or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 hours of community service Participation in mock interview session Participation in a Reality Fair sponsored by NCHS Completion of two or more job applications Resume

Building & Grounds

The administration of the Neshoba County School District thanks all employees for helping to keep our campus looking its very best. We take great pride in our buildings and grounds. Your help in keeping them neat is greatly appreciated. Teachers should be alert for any abuse of the building or equipment. **Students who destroy or deface school property are required to restore or replace the damaged item.**

Please report promptly, (fill out work order), any needed repairs that will require the service of maintenance personnel. All facility work orders should be submitted to the designated Assistant Principal.

* Note: **Please do not allow students to adjust thermostats on any heating or air conditioning units.**

Campus Anonymous Reporting

NCSD focuses on keeping our students and staff safe. Anonymous reporting of concerns (anything from mental health issues to threats of violence) can be done through our STOPit mobile app on our website under Quick Links. <https://appweb.stopitsolutions.com/login>

Conduct of Employees

(Cross Ref: *Policies GAA & GAB*)

STATE BOARD POLICY: Mississippi **Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct**

Each educator, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the code of ethics, which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation. This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to the rules established by the Mississippi State Board of Education and protects the health, safety and general welfare

of students and educators. Ethical conduct is any conduct which promotes the health, safety, welfare, discipline and morals of students and colleagues.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the license holder's ability to function in his/her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, safety, welfare, discipline, or morals of students and colleagues.

Any educator or administrator license may be revoked or suspended for engaging in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4). Superintendents shall report to the Mississippi Department of Education license holders who engage in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4).

Employees of the Neshoba County School District are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively on the school district and the community, thus promoting a positive environment for teaching, learning and student well-being.

Unseemly dress, conduct or the use of abusive, foul, profane, suggestive, or inappropriate language by any employee while on duty is expressly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics Standards of Conduct Mississippi Department of Education

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An Educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

1.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
- b. Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment
- c. Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning
- d. Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner
- e. Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter and pedagogical practices
- f. Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establish appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children

1.2. Unethical Conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Harassment of colleagues
- b. Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
- c. Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity
- d. Physical altercations
- e. Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice and does not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

- 2.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
 - b. Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
 - c. Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness
- 2.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following
 - 1. Employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
 - 2. Information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
 - 3. Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
 - 4. Reasons for absences or leave
 - 5. Information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
 - b. Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes and local school board policies.

- 3.0 Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or sexual offense. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Educator/Student Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

- 4.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy, and encouragement for students.
 - b. Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students
 - c. Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement
 - d. Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.
- 4.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Committing any act of child abuse
 - b. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
 - c. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
 - d. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
 - e. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
 - f. Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationships with students.

Examples of these acts may include but not be limited to:

- 1. Sexual jokes
- 2. Sexual remarks
- 3. Sexual kidding or teasing
- 4. Sexual innuendo
- 5. Pressure for dates or sexual favors

6. Inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing or grabbing
7. Rape
8. Threats of physical harm
9. Sexual assault
10. Electronic communication such as texting
11. Invitation to social networking
12. Remarks about a student's body
13. Consensual sex

Standard 5: Educator/Collegial Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with colleagues, both in and outside the classroom.

5.0. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- a. Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
- b. Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
- c. Interfering with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities
- d. Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or family status
- e. Using coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues.

Standard 6: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

6.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice

6.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
- b. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages. A school-related activity includes but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc. which involve students.
- c. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented using tobacco.

Standard 7: Public Funds and Property

An educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use funds, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

7.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds
- b. Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property

- 7.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- a. Knowingly misappropriating, diverting, or using funds, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain
 - b. Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents, or any school-related function
 - c. Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
 - d. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
 - e. Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body

Standard 8: Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

- 8.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- a. Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
 - b. Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization
- 8.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- a. Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body
 - b. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
 - c. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgement or to obtain special advantage. (This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts, or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition of appreciation of service.)

Standard 9: Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of students and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

- 9.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- a. Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a legitimate purpose or is required by law
 - b. Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.
- 9.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- a. Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information family status/income and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law
 - b. Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school board or state directions for the use of tests
 - c. Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standards 10: Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local school board or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

10.0 Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the school board
- b. Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy shall be reported and discussed in a conference between the employee and the school principal (or superintendent and principal if a principal is in violation of this policy). If the principal or superintendent finds the complaint to be factual, he or she shall issue a written reprimand to the employee(s) involved. This reprimand shall become a part of the employee's personnel file.

Violations of this policy may lead to an employee being placed on Administrative leave, dismissed or non-renewed.

Employees shall have the right to appeal any disciplinary action taken against them by following the proper chain of command as specified in the district's "Employee Grievance Procedure" policy and the provisions of the Education Employees Procedures Law (EEPL). Please refer to the EEPL Handbook, published by MSBA.

LEGAL REF.: MS Code 37-9-59 & 37-9-101

CROSS REF.: Policy GAE-R – Licensed Staff Complaints and Grievance

Dismissal of Personnel (Cross Ref: *Policies GBK, GBN-R*)

The causes for dismissal are:

1. Immoral conduct
2. Inefficiency/neglect in duties
3. Not being cooperative with superiors
4. Excessive criticism or disturbance of employee relationships
5. Use of intoxicants or drugs during or before the work day
6. Intemperance (ex. showing anger that is too extreme and not well-controlled or excessive behavior)
7. Physical or mental incapacity for instructional duties
8. Connection with a felony or crime involving moral turpitude (corruption, perversion, etc.)
9. Unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4 of MS Educator Code of Ethics)
10. Excessive absenteeism – The interest and welfare of the students being paramount, the District reserves the right to terminate the contract of any teacher who is excessively absent during the year (See Sick Leave Provisions pg. 37). In the event of such termination, the teacher shall be entitled to no further compensation except salary accrued to date of termination.
11. Violation of Board policies, rules and regulations (**including failure to properly implement the Bullying/Harassment Policy**)
12. Failure to perform assigned responsibilities

Neshoba County School District abides by all provisions of the School Employment Procedures Act. All employees' conflicts will be dealt with individually as provided by law.

Dress & Personal Appearance (Cross Ref: *Policy GAB*)

The Neshoba County School Board assumes that all employees will dress in a manner befitting job responsibilities and that their personal appearance will be consistent with dress and appearance regulations required of students; thus, setting examples for the students.

The school district feels very strongly that teachers are professionals and should dress in that manner; therefore, the following will not be allowed:

- visible tattoos (must be covered)
- cutoffs
- shorts
- dresses or skirts unless they are at least to the top of the knee **if worn without leggings**
- leggings (except when worn under dresses or long tunic like shirts/sweaters) - dresses, skirts, tunics, shirts or sweaters should be at least finger-tip length **if worn with leggings**
- cotton sweat suits
- tee shirts (except on designated days: spirit day, homecoming, etc.)

“Spirit” Fridays will be observed where personnel may wear more casual clothing including jeans.

Contracts (Cross Ref: *Policy GBD*)

The Principal will recommend teachers to the Superintendent for reemployment on or before April 1. The Superintendent will in turn recommend teachers to the Board by the April meeting, or within 10 days after the Governor signs the budget.

Teachers who are approved for employment will be offered contracts electronically for the following year. Teachers have ten (10) calendar days to accept or reject contracts. Any contract not signed after ten (10) calendar days will be considered void.

Contracts are for the protection of both the teacher and the Board of Education. It is the intent of the Board to abide by the terms therein and it is expected that the teacher does likewise.

Carefully review your contract before signing. Contact your principal should you have questions regarding the contract. Only sign a contract when you fully understand the agreement(s) contained therein.

After contracts have been signed, resignations of teachers and all other employees will be accepted only when satisfactory replacements can be found, except in the case of mental or physical disability verified by a doctor’s certificate. Resignations to the Board of Education must be in writing, and the employee will be notified of the decision of the Board in accepting or rejecting the resignation.

Direct Deposit (Cross Ref: *Policies DJC, DJCA*)

The Neshoba County School Board has mandatory direct deposit for every employee (full or part time). A completed direct deposit form attached with a voided personal check should be submitted to the Payroll Clerk at the Superintendent's Office for any new staff member that has not completed this process.

Disaster Drills/Safety (Cross Ref: *Policy EBBC*)

Fire, tornado, earthquake, bomb, lockdown, and active shooter drills will be conducted as scheduled and at times unannounced. Your principal will explain these drill procedures in your building. These drills are primarily conducted for the safety of the Neshoba Central students. They are also mandated by accreditation standards. All disaster routines and drills are explained in your copy of the **School Safety Plan/Crisis Management Plan**, which should be kept on/near your desk at all times.

Discipline (Cross Ref: *Policies JCA, JD*)

An organized disciplinary program supports teachers' efforts to teach and addresses the growth of positive student attitudes and behavior. The discipline policies of this District are in compliance with both federal and state law. The discipline policy incorporates the student code of conduct required by Policy JD and the policies and procedures set forth herein and in Policy JCA and as supplemented by all others adopted.

Excessive Discipline Issues in any particular classroom is often evidence of Poor Preparation, Instruction, and/or Classroom Management on the part of the teacher.

NEVER leave your room unsupervised while students are present. This is when most fights will occur. You are personally liable for all students who are assigned to you.

Teachers are expected to handle routine discipline problems. The administration will handle severe and/or chronic cases. **Do not send discipline cases to the library, counselor's office, or place them in the hall!**

The authority of the school extends throughout the school day including time between home and school, at school-sponsored events, outside the school day, and off school property. Any misconduct that affects or relates to the management and efficiency of the school is within the scope of school officials and the Board.

(A student is subject to discipline when engaged in extra-curricular activities as a representative of the school. Students shall conduct themselves as young ladies and gentlemen at any time they are engaged in a school-related activity. Sponsors are expected to see that this policy is adhered to.)

The Board shall support teachers and administrators in efforts to maintain proper decorum among students. The Board authorizes principals to use such reasonable disciplinary or punitive measures as seem necessary to insure a properly functioning school organization.

Bullying/Harassment (Cross Ref: *Policy JDDA, HB 263*)

The Neshoba County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subject to bullying or harassing behavior by other school employees or students. Likewise, the

District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person engages in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior.

- (1) Bullying or harassing behavior is any **pattern** of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by an actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, and that:
 - a) Places a student or school employee in actual or reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
 - b) Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.
- (2) No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students.
- (3) No person shall engage in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior.
- (4) A school employee or student who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to the appropriate school official.
- (5) Conduct described in section (1) is considered bullying or harassing behavior if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

The Neshoba County School District recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the Neshoba County School District defines "reasonable action" as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school official in authority when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

[Anonymous reporting of concerns \(anything from mental health issues to threats of violence\) can be done through our STOPit app on our main website under Quick Links or <https://appweb.stopitsolutions.com/login>](#)

Procedures for Reporting Bullying/Harassing Behavior (Also see www.neshobacentral.com for procedures and bullying complaint form)

Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, or has witnessed or who has reliable information that a student, school employee or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school official. The report shall be made promptly but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the names of the victim of the misconduct, the names of any witnesses and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board

chairman.

