

Corinth School District Employee Handbook



July, 2023

1204 Harper Road
Corinth, Mississippi 38834

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WELCOME

Dear Faculty and Staff,

Thank you for your commitment to the students of the Corinth School District. It is our goal to provide educational opportunities that promote academic excellence and prepare our children for the future. We want all Corinth children to leave our District career and college ready. All of us must commit ourselves to work together to accomplish this goal.

This handbook is an effort to help you understand the roles and requirements for being an employee in the Corinth School District. It will hopefully provide you with valuable information about employment procedures and information, State laws, and District policies and procedures. If you desire more detailed information about the referenced policies, laws and regulations, please consult the Policies and Regulations of the Board of Trustees Manual. A copy of this manual may be found in each school library and principal's office.

Thank you for your service in our schools and to the children of the Corinth community.

Edward Lee Childress, Ed.D.

Superintendent

I. INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL MATTERS

This Employee Handbook is intended to be an informative guide to certain policies and procedures of the Corinth School District, as well as a general statement concerning expectations of Corinth School District employees. While certain policies of the District are set forth herein, this handbook is not intended to comprehensively cover all employment and other policies applicable to District employees. Many procedures are established by State law. Additional policies and procedures are more fully set forth in the Policies and Regulations of the Board of Trustees and the Student Handbook, copies of which are available in each school office, the school library and in the District Central Office.

It is the responsibility of faculty and staff members to become familiar with the contents of this handbook. Through better understanding and cooperation, a better education can be afforded the students of our school. We welcome your cooperation, input and contributions to a safe, pleasant learning environment.

A. ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent:

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Corinth School District Board of Trustees:

Mr. Chip Peterson, President
Mr. Frank Davis, Secretary
Mr. Dennis Dilworth
Mrs. Jessica Garth
Mrs. Rilla Jones

Contact Number

Employees are requested to work with their principals in using the following district-level services and resources. For questions about individual schools, please call the building principal. For additional assistance, phone the Central Office at (662) 287-2425.

B. VISION

As a courageous, innovative leader in education, the Corinth School District will become one of the nation's top performing school districts through providing a world-class, 21st century educational experience graduating all students with the college and career readiness skills needed to succeed in a global, knowledge based society.

C. MISSION STATEMENT

To create a world-class 21st century educational experience for all students to achieve academic success, develop personal and civic responsibility, and achieve career and college readiness for the future.

D. NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Corinth School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. Inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies of the District shall be directed to the Superintendent. If a complaint concerns the actions of the Superintendent, such complaint should be directed to the President of the Board of Trustees.

E. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

No person shall on the basis of sex, race, religion, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic, extracurricular, occupational, training, or other program or activity operated by the Corinth School District. The employment procedures followed within the school district will also be executed on a non-discriminatory basis. Any inquiries regarding Title IX and Section 504 and its application may be directed to Tanya Nelson, Federal Programs Coordinator, or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights.

II. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

In an effort to attract and retain the highest quality personnel to serve the children of the Corinth community, the Corinth School District offers a wide range of benefits to eligible personnel. Programs such as social security, workers' compensation, state retirement and unemployment insurance cover all eligible employees in the manner prescribed by law. Benefits eligibility is dependent upon employee classification and other factors. Details of many of the programs can be found within this handbook.

A. GENERAL BENEFITS

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Cafeteria Plan
- Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS)
- Direct Deposit
- Holidays
- Insurance
- Medical Leave
- Personal Leave
- Sick Leave Benefits
- Vacation Leave (12 month employee)

Some benefit programs require contributions from employees, but others are fully paid by the District. The benefit package for full-time employees represents an additional cost to the Corinth School District.

B. BENEFITS CONTINUATION (COBRA)

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue insurance coverage under the Corinth School District's health plan when a "qualifying condition" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Such conditions include resignation, termination of employment, a reduction in the employee's hours, a leave of absence, an employee's divorce or legal separation, a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements, or death of an employee.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage for up to 18 months.

C. CAFETERIA PLAN

Corinth School District participates in the Section 125 Flexible Benefit Plan. Many insurance premiums paid through payroll deduction are exempt from social security, federal and state income taxes.

D. DIRECT DEPOSIT AND SALARY

State law mandates the direct deposit of monthly payroll checks. See Miss. Code Ann. §37-151-103.

E. HOLIDAYS

The Corinth School District will observe the holidays listed below.

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Break
- New Year's Day
- Dr. Martin Luther King Day
- Spring Break
- Easter
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

Each cafeteria, janitorial, maintenance and clerical staff member who is eligible for sick leave shall be given the following holidays with pay if they physically work the school day before and the school day after the holiday:

- New Year's Day
- Dr. Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (Only if regularly scheduled to work)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (2 days)
- Christmas (3 days)

If a non-licensed employee has a doctor's appointment, is absent with a doctor's excuse, or is out due to an immediate family death, then the Superintendent may excuse the absence and the employee receive holiday pay.

F. INSURANCE

The Corinth School District participates in the state health insurance plan for school employees. Health insurance is provided for all full-time employees and bus drivers of the district. A full-time employee is defined as one who works 20 hours per week or more.

Eligible employees may participate in other insurance plans subject to all terms and agreement between the Corinth School District and the insurance carriers. Information on all available insurance types and plans may be obtained from the Insurance Specialist at the Central Office. Additional insurance premiums will be deducted from the employee's salary.

