



# Employee Handbook

2024-2025

Mr. David Baggett, Superintendent

# Table of Contents

FORWARD.....	1
PROFESSIONALISM .....	1
MISSION STATEMENT .....	2
DISTRICT GOALS .....	2
CONTRACTS.....	2
NEWS MEDIA.....	2
CELL PHONES .....	3
EXTRA DUTY .....	3
TEACHER ABSENCE.....	4
ARRIVING AND LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS.....	5
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL CAMPUS .....	5
STUDENT HANDBOOKS .....	6
STUDENT ATTENDANCE .....	6
STUDENT DISMISSAL .....	6
DISCIPLINE .....	6
CONFERENCES WITH PARENTS.....	6
PURCHASING .....	7
STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS.....	7
LENDING EQUIPMENT .....	10
CARE OF ROOMS.....	10
ENERGY .....	10
TOBACCO AND VAPE FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY .....	11
GUM CHEWING.....	11
PROGRESS REPORTS.....	12
NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS .....	12
TEXTBOOKS AND CHROMEBOOKS .....	14
LUNCH FEES FOR TEACHERS .....	14
COLLECTION OF MONEY .....	15
ADVERTISING OR PROMOTIONS WITHIN THE SCHOOL .....	15
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES .....	15

TITLE IX and TITLE VI .....	16
ATHLETICS and ACTIVITIES .....	17
FIELD TRIPS .....	17
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES .....	18
NOTICE OF EMPLOYEES RIGHTS TO CONTINUE GROUP HEALTH COVERAGE .....	25
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR STAFF .....	27
BULLYING – EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS.....	27
SEXUAL HARASSMENT – EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS .....	28
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY .....	30
PREVENTION OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE.....	32
COMPUTER / INTERNET APPROPRIATE USE POLICY .....	34
ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT CODE .....	34

*The Jackson County School District is an equal opportunity employer. The Jackson County School District does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sex, military status or any other classification that is protected by federal, state, or local law in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of employees, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, and vendors.*

**FORWARD**  
**PROFESSIONALISM**

Those in teaching who have reached a professional level are at ease with themselves and with their work. Ease with one's self comes from knowing what to accept and what to reject.

Employees are expected to act in a professional manner with each other, administrators, students, parents and the public. As professionals, all employees will follow the MS Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for one's actions. Professional behaviors include being respectful and displaying appropriate interactions with others. Confidentiality is expected regarding grades and personal student information. Regular attendance and consistently being on time for class is expected. All employees are expected to follow all school rules.

**Message from Superintendent David Baggett**

Dear Esteemed Team Members,

As the Superintendent of Education, I am honored to address you as we embark on our collective mission within The Jackson County School District. Our purpose is rooted in the belief that every student deserves access to a safe, nurturing environment where quality education flourishes. It is our commitment to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, where students not only acquire essential skills but also develop the confidence to pursue their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to society.

At the heart of our mission lies the conviction that education is the cornerstone of personal and societal progress. Through our dedication and expertise, we empower students to unlock their full potential and shape their futures according to their dreams and aspirations. Together, we strive to cultivate responsible, productive citizens who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to navigate an ever-changing world with resilience and integrity.

This employee handbook serves as a roadmap, guiding us in our shared endeavor to fulfill the mission of The Jackson County School District. It outlines the principles, policies, and procedures that underscore our commitment to excellence. As valued members of our educational community, your contributions are integral to the realization of our vision. I extend my deepest gratitude for your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in service of our students' success.

David Baggett  
Superintendent  
Jackson County School District

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Jackson County School District is to provide a safe, nurturing environment conducive to quality education wherein all students have the opportunity to obtain the essential skills necessary to achieve the goals of their choice and to become responsible, productive citizens.

## **DISTRICT GOALS**

1. Decrease number of Safety Incidents
2. Increase Student Achievement
3. Maintain Sound Financial Management
4. Develop and Improve Facilities and Infrastructure
5. Create a Positive Educational Experience
6. Maintain Positive and Effective Leadership

## **EMPLOYMENT**

The employment of certified employees depends upon proper licensure by the Mississippi Department of Education or other required credentials. Each certified employee is recommended by the Principal for the type of license indicated on his/her application.