The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The school/district official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within a timely manner after initial receipt of the complaint by the school/district official. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be put in writing. The school/district official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents as appropriate when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the school/district official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and other affected parties as deemed necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within a timely manner.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall review the appeal, within a timely manner, and shall provide a written decision within a timely manner following the next regular scheduled board meeting.

Corporal Punishment (Cross Ref: *Policy JDB*)

School personnel are prohibited from using corporal punishment on any student with a disability. A student with a disability is any student who has an IEP or Section 504 plan. A certified teacher, principal, assistant principal, or other certified school personnel shall NOT be granted immunity from liability for the use of corporal punishment on a student with a disability.

“Corporal Punishment” of a NON-DISABLED student means the reasonable use of physical contact by a certified teacher, principal or assistant principal as may be necessary to maintain discipline, to enforce a school rule, for self-protection or for the protection of other students from disruptive students. Corporal punishment of a non-disabled student may be administered by the principal of each school or those designated by him only (certified staff) **and shall be witnessed at all times by at least one (1) certified school employee.** Punishment shall be reasonable and administered with a paddle, which will not bruise or abuse the student.

Whenever corporal punishment of a non-disabled student is administered, a discipline report must be completed and signed by the teacher and witness. Discipline reports should be submitted daily to the principal. Any non-disabled student refusing corporal punishment shall be assigned alternative punishment, which may include suspension. Once a student is brought to the principal, the principal then has the right to determine disciplinary procedures to be taken.

Detention

In-School Suspension (ISS) (Cross Ref: *Policy JDC*)

Detention of students for disciplinary purposes is permissible. The superintendent and principal shall establish guidelines for detention. District personnel shall supervise all students in detention. The planning and scheduling of students to be kept in detention should reflect this district's philosophy of student-centered instruction and his/her individual growth.

Suspension (Cross Ref: *Policy JDD*) **Out-of-School**

"Suspension" is the denial of the privilege of attending school in the district. It may be imposed by the principal after due process has been given a student. A suspended student may return to school following the expiration of the suspension period without application for readmission but will be required to be accompanied, on return to school, by a parent, legal guardian, or custodian.

A "Suspension" includes the denial of the privilege of participating in or attending any school-related activity for the period of the suspension. Further, suspended students shall not trespass upon any other school campus or enter into any other school building except for a pre-arranged conference with a principal.

In all cases of suspension, the parent/ legal guardian/ custodian shall be notified in writing within 24 hours of such suspension, giving the reason thereof. If a student is to be sent home during normal school hours, a parent or guardian shall be notified before the student is dismissed. No student shall be sent home during normal school hours unless a parent, guardian, or custodian has first been notified.

Expulsion (Cross Ref: *Policies JDE, JDG*)

"Expulsion" is the denial of school attendance for a specified minimum period of time or for an unspecified period of time. Expulsion will last, in no event less than one calendar year, after which time a student may be readmitted only upon application and with approval by the board in accordance with Policies JDE and JDG.

"Limited Expulsion" is the denial of school attendance for the remainder of the school year. A principal may recommend a limited expulsion when a student who has been suspended 3 times during the same school year commits a fourth offense or in circumstances otherwise proper for such action. The student may be readmitted the following school year only upon application and with approval by the board in accordance with Policy JDE and JDG.

Due Process (Cross Ref: *Policy JCAA*)

A student who has been suspended, denied admission, recommended for alternative school, or expelled has the right to due process. All aspects, circumstances and records of the student's case shall be confidential and available only to authorized school officials dealing directly with the student or to the student's parents, legal guardians or attorneys for the student or for the Board. The following procedures provide notice and opportunity to be heard in such matters.

STEP I: INITIAL INFORMAL HEARING

Applies to: Suspension

Immediate removal

Expulsion

Denial of admission

Alternative school placement

A. An initial informal hearing is required in each case where disciplinary action may be taken against a student and where an expelled student makes application of readmission following the conclusion of the expulsion period. After an initial investigation appropriate under the circumstances, the principal, superintendent, or designee shall:

1. Advise the student of the charges against him or reasons for non-admission
2. Afford the student a full opportunity to respond
3. If the student denies the charges or contests the reasons for non-admission, explain the evidence in support thereof

B. After the informal hearing, the principal may take the following actions:

1. SUSPENSION OF 10 DAYS OR LESS:

The principal or the superintendent may issue to the student and legal guardian a notice of suspension not longer than 10 consecutive school days. The suspension is effective immediately and no further due process is required.

2. IMMEDIATE REMOVAL:

The principal or the superintendent may immediately dismiss the student from school for the day when such is necessary to restore order, to protect the safety of the student or others, and/or to resume normal school functions when an immediate suspension is not or may not be appropriate. A student sent home under these circumstances shall be instructed to return the following day with his legal guardian. Should the student not return as instructed, the principal or the superintendent shall mail or deliver a "Notice of Suspension" for 10 days or less to the student and the parent or legal guardian of the student.

3. IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF EXPULSION:

The principal or the superintendent may immediately suspend a student for 10 days or less and recommend expulsion when there is reason to believe that the student committed an unlawful or violent act, as defined or otherwise provided by district policy. The suspension shall be effective immediately, pending conclusion of due process on the recommendation of expulsion.

4. IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF SUSPENSION OF 11 DAYS OR MORE/EXPULSION:

The principal or the superintendent may immediately suspend a student for 10 days or less and recommend a suspension of 11 days or more or expulsion, as appropriate under the circumstances. The suspension shall be effective immediately, pending the conclusion of due process on the recommendation of long-term suspension or expulsion.

5. DENIAL OF ADMISSION:

The principal or the superintendent may recommend a denial of admission which shall be effective immediately, pending the conclusion of due process on the recommendation for denial of admission.

6. IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENT

The principal or the superintendent may immediately suspend a student for 10 days or less and recommend alternative school placement. The suspension shall be effective immediately, pending the conclusion of due process on the recommendation for alternative school placement.

STEP II: APPEAL

Applies to: Suspension of 11 days or more
Expulsion
Alternative school placement
Denial of admission

The student has the right to request a due process hearing, if after the initial hearing the principal or the superintendent determines that a recommendation of suspension for 11 days or more, expulsion, alternative school placement, or denial of admission is the appropriate disciplinary action:

A. The principal or the superintendent or his/her designee shall give the student a "Student's Statement of Rights Form" containing a recommendation for expulsion, suspension of 11 days or more, non-admission, or alternative school placement.

B. The "Student's Statement of Rights Form" shall contain a statement of the charges/reasons; advise the student of his/her rights to legal counsel, to present witnesses, and to cross-examine witnesses presented against him/her; and state the date, time, and place for hearing. A copy of the notice will be hand-delivered to the student when possible and a copy hand-delivered or mailed to the legal guardian.

C. A hearing before the District Appeals Committee may be requested no later than the fifth school day following the date of the discipline recommendation notice.

D. Pending the outcome of the hearing before the District Appeals Committee:

1. The hearing committee will be before the District Appeals Committee
 - a. The Committee shall be composed of four district and/or school level administrators.
 - b. The superintendent's designee will serve as the investigator, convener, and administrative officer of the Committee. The superintendent's designee will have the right to vote.
2. The Committee shall hear and consider all cases presented and is authorized to:
 - a. To concur or not concur with the suspension of 11 days or more, expulsion, alternative school placement, or non-admission
 - b. To confirm or specify the duration of a suspension of 11 days or more, to confirm or specify the

duration of an alternative school placement, or to allow admission.

c. Subject to review and approval of the superintendent, to recommend limited or unlimited expulsion, suspension of 11 days or more, alternative school placement, or non-admission to the board.

d. The Committee shall prepare a written summary of each case.

3. All decisions made by the committee will be reviewed by the superintendent.

4. Decisions to expel or deny admission to students must be approved by the board.

5. After completing this appeal step, a parent, legal guardian, or custodian aggrieved by a decision to suspend for 11 days or more, expel, place in alternative school, or deny admission of his /her child may request a review of the decision by the superintendent. A request for review must be submitted to the superintendent within 2 days after receiving a decision at this appeal step.

STEP III: REVIEW BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Applies to: Expulsion

Suspension of 11 days or more

Alternative school placement

Denial of admission

The superintendent shall review all recommendations by the District Appeals Committee for expulsion, suspension of 11 days or more, alternative school placement, or denial of admission. At that point the superintendent may:

A. Concur with the decision of the committee.

B. Not concur with the decision of the committee. At that time the superintendent may:

1. Remove the Expulsion
2. Remove the Suspension
3. Remove the Alternative School Placement
4. Allow Admission
5. Modify suspension or alternative school placement duration
6. Expel
7. Place in alternative school
8. Suspend
9. Deny Admission

C. All recommendations by the superintendent of expulsion or denial of admission shall be subject to review and approval by the board.

D. After completing this appeal step, a parent, legal guardian, or custodian aggrieved by a decision to suspend for 11 days or more, expel, or deny admission to his/her child may request review of the decision by the board. A request for review must be submitted to the board in writing and delivered to the Neshoba County School District Central Office, within 2 days after receiving a decision from the Superintendent in

this appeal step.

STEP IV: REVIEW BY THE BOARD

Applies to: Expulsions
Denial of admission

The board shall, at its next regular or special meeting following the Superintendent's recommendation, review the written recommendation. Unless further discussion is requested by the board, the board shall take final action on all recommendations for expulsion and denial of admission. All decisions by the board shall be final and written notice shall be mailed to appealing parties.

HAZING (Cross Ref: *Policy JDDA*)

The MHSAA defines hazing as any act or ceremony which can create the risk of harm to a student as a form of initiation into a particular club or activity. Hazing includes activities that involve the risk of physical harm, whipping, branding, ingesting vile substances, sleep deprivation, over-exposure to heat or cold, restraint, nudity or kidnapping, i.e. Hazing, bullying, or harassment by any name is wrong and should be reported to the local administration. Students participating in sports activities will be held accountable to the same disciplinary procedures as with any school approved event. This also includes the school policy regarding bullying and harassment. Employees encouraging or engaging in will be considered in violation of Board policies.

Dismissal of Students from Campus (Cross Ref: *Policy JGFC*)

Under no circumstances should any teacher give permission to any student to leave campus unless the principal is consulted and permission granted.

DISTANCE/ONLINE LEARNING (*Policy Ref: IAAA*)

During times of emergency closures, the teachers and staff of the Neshoba County School District may have to deliver educational services through distance learning. Distance Learning, also called distance education and virtual/online learning, is a method of studying in which lectures are broadcast or classes are conducted by correspondence or over the internet, without students needing to attend a school. Distance learning techniques may include, but are not limited to, hard copy materials, web-based instruction, and/or online materials. District employees will be trained in using technology to deliver academic content in order to continue to support high quality student learning.

