

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The School Board Policy is available in the office and on the PSJA website ([www.psjaisd.us](http://www.psjaisd.us)). School policy DEC (Local) and DEC (Legal).

## TEACHER ABSENCE

Whether you know days in advance that you will be absent, or whether you become ill during the night, you owe it to your students and to your replacement to leave a situation he/she can step into easily. The substitute teacher is a versatile person, but his/her effectiveness is lowered every time something unexpected arises that could have been foreseen or prevented. Discuss substitute teachers with your students early in the year. Emphasize the necessity for adhering to established routines on days when you are absent. Days when you are absent are days that students can use to discover how far along they have gone in the development of self-discipline, how well they can carry on without your physical presence and how courteous they can be to someone who has taken on the difficult assignment of filling in for you with little notice. If you know several days in advance that you will be absent, adjust your scheduled work so that much if the day's work can be done with little guidance from the teacher. Review lessons, individual and group project work periods, tests and one-day projects are easiest for a substitute to handle. Lesson plans should be visible on your desks and easy to understand. Worksheets and/or handouts should be run off in advance.

\*\*Teachers will be assigned as substitutes if needed.

Do not secure a substitute unless you have been given approval by Mrs. Rakay.

## EMPLOYEE ABSENCE

Every person is to call me at 358-0131 to report an absence and then call the system. If you know ahead of time, let me know, and I will document. Failure to report an absence will result in possible termination. Staff development sessions are marked in attendance binder and you may remind me by texting or calling. After receiving approval for the absence from me, make arrangements for substitute teacher or colleague immediately. I will let you know if you require a substitute for the absence.

## EMPLOYEE LEAVE

**Sick Leave:** Use of extended sick leave or sick leave pool days shall be permitted only after all available state and local leave has been exhausted. (See secretary about using state days before local days.)

**State Sick Leave:** The District shall provide employees with five days per year of state personal leave, with no limit on accumulation and no restrictions on transfer among districts.

**Local Sick Leave:** All full-time employees shall earn paid local sick leave in accordance with the policy. Local sick leave shall accumulate without limit.

**Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** The District shall grant leave to eligible employees. (See policy info.)

### **TEACHER WORK DAY**

**7:45 AM – 4:10 pm**

Teachers who leave campus for lunch are asked to sign out at the office. Any scheduled meeting will be an extension of the workday and attendance will be required. Teachers assigned to school duty need to be at their duty location on time. Leaving during conference period is discouraged. However, if the situation arises, a teacher must receive administrative approval and will sign out in the office.

### **KEYS**

Each teacher is issued keys to the room in which he/she is teaching. The teacher is responsible for all keys issued and should take steps to ensure that they are misplaced. No teacher should ever give a key to a student for any purpose. They will be collected at the end of the year. See custodian or secretary for keys. **See Emily Rodriguez about this.**

### **TECHNOLOGY**

The teacher is responsible for all technological devices issued and should take steps to ensure that they are not misplaced. Inventory will be taken at the beginning and end of the school year. See CIT for help. **See Mr. Rios or Emily about this.**

### **FACULTY MAILBOXES**

Each faculty member should check his/her mailbox/email *twice each day and clear it out*; once before first period and once at the end of the day. Telephone messages, mails and memos will be placed in the boxes as soon as possible. If your mailbox is full, everything will be discarded. Teachers are not to send students to get mail or to the lounge for ANY REASON. See the secretary for any concerns regarding your mailbox.

### **DUPLICATING WORK**

Teachers are responsible for duplication of their own materials. Make use of your conference period. The office or custodians will not make copies for you. The copier in the office is strictly for office use. Paraprofessional(s) will only be used for instructional purposes and are to work with students directly. Copier will be located in the lounge. See the secretary for any questions/maintenance concerns regarding copiers.

### **CLC/PLANNING PERIOD**

Teachers are reminded that the period without class is NOT an off period. It is a ***planning period or extended learning time*** and should be used effectively. Teachers may leave the building for **emergencies only with administrative approval**. You need to be prompt to all CLC meetings. (Discuss new master schedule)

### **FACULTY MEETINGS**

Faculty meetings will be scheduled once a month as needed beginning at 4:15 pm and ending at 5:15pm. Please make arrangements for your OWN children on those days so you do not miss the meeting. They will begin promptly and they are mandatory for professionals. Teachers who need to be excused due to a doctor's appointment or university attendance must provide a written doctor's excuse or college schedule. See principal/assistant principal if you need to be excused from these meetings. However, you are still responsible for the agenda items.