A valid copy of each certified employee's license must be on file in the Office of Human Resources.

## **CONTRACTS**

A contract shall not be issued to a certified employee who does not possess a valid Mississippi Educator's license with the proper endorsement for employment or other required credentials. All contracts shall be based on the issue date of the license. The signature of a certified employee on a contract represents good faith on the part of the certified employee to fulfill the requirements set forth by the administration and the Board of Education. After a contract is signed, any resignation must be approved by the school board.

All certified employees will be evaluated annually according to the state and district personnel appraisal instruments using the competencies appropriate for the employee position.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Our school employees are the best public relations persons for The Jackson County School District. The teacher's classroom management, teaching methods, treatment of the children, as well as the school employees or almost anything an employee does or says is carried to the public by the child. Every employee should show a genuine interest in every child in school.

## **NEWS MEDIA**

The Superintendent is the spokesperson for The Jackson County School District. No one should talk to the news media without permission from the Superintendent. (The only exception is for athletic events).

### **SUBPOENA REQUESTS INVOLVING STUDENTS**

All subpoenas regarding or involving students or student records are to be forwarded to the District Office Superintendent, who will seek legal advice prior to any actions occurring.

### **SCHOOL TERM**

A school calendar will be available to employees prior to the opening of school.

### **TEST SECURITY FOR STATE ASSESSMENTS**

The Jackson County School District is dedicated to maintaining the integrity and security of the Mississippi State Assessments. As such, in accordance with guidelines set forth by the Mississippi State Department of Education, the District Test Coordinator will develop an annual District Test Security Plan for the approval of the Jackson County School Board. In turn, each School Test Coordinator will develop an annual School Test Security Plan. It is the responsibility of each individual employed by The Jackson County School District to study and implement the provisions set forth by the District Test Security Plan, their School Security Plan, as well as Appendix F of the Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards. Any school employees of The Jackson County School District involved in state testing must attend a State Assessment Training per school year.

### **CELL PHONES**

The Jackson County School District believes that the school district was created for the primary purpose of effectively educating the children attending school. The District further believes that to accomplish this mission, it is imperative that classroom instructional time be protected. Therefore, any activity that distracts the teacher from his or her ability to utilize the entire class period for instructional purposes is prohibited. Specifically prohibited is the use of personal cell phones by employees while supervising students or when the use is not related to instruction.

The District further prohibits the use of personal text messaging in any form by all employees to individual students. *If a teacher receives a text message from a student, he/she should make their building Principal aware of this conduct.* School personnel are to use the district's approved (by your supervisor and/or Principal) service to communicate with parents and students regarding emergency situations, school events, and other important issues.

Alleged violations of this policy shall be discussed in a conference between the employee and the building Principal. If the Principal finds the violation(s) to be factual, the Principal may issue a written reprimand to the employee(s) involved. This reprimand shall become a part of the employee's personnel file. Repeated violations may result in non-renewal of an employee's contract or dismissal.

Employees should not use cell phones to take inappropriate pictures of students for personal use or forward pictures of students to others.

### **EXTRA DUTY**

All employees will be asked to do extra duty during the school year. This duty will be distributed equally and fairly among the faculty. Employees are expected to perform their

duties as assigned. Teachers who travel from school to school (i.e. Gifted, Speech and Language, Occupational, and/or Physical Therapist, ELL, PBS) may not have this same expectation due to travel time to and from schools.

### **TEACHER ABSENCE**

When a teacher is absent for any reason, he/she should notify the Principal at the earliest possible hour – one hour prior to the beginning of school on the day of absence unless an extreme emergency occurs. In the event a teacher finds it necessary to be absent from school, he/she should notify the Principal as soon as possible.