The District recognizes that the health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is the primary concern during times of emergency. Educators, administrators, and parents will have to collaborate creatively to ensure students continue to have access to appropriate educational materials and continue to receive daily interaction with teachers. Teacher and student responsibilities and expectations will change during any distance learning instruction.

Teacher's responsibilities are as follows:

1. Teachers will have all required technology such as laptops or tablets to provide online instruction;

2. Teachers will provide guidance and feedback on class work through email, the school website, or any other approved means of communication;
3. **Teachers will report to the school building during normal work hours;**
4. If a teacher is not available for distance learning due to illness or a personal day, the teacher will communicate with the students/parents within 24 hours of their return to work;
5. Teachers will provide instruction to all students along with appropriate and reasonable accommodations to those who are on a 504 plan or an IEP;
6. Any other responsibilities approved by the Board or the Superintendent.

Student's responsibilities are as follows:

1. Students will be available for their courses during instructional periods and will complete assignments given by their teachers;
2. Students will continue to follow the expectations set by their individual classroom teachers;
3. Students who do not have electronic access or are not provided a school district device, will complete educational activities through paper/written format;
4. Students will bring any questions or concerns to their individual teachers;
5. Any other responsibilities approved by the Board or the Superintendent.

Students with Disabilities

During times of emergency, individual education must take place for all students, including students with disabilities. District employees will make decisions regarding distance learning based upon what is best for each individual student. The District will continue to comply with all applicable state and federal laws including the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities will continue to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), however, special education and related services may be provided virtually, online, and/or telephonically in order to maintain the health and safety of both the students and teachers.

If, during an emergency closure, it becomes infeasible or unsafe to provide certain IEP services such as hands-on physical therapy or occupational therapy, these services will be provided online. This includes, but is not limited to, extensions of time for assignments, videos with accurate captioning or embedded sign language, accessible online reading materials, and other services through video conferencing.

Where technology itself imposes a barrier to access or where educational materials simply are not available in an accessible format, children with disabilities will be provided with equally effective alternate access to the curriculum or services provided to other students. This includes, but is not limited to, distributing print material, reading educational material over the phone, and/or audio recordings.

The superintendent and/or designee shall develop procedures to support this policy.

Donated Leave Policy (Cross Ref: *Policy GADF*)

Any employee of the Neshoba County School District may donate a portion of his or her unused accumulated sick leave to another employee of the Neshoba County School district who is suffering from a **catastrophic** injury or illness or who has a member of his or her immediate family suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with the following:

- a) The employee donating the sick leave (the "donor employee") shall designate the employee who is to receive the sick leave (the "recipient employee") and the amount of unused accumulated sick leave that is to be donated, and shall notify the superintendent or his designee of his or her designation.
- b) The maximum amount of unused accumulated sick leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed a number of days that would leave the donor employee with fewer than seven (7) days of sick leave remaining, and the maximum amount of unused accumulated sick leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the unused accumulated sick leave of the donor employee.
- c) An employee must have exhausted all of his or her available leave (including the allotted 10 sub-dock days) before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee. Eligibility for donated leave shall be based upon review and approval by the donor employee's supervisor.
- d) Before an employee may receive donated leave, he or she must provide the superintendent or his designee with a physician's statement that states that the illness meets the catastrophic criteria established under this section, the beginning date of the catastrophic injury or illness, a description of the injury or illness, and a prognosis for recovery and the anticipated date that the recipient employee will be able to return to work.
- e) Before an employee may receive donated leave, the superintendent shall appoint a review committee to approve or disapprove the said donations of leave, including the determination that the illness is catastrophic within the meaning of this section.
- f) If the total amount of leave that is donated to any employee is not used by the recipient employee, the whole days of donated leave shall be returned to the donor employees on a pro rata basis, based on the ratio of the number of days of leave donated by each donor employee to the total number of days of leave donated by all donor employees.
- g) Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement.

For the purpose of this policy:

(i) "**Catastrophic injury or illness**" means a life-threatening injury or illness of an employee or a member of an employee's immediate family that totally incapacitates the employee from work, as verified by a licensed physician, and forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee, resulting in the loss of compensation from the local school district for the employee.

Conditions that are short-term in nature, including, but not limited to, common illnesses such as influenza and the measles, and common injuries, are not catastrophic. Chronic illnesses or injuries, such as cancer or major surgery, that result in intermittent absences from work and that are long-term in nature and require long recuperation periods may be considered catastrophic.

(ii) "Immediate family" means spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child or stepchild, grandparent, stepbrother or stepsister.

Drug Free Workplace (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRL*)

NOTICE TO ALL EMPLOYEES: YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that it is a violation of the policy of the NCSD for any employee to unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use on or in the workplace any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance, as defined under state and federal law.

"Workplace" is defined as the site for the performance of work done. That includes any school building or other school premises; any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; off school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that it is a condition of your continued employment with the school district that you will comply with the above policy and will notify your supervisor of any your conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace as defined above, no later than 5 days after such conviction.

Any employee who violates the terms of the school district's drug-free workplace policy may be non-renewed or his or her employment may be suspended or terminated, at the discretion of the school district.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

This policy applies to medical cannabis. Under the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act, this school district:

1. Is not required to permit, accommodate, or allow the medical use of medical cannabis, or to modify any job or working conditions of any employee who engages in the medical use of medical cannabis or who for any reason seeks to engage in the medical use of medical cannabis.
2. May refuse to hire, discharge, discipline, or otherwise take an adverse employment action against an individual with respect to hiring, discharging, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment as a result, in whole or in part, of that individual's use of medical cannabis, regardless of the individual's impairment or lack of impairment resulting from the medical use of medical cannabis.
3. Does not allow the use of medical cannabis by employees while on district property, while at a district sponsored event, or while performing district business.

Click [here](#) to read the entire Policy GBRL: Drug Free Schools and Workplace

Drug & Alcohol Testing Policy (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRM-2*)

The District will test personnel if it reasonably suspects an employee is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. This is in addition to the existing policy of random testing of all bus drivers. This policy will be enforced uniformly with respect to all personnel. All of the District's personnel, including administrators, will be subject to reasonable suspicion testing. Click [here](#) to read the entire Policy GBRM-2.

Extra-Curricular Duties (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRE*)

Teachers and other personnel will be called upon to perform extra duties such as sponsoring clubs, selling or receiving tickets, supervising children in the cafeteria, and supervising bus loading and unloading. The principal of each school shall assign duty posts at strategic places around buildings and grounds so the entire student population shall be under supervision at all times.

Clubs must be official clubs with student officers elected. Student members must have meetings with recorded minutes and students must approve club transactions.

Faculty Meetings (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRD*)

Faculty meetings are held when needed, at the discretion of the principal. Teachers should be present and on time for all faculty meetings. **Please do not ask** to be excused for any reason other than an emergency.

Anyone missing faculty meetings is to report to the principal the next school day to discuss the agenda.

Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (Cross Ref: *Policies GBRI, GBRIA, GBRID*; LEGAL REF: *Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993*)

NOTE: This Federal Family and Medical Leave Policy (FMLA) is reviewed and updated each school year and is made a part of the Neshoba County School District Employee Handbook. FMLA shall take precedence over school policies.

FEDERAL FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE – ALL EMPLOYEES

Basic Leave Entitlement

FMLA requires covered employers such as the Neshoba County School District (“School District”) to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees during a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee’s child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee’s spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job.

For purposes of FMLA, the School District has chosen a rolling-year method for determining the 12-month period during which an employee is entitled to FMLA leave, as described in this policy. A rolling 12-month period is measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave. Each time an employee takes FMLA leave the remaining leave entitlement would be the balance of the 12 weeks, which has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months.

Military Family Leave Entitlements

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Benefits and Protections

During FMLA leave, the School District will maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

Eligibility Requirements

Employees are eligible if they have worked for the School District for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed within 75 miles.

Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave

An employee does not need to use the FMLA leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the School District's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

The Neshoba County School District requires use of all accrued paid leave (including 10 sub-pay dock days) while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When a 30-day notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the School District if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities

The School District will inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the School District will provide a reason for the ineligibility.

The School District will inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the School District determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the School District must notify the employee.

Prohibited Acts

FMLA prohibits employers from interfering with, restraining, or denying the exercise of any right provided under FMLA; discharging or discriminating against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

Fees/Dues (Cross Ref: *Policy JS*)

Any fee charged to students for supplemental materials and supplies (excluding school textbooks) or any fees related to a valid curriculum educational objective, including transportation, **MUST BE APPROVED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT** and meet the requirements of Policy JS.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

(Ref Policy JRAB & Policy JR)

Parents and eligible students (a student or former student who has reached age 18 or is attending a post-secondary school and who is no longer a dependent of the parent for federal tax purposes) have the following rights under FERPA and district policy:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education record;

2. The right to exercise a limited control over other people's access to the student's education record;
3. The right to seek to correct the student's education record, in a hearing, if necessary;
4. The right to report violations of the FERPA to the Department of Education; and
5. The right to be informed about FERPA rights.

NOTE: The educational records include all materials directly related to a student that a school maintains. Records and notes maintained by a teacher, administrator, school physician, or school psychologist for his/her own use are exempted from this definition.

PROCEDURE TO INSPECT EDUCATION RECORDS

The parent or eligible student should submit to the student's school principal a written request that identifies, as precisely as possible, the record he/she wishes to inspect. The principal will contact the parent or eligible student to discuss how access will be best arranged (copies, visit to site, etc.) The fee for copies will be from no cost to 10 cents per page.

The school will require a prior written consent before information other than **directory information** may be divulged to third parties. The NCSD designates the following as directory information:

- The student's name, address, and telephone number;
- The names of the student's parents;
- The student's date and place of birth;
- The student's major field of study and class designation (i.e., first grade, tenth grade, etc.);
- The student's extracurricular participation;
- The student's achievement awards or honors;
- The student's weight and height if a member of an athletic team;
- The student's photograph and video images;
- The student's electronic mail address;
- The student's dates of attendance; and
- The most recent educational institution the student attended prior to the student enrolling in this school district.

NOTE: A parent or eligible student will have two weeks to advise the school district in writing (a letter to the superintendent) of any or all of the items they refuse to permit the district to designate as directory information about the student. The student's record will be marked to indicate the items the district will designate as directory information about the student. This designation will remain in effect until it is modified by the written notification of the parent. Upon request by recruiters, the NCSD will provide directory information to the military and institutions of higher learning.

USE OF STUDENT EDUCATION RECORDS

The district limits access to its information systems to ensure that only authorized individuals have access to personally identifiable information (PII). Staff who work with PII receive training on practices for protecting PII to ensure the integrity and security of information. The NCSD may disclose a student's PII from education records to school officials who have been determined to have legitimate educational interests. The NCSD recognizes a school official as a board member, administrator, teacher, paraprofessional, support or clerical staff, counselor, health staff, information systems specialist, school security personnel, substitute, contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom the district has outsourced services or functions. Legitimate educational interest is the person's need to know in order to perform his/her task required in the position or perform a service/benefit for the student/student's family.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Online Educational Services are services involving computer software, mobile applications (apps), and web-based tools provided by a third-party to a school district that students and/or parents access via the internet and use as part of a school activity.