All employees are eligible to participate in voluntary deduction of tax shelter annuities.

The Corinth School District provides Workers' Compensation insurance at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, Workers' Compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period, or if the employee is hospitalized, immediately. An employee should notify his/her immediate supervisor whenever an injury is sustained whether or not medical attention is needed. A Workers' Compensation form should be completed within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident, if possible. It is important to report all injuries immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible. The immediate supervisor will notify the Central Office, make the necessary arrangements for medical attention, and see that all claims forms are properly completed.

G. LEAVE

Eligible employees shall be entitled to leave (including FMLA leave, sick leave, personal leave, vacations, military leave, jury duty leave and leaves of absence) pursuant to applicable law and the policies set by the Board of Trustees. Such leave policies can be found in Section 6.4 of the Policies and Regulations of the Board of Trustees.

III. EMPLOYMENT

A. EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS

Licensed employees shall be employed under contracts issued by the Corinth School District for one-year terms. Decisions regarding employment will be made in accordance with the Section 5.0 of the Policies and Regulations of the Board of Trustees and applicable law. Employment decisions regarding licensed employees such as renewals of contracts, non-renewal of contracts, suspensions and terminations shall be dealt with as

provided in the School Employment Procedures Act, Miss. Code Ann. §37-9-101 *et seq.* (as applicable) and Miss. Code Ann. §37-9-59.

Pursuant to State law, licensed employees may be dismissed or suspended for incompetence, neglect of duty, immoral conduct, intemperance, brutal treatment of a pupil or other good cause. Non-licensed employees are employees at-will, are employed for no fixed term, and may be terminated at any time, for any reason or no reason.

B. BACKGROUND CHECKS

The Corinth School District requires that all persons recommended for employment submit to a current criminal records background check and a current child abuse registry check. This check is performed for licensed and non-licensed prospective employees. The cost of such background checks shall be paid by the District.

C. COMPENSATION, SALARY SCHEDULES AND OVERTIME

District policies concerning compensation, salary schedules and overtime can be found in Section 7.0 of the Policies and Regulations of the Board of Trustees. All overtime must be approved in advance by the Superintendent.

D. PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS

The Superintendent has the power and authority to make assignments of all employees to the various schools in the District. This includes the authority to make reassignments of all employees as deemed appropriate, provided that for licensed employees, the employee shall be properly licensed for the position to which he or she is moved.

E. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT / PUBLIC OFFICE

Unless otherwise noted at the time of employment, all employees of the District are considered to be full-time employees. Outside employment will not be permitted to jeopardize the effective performance of an employee or make it in any way difficult to adequately perform his/her duties or carry out his/her responsibilities. Any outside employment should be of the type which is not inconsistent with the moral and ethical aspects of teaching children. Before any employee of the District accepts outside employment during the period of his/her regular employment with the District, he/she shall file a written request with the Board of Trustees for permission to accept such employment and shall receive the consent of the Board to accept such employment.

Any employee should be allowed to seek public office so long as there is no political activity during the official workday of the employee while on duty with the District. An employee desiring to seek public office shall file a written request with the Board of Trustees for permission to seek the office and shall receive the consent of the Board before qualifying to run for the position.

F. RESIGNATION

Resignations must be submitted in writing to the principal or supervisor and forwarded to the Superintendent. Licensed personnel who have signed a contract for the coming school year and who submit resignations after June 15 may not have their resignations accepted unless a satisfactory replacement can be secured. Resignations or applications for release from the contract will be received by the Superintendent and only if properly executed. If employment is to be terminated during the school session, the resignation should be submitted in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of resignation.

G. RETIREMENT

An employee may retire upon becoming eligible under the provisions of the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi. Any unused accumulated leave time may be credited to an employee's creditable service at the time of retirement.

Any employee anticipating retirement during or at the end of the school fiscal year should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Notify the principal or supervisor of intent to retire no later than ninety (90) days prior to the effective retirement date.
2. Notify the Personnel/Payroll Specialist at the Central Office.
3. Request a retirement package from the Central Office at least ninety (90) days prior to the effective retirement date. **(Failure to request a retirement package ninety (90) days in advance may result in delay of retirement benefits.)**
4. When the package is received, call the payroll office to set up an appointment to complete retirement papers.

Upon retirement from employment, each licensed and non-licensed employee shall be paid for not more than thirty (30) days of unused accumulated sick leave and personal leave earned while employed by the Corinth School District, which leave is not credited to those employees for retirement purposes. For licensed employees with less than twenty (20) days of unused leave, payment shall be at the then current regular substitute teacher pay rate. For licensed employees with twenty (20) or more days of unused leave, payment shall be at the then current supply substitute rate. For non-licensed employees, payment for unused leave shall be at the then current federal minimum hourly wage rate.

According to PERS, accumulated leave days may be credited toward retirement as explained in the PERS Member Handbook, which can be found at www.pers.ms.gov.

H. CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL HOURS AND DUTIES

Classified personnel are scheduled for a 40-hour week or less. The duties and responsibilities of classified personnel will be as fixed and prescribed in the job descriptions approved by the Board of Trustees. Time schedules are assigned as follows:

1. Custodians – assigned by building principal
2. Maintenance Workers – assigned by the Director of Buildings and Grounds and the Director of Transportation
3. Assistant Teachers – assigned by building principal
4. Clerical Staff – assigned by building principal and/or department director
5. Technology Support Staff – assigned by Director of Technology
6. Cafeteria Workers – assigned by the Director of Food Service and the Cafeteria Managers
7. Cafeteria Managers – assigned by the Director of Food Service
8. Bus Drivers – assigned by the Director of Transportation

I. TIME CLOCK PROCEDURES

All employees of the Corinth School District must clock in and clock out each day. All work days must be accounted for by either having time worked or leave entered. This includes leave for appointments, lunch and errands. The District uses a time system which requires employees to use ID card readers which record the employee's identity and time worked. Requests for leave and time edits should be entered by the employee in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of the principal of each school or departmental directors to ensure that employees are trained in the use of the time system and that the time records are accurate and true. Failure of an employee to follow time clock procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

IV. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

A. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Licensed employees of the Corinth School District shall at all times demonstrate professional conduct that follows the standards set forth in the *Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct*, promulgated by the Mississippi Department of Education. Violations of the standards set forth in the *Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct* may subject licensed employees to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The *Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct* is attached hereto as Appendix A.

Non-licensed employees of the Corinth School District are also expected to conduct themselves at all times in a respectful and professional manner, both in relation to other District employees and to students.

B. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

All employees shall abide by the Internet Safety Policy and the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy adopted by the Corinth School District Board of Trustees when at school or while performing school related activities. Such policies can be found in Section 11.8 of the Policies and Regulations of the Board of Trustees.

C. CELL PHONE USE / TEXTING / SOCIAL MEDIA

Teachers are specifically prohibited from using cell phones for personal use during times assigned for instruction or duties.

It is the duty of all teachers, coaches, extra-curricular sponsors, and staff members (all referred to generally as "Personnel" for the purposes of this policy) to maintain only appropriate communications with students at all times. The Corinth School District recognizes that with advances in communication technology, there are more opportunities for out-of-school and non-school related communications between Personnel and students. The increased opportunity for such communication also increases the risk that Personnel will make inappropriate contact with students.

The Corinth School District recognizes that there are many convenient and efficient means of communication available to Personnel who need to contact groups of students. Personnel are encouraged to be proactive in the delivery of verbal messages in group settings during scheduled practices or events. However, the Corinth School District understands that group texting or messaging in certain conditions is justifiable. In such instances, e-mail communication or texting with your class or teams **must** be managed through the one of the District's authorized commercial communication platforms. This group e-mail and group text messaging must be conducted during appropriate hours of the day.

Communicating with students through text messaging, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms and social media, as well as calling/accepting calls from individual students, constitute dangerous practices for Personnel, especially when these activities take place outside the normal school day or away from school activities. These communications could easily be misconstrued to be inappropriate contact with students and could lead to dismissal from employment and/or criminal charges.

The District recognizes, however, that there may be circumstances in which direct Personnel/student communication could be necessary or appropriate. Therefore, direct one-on-one contact between Personnel and students will be permitted **only** in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The communication **must** be through one of the District's commercial communication platforms: School Status, Canvas or any other platform approved by the District. Social media

- platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) may not be used for direct communication with individual students.
2. The communication **must** be with a student participating in the class, sport or extra-curricular event taught, coached or sponsored by the Personnel member;
 3. The communication **must** pertain to academics, athletics or some other school-related extra-curricular event, and be related to the class, sport or extra-curricular event taught, coached or sponsored by the Personnel member.
 4. Purely personal or social communications are absolutely prohibited.

The District's commercial communication platforms keep records of all communications made on such platforms, and all such communications are subject to review by the District at any time. Any direct electronic communication between Personnel and a student which does not strictly conform to these requirements may be viewed as evidence of inappropriate conduct toward students and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

This policy is intended to address communications between Personnel and students which arise out of their school relationship. The District understands that some Personnel may have legitimate relationships with students outside of the school context (e.g., church, non-school sports league, family relationships, etc.) which require direct communication between such Personnel and students. This policy is not intended to restrict any such communications. Accordingly, all potential violations of this policy are subject to review by the District to determine whether such communication occurred in the context of a legitimate non-school relationship, in which event, this policy shall not be deemed to have been violated.

Please also be reminded that both during and after school hours, the discussion of school-related issues through Facebook, Twitter, or other social media may be a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

As advances in communication technology are made, this policy shall be interpreted to cover new developments in technology and new methods of written and electronic communication. Infractions with regard to communication methods not specifically identified in this policy but within the scope of what this policy is addressing will be treated as violations of this policy.

D. ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Drug Free Workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in any property or facility owned or used by the Corinth School District and by any employee while serving in any official capacity representing said School District. No employee shall use or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages at school or at a school function. No employee shall operate any school vehicle or equipment while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

Employees may be suspended, without pay, for up to thirty (30) days or dismissed from employment within the District for the first occurrence of any of the above acts. Each employee is herein notified that as a condition of employment with the Corinth School District, he/she will abide by the terms of this Policy Statement and notify the Superintendent of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring outside of the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction.

Drug Testing. The Corinth School District will comply with The Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act (The Act) passed by Congress.