### **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The equipment in a classroom is the responsibility of the teacher supplies, maps, desks, etc. and should be taken care of. Do not place student desks close to any room walls. It is not too much to expect of a teacher to occasionally check the condition of his/her room furniture. Any cutting or marking on desks should be reported to the office at once. School board policy states that school owned equipment is to be used only on school premises. Teachers must keep classrooms clean at all times. Do not leave food open in areas of instruction. See custodian or secretary for any concerns regarding classroom maintenance or school property.

### **SAVING ENERGY**

The doors to the rooms should be kept closed and locked if necessary. Please turn off lights and equipment when not in use and especially at the end of the day. Also, be sure to turn off any technological devices in your room, during lunch, conference period, or whenever not in use.

### **MATERNITY LEAVE**

A full-time certified employee who becomes pregnant may continue working and do so until the employee's condition interferes with the performance of regular duties. The employee shall submit to the Superintendent a request for leave of absence for maternity reasons. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work, the date upon which the employee has requested that the leave begin, and the probable date of the employee's return. Upon presentation of a statement of good health signed by her physician following delivery, an employee may resume her duties. A certified full-time employee covered by the state sick leave program is entitled to utilize accumulated state and local sick leave when leave is granted due to pregnancy. Personnel shall be required to perform all duties regardless of and without consideration of their pregnancy status. If unable to perform their duties, she will be required to take temporary disability leave for maternity reasons. See secretary for any questions/concerns regarding maternity leave.

## **PERSONAL LEAVE**

All personal leave requests must be submitted to the principal or assistant principal two days in advance of the anticipated absence. Time will be accumulated and deducted from sick leave periodically. Discretionary leave shall not be allowed on the day before a school holiday, the day after a school holiday, days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams, days scheduled for state mandated testing, or staff development days. These policies are set to preserve the employee's leave entitlement while minimizing disruption to the instructional program. Payroll department will dock the employee's check accordingly when policy is not followed. See secretary for personal leave form or go to website. You have calendars to plan accordingly.

## **WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF EMERGENCY ILLNESS**

If for any reason you cannot make it to school and have not made prior arrangements in the office, be sure to call the secretary, so a substitute can be arranged. This should seldom happen.

## **PREPARE FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

Pharr – San Juan – Alamo Independent School District will continue with the automated **Smart Find Express (substitute calling system)**. Teachers will continue to utilize this system that offers an opportunity to find substitute teachers better qualified for the job. In order to participate in SFE, teachers must register to get a Personal Identification Number (**PIN**). Teachers can then exercise greater control in requesting a substitute teacher. However, please understand SFE has its limitations. When you know you are going to be absent, call SFE as soon as possible. The closer the request is made the absence date, the more difficult to find a proper substitute. There are also special instructions to leave for the substitute if needed. See school secretary for help. Remember you must get administrative approval.

## **JURY DUTY**

Jury service may be performed by employees of the District if the service is mandatory or if the employee chooses to serve. The employee shall receive full pay for the days missed for jury duty. Money received for jury duty in any court in Hidalgo County shall be retained by the employee. Procedures for jury duty are as follows:

1. When you get notice, let your principal know immediately so that a copy of summon can be given to the secretary as a backup for monthly absence report and substitute may be employed for the time you are away from your post.
2. You must report to the District Court on the day you are asked to be present.
3. There are no exemptions from the service except for those over 65 years of age and those that have children under the age of ten.
4. Request from the District Court a letter confirming your jury duty service as soon as dismissed.

See secretary for any questions regarding jury duty.

## LESSON PLANS

### **WHY ARE THEY NEEDED?**

The tangible product developed, containing all lesson cycle components. Is a lesson plan. They should be complete enough so that any qualified person can teach from them. They should include certain details in lesson plans.