All methods of distance learning involving online educational services shall be evaluated and approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee prior to use to ensure the platform's security and to ensure that there is no risk of disclosure of student protected personally identifiable information. When using an online educational service, the district shall have a written contract in place prior to use which dictates the necessity of security and data protection. If a contract with a provider is not possible, such as with free-to-use applications, the district must use the utmost caution and validate the security of the application before use. The Superintendent shall consult legal and information technology staff during this process.

Personally identifiable information must be protected at all times in accordance with FERPA. The district shall inform parents of any third-party provider used during distance learning. Non-students shall be discouraged from participating in any district sponsored distance learning.

For more information on compliance with FERPA, see Policy JRAB.

Fixed Assets (Cross Ref: *Policy DM*)

The Neshoba County School District must establish adequate procedures to insure that the fixed asset accountability system is being maintained on a current basis. These control procedures will address acquisitions, adjustments, transfers and disposals. Your help in maintaining adequate, up-to-date, records is imperative.

Equipment having a "red fixed asset label with number" must remain at the room/location in which it is inventoried. Before moving this equipment to a different room/location, the following policy should be followed:

- Permission should be granted from the building principal.
- "Change of Location" form(s) should be completed.
- Return completed form(s) to the school office.
- Each school office will report all changes to the Central Office in a timely manner.
- Prior approval to check out equipment must come from the building principal with proper documentation on file in the principal's office and teacher's classroom.
- Any equipment assigned to an employee is the sole responsibility of the employee. The employee will be charged for un-accounted equipment.

Fund Raising (Cross Ref: *Policy JK*)

The principal, superintendent, and school board must approve all fund-raising activities prior to the event.

Policies and state laws require all school monies received by the teacher be deposited in the school office into a central account. A receipt will be issued to the teacher and the funds will be expended upon proper authorization.

Please be aware that school employees should not be involved with the collection of monies for the benefit of the booster clubs. If money is collected by a school employee, that money must be turned into the school office or the central office and deposited into the appropriate school district bank account by authorized employees. Employees shall not keep money in their desks overnight, but should turn in all money to the school office or central office before leaving each day (or as soon as possible, if it is not feasible to turn in the money the same day as received).

In addition, the use of the Neshoba County School district's federal I.D. number by the various booster clubs is strictly prohibited.

Garnishment or Levy (Cross Ref: *Policy GBA*; United States Department of Labor: *The Federal Wage Garnishment Law*)

Each school system employee is expected to attend to his own personal business affairs. When a garnishment or levy is received in the superintendent's office, the employee will be notified. A release should then be secured prior to the issuance of the next paycheck. In the absence of a properly signed release, a maximum of twenty-five percent (25%) of the employee's net monthly salary will be withheld until the garnishment and court costs are satisfied. Such garnishments or levies are attached to the release and remain in the personal file of that teacher or staff member. A fee will be assessed for processing garnishments.

Gifts/Donated Assets to the District (Cross Ref: *Policy DFK*)

Items and donations contributed to the Neshoba County School District will become the property of the district and shall be subject to the same controls and regulations, which govern the use or disposal of all district owned property. This includes items of value purchased with EEF cards and items purchased through crowdfunding projects. The Board reserves the right to reject any contribution to the district which does not serve to enhance or extend the work of the schools.

Procedures for Receiving Gifts/Donated Assets to the District:

When you receive a donated gift or purchase an item with EEF cards valued above \$250, you must complete a "Fixed Asset Donation Form" (found at neshobacentral.com under "Staff Portal - District Forms") and attach a copy of the receipt or donation documentation to it. Give the form and documentation to your location's bookkeeper to be accepted at the following school board meeting. In return, an asset tag will be issued to place on the item and it will be added to the asset inventory list for that classroom/area.

Crowdfunding Projects:

Inasmuch as desired enhancements to educational programming have always and will always exceed school resources, school employees may at times choose to seek private funds for school projects. One modern manifestation of this is commonly referred to as 'crowdfunding,' or the placement of needs on various websites in order to secure donations to meet those needs.

It is the preference of the Neshoba County Board of Education that employees utilize sites funding supplies or equipment rather than monetary donations.

Please click [here](#) (Policy DFK) for all guidelines and procedures.

Identification Badges/Classroom Keys (Cross Ref: *Policy EBBAA*)

An identification badge and classroom key will be provided to all employees. If the badge or key is lost, the employee should report the loss immediately to the building principal or supervisor. A new one will be issued to the employee. **Cost of replacement (\$5) for the badge and key (\$20) will be the responsibility of the employee. Employees will wear their identification badges at all times while on school grounds.**

Insurance (Cross Ref: *Policy EGA*)

All employees have the opportunity to take health insurance and have all or part of the premium paid by the state. If you choose select coverage, there will be additional charges above what the state pays. This charge applies to Horizon and Legacy employees. Horizon employee is an employee that was hired after January 1, 2006. Legacy employee is an employee that was hired prior to January 1, 2006.

Legacy employees will pay \$20.00 per month for Select Coverage. Horizon employees will pay \$46.00 for select coverage.

Note: The **Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA)** requires the school district to offer employees and their families continuation coverage at group rates, that otherwise would have been forfeited, under certain situations that result in loss of group medical coverage. An employee, spouse, and dependent children are entitled to 18 months of continuous coverage if the qualifying event is due to a termination or reduction of hours. Any other qualifying event allows the beneficiary 36 months of coverage.

A beneficiary loses COBRA coverage, 1) when the premium for coverage is not paid, 2) the date the employer terminates group health coverage, 3) becomes covered under another group plan, 4) date qualified for Medicare benefits.

All employees have the opportunity to take life insurance at the rate of 20 cents per thousand dollars of coverage. (10 cents paid by district/10 cents paid by employee)

Leaving School (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRB*)

Teachers are expected to conduct personal business during non-school hours.

Teachers are never to leave campus during working hours without the knowledge and/or permission of their building principal. Each school office has a place to sign-out/sign-in upon leaving or returning to campus.

Length of Work Day (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRB*)

Teachers and staff are expected to “sign-in” each morning and be present at their assigned duty posts at or before 7:30 as designated by the school principal and remain on campus until 3:30 p.m. each day. At their discretion, administrators may call Faculty/PLC Meetings after school on designated days and teachers are required to attend. Teachers should also be available for conferences during planning periods or in the afternoons after school.

All teachers and administrators are subject to call for special duty on Saturday or other times when the best interests of the Neshoba County School District may be served. The stated school hours are not to be interpreted as being limited to classroom activities, or the length of a teacher's day.

Lesson Plans/Instructional Management Plan (Cross Ref: *Policy ID*)

Lesson plans should be **well designed and aligned with the District Instructional Management Plan**. The Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, State Accountability Standards, and the Career and Technical Education curricula will serve as the basis of the minimum district curriculum. Pacing guides have been developed and are revised annually per relevant data analysis by the teaching staff and administration. Lesson plans and objectives will be reviewed by the principal or designee.

Licensure

(Cross Ref: *Policy GBBA*)

Under state guidelines, teachers are responsible for maintaining all records necessary for re-certification upon the expiration of the existing certificate. It is the teacher's responsibility to enter all CEUs, certificates, and/or coursework into the Mississippi Department of Education's MECCA licensure system at <https://mecca.mdek12.org>. CEUs MUST be approved by the Licensure Department before you can submit a renewal application. Submit/upload any other supporting licensure documentation (Verification of Lawful Presence (VLP), etc.)) **(excludes official transcripts and licensure test score reports – transcripts should continue to be submitted electronically directly from the respective institution and test score reports from testing company)**. When the appropriate criteria for license renewal has been met, the teacher will submit the online application. Please review the criteria for re-certification at <https://www.mdek12.org/OTL/OEL>.

Literacy-Based Promotion (Cross Ref: *Policy ICHI*)

In compliance with the "Literacy Based Promotion Act," it is the intent of the Neshoba County School District to improve the reading skills of Kindergarten - Third Grade students so that every student completing the Third Grade is able to read at or above grade level.

This district shall comply with all requirements of the Act, including, but not limited to:

3rd Grade Reading Summative Assessment - A student scoring at the lowest two (2) achievement levels in reading on the established state assessment for 3rd grade will NOT be promoted to 4th grade. A score of Level 3 or above is required.

Social Promotion – A student may not be assigned a grade level based solely on age or any other factor that constitutes social promotion.

Public School Requirements

If a K - 3 student has been identified with a substantial deficit in reading, the teacher will immediately, and with each quarterly progress report, notify parents or legal guardians of the following in writing:

- Determination of a substantial deficit in reading;
- Description of student services and supports presently provided;
- Description of proposed supplemental instruction and support to remediate the student's deficit areas;

- Strategies for parents to use to help students at home; and,
- Notification that student will not be promoted to 4th grade if reading deficiency cannot be remediated by the end of 3rd grade.

Provide intensive reading instruction and immediate intervention to each K - 3 student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at any time.

The intensive reading instruction and intervention must be documented for each student Grades K-3 in an **individual reading plan**, including, at a minimum, the following:

- a) The student's specific, diagnosed reading skill deficiencies as determined (or identified) by diagnostic assessment data;
- b) The goals and benchmarks for growth;
- c) How progress will be monitored and evaluated;
- d) The type of additional instruction services and interventions the student will receive;
- e) The research-based reading instructional programming the teacher will use to provide reading instruction, addressing the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension;
- f) The strategies the student's parent is encouraged to use in assisting the student to achieve reading competency; and,
- g) Any additional services the teacher deems available and appropriate to accelerate the student's reading skill development.

Good Cause Exemptions

A 3rd grade student who fails to meet the academic requirements for promotion to the 4th grade may be promoted for good cause:

- a) Limited English Proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in English Language Learner program;
- b) Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide accountability assessment program is not appropriate, as authorized under state law;
- c) Students with a disability who participate in the state annual accountability assessment and who have an IEP or Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received intense remediation in reading for two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading **OR** was previously retained in Kindergarten or First, Second or Third grade;
- d) Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the State Board of Education; and
- e) Students who have received intensive intervention for two (2) or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading, and who previously were retained in Kindergarten or First, Second or Third Grade for a total of two (2) years and have not met exceptional education criteria.

Mississippi Assessment System (Cross Ref: *Policies II & IIAAA*)

Whereas state law requires every school district within the state to “periodically assess student performance and achievement in each school” (Mississippi Code Section 37-16-5), **student assessment therefore is not an option in the Neshoba County School District, but rather a requirement.** The Neshoba County School Board believes that state student assessments are useful and valid tools in helping the school board assess the progress the school district is making in raising the level and quality of education throughout the district. Each school district in Mississippi must submit a test security plan to the State Department of Education every year that addresses the security and administration of the Mississippi Assessment System.