Use of Tobacco, E-Cigarettes and Similar Devices. The Corinth School District is dedicated to the good health of its students and faculty. In order to promote good health, the Corinth School District will provide a smoke-free and tobacco free environment on all school district property, including in vehicles. Accordingly, the use and possession of tobacco, tobacco related products, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), Juuls and similar devices which deliver nicotine or related substances as an alternative to smoking tobacco, is prohibited on school

property, in school vehicles and at school related events. Any person who violates this prohibition shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, in addition to any fine by local authorities.

E. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Acts of sexual harassment by employees, supervisors, and administrators are prohibited employment practices and are subject to sanctions and disciplinary measures, up to and including termination.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Prohibited acts of sexual harassment can take a variety of forms ranging from subtle pressure for sexual activity to physical assault. Examples of the kinds of conduct included in the definition of sexual harassment are:

1. Threats or intimations of sexual relations or sexual contact which is not freely or mutually agreeable to both parties;
2. Continual or repeated verbal abuses of a sexual nature including graphic commentaries on the person's body, sexually suggestive objects or pictures placed in the work area that may embarrass or offend the person, sexually degrading words to describe the person, or propositions of a sexual nature; and
3. Threats or insinuations that the person's employment, wages, benefits, or other conditions of employment may be adversely affected by not submitting to sexual advances.

The determination of the legality of a particular action will be made from the facts on a case by case basis.

Any questions or individual complaints involving sexual harassment should be referred to the individual's immediate supervisor, the building principal, or the Superintendent.

The following procedure will be utilized in processing any complaint involving sexual harassment:

1. The individual bringing the complaint shall be required to execute a Sexual Harassment Complaint Form which can be obtained from the office of any principal or the Superintendent;
2. The person against whom the complaint is made will be required to execute a written response on a form provided by the School District;
3. The Superintendent (or other administrator designated by the Board of Trustees if the complaint is against the Superintendent) shall make a prompt, thorough investigation, using discretion, good judgment, and confidentiality which investigation shall consist of interviewing the accuser and the accused person, either separately or together, and all witnesses who have been identified by either party;
4. Such witnesses, if employees of the school district, shall be required to execute a written statement concerning the alleged event; and any witness, if not an employee of the school district, shall be requested to do so;
5. Promptly after the investigation is completed, the Superintendent (or other administrator designated by the Board) shall make a written report to the School Board, accompanied by the complaint, the response, and all witness statements; and
6. As soon as possible after receipt of this report, the School Board, with the assistance of its legal counsel, shall determine the most appropriate action to take in light of the facts as they have been developed through the investigation. Options include discharge, transfer, written or oral

reprimands, or other actions deemed appropriate by the School Board in light of the established facts.

F. STUDENT CONTACT AND INTERACTIONS

The highest priorities of the Corinth School District are the education, welfare and safety of students. Accordingly, all employees are charged with the responsibility of promoting these priorities.

No employee of the Corinth School District shall ever strike a student out of anger or for disciplinary reasons. Any such striking of a student shall subject the employee to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This prohibition shall not apply to physical contact required to restrain or separate students engaged in fighting or otherwise required to prevent a student from causing immediate bodily harm to another person.

Sexually suggestive physical or verbal contact between employees and students is strictly prohibited. Employees shall not engage in any communication with students of a sexual nature. No employee of the Corinth School District shall ever touch a student in an inappropriate, romantic or sexualized manner, or in such a way that could have the appearance of being romantic or sexual in nature. Such prohibited conduct is not limited to touching chest and groin areas, but also includes, actions such as rubbing shoulders, necks or backs, touching knees or thighs, holding hands, and any other form of touching which could be perceived as done in a romantic or sexualized way.

While there may be times when it could be appropriate for an employee to raise his/her voice toward a student, as a general rule, employees should not publicly engage in loud verbal confrontations with students. In the event that an employee must confront a student about an issue, every effort should be made to do so in private, and using a moderate, conversational tone. If this cannot be accomplished, the matter should be taken to the principal.

G. CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

In training for effective citizenship, it is frequently necessary for pupils to study issues which are controversial. However, any issue which could be deemed controversial by students or parents, or which could create a divisive educational setting should be formally approved by the Superintendent prior to use in the classroom.

When studies within the classroom create differences of opinion, teachers should implement the following:

1. Deal with the topics and issues as impartially and objectively as possible. Teachers should not inject their own biases.
2. Handle all such topics in a manner suited to the range of knowledge, maturity, and competence of their students.
3. Have teaching materials dealing with all possible aspects of the topics readily available.
4. Do not expect or require that the class reach an agreement. Holding a difference of opinion is the right of each citizen.

H. RELIGIOUS MATTERS

One of the most sacred and fundamental rights citizens of the United States hold, is the right to freedom of religion. Constitutional protections are afforded both to individuals who hold religious beliefs, and to individuals who do not. It is the policy of the Corinth School District to protect and respect the religious liberties of all students and employees.

However, the District recognizes that when acting in the course and scope of their employment, employees of the Corinth School District are acting in a representative capacity for and on behalf of the District. Furthermore, teachers operate in a position of trust and authority with regard to students, giving them a unique ability to

influence students. Accordingly, in order to protect the religious liberties of students, employees are prohibited from proselytizing or taking actions designed to impose their particular religious beliefs upon students.