1. **Improvement of Preparation.** The lesson provides a well-thought out, detailed plan for conducting a class.
2. **Economy of Time.** If a lesson is taught two to four times a year, details need not be recalled each time. With a plan, the information is available and ready to be adapted to the current situation.
3. **Facilitation of Improvement.** If there is no record of a previous lesson, it is difficult to remember what occurred and to make course improvements. The lesson plan can help.
4. **Ease in Ordering Supplies.** The materials list on the lesson plan facilitates requisitioning equipment and materials.
5. **Guide for Substitute Teacher.** Lesson plans enable the substitute teacher to carry on regular class activities.
6. **Protection against Liability.** If the teacher can offer proof that safety procedures are taught in certain classes, it is more difficult to show negligence on the teacher's part. A lesson plan, which includes safety content, is non way to establish such proof.

**The Principal will determine the timeline for turning in lesson plans – which will be every 2 weeks and you will turn in 2 weeks of advance lesson plans each time you submit. Dates will be given to you at a later time on a campus calendar.**

**\*Lesson plans will be due: August 25 for Aug. 21 – Sept. 1, mark your calendars. Give printed copy to CLF.**

## TEXTBOOK PROCEDURE

1. The total number of books checked out will be the responsibility of each teacher during the school year. The teacher will be held accountable for his/her count.
2. Be sure to add to your total any number of additional textbooks that are requested and received. No books should be returned to the book room without first clearing it with secretary/principal.
3. Each teacher that issued books to students is to enter book numbers in grade book.
4. Subject area teachers should give students their book numbers when they lose their book. If a student cannot find her book, give her the book price and send her the office to pay for the book. We will issue the student and teacher as paid receipt. Teachers, keep your receipts for accountability and book reassurance purposes.
5. Do not sign "cleared" on a withdrawal slip unless you have checked in or received a paid receipt. The secretary will record all withdrawal slips not cleared.
6. Take up a student's textbook before you sign a schedule change form. Receiving teachers should not accept a schedule unless the releasing teacher has signed the schedule change form.
7. Periodically check to see that students keep their books covered.
8. It is important and necessary that book checks be made every six weeks. At the end of the school year, textbooks, receipts and not clear drops should add up to the total number of books assigned or checked out to you. If not, the teacher will be responsible for the balance.
9. No books will be accepted with an altered number or without a number.
10. All teacher editions should be returned to the office if you leave our campus, you may be charged for editions not returned.

## BOOKKEEPING AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

When a student has paid for textbooks or other items, student should pay the secretary and get a receipt. The student needs to be furnished with name of book and ISBN# and let the secretary know if the textbook is a classroom book or library book. The monies collected will either go to the library account or the textbook account; the receipt will be made out to the student's name and include the name of the book, ISBN #, and if it's a library book or a classroom textbook. This receipt should be shown to the teacher in order to get another book, etc. Teachers must keep their copy of textbook receipts until check out time at the end of the school year. The office is not responsible for money left unattended by staff on the secretary's desk or any desk. Money has to be counted, wrapped and given to the secretary. The same procedure applies to college textbooks. **A secretary or bookkeeper cannot accept cash that has not been counted.**

### **ISSUING RECEIPTS**

Cash should be organized when it is submitted to the school office; money has to be counted, wrapped and given to the secretary, along with completed Activity Fund Count of Cash Collections (Form E).

Two persons must be involved in the functions of collecting cash and issuing cash receipts; the secretary will do daily deposits. She will enter receipts into the Activity Fund Account.

### **CAMPUS SAFETY**

Some campus regulations are necessary to maintain an atmosphere of learning and to fulfill the school's responsibility for the welfare of the students. Campus rules, such as "CLOSED CAMPUS", no students in the parking lot or in parked cars, no smoking and requirement of hall passes are adopted for these purposes. Since every faculty member directly or indirectly benefits from an orderly campus, the responsibility for campus life is shared by all staff members. The professional teacher, who turns his/her head the other way, in full-view of a campus violation, is not fulfilling his contract of employment and is subject to consultation about the matter. With regard to campus violations, the responsibility of the teacher is to escort the violators to the principal's office or if that is not feasible, to report the violation. The school administration will be responsible for following up on the offense.

### **FIRE DRILL OR EMERGENCY BELLS**

Fire drills will be conducted as needed. Make sure:

1. To train occupants to leave the building orderly and quickly in case of emergency.
2. To teach self-control in times of emergencies.