House Bill No. 603 requires strict adherence to test security regulations. In section 37-16-4 of H.B.603 it is unlawful to:

- Give examinees access to test questions prior to testing.
- Copy or reproduce all or any portion of any secure test booklet.
- Coach examinees during testing or alter or interfere with examiner's responses in any way.
- Make answer keys available to examinees.
- Fail to account for all secure test materials before, during, and after testing.
- Participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist, encourage, or fail to report any of the acts prohibited in this section.

House Bill 603 further states that any person violating any of the above "is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not more than **one thousand dollars** (\$1,000.00), or be imprisoned for not more than 90 days, or both". Upon conviction, the state board of education may suspend or revoke the administrative or teacher credentials, or both, of the person convicted.

All certified and non-certified personnel are expected to follow the Neshoba County School District's test security plan when statewide testing is conducted.

Patriotism (Cross Ref: *Policy AFA*; Senate Bill 2321)

The United States flag shall be displayed in each classroom and in each main room (library, etc.) of the school building at all times while school is in session. Teachers shall encourage all pupils to repeat the oath of allegiance to the United States flag at the beginning of the first hour of class each day school is in session.

Teachers shall provide students instruction in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag, and in patriotic exercises. Any student who objects to reciting the oath of allegiance shall be excused from participating.

Preparation Period

As specified in the MS Public School Accountability Standards, each secondary teacher is entitled to 225 minutes of planning per week and an elementary teacher is entitled to 150 minutes per week. Teachers should use this time for lesson preparation, grading, grade-level/subject-area team meetings, parent conference, Tier paperwork or other classroom related activities.

Professional Development (Cross Ref: *Policies GAD & GADA*)

Professional Development activities are provided in accordance with Section 37-17-8 of the Mississippi Code, applicable regulation. These activities are designed to enhance the delivery of instruction and to maximize student benefit from that instruction as measured by standardized achievement tests.

Teachers who register for EMCED workshops and are unable to attend must contact EMCED and cancel within the given timeframe. If a fine is assessed due to nonattendance and not properly notifying EMCED, **the employee will be responsible for paying this fine!**

All employees must have the written approval of their supervisor before registering for any workshop for which district funds will be used or for which professional days will be provided.

Public Employees Retirement Plan (Cross Ref: *Policy GBQ*)

By state law, all full-time employees are required to become members of the Public Employees Retirement System. Each member contributes 9% of his/her monthly salary. The school district contributes 17.40% beginning July 1, 2019.

All information about employee retirement is available through the system at 429 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. You may call them at 1-800-444-PERS or visit their website, www.pers.ms.gov. Your request must be submitted in writing.

Purchasing (Cross Ref: *Policy DJEG*)

No employee shall charge anything to the school. Purchase requisitions must be presented to the principal for any orders.

No staff is authorized to pick up, receive, or receipt any material, supply, or service for the Neshoba County School System (including donations) unless the acquisition is properly approved and executed. **Any employee purchasing goods without an approved purchase order (PO) will be held personally liable for the expenditure.**

Vendors allowing any Neshoba County School District employee to purchase without authorization will be sent a certified letter stating that any additional purchase(s) made by a Neshoba County School System employee without a purchase order will be the responsibility of the vendor and not the Neshoba County School District.

Report Cards (Cross Ref: *Policy IHA*)

Teachers will issue report cards every 9 weeks. These report cards **should be returned, signed by one of the parents or the guardian of the pupil, to the teacher the next day**, unless extenuating circumstances require an extended time.

Progress Reports will be sent to parents at approximately half way through each 9-week term. Parents may view their child’s grades at any time online with the **ACTIVE PARENT** (www.neshobacentral.com) by contacting their child’s school office to obtain a login and password. It is our hope that, through close cooperation of parents, students, and teachers, failures may be kept to a minimum. Parents are urged to schedule conferences with teachers about the progress of their student(s). Final grades should be in the office no later than two days following the student’s final examination.

All grades on report cards will be **number grades for grades K-12**. Grades are:

Grades 1-12			Kindergarten	
A = 90-100	D = 65-69		A = 95-100	D = 80-84
B = 80-89	F = 64 and below		B = 90-94	F = 79 and below
C = 70-79			C = 85-89	

A notation of “I” will be made if the student has not completed the course of work required in any 9-week period, including all tests, (both regular and make-up). The grade “I” will be recorded “F” if the make-up work is not satisfactorily completed before cards are issued again.

Salesmen, Solicitors, & Visitors (Cross Ref: *Policy KM*)

Salesmen should always secure the permission of the principal before contacting a teacher. Only, occasionally should it be necessary to interrupt a teacher while a class is in progress. The principal or designee will conduct the caller to the teacher's room if a visit appears to be necessary. Otherwise, all business of either school or personal nature will be conducted during the teacher's free time.

No employee of the school district will be allowed to sell products to students for non-school activities.

No employee will be allowed to solicit membership in an organization during the school day.
(See Length of Work Day – *Policy GBRB*.)

Visitation is restricted to those persons having been cleared through the principal's office. It is the responsibility of **every employee** to direct a visitor to the principal's office first. Any person on campus without proper authority or who are distracting normal school operations should be reported to the principal or security personnel. **Trespassers will be prosecuted.**

Sick Leave Policy (Cross Ref: *Policies GBRI, GBRID, and GADF*)

The administration realizes that it may be necessary for an employee to be absent; therefore, each licensed employee or non-certified personnel (except bus drivers), at the beginning of each school year, shall be credited with two (2) personal days, with pay, and the following sick leave as indicated below, with pay, for absences caused by illness or physical disability of the employee during that school year.

Length of Contract/Employment	Sick Leave Days
180-187 Days	7
11 Months	9
12 Months	10

Sick Leave may be used for personal illness, illness or death in the employee's immediate family, which shall include spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child or stepchild, grandparent, stepbrother or stepsister. Any unused portion of Annual Sick Leave or Personal Leave shall be carried forward to succeeding fiscal years and credited to such teacher and/or administrator. The accumulation of sick-leave days is unlimited and the personal or vacation leave days may accumulate to five. Unused Vacation Leave days shall be converted to sick leave days at the end of each calendar year.

No teacher and/or administrator shall be permitted to transfer unused Accumulated Sick Leave from another school district to the Neshoba County School District. Substitute employees are not entitled to sick leave.

Partial absence during workday: Employee absences will be recorded in half-day or full-day increments ONLY. Half-days or full-days will be reported to the central office for deductions. Half-days will be taken as follows:

AM: 7:30-11:30

PM: 11:30-3:30

If emergencies arise, employees will arrange the time of absence with their principal.

NOTE: Having to go to the bank or run an errand is not an emergency.

SICK LEAVE PROVISIONS (EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM)

The school and learning environment are negatively impacted by excessive absenteeism by an employee. Any employee absent for the purpose of illness, injury, or other physical disability:

- for four (4) or more consecutive days
- for two (2) consecutive days prior to or after a non-school day or holiday break, unless absence is caused by the death of an immediate family member or other catastrophic event
- after the **annual contractual (see 1: Sick Leave Allowance)** sick days have been exhausted,

must provide his/her immediate supervisor a certificate of appropriate physician, dentist, or other medical practitioner as to the illness of the absent employee or employee's immediate family member. Failure to provide the certificate shall result in 100% loss of pay because the provisions to use sick leave have not been met. The certificate must be presented prior to the absence of the employee for pre-scheduled medical procedures. All procedures should be medically necessary if performed during an active school year. Otherwise, the procedures must be performed during the time school is not in session.

If a medical excuse is provided and approved, employees may use their additional accrued sick leave and/or up to ten (10) sub-pay days. **However, any employee with fifteen (15) or more absences (with the exception of FMLA) will be subject to review and may be terminated or non-renewed.**

After all leave provided for the contractual year has been exhausted and the employee does not provide a medical excuse, the employee will be docked full pay. In the case where no medical excuse is provided, an employee will be allowed three (3) non-paid absences within a contractual school year. A fourth (4th) non-paid absence may result in termination or non-renewal of the contract. Any materially false statement by the employee as to the cause of absence will result in full pay dock and other discipline measures. This policy does not include FMLA. For purposes of this section, "holiday break" shall mean the day or days the students are on holiday break as set in the district's academic year.

SICK AND PERSONAL LEAVE PROCEDURES

A teacher is encouraged to let the principal know as soon as possible when he/she will be absent from school. If, in any event, there is a situation that arises that does not allow any advance notice, you will need to contact the building administrator in charge of substitutes.

Upon returning to school, teachers/staff members must come by the office and sign the absence sheet verifying the information for payroll purposes.

Except in cases of emergency the principal shall be notified at least 48 hours prior to any personal leave needs. In case of pregnancy, prolonged illness or major surgery, employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA, if eligible. When a 30 day notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable so a suitable substitute may be contacted. The employee must give the date the leave is to begin and the date it is to terminate. An employee who qualifies and is covered under FMLA will have up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12 month period. An employee who is not covered under FMLA and the incapacity is fifteen (15) or more school days, the principal will make a recommendation to the superintendent whether or not to terminate their employment. Once an employee has exhausted their FMLA leave and return to work is indefinite, the District has no requirement to hold the position, unless there is a reasonable accommodation. The following steps are required for approval of emergency leave. As soon as the need for major surgery is established, pregnancy determined, or lengthy

illness is diagnosed, the teacher will advise, in writing, the principal of the intent to request leave, along with a letter from the physician verifying:

1. the need for emergency leave
2. the time the leave should begin
3. the date the teacher can return to full duty
4. fitness to continue performance in the teaching assignment until the leave is to begin

All forms of leave not specifically covered under the emergency leave or personal leave provisions of this handbook are not eligible for reimbursement. In these instances, teachers will be charged an amount equal to their daily contractual salary.

In the event of a materially false statement by a teacher as to the cause of absence, penalties may include a full deduction to pay or other appropriate penalties. Accumulated or future sick leave may be forfeited if a teacher's absence is caused by optional dental or medical treatment which could have been provided without medical risk at time when school was not in session.

A leave record for each teacher will be kept by each principal, and a copy **forwarded to the superintendent monthly.**

C. Personal Leave

1. All personal leave will be assessed in half-day or full-day increments.
2. Advance notice shall be given to the principal before personal leave is granted. Sufficient time must be given for the principal to secure substitutes and arrange for an orderly continuation of the school schedule.
3. Personal Leave shall not be taken on the first day of the school term nor within the last week of school, nor shall it be taken for any days immediately preceding or following a legal or school holiday, except with prior permission from the principal and superintendent.
4. Any personal leave days left (above 5) at the end of the fiscal year will be credited to the employee's accumulated sick leave days and be considered at that point as sick leave days.