Classroom instruction utilizing religious texts or figures can be appropriate in the proper context of the study of comparative religions, schools of thought, historical events, etc. While the free and open exchange of ideas and the debate of various viewpoints is encouraged, the imposition of one's own religious beliefs on another and the elevation or denigration of a particular religion, belief system or view over another is prohibited. If a student initiates a discussion with an employee or asks an employee about his or her personal religious beliefs, the employee is not prohibited from responding, but should always be careful to avoid even the appearance of proselytizing or imposing his or her religious beliefs upon the student.

I. WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PREMISES

The Corinth School District Board of Trustees recognizes that the possession of pistols, firearms, or other weapons on school premises or at school functions by persons other than duly authorized law enforcement officials or duly authorized school officials creates an unreasonable and unwarranted risk of injury or death to District employees, students, visitors, and guests and further creates an unreasonable and unwarranted risk of damage to the property of District employees, students, visitors, and guests.

All employees of the Corinth School District, as a condition of employment with the District and regardless of whether any concealed carry or enhanced carry permit is held, are prohibited from carrying or possessing firearms or other weapons on school property or at school related events; provided, however, that the following personnel (or classes of personnel), who possess a valid enhanced carry permit for concealed weapons issued in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §97-37-7(2), may carry a concealed firearm on school property and at school related events: Superintendent, Principal, Assistant Principal and Maintenance and Transportation Director. This policy shall not prohibit the possession and use of knives or cutting tools by maintenance, transportation, cafeteria or other employees where the possession and use of such instruments is required in the normal performance of the employee's job duties. Further, this policy shall not prohibit employees from possessing a small, folding pocket knife.

J. SAFETY

In an effort to protect the safety and welfare of our personnel, all employees of the Corinth School District shall observe reasonable principles of good safety. Periodic staff development will be provided to promote safety. All employees, particularly directors, supervisors and administrators are responsible for keeping buildings, grounds and equipment as safe as reasonably possible. Periodic checks should be made to detect any safety hazards that may exist in the School District. Employees must immediately notify their building Principal or Assistant Principal upon discovery of any threat, act of violence or unsafe activity.

K. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

The Board recognizes and encourages the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in activities which exemplify good citizenship, including political activities. However, the Board also recognizes that school property and school time, financed by all of the people, shall not be used for political purposes.

L. EMPLOYEE DRESS

All employees are expected to be neat and well-groomed at all times while at work. An employee's dress or appearance shall not be so unusual, inappropriate or lacking in cleanliness that it clearly disrupts class or the learning environment. Administrators reserve the right to make a determination as to the appropriateness of an employee's appearance and will do so in a non-discriminatory manner. Administrators may ask an inappropriately dressed employee to leave work and to return in proper attire. Violation of this policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

M. ABSENCES

Any employee who anticipates an absence for any reason should report that absence to his/her principal or immediate supervisor in advance of the day of the absence, or will lose full payment for the unreported absence. An absence of three (3) days without proper notification to the employee's principal or immediate supervisor, or other administrator if the principal or supervisor is not available, shall constitute a voluntary resignation from employment.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES

A. ACCIDENT AND INJURY REPORTS

Any accident or injury involving school personnel, students or others on school property should be reported immediately to the principal. All accidents involving district vehicles should be reported to the proper law enforcement agency and to the Superintendent. Any accident involving school personnel or students participating in a school event away from the Corinth School District should be reported immediately to the school supervisory representative on the trip and to the Superintendent.

Any injury suffered by a school employee on school property should be reported to the school principal or the employee's supervisor on the day of the injury, but in any event, no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the injury. Following such report, employees must timely cooperate with the District in preparing and submitting insurance and other documentation concerning the injury. Failure of the employee to timely report any such injury or to cooperate with the District in preparing and submitting documentation concerning the injury, may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment. By clocking out each day a school employee certifies that he or she has reported any known injury suffered that day to the school principal or the employee's supervisor.

B. PARKING / PERSONAL PROPERTY

Employees shall park their automobiles in designated areas. All vehicles, except visitors, parked on campus are required to have a school issued parking decal. Vehicles without a decal are subject to towing. The District is not responsible for damage to or theft of cars or other personal property.

C. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Corinth School District shall operate in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, with regard to student information and records.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) have provided schools, school districts and state educational agencies guidelines in disclosing student records. School officials with a "legitimate educational interest" in any student information can have access to educational records without specific consent of parents or eligible students. A legitimate educational interest is the person's need to know in order to:

1. Perform an administrative task required in the school employee's job description approved by the School Board;
2. Perform a supervisory or instructional task directly related to the student's education; or
3. Perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family such as health care, counseling, student job placement, or student financial aid.

The misuse or improper disclosure of confidential information by school officials or a third party is strictly prohibited and is punishable by federal statutes. Such misuse or improper disclosure by District employees may additionally result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Electronic access to student information will be limited to job duty specifications of each employee. At no time should this information be printed, transferred, or shared under conditions other than those stipulated in FERPA. A complete explanation of FERPA may be found online at the United States Department of Education's website at www.ed.gov.

D. NEWS MEDIA / INTERVIEW REQUESTS

The District Public Information Officer is responsible for providing accurate and timely information to all educational staff, students and citizens of the community regarding the efforts by the District to provide each student with the best possible education and preparation. The Public Information Officer must approve all information and interview requests prior to giving the interview or disclosing the information, with the exception of media releases by the Superintendent.