### **FIRE DRILLS WILL BE CONDUCTED AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH**

All students and staff must:

Walk-Not run.

Be quick-Not talk.

Keep calm-Not push.

### **SECURE CAMPUS PROCEDURES**

PHASE 1 – SECURE PERIMETER: Secure all gates and doors leading into campus. Only one entry. Only one entry and one exit point into the school. School continues to operate normally.

PHASE 2 – HOLD IN PLACE: Secure all gates and doors leading into campus. No one is allowed in and out of campus. Students and teachers are not allowed to leave classrooms.

PHASE 3 – LOCKDOWN: secure all gates and doors leading into campus. No one is allowed in or out of campus. All students and staff are not allowed to leave classrooms. Lights turned off in classrooms. Classrooms are locked. Students and teacher take cover.

### **ROOM CARE**

Rooms should be **kept clean**. Students respond positively to an attractive environment. Please adhere to the following:

1. At the end of the day, **leave the classroom in the best possible condition**. Floors should be clear of all paper, books, etc. ready for sweeping and that all trash is ready to be taken in the trash bag. It is advised that all maintenance problems, repairs, moves of furniture, etc., be cleared through administration office.
2. **All lights and equipment should be turned off** and doors locked at all times when the room is not in supervised use.
3. Teachers should make frequent inspections of the equipment, desks, walls and floors in their rooms. Our building can be kept free from damage only through the earnest cooperation of all teachers and students.
4. Teachers are asked to help create pride in this school and encourage good citizenship on the part of the students.
5. Food should not be left in room uncovered. Plastic containers are recommended.
6. Chewing gum is prohibited at all times on campus.
7. Clutter should not be seen. Make efforts to clean after every day, week, month, etc.

### **DISCIPLINE IN CLASSROOM AND HALL CONDUCT**

Teachers are directly responsible for proper discipline and conduct of students in the classroom, halls, cafeteria, library and in restrooms. **Teachers must be in the hall before school, between classes and after school**. Do not allow students to loiter in the halls or around doorways. Teachers should always greet students when entering the classroom (remember our training with Capturing Kid's Hearts). If at all possible, refrain from rebuking or disciplining a student in front of the class. The use of sarcasm will seldom serve to put a student in his place. **A firm, fair, and humane approach should be used**. A good teacher will have a few discipline problems if his/her work has been well planned, lessons thoroughly thought out, and the students are kept busy. Each teacher should be prepared to teach and supervise the study of his/her class for the full time allotted for each period.

### **CLASSROOM RULES**

Be sure that all students in your classes are aware of the rules in your classroom. It is a good policy to involve them in setting your guidelines as it gives them some ownership and responsibility. (Remember the Social Contract)

### **LEAVING THE CLASSROOM**

Teachers must be in their classroom at ALL times when the class is in session. Since both Administrative and Board Policies recognize the importance of constant classroom supervision and control, ***you must not leave the classroom***. If some emergency arises and you find it necessary to leave the room press button for help, send a note to the office or contact security.

### **BULLETIN BOARDS/CLASSROOM**

Please make efforts to have the classroom as appealing and intellectually stimulating as possible. Use of creative **bulletin boards that instruct and acknowledge achievement are important** for our students. Make sure to change them often. Take the time to prepare your classroom. Materials are readily available for most projects; however, if you should need any special materials please make a request. Preparing your classroom will demonstrate your commitment to education and to this campus. Prepare word walls in advance and always display student work!

### **CLASSROOM VISITS**

A constant program of classroom visitations will be in effect by principal, assistant principal and/or instructional coach. Teachers are asked not to stop classroom routine when such visits are made. These visits will strengthen your position as a teacher. Students will be better behaved, you will be better prepared and other teachers can profit from my observations of you as we pass on to them many of your outstanding teaching techniques. Observations will be conducted through video camera and/or paper documentation. I have to turn in 10 classroom observations, therefore, you will get visited regularly. Remember that central office staff can stop by your rooms AT ANY TIME!!

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Take care in bringing personal property to school. The school cannot take responsibility for any theft or damage. Don't leave them in your room. No money should be left inside a desk at any time. Also, lock your classroom any time you are leaving for more than a few minutes. Money should only be handled by secretary. Ladies be careful with wallets and purses.