D. Other Regulations

1. Maternity leave: An employee on maternity leave shall receive pay, insurance, and other benefits to the same extent and on the same basis as if they were on sick leave. A statement from a physician as to how long she may work before the birth of her child and when she should be allowed to return to work after the birth of her child may be required.
2. Military leave policy: Employees of the school district shall be granted release time for mandatory military duty. Release time for military leave shall be limited to a period of not more than fifteen (15) calendar days. Such employees called for military duty shall receive the full salary to which they are normally entitled, less any compensation received for military services not to exceed per diem pay.
3. Approved leave without pay: A maximum of three (3) days of leave may be granted to an employee upon approval of appropriate administrative officials. One (1) full day's pay will be deducted for each day's absence and there will be no reduction of authorized leave days.
4. Jury duty/Subpoena: Employees will be granted leave time for jury duty and/or for subpoena to serve as a witness. The school board cannot recover jury fees from employees who serve on juries.

Note: We need your help with sick and personal leave days. If you are absent, please be sure correct information is received in central office before checks are prepared.

VACATION AND PERSONAL LEAVE

12-month employees are granted ten (10) vacation days at the beginning of each Calendar year (January 1). Vacation leave is granted to either, licensed or non-licensed employees and shall be synonymous with personal leave. Unused vacation or personal leave accumulated by licensed employees in excess of the maximum five (5) days may be carried over from one (1) year to the next and will be converted to sick leave.

To use vacation leave, employees must complete a Vacation Leave Request form, which is located under the website's "Staff Portal" under "[District Forms](#)".

The form must be completed, signed by the supervisor and forwarded to the central office for processing.

Staff Complaints & Grievances (Cross Ref: *Policy GAE-R*)

Purpose

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure at the first possible administrative level, an equitable solution to any grievance.

Definitions

The following definitions shall apply in this grievance procedure:

1. A "grievance" is a complaint by an individual based upon an alleged violation of his or her rights under state or federal law or board policy.
2. A "grievant" is a person or persons making the complaint.
3. The term "days" shall mean working school days and shall exclude weekends, holidays and vacations days.

Procedure for Processing Grievances

Grievances shall be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

Level One

1. All grievances, as defined above, must be presented orally to the principal or immediate supervisor of the grievant within five (5) calendar days of the act or omission complained of, and the principal or immediate supervisor and grievant will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
2. If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given by his principal or immediate supervisor, the grievant shall, within five (5) calendar days after meeting with his principal or immediate supervisor, file a written statement with his principal or immediate supervisor setting forth in detail how the grievant claims to have been discriminated against. This written statement shall contain, in addition to the above, the time, place, and nature of the alleged act or omission and the state or federal law or board policy violated. The statement must be signed by the grievant.

3. In the event the grievant does not submit to his principal or immediate supervisor a written statement as required, his failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by his principal or immediate supervisor.
4. Within a timely manner after receiving the grievant's signed statement the principal or immediate supervisor shall send to the superintendent a copy of the grievant's statement along with a statement from the principal or immediate supervisor setting forth his response to the grievant and/or his decision, as is applicable. At the same time, the principal or immediate supervisor shall also provide a copy of his written statement to the grievant.
5. The written decision of the principal or immediate supervisor shall be deemed to be accepted by the grievant unless the grievant notifies the superintendent in writing within five (5) calendar days of the date of the principal's or immediate supervisor's written decision, of the grievant's intention to appeal the written decision of the principal or immediate supervisor.

Level Two

1. Upon receipt by the superintendent of the written notice that the grievant intends to appeal the decision of his principal or immediate supervisor, the superintendent shall notify the grievant in writing within a timely manner and shall advise the grievant of the date, time, and place upon which the matter will be considered by the superintendent. The superintendent shall schedule a hearing on the matter no later than ten (10) calendar days from the date of receipt of the grievant's written notice of intention to appeal the written decision of his principal or immediate supervisor.
2. The written statement submitted by the grievant to his principal or immediate supervisor in Level One shall form the basis for the grievance before the superintendent.
3. In the event the grievant does not personally attend the hearing scheduled by the superintendent, his failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the written decision rendered by his principal or immediate supervisor at LEVEL ONE.
4. The superintendent shall render a written decision to the grievant within a timely manner of the date upon which the matter was heard.

Level Three

1. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at LEVEL TWO, the grievant may file the grievance with the secretary of the school board. The name and address of the board secretary may be obtained from the Superintendent's office.
2. If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the school board within five (5) working days of the superintendent's written decision at LEVEL TWO, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
3. Within a timely manner after receipt of the grievance, the board secretary, in concert with the board chairman and superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the school board on the grievance.
4. The board shall render its decision within a timely manner of the hearing.

Reduction in Force Policy (Cross Ref: *Policy GBKAR*)

The Board of Trustees has the responsibility for providing and maintaining quality schools within the district. In order to carry out its responsibility, the board may: (1) abolish or combine job positions, (2) reduce the length of the work year with a concomitant reduction in salary (the same to be in no event less than 187 days per contract year), (3) reduce administrative supplements, (4) reduce the number of

employees. Initially, staff reduction will be accomplished by attrition.

When reducing the number of licensed employees, the board will take into account the following reasons for such reduction in force:

1. Enrollment declines,
2. Financial decline/reduction
3. Educational program(s) elimination, and
4. Priority need for human, material and financial resources.

The primary objective of the board when reducing the work-force will be the maintenance of a fair and balanced educational program consistent with the needs of the students and the functions and responsibilities of the school district. When deciding reduction in force, the board will consider the following factors, not necessarily in the order listed:

1. Criticality of the position to the mission, goals, and objectives of the school district
2. Subject area(s) and advanced degrees by certification.
3. Experience, professional training, length of service within the district and work assignment.
4. Quality of performance including the proven ability to accomplish the educational mission of the school district.
5. Executive ability.
6. Employee attendance and discipline history.
7. Skills and licensure in the area(s) where the district has instructional and/or supervisory needs.

Staff Relationship

For any organization to be effective, the individuals of the organization must work together with one vision, one mission. The Neshoba County School District has a vision and mission to provide the best educational experience for our students. Therefore, all employees should work together to accomplish this singular goal, without personal agendas or bias. It is the expectation that each staff member behave professionally at all times, be respectful and courteous to one another and others, uphold the policies of the district, and work diligently toward meeting our district goals.

State Board Policy on Teaching Experience/Salary

(Cross Ref: *Policies GBA & GBA-E, HB 347*)

The level of professional training of each teacher to be used in establishing the salary allotment for the teachers for each year shall be determined by the type of valid teacher's license issued to those teachers on or before October 1 of the current school year. (37-19-7)

The term "year of teaching experience" shall mean nine (9) months of actual teaching in the public or private elementary and secondary schools and shall also include nine (9) months of actual teaching at postsecondary institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) or equivalent regional accrediting body for degree-granting postsecondary institutions. In no case shall more than one (1) year of teaching experience be given for all services in one (1) calendar or school year. In determining a teacher's experience, no deduction shall be made because of the temporary absence of the teacher because of illness or other good cause, and the teacher shall be given credit therefore. Beginning

with the 2003-2004 school year, the State Board of Education shall fix a number of days, not to exceed forty-five (45) consecutive school days, during which a teacher may not be under contract of employment during any school year and still be considered to have been in full-time employment for a regular scholastic term. If a teacher exceeds the number of days established by the State Board of Education that a teacher may not be under contract but may still be employed, that teacher shall not be credited with a year of teaching experience. (37-151-5) Two parts of a year may be added together in determining a year's experience.

Student Restraint & Seclusion (Cross Ref: *Policy JCBA*, MS CODE: 37-9-69; 37-11-57)

The Neshoba County School District Board of Trustees supports a positive approach to behavior that uses proactive strategies to create a safe school climate that promotes dignity, creates authentic student engagement, and improves student achievement for all students.

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-9-69 and 37-11-57, it is recognized that staff may intercede in situations wherein students are displaying physically violent behavior or are deemed to be a danger to themselves or others. The use of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment regarding student management is prohibited. Restraint and/or seclusion shall not be utilized as a punitive measure.

Only school personnel trained in the use of restraint and seclusion should be used to observe and monitor these students. Staff engaged in monitoring students shall have knowledge of effective restraint and seclusion procedures, emergency procedures, and knowledge of how to effectively debrief students after the use of restraint or seclusion.

This policy in no way shall inhibit the right of staff to reasonable self-defense in accordance with the provisions of the 5th and 14th amendments to the Constitution of the United States, or the Constitution of Mississippi, nor negate the obligation of the district to provide a safe work environment.

In any situation in which a student is a danger to himself/herself or others, and it becomes necessary to contact law enforcement or emergency medical personnel, nothing in this policy guidance shall be construed to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.

Restraint

Physical restraint is considered to be an emergency response after all other verbal and non-verbal de-escalation measures have failed in effectiveness. When using physical restraint for students who are a danger to themselves or others, staff should take precautions necessary to ensure the safety of the student and the staff members engaged in restraining the student.

1. Physical restraints that restrict the flow of air are prohibited in all situations.
2. The use of mechanical restraints is prohibited, except by law enforcement.
3. The use of chemical restraints is prohibited.

Seclusion

The use of seclusion occurs in a specially designated room or space that is physically isolated from common areas and from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. The room or space used for seclusion may not be locked and staff shall be present to monitor the student. Seclusion shall cease once the student regains control of his or her behavior.

Administrative Procedures

This policy and the supporting procedures are designed to ensure the safety of all students, school personnel, and visitors. The following provisions shall be adhered to:

- a. Staff and faculty shall be trained at least annually on the use of physical restraint and seclusion. Teachers and other district personnel shall be trained on how to collect and analyze student data to determine the effectiveness of these procedures in increasing appropriate behavior.
- b. Administrators shall document incidents of the use of physical restraint or seclusion by staff or faculty participating in or supervising the restraint or seclusion event.
- c. A review of the use of a restraint and seclusion process shall be conducted by the school to determine if revisions of behavioral strategies are in place to address dangerous behavior or if positive behavioral strategies were not in place at the time of the restraint or seclusion.
- d. The school board shall review this policy and incidents of seclusion and restraint data at a minimum, annually. At a minimum, the Superintendent shall make quarterly reports of incidents of restraint and/or seclusion to the school board. The school district shall report the incidents to Mississippi Department of Education annually.
- e. This policy and supporting procedures shall be reviewed with all staff on an annual basis.
- f. The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for reporting the use of restraint or seclusion to the local board of education and to the Mississippi Department of Education.
- g. After reviewing the district reports of incidents in which restraint and seclusion were used, if necessary, the superintendent shall make recommendations to the board for possible revisions to this policy. The review and/or revisions to this policy shall be documented on the school board meeting agenda and the subsequent minutes of the school board meeting. The school district or school shall maintain records of its review of and any resulting decisions or actions regarding the use of seclusion and restraint.