All children in the District shall be allowed to participate in public relations activities or school related websites, unless their parents or guardians execute and return to the District a statement denying permission for their children to so participate.

Teachers should report noteworthy activities within classrooms and schools to the Public Information Officer as the support arm for all staff in informing the media and the community of events, activities and stories.

E. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

In order to maintain a proper atmosphere for learning, it is imperative that discipline be maintained at all times. Discipline must be fair and consistent. The teacher is authorized to discipline his/her classroom and is further authorized to discipline any student at school or at school-sponsored events. No paddling of students shall be permitted in the Corinth School District.

Specific policies and procedures regarding student discipline may be found in Section 8.17 of the Policies and Regulations of the Board of Trustees.

The Corinth School District has adopted a discipline ladder system which shall govern discipline for particular infractions. The discipline ladder for Corinth High School and Corinth Middle School, along with the separate discipline ladder for Corinth Elementary School, can be found in section VI.B. of the Corinth School District Student Handbook.

F. SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

If a teacher must be absent for any reason, it is likely that a substitute teacher must be provided. Please give the assistant principal as much advance notice as possible (by 6:30 a.m. for sicknesses). The assistant principal is responsible for securing substitutes. **Teachers may not call substitutes without permission.**

Each teacher will be expected to prepare a "Substitute Information File" to remain in the teacher's handbook or a highly visible place on the teacher's desk. This file should include the teacher's class schedule, current class roster, times and duty locations, lesson plans, seating charts, etc. Please include any other information which would be helpful to maintain the classroom in the regular teacher's absence. **Always over-plan for a substitute teacher, and make sure expectations of the substitute are clearly spelled out in writing.**

G. SCHOOL PURCHASES

Purchase orders are required for the purchase of all commodities which are to be paid for with public funds. Purchase requisitions must be approved by the principal/supervisor. All purchase orders must be approved by the Superintendent or a purchasing agent. Expenses incurred by purchases not authorized by the

principal/Superintendent will become the personal obligation of the employee making the purchase. State purchasing laws require obtaining two competitive quotes for purchases over \$5,000.00.

H. FUNDRAISING PROJECTS

All fundraising projects must be approved in advance by the principal, the Superintendent, and the Board of Trustees, through submission of a fundraising application form. Fundraising application forms may be obtained at the school office or the Central Office.

I. FEES

All fees or collections from students and/or in the name of the School District must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

J. ACCOUNTING FOR MONEY COLLECTED

Students must be given a receipt for all monies collected by teachers or by the office. Teachers must be given a receipt for monies turned in to the office. Teachers should not leave money in their rooms, and should not leave money in the office without obtaining a receipt. If time is a problem, teachers will be provided with the proper night deposit bags to safeguard money until it can be receipted. Every effort should be made to come to the office before 3:30 p.m.

K. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION / REIMBURSEMENT

Personnel who have been authorized by the Superintendent to travel in performance of their duties shall be reimbursed after such travel has occurred. Mileage, Per Diem, and Travel will be reimbursed at the current reimbursement rate as established by the Department of Finance and Administration Office of Purchasing and Travel. Travel in High Cost Areas will be reimbursed per Federal guidelines.

L. USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY

Each individual teacher is held responsible for the condition of his/her classroom. All teachers should periodically inspect furniture and other District property in their classrooms in an effort to catch and prevent the defacement of property.

School District property, furniture, and/or equipment may not be used for personal reasons, without advance authorization from the Board of Trustees.

M. GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

As the primary means of solving staff complaints and grievances, the Board expects each administrator to (1) discover and practice effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and administrators; (2) reduce potential reasons for complaints and grievances; and (3) establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration and the Board.

If an employee has a complaint or grievance, he or she should bring the matter to his or her principal or supervisor. If the matter is not resolved, the employee should then bring the matter to the Superintendent. If the matter is still not resolved, the employee should then bring the matter to the Board of Trustees.

N. ACTIVITY FUND PROCEDURES

Activity funds describe all funds received by school officials paid or collected to participate in any school activity, such activity being part of the school program and partially financed with public funds or

supplemented by public funds. The School Board is authorized and empowered to promulgate rules and regulations designation for what purposes school activity funds may be expended.

O. COPYRIGHT MATERIAL USE

Corinth School District employees are responsible for obeying copyright laws and restricted use requirements set forth by publishers and manufacturers.

P. FIELD TRIPS

Any field trip must enrich or enhance the instructional program of a school. The Corinth School District specifies the following guidelines:

1. Field trips are trips which involve no overnight stays.
2. The principal must approve all field trips and shall assign an appropriate number of staff members to have adequate supervision of the students.
3. After approval by the principal, written information pertaining to each specific field trip must be disseminated to the parents of involved students at least three school days prior to the date of the trip.
4. School buses or commercial buses must be used to transport students to and from school functions. Students cannot be transported by private vehicles.
5. Student attendance must be accounted for at all times. To take care of emergencies when parents have to be contacted, a list of all students who will be traveling and their home telephone numbers or other emergency numbers, will be submitted to the principal prior to departure.
6. In case of any emergency involving an accident or the health of the student, the staff member in charge shall take whatever steps are necessary to provide for the needs of the students. In all cases, the parents of the student are to be contacted and apprised of the circumstances of the problem. If required, medical assistance will be sought as soon as possible.