### **TEACHING SUPPLIES**

Tape, erasers, transparencies, markers, paper clips and similar items are available in the office. See secretary at the end of the day.

### **FACULTY LOUNGE**

We are family. Maintenance and upkeep of the lounge is everyone's responsibility. Please help us keep it neat and clean. Refrigerators will be cleaned out every Friday.

### **FOOD**

The rules concerning the consumption of food in the classroom during breakfast hours has changed. These rules will be discussed during our August PD. It is important that teachers monitor proper etiquette and cleanliness when food consumption is permitted in the classroom. No food or drinks are

allowed in the science lab rooms. Students will eat lunch in the cafeteria and are NOT allowed to leave school to go buy food or drinks.

### **TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS**

Membership in the TCTA, ATPE and AFT is not mandatory, but imperative, if you as teachers will be providing services to students. Each organization offers benefits which will protect you while on the job, plus keep you well informed on new ideas and concepts, as well as financial and legislative laws that affect the teaching profession.

### **EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

#### **SETTING AN EXAMPLE**

As a professional, you should set the professional example. If we require something from someone, we should set the example.

1. Proper language-proper conversation. Be careful what you share with students.
2. Be on time to work in class.
3. Dress appropriately.
4. Neatness-school work, desk, grade books.
5. Not sitting on top of tables or desks.
6. Not drinking soft drinks in the classroom while students are watching...especially during instruction.
7. No gum.

Do not place yourself in a position that permits parents to make complaints about your language and your unethical conversations in class.

### **UNIFORMED DRESS**

Follow district policy. Friday will be spirit day and staff will use Sotomayor Staff spirit shirt with jeans.

### **ATTENDANCE REPORTING**

Funds to operate our school come mainly from the state of Texas based on the current AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE. It is *imperative* that teachers report accurately every student absence. All teachers must record absences during every class period on the computer (TAC). A computerized attendance sheet/folder will be used as needed; it should be returned to the attendance office promptly after roll call. If you have students missing from your classroom that you think are on campus, contact the office immediately. If you have extra students not on ADA send them to their classrooms. We will be taking care of attendance daily. If you have a concern about the student's attendance, please see office staff.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

At the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week teachers shall send a progress report to parents of all students. If the ***student fails*** during a progress report period, the teacher shall be expected to contact the ***parents by the phone, home visit or personal note***. The contacts need to be logged. You must make contact with student.

Teachers will be asked to turn in documentation on the students that failed along with progress monitoring form for each student.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be issued every six weeks, and all grades will be given a numerical value. If a student is in school three weeks during a grade-reporting period, the student must receive a grade. Do not give a grade lower than a 50 and no "Incompletes".

### **SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited by state law on any school campus. This includes the parking lot or any other place on campus.

### **HOME CONTACTS**

We encourage you to make POSITIVE home contacts throughout the school year. You are asked to make phone calls, send positive notes and/or make home visits. These contacts should be for promoting attendance and encouraging students. Keep documentation of all your home contacts through designated phone/home visit logs. See liaison if you have concerns/questions about a student.

### **TIPS FOR WORKING WITH PARENTS**

1. Greet parents with a smile and welcoming manner.
2. Speak to parents in the language they prefer. If you do not know how to speak Spanish, have someone with you that can translate your message.
3. Make it clear to the parents that you are interested in their child's success.
4. Make it clear to the parents that you accept them as advocates for their child.
5. Use words that are easily understood when possible.
6. Explain terminology that may not be familiar to the parents.
7. Explain the school's program or services available to parents and students.
8. Temper difficult messages with positive introductions and conclusions.
9. Try to diffuse potential problems by remaining calm and positive in all communications with the parents.
10. LISTEN to and look at the parents when they speak to you.
11. Be open-minded to the parents' communication with you.
12. Let parents know that you are accessible to them by giving them the time(s) during the school day that you can be reached and the school's phone number.
13. Minimize interruptions and other distractions when talking with parents.
14. Send positive messages home, often.
15. Strive to provide all communications with the home in English and Spanish.
16. Invite parents to visit the school and to participate in the parental involvement activities.
17. Use "Open House", "Meet the Teacher Night" and other parent meetings to give positive and informative messages to parents, leaving discussions on problems with individual's student for parent-teacher conference.