### **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

Dress guidelines for Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Administrators, and Office Support Staff

Each employee should follow the below guidelines:

1. Employee should be neatly groomed.
2. Employee should wear attire that is neat and clean in appearance.
3. No shorts or warm-up suits in the classroom or office setting. Coaches/PE teachers can wear shorts (no more than 3" above the knee) while teaching PE.
4. No midriff tops, tank tops, jersey tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, off the shoulder, low cut tops, or revealing apparel. Sleeveless shirts, tops, or dresses may be worn, but the shoulder straps must be 2 inches or more in width and not to reveal any undergarments. Employees should not wear clothing that would be inappropriate for students to wear (length, tightness, etc.).
5. No beach style flip flop shoes shall be worn.
6. No sweatshirts or t-shirts bearing inappropriate logos or advertisements. No political affiliations may be worn.
7. School or district mascot/name and holiday sweatshirts or t-shirts will be acceptable, if approved by the supervisor.
8. Undergarments must be worn.
9. None of the following are allowed:
  - Visible body piercings (other than ears) or a small stud in the nose. No gauges or other visible piercings, including tongue piercing.
  - Exposed midriffs.
  - Sunglasses worn in the building.
  - Clothing that is in poor taste, immodest, or offensive because of reference to race, sex, ethnic group, etc.
  - Oversized clothing, "sagging" and/or "low-riding" clothing.
  - Unnatural hair colors [Only natural hair colors permitted, i.e., blonde, brunette, etc.]
  - Clothing or appearance styles that are deemed as a distraction by other employees or administration.
  - Tight clothing or clothing top cut so low in front to expose any part of the breast or be excessively low in the back.
10. The proper attire for **male personnel** includes the following:
  - Button-up shirts or polo shirts with collar.
  - Slacks – professional style with appropriate fit

- Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the school Principal for spirit days, motivational activities, cleaning, and moving activities. Blue jeans may be worn at the discretion of the Principal.
  - Clothes, to include blue jeans, should be free of rips, holes or tears.
  - Sneakers or other appropriate shoes must be worn.
11. The proper attire for **female personnel** includes the following:
- Blouses must be made of material which cannot be seen through. Sleeveless blouses are acceptable as long as the openings adequately cover undergarments. No backless apparel allowed.
  - Skirts, dresses, are to be no more than 3” above the knee. Denim skirts and dresses are allowed.
  - Slacks, Capri pants – professional style with appropriate fit.
  - Leggings may be worn under a dress as long as the dress is no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. **Leggings and/or yoga pants are not to be worn as pants.**
  - Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the school Principal for spirit days, motivational activities, cleaning, and moving activities. Blue jeans may be worn at the discretion of the Principal.
  - Clothes, to include blue jeans, should be free of rips, holes or tears.
  - Sneakers or other appropriate shoes must be worn.

Specialized employees such as maintenance, mechanics, custodians, transportation, and food service should follow a dress code approved by their supervisors.

### **ARRIVING AND LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Employees are expected to arrive on campus at the time set by the building Principal, not to exceed 35 minutes prior to the first bell. Employees are expected to remain at school continuously through the school day.

If an employee must leave school during the school day, he/she must obtain permission from the Principal before leaving. All employees are responsible for all students during the time the students are under the supervision of the school.

Teachers are not to leave the school grounds any earlier than 15 minutes after the last bell each afternoon. Exceptions must be arranged with the Principal. Several times during the year employees will remain at school beyond the normal dismissal time for professional development, conferences or other duties as required.

### **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL CAMPUS**

The Board of Education of The Jackson County School District is dedicated to maintaining a secure and educationally sound environment for its students and employees. Therefore, to ensure safety, security, and an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning on all campuses, it shall be the policy of this board that upon entering the campus of any school within this district, all visitors must report immediately to the school office and obtain permission before visiting any part of the campus.



Each visitor must sign a visitor list in the school office. A visitor's badge will be issued and must be worn at all times while on the school campus. The badge will be returned to the school office when the visitor departs the campus.

Teachers observing unauthorized visitors on campus should follow the school's guidelines for notifying the office.

### **STUDENT HANDBOOKS**

Each teacher and employee will have available a Student Handbook which becomes a part of the Employee Handbook. Each employee should become equally as familiar with the Student Handbook as with the Employee Handbook. The Employee Handbook and Student Discipline Policy JD are school board policies that all employees should know and follow.

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Employees should stress the importance of daily attendance and help administrators enforce attendance policies. Employees should encourage students to come to school every day.

### **STUDENT DISMISSAL**

Teachers are not to dismiss students from class before the bell rings unless instructed to do so by their Principal.