Q. OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES

Certain educational and extracurricular activities will require overnight stays. Such activities may include athletic events, band and chorus events, competitions, Challenge trips, and other school sponsored overnight activities. The Corinth School District specifies the following guidelines to be followed with respect to such activities:

1. The principal must approve all overnight activities and shall assign an appropriate number of staff members to have adequate supervision of the students.
2. After approval by the principal, written information pertaining to the overnight activity must be disseminated to the parents of involved students at least three school days prior to the date of the trip.
3. School buses or commercial buses must be used to transport students to and from school functions. Students cannot be transported by private vehicles, except as specifically provided in Section Q, below.
4. Student attendance must be accounted for at all times. To take care of emergencies when parents have to be contacted, a list of all students who will be traveling and their home telephone numbers or other emergency numbers, will be submitted to the principal prior to departure.
5. In case of any emergency involving an accident or the health of the student, the staff member in charge shall take whatever steps are necessary to provide for the needs of the students. In all cases, the parents of the student are to be contacted and apprised of the circumstances of the problem. If required, medical assistance will be sought as soon as possible.

6. With respect to hotel room selections and assignments, every effort shall be made to assign males and females to different floors of the hotel, and preferably to opposite sides of the hotel. Under no circumstances shall males and females be allowed to share the same room. Under no circumstances shall any adult be allowed to share the same room with a student.

R. OUT OF TOWN EVENT CHECK-OUTS

Students attending out of town academic, athletic or other extracurricular school events are required to travel to such events on buses provided by the school district. The Corinth School District recognizes, however, that from time to time parents or guardians may request that a student leave the event with the parent, guardian or other authorized person, rather than making the return trip on the bus. In such instances, a parent or guardian will be allowed to check-out his or her student following the event, provided that the parent or guardian either: (i) signs the school provided sign-out-sheet acknowledging that he or she is checking out the student and leaving the event, or (ii) provides written permission authorizing the student to leave the event with another person.

S. FIRST YEAR TEACHERS

New teachers and teachers new to the Corinth School District shall participate in the Corinth Teacher Induction Program (CTIP) which convenes monthly for sessions, including but not limited to the following:

1. Legal issues and professional ethics
2. Parent/teacher conferences and teacher evaluation
3. Contextual alignment
4. Reading strategies
5. Differentiated instruction

The training sessions conclude with an evaluation of what participants believe helped them make the transition into the Corinth School District.

T. GRADING

Assessment must provide timely feedback on specific knowledge and skills for specific students. Teachers are encouraged to provide information to students and parents on the mastery of essential skills of the curriculum. Grades will be given to each student on a nine-week basis. Grades shall reflect a student's progress in meeting the objectives of a course's curriculum.

Transfer grades shall be accepted by the receiving school provided that the courses taken are compatible with local and state regulations.

Students entering the ninth grade shall be advised of the method of calculating class rank and grade-point average. Grades used to determine class rank shall be the final grades for any course.

Teachers shall maintain accurate records which show how they determined grades.

The grading scale for grades 4-12 shall be as follows:

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade
A	93-100
B	85-92
C	75-84
D	70-74
F	Below 70

IGCSE and AICE classes --IGCSE Cambridge Regular Classes have a 1.02 weight. IGCSE Cambridge Honors Classes have a 1.03 weight. Extended Classes have a 1.03 weight). Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) and Advanced Placement Classes have a 1.05 weight.

The following conversion scale will be used in computing grade point averages based on a four-point system. All subjects taken will be considered in figuring the G.P.A.

		Regular & Accelerated	AICE/Advanced Placement
A	93-100	A 4 pts.	5 pts.
B	85-92	B 3 pts.	4 pts.
C	75-84	C 2 pts.	3 pts.
D	70-74	D 1 pt.	2 pts.
F	Below 70	F 0 pts.	0 pts.

The 4-point G.P.A. is computed by adding the total points earned considering semester grades in the classes in which students earn Carnegie units, then dividing by the number of semester grades. Total points/no. of grades = G.P.A.

Additional information regarding grading can be found in Section IV.D. of the Corinth School District Student Handbook.

U. LICENSURE / LICENSURE RENEWAL

Educators have the professional and contractual responsibility to participate in the school district’s professional development program and in professional development options for license renewal. The selection of professional development options is to be focused on improving student learning. Each educator is responsible for selecting and monitoring his/her individual professional development program.

Educators are also responsible for meeting all State requirements for maintaining licensure, and are responsible for timely submitting documentation for license renewal to the Office of Educator License in the Mississippi Department of Education (See Guidelines for Educator License). Specific questions regarding license renewal must be addressed with the appropriate staff at the Mississippi Department of Education Office of Educator License at (601) 359-3483, or by visiting the MDE website.

The failure of a licensed employee to have his or her license renewed prior to the statutory deadline for notifying licensed employees of the non-renewal of their contracts, shall result in the employee’s contract being non-renewed for the coming year.