Parental Notification

- a. All parents shall receive, at least annually, written information about the policies and procedures for restraint and seclusion issued by this school district. The written policies shall be included in the code of conduct, student handbook, school board policy manual, and any other appropriate school publication.
- b. Parents or guardians shall be notified verbally or in writing on the day of the restraint or seclusion or no later than 48 hours following the incident. In the event a parent cannot be reached by telephone, a letter shall be sent informing the parent of the incident and the person who can be contacted at the school to address any questions the parent may have. At the time the parent is notified, the school shall schedule a debriefing with the parent to discuss the incident.
- c. A complaint from a parent regarding the physical restraint or seclusion of their child may be submitted in writing to the principal. The written complaint must state the student's name, the nature and date of the restraint or seclusion, the persons involved (teacher, witness, etc.) and requested action. The principal shall provide an initial response to the complainant within five school days. If the parent is not satisfied with the response, he/she may request (in writing) a review by the superintendent. Within 10 days from receiving the request for a review, the superintendent will issue a decision.

Suicide Prevention Education In-Service Training

(Cross Ref: *Policy GADAC*)

The Neshoba County School Board recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. It is the policy of the NCSD that in-service training on suicide prevention education will be conducted for all newly employed school district employees. The NCSD shall conduct, every two (2) years, refresher training on mental health and suicide prevention for all school employees and personnel, including all cafeteria workers, custodians, teachers, and administrators. This training shall be in connection with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. The district shall report completion of the training to the State Department of Education.

The board establishes this policy in an effort to take positive steps toward reducing student suicide through:

1. **Prevention.** To provide in-service training to all newly employed school district employees with information about the recognition of the signs of suicidal behavior; including, but not limited to, early identification and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts along with steps for reporting students who they believe to be at an elevated risk for suicide.
2. **Intervention.** To take affirmative action when an immediate referral is warranted, such as when a student verbalizes about suicide, presents overt risk factors such as aggression or intoxication, the act of self-harm occurs, or a student self-refers and to understand the emergency procedures when a referral is made and to provide support for students.
3. **Postvention.** To respond to suicide or suicide attempt, utilizing the district's crisis response, documentation, and reporting procedures.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be reached at 1-800-273-8255(TALK); <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Supervision & Evaluation (Cross Ref: *Policies GBH, GBI, & GDI*)

The principal of each school is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of all local school personnel. It is the duty of the principal to document situations, either positive or negative, which reflect the quality of work being done by each employee. The purpose of supervision and evaluation is instructional improvement.

Observations and evaluations will be conducted in accordance with adopted state policy, which includes the Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System. The Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System provides a reliable and valid system of performance assessments based on common standards to gauge teacher effectiveness, help track educational progress, identify areas of need, and improve performance throughout a teacher's career. It is designed to improve student achievement by providing teachers with clear, specific, actionable, and timely feedback to inform continuous improvement. Evaluations of certified employees are submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education.

Technology Policies (Cross Ref: Policies IJ & IJB)

TECHNOLOGY & INSTRUCTION INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

The Neshoba County School District is pleased to offer to its students, faculty, and staff access to the Internet in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy. The Internet is an electronic highway connecting hundreds of thousands of computers and millions of individual users globally. This computer technology will help propel our schools through the communication age by allowing students and staff to access and to use resources from distant computers, communicate and collaborate with other individuals and groups, and significantly expand their available information base.

Overview

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional state networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the users who must adhere to strict guidelines. To this end, Congress has passed and President signed into law, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). CIPA requires that schools receiving certain federal funds, including E-Rate discounts and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, put into place Internet Safety policies. These Internet safety policies must include a technology protection measure for blocking access to "visual depictions" of obscene material, child pornography, and material that is "harmful to minors" when minors are accessing the computer. CIPA also requires that the Internet safety policy include monitoring of all online activities of minors. Additionally, the policy must address all of the following: (a) access to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web, (b) the safety and security when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications, (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking", installation/manipulation or software/hardware and other unlawful activities online, (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information, and (e) measures designed to restrict access to harmful materials.

Recognizing that no filtering solution can be 100% effective, it is understood that all technology protection measures do not and will not work perfectly. In complying with CIPA, schools are expected to engage in a "good faith effort" to abide by the requirements of CIPA. CIPA does not create a private right to action, meaning that the discovery of objectionable material on a computer cannot result in a lawsuit complaining that a school violated CIPA.

These guidelines are provided so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to assume. In general, this requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources. If a Neshoba County School District user violates any of these provisions, his or her account will be terminated and future access could possibly be denied.

Neshoba County School District Internet Terms and Conditions of Use

Personal Safety:

1. User will not disclose, use, disseminate or divulge personal and/or private information about himself/herself, minors or any other including personal identification information such as, but not limited to, credit card information, social security numbers, telephone numbers, addresses, etc.
2. User will immediately report to the Neshoba County School District Authorities any attempt by other Internet users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal contact.

Illegal Activity:

1. User agrees not to access, transmit or retransmit any material(s) in furtherance of any illegal act

- or conspiracy to commit any illegal act in violation of United States, Mississippi, local government, or the Neshoba County School District laws, policies or regulations.
2. User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit: copyrighted materials (including plagiarism), threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, or material protected by trade secret, and/or any other material that is inappropriate to minors.
 3. User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit any material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by devices including, but not limited to, the use of firearms, explosives, fireworks, smoke bombs, incendiary devices, or other similar materials.
 4. User shall not use the network for any illegal activity including, but not limited to, unauthorized access including hacking, installation/manipulation of software/hardware.
 5. User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit language that may be considered offensive, defamatory, or abusive.
 6. Personnel dismissal may occur when inappropriately associating with or writing about students/children on internet social networking websites, such as Facebook, MySpace, chatrooms, blogs, etc. This includes posting comments, data, and/or photos of students. Employees, faculty, and staff should not give social networking website passwords to students. Access to social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited.
 7. User shall not access, transmit or retransmit information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
 8. User shall not access, transmit or retransmit information that harasses another person or causes distress to another person.

System Resource Limits:

1. User shall only use the Neshoba County School District system for educational and career development activities and limited, high quality self-discovery activities as approved by the Neshoba County School District faculty for a limited amount of time per week.
2. User agrees not to download large files unless it is absolutely necessary. If absolutely necessary to download large files, user agrees to download the file at a time when the system is not being heavily used.
3. User agrees not to post chain letters or engage in “spamming” (that is, sending an annoying or unnecessary message to large numbers of people).
4. User agrees to immediately notify his/her teacher or other school administrator should user access inappropriate information. This will assist protecting user against a claim of intentional violation of this policy.

User Rights:

1. The Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to a school newspaper, and therefore the Neshoba County School District may restrict user’s right to free speech for valid educational reasons. The Neshoba County School District will not restrict user’s right to free speech on the basis of disagreement with the opinions expressed by the user.
2. User shall have the responsibility to use computer resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. The only exception will be for academic research by a staff member with the approval of school administration.
3. User should not expect files stored on school-based computer to remain private. Authorized staff will periodically inspect folders and logs of network usage will be kept at all times. Routine review and maintenance of the system may indicate that user has violated this policy, school codes, municipal law, state law or federal law. Parents of minor users shall have the right to inspect the contents of the user’s files.

4. The Neshoba County School District will fully cooperate with local, state or Federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the user's Internet account.

Individual schools within the district may create additional guidelines and procedures consistent with this policy. Such guidelines and procedures will be appropriate for the electronic information resources being used and the students served at the school.

Consequences for Failure to Follow Terms and Conditions of Internet Use Policy

There will be consequences for any user who fails to follow the Neshoba County School District and school guidelines and policies. The consequences may include paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy, and state or federal law. At the discretion of the Neshoba County School District, law enforcement authorities may be involved and any violations of state and/or federal law may result in criminal or civil prosecution.

When user is using the Neshoba County School District system, it may seem as though these policies could be easily broken and that the user would not get caught. This is not true. Electronic footprints are left behind on a machine each time it is used, and the potential for apprehension always exists.

INTERNET SAFETY POLICY CHILDREN'S INTERNET PROTECTION ACT (CIPA) POLICY

The Neshoba County School District (NCSD) adopts guidelines that require efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of Internet resources within the educational setting. The Neshoba County School district shall be in compliance with The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) which is a federal law enacted by Congress in December 2000 to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers.

CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-Rate Program, a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. The following policy issues that are addressed in the **"Internet Safety Policy"** are:

1. Minors and employees will not be allowed access to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;
2. For the safety and security of minors and employees on the Internet, students and employees will not be allowed to access chat rooms, blogs, and other forms of direct electronic communications from the general public;
3. All employees are prohibited from text messaging an individual student at any time. This behavior creates opportunities for inappropriate relationships and should therefore be avoided except for educational purposes (ex: teachers, instructors, coaches may text the entire team concerning time changes or postponements in games, tournaments, performances, etc.)
4. Students and employees are unauthorized to access Internet "hacking" and other unlawful activities online;
5. Students and employees are unauthorized in the use, disclosure, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors and employees;
6. The NCSD provides measures designed to restrict minors and employees access to harmful materials (i.e., pictures that are obscene, are child pornography, etc.) through internet filtering/blocking via a District Content Filter/and Bell South Internet filtering services. A district authorized person may disable the blocking or filtering measure during any use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes;
7. The NCSD provides reasonable public notice through the local newspaper and holds a public hearing to address proposed technology protection measures and **"Internet Safety Policy"**.

8. The NCSD will provide for the education of minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms. *(Added by amendment to meet July 1, 2012 CIPA regulations)*
9. The NCSD will provide activities which will increase the awareness level of students, staff, and parents regarding cyberbullying and the appropriate methods for response and reporting. *(Added by amendment to meet July 1, 2012 CIPA regulations)*

By adopting and implementing the “**Internet Safety Policy,**” the NCSD is committed to providing an Internet network that allows legitimate access to educational resources for our students and employees.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF DISTRICT USED TECHNOLOGY (Policy Ref: IJBD)

The Neshoba County School District provides the privilege of technology for use in the schools and distance learning situations. Use of any district technology, including the use of devices and other technology under the Mississippi Equity in Distance Learning Grant Program, shall only be used for its intended purpose and for school purposes.

Before being given permission to use district technology, each user, as well as a minor’s parent(s) or guardian(s), is required to sign the Responsible Use of District Issued Technology Agreement.

Fines may be assessed for any intentional loss or damage of any school district devices.

Each user of district technology will:

1. Use school technology for school-related purposes only.
2. Treat school technology and devices with care and alert staff if there are any problems with operation.
3. Return district technology in the same manner as it was received minus normal wear and tear.