V. MEDICAL POLICIES

Infectious Diseases. The infectious disease policy for students and employees is on file in the Superintendent’s office, principal’s offices, and the libraries. Students who have lice, ringworms, or scabies are not allowed to attend class until the situation is medicated and properly treated. The school will call the parent to pick up the student. To be readmitted to school, the student must bring a note from the parent stating the name of the product used and the date of use, or the box top from the product used. Repeat occurrences may result in referral of the child to the Alcorn County Health Department.

Procedures for Administering Medication. The Corinth School District does not provide nonprescription medication and will not be responsible for the storage or administration of such medications.

Authorized District personnel may administer prescription medication to students only if the following guidelines are met:

1. A signed *permission to administer prescription medication* form must be on file in the office. This form must be signed by the parent or legal guardian and then signed by the principal. A copy of the completed form will be given to the teacher.
2. The medication must be in the **original container**, with the information label displaying the name of the physician, name of drug, dosage, and specific instruction for administering. **(Medication in a non-prescription container will not be administered.)**
3. **The medication must have a current prescription label.**
4. **Medication prescribed and the container must match the form.**
5. **Medication can only be administered according to the instructions on the label.**
6. Medication will be stored in a secure place, and access to medication will be limited to the principal or his/her designee.
7. Medication will be administered in the presence of another adult witness.
8. A log will be maintained giving the date and time the medication is administered and the amount given.
9. The log will be signed by both the teacher and adult witness.
10. Over-the-counter medications cannot be administered at school.

Asthma and/or anaphylaxis medications may be possessed and self-administered by a student, provided that such medication has been prescribed for the student as indicated by the prescription label and the self-administration is in compliance with the prescription or written instructions from the student's physician or other licensed healthcare provider, and further provided that the student's parent or guardian:

1. Provides written authorization for self-administration to the principal;
2. Provides a written statement from the student's health care practitioner which states:
 - (i) that the student has asthma or anaphylaxis and has been instructed in self-administration of asthma and/or anaphylaxis medications;
 - (ii) the name and purpose of the medications;
 - (iii) the prescribed dosage;
 - (iv) the times at which or circumstances under which the medications may be administered; and
 - (v) the length of time for which the medications are prescribed.
3. Provides a written statement acknowledging that the school district shall incur no liability and that the parent or guardian shall indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees against any claims relating to the self-administration of asthma and/or anaphylaxis medications.

The permission for self-administration of asthma and/or anaphylaxis medications shall be effective for the school year in which it is granted, and shall be renewed each subsequent school year in accordance with the above stated requirements.

Auto-Injectable Epinephrine. It is the policy of the Corinth School District to permit a school nurse or trained school employee to administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a student who the school nurse or trained school employee, in good faith, believes is having an anaphylactic reaction, whether or not the student has a prescription for epinephrine.

W. CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT AND RETURN TO PLAY

An athlete who reports or displays any symptoms or signs of a concussion in a practice or game setting shall be removed immediately from the practice or game. The athlete shall not be allowed to return to the practice or game. The athlete shall not be allowed to return to the practice or game for the remainder of the day regardless of whether the athlete appears or states that he or she is normal.

The athlete shall be evaluated by a health care provider working within the provider's scope of practice. "Health care provider" is defined as a licensed physician, licensed nurse practitioner, licensed physician assistant or licensed health care professional working within the person's scope of practice and under the

direct supervision or written consultation of a physician; provided, that such health care provider has also been trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

If an athlete has sustained a concussion, the athlete shall be referred to a licensed physician, preferably one with experience in managing sports concussion injuries.

An athlete, who has been diagnosed with a concussion, shall be returned to play only after full recovery and clearance by a health care provider.

An athlete shall not return to a competitive game before demonstrating that he or she has no symptoms in a full supervised practice.

Athletes shall not continue to practice or return to play while still having symptoms of a concussion.

Parents or guardians shall receive and sign a copy of the concussion policy before the start of the regular school athletic event season.

X. PARENT CONFERENCES

Each school principal will provide time for school-wide parent/teacher conferences each year. As the need for parent conferences arises throughout the year, teachers should make every effort to accommodate parents' schedules for conferences. The teacher should inform the principal of any conference in which a third party may be required to attend the conference.

Y. PROMOTION, RETENTION AND GRADUATION POLICIES

Corinth School District policies on Promotion, Retention and Graduation can be found in Section IV.D. and E. of the Corinth School District Student Handbook.

Z. REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT

Any school employee having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is neglected or abused is required by Miss. Code Ann. §43-21-353 to cause an oral report to be made immediately by telephone or otherwise, and followed as soon thereafter as possible by a report in writing to the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (CPS), and shall also immediately report the same to the principal or his/her designee. Any report to CPS shall contain the names and addresses of the child and his parents or other persons responsible for his care, if known, the child's age, the nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries and any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury and the identity of the perpetrator. Reports of abuse and neglect made under this law and the identity of the reporter are confidential except when the court in its discretion determines the testimony of the person reporting to be material to a judicial proceeding. A school employee who makes a required report pursuant to this law is presumed to be acting in good faith. Any person reporting in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability (see Miss. Code Ann. §43-21-35).

APPENDIX A

Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, the undersigned employee of the Corinth School District, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Corinth School District Employee Handbook and the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct, have read the same carefully, and understand the contents thereof. I understand that if I have questions regarding the Employee Handbook or the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics or Standards of Conduct, I may contact my building Principal or the Superintendent.

Employee Signature

Date