The District shall assume the control of ownership and liability for devices and other equipment purchased under the Equity in Distance Learning Grant Program until the device or other equipment:

1. No longer serves the school or related school purposes for which it was acquired and is sold by public auction under Section 17-25-25
2. Is sold to students in Grade 12 under the provisions of Section 37-7-459 and policy IJBC; or
3. Is traded in to a vendor as part of a subsequent purchase

The NCSD shall compile and maintain an inventory list of all devices purchased and issued to students, teachers and administrators, and other staff, as well as any supporting technology or equipment used to support the school’s distance learning plan.

***User and Parent/Guardian agreements are located at the end of this handbook.**

Telephones

All telephone calls into and out of the school district are logged and monitored through the Shortel system. Long distance personal calls should not be made from school phones.

Personal use of cell phones during instructional time is strictly prohibited.

Textbooks (Cross Ref: Policy ICFA)

Students should be urged to give their textbooks the best possible care. Fines will be assessed on damages to individual books. **Teachers must keep an accurate record of textbooks and the conditions of the books issued.** (This record should include the following: ISBN numbers, title, edition, publisher, and quantity.) Keep your principal informed of your textbook needs.

Transportation (Cross Ref: Policy JCDAD)

The safety of pupils to and from school should be of serious concern to every member of the Neshoba county school staff. Each principal assumes the responsibility of having persons assigned to supervise the loading and unloading of all school buses. Bus drivers as well as school staff, are responsible for making sure students are instructed on safety procedures while riding the bus and ensuring that students follow these instructions. **Accountability standard #29 requires that emergency bus evacuation drills are conducted at least two (2) times each year.**

Travel (Cross Ref: Policies DJD & GBRF)

Trip Request and Travel Reimbursement forms can be found on our website under [District Forms](#).

Travel must be approved beforehand by completing a trip request form and submitting it to the principal who will forward it to the superintendent or Federal Programs Director for approval.

1) Trip Request:

Most trips for professional development are supplemental and paid with federal funds, so the trip request must first be approved by the Federal Programs Director and then approved by the superintendent.

2) Registration:

You must be approved for a professional development trip before registering. If there is a cost for registration, you must have a Purchase Order number (PO#) from Federal Programs before registering.

3) Reimbursement:

Once you return from the trip, you will need to fill out a Travel Reimbursement form. ALL professional development requires proof of attendance (See #4). An agenda or other proof MUST be attached to the Travel Reimbursement Form. Reimbursement for mileage at the rate of \$.55 per mile is authorized by the Board. When overnight travel is required, the district will reimburse for out of pocket expenses for room and board and meals provided an itemized receipt (not just credit card receipt; no alcohol) is submitted. If plane fare is required, all transportation receipts are required in order to be reimbursed. The signature of the teacher requesting reimbursement attests that the request is accurate and valid.

4) **Proof of Attendance:**

(Attach copies of Proofs of Attendance to the Travel Reimbursement Form.)

Copy of Proofs of Attendance are required for documentation.

a. Agenda or Attendance Verification form (conference with signatures for sessions) AND

b. Name Badge (if given) from conference or Certificate of Completion.

5) In rare cases where a travel advance is authorized, settlement with the district after the travel is completed must be done within three (3) days of returning from the authorized destination.

See Local School Board Policy [DJD](#) regarding limits on meal reimbursements.

Use of Tobacco on Campus (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRM*)

The Neshoba County School District's campus and buildings are SMOKE-FREE. No tobacco products or electronic smoking devices shall be used in any public school buildings, on buses, on campus or grounds, on recreational areas or athletic fields, nor other properties owned, used or operated by the local school board. Violators shall be subject to a warning for the first conviction, \$75 for a second conviction and a fine not to exceed \$150 shall be imposed for subsequent violations.

Using an Electronic Device While Driving on District Business (Cross Ref: *Policy ECIA*)

No employee or volunteer driver of the Neshoba County School District shall operate any district motor vehicle or operate a personal motor vehicle in the course of their responsibilities and duties with the district while writing, sending, or reading a text message and from accessing, reading or posting to a social networking site using a hand-held mobile telephone.

Definitions

- "Hand-held mobile telephone" means a mobile telephone or other portable electronic communication device with which a user engages in a call or writes, sends, or reads a message using at least one hand. The term "hand-held mobile telephone" shall not include a voice-operated or hands-free device;
- "Motor vehicle" means a vehicle driven or drawn by mechanical power and manufactured primarily for use on public highways;
- "Social networking site" means any web-based service that allows individuals to construct a profile within a founded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and communicate with other users of the site;
- "Text message" includes a text-based message, instant message, electronic message, email, , but shall not include an emergency, traffic, or weather alert or a message related to the operation or navigation of the motor vehicle;
- "Writing," "sending," and "reading," with respect to a text message, means the manual entry, sending, or retrieval of a text message, respectively, to communicate with any person or device.
- "Voice operated or hands-free device" means a device that allows the user to write, send, or listen to a message without the use of either hand except to activate, deactivate, or initiate a feature or function.

Violations

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action including denial of use of school vehicles and district cell phones and up to and including termination. Certain violations are punishable by law. Any fines or penalties incurred shall be the responsibility of the employee.

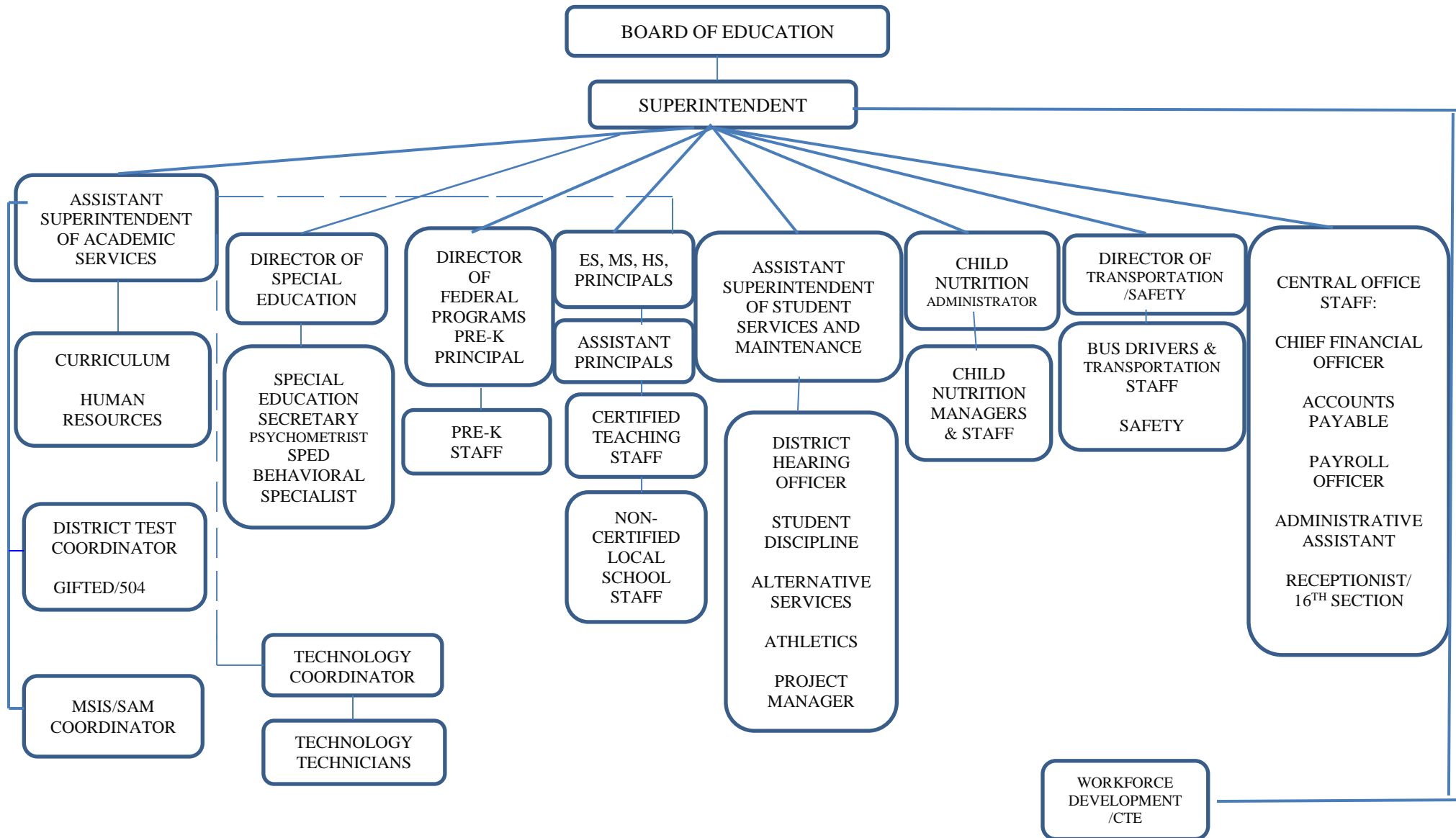
Worker's Compensation (Cross Ref: *Policy GBRHC*)

Employee Responsibilities When Injured On-the-Job

To be in good standing compliance with the MSBA Worker's Compensation Trust, you are encouraged to review this policy with all new hires and annually thereafter.

1. Report ALL accidents or illnesses, no matter how minor, to supervisor/principal.
2. The supervisor/principal will direct you to the Worker's Compensation contact for your location. The contact person will give you a packet to complete in order to open a claim. You will need to call the Employee Injury Call Center immediately at 1-877-764-3574, if capable to.
3. If you need to see a physician, please contact your supervisor immediately.
If going to the Neshoba General Emergency Room, the Worker's Compensation contact for your location should call Neshoba Occupational Wellness Program at 601-781-2400 immediately to notify them you are on the way.
4. Written or verbal information regarding the availability of light duty work should be given to the physician at the time of the first visit. In any case, the information will be provided to your attending physician in accordance with Neshoba County School District's Return-to-Work Program.
5. Immediately report to supervisor/principal the results of each physician visit. This should be done in person unless other arrangements have been made.
6. Contact should be made with supervisor/principal each week for updates on your condition and your ability/needs to return-to-work. Any information from the district will be provided to you at this time.
7. All work releases must be reported to supervisor/principal immediately so your return-to-work can be scheduled.
8. If supervisor is unavailable, you should contact principal.
9. If you have any questions or have concerns about the modified duty job, it is your responsibility to consult supervisor or principal immediately to discuss them. If they have any questions or concerns they will discuss them with you.
10. Doctor or physical therapy appointments should be scheduled outside working hours if possible. If not possible, arrangements need to be made with supervisor/principal.

NESHOBA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Responsible Use of District Issued Technology Agreement
User

I, _____, accept full responsibility for the safe and secure handling of the technology device(s) issued to me by the Neshoba County School District. I accept full responsibility for the proper use of the technology device(s) under all school board policies and applicable handbooks. I understand that if there is found to be intentional loss or damage to my device(s) applicable fines may be issued.

Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

User Name: _____ (Please Print)

User Signature: _____

Device: _____

Asset # (red tag) _____

Date: _____