### **DISCIPLINE**

The Jackson County School District Board of Education expects all employees to maintain an atmosphere conducive for learning. Each employee is expected to become thoroughly knowledgeable of procedures applicable to students.

Teachers are encouraged to handle the discipline of their classes as much as possible; but should never hesitate to take students to the office. Students are not to be sent from the room with no place to go, nor placed in the hall. If a teacher sends a student to the office, the decision for punishing the student rests with the Principal. Teachers shall not prescribe what is to be done after the student has been referred to the Principal and in no case should the teacher tell a student that the Principal is going to have the student paddled or suspended.

When involved in a confrontational situation with a student(s), the employee should refrain from using physical restraint with the student(s) unless the student(s) is physically assaulting another student and/or employee. If a student fails to follow instructions from an employee, the employee should report the incident to the Principal and let him/her proceed with further action.

### **CONFERENCES WITH PARENTS**

Conferences with parents will not be scheduled during class periods. Conferences will be arranged after school or during planning periods and should be conducted professionally and with the student's best interest as the ultimate goal.

### **LESSON PLANS**

Each teacher must develop lesson plans as instructed by the Principal. Each teacher shall file with the Principal a teaching plan to be used in case of an emergency absence. Substitutes must have information to carry on class work during any period of a teacher's absence.

### **PAY DAY**

All JCSD personnel will receive their pay checks on the last business day of the month according to the 12 month/232-day work calendar. All checks will be directly deposited.

### **PURCHASING**

School personnel are to follow School Board Policy DJEG when making purchases. School personnel are to submit purchase requisitions to the Principal for approval. If the requisition meets all levels of approval, a purchase order will be issued. School personnel are not permitted to charge any purchase to the school unless they have an approved purchase order or an EEF card order to give vendor at the time of purchase. Any unauthorized purchases will be the responsibility of the buyer.

Personnel receiving invoices shall verify receipt of merchandise by signing and dating the invoice and packing receipt and promptly submitting it to the Principal's Office so payment can be made in a timely manner. Personnel who fail to submit invoices to the Principal's Office in a timely manner will be responsible for late charges assessed by vendors.

School personnel are responsible for all equipment and materials under their supervision. School property shall be used with care and consideration. School personnel are responsible for reporting any damage to school property or missing equipment to the Principal immediately.

All supplies, materials, equipment, and other property purchased by the school shall remain the property of the school, even those purchased with an EEF card or grant. Equipment purchases must follow district purchasing guidelines. All equipment purchased must remain at the school.

### **PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS OR GROUPS**

Any technology equipment purchased must have approval of the Technology Director. The equipment, when purchased for school use, will become the property of the school.

### **STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS**

The Board of Education of The Jackson County School District authorizes the expenditures of local school activity funds, or other available school district funds, other than minimum education program funds, for any necessary expenses or travel costs incurred by students and their chaperons in attending any in-state or out-of-state school related programs, conventions or seminars and/or any commodities, equipment, travel expenses, purchased services or school supplies which the school board, in its discretion, shall deem beneficial to the official or extracurricular programs of the district, including items which may subsequently become the personal property of students, including yearbooks, athletic apparel, book covers, and trophies.

“Activity funds” shall mean 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 term “activity funds” shall not include any funds raised and/or expended by any organization unless commingled in a bank account with existing activity funds, regardless of whether the funds were raised by school employees or received by school employees during school hours or using school facilities and regardless of whether a school employee exercises influence over the expenditure or disposition of such funds.

Each Attendance Center’s Bookkeeper’s Office, Jackson County Technology Center Office, and JCSD Fab Lab Office will maintain its own bank account for the receipt of activity funds. The account must be approved by the school board and entered into its minutes along with the name of the only persons authorized to sign checks on the account. Accounts must be in financial institutions selected by the school board in accordance with state statutes. A copy of the school activity account will be kept on file in each Attendance Center Bookkeeper’s Office and the Jackson County Technology Center Office, and JCSD Fab Lab Office available at any time to the teachers, students, or parents.

All activity funds received by a local school must be deposited into its activity fund bank account.

The Bookkeeper of the Attendance Center, Director of the Technology Center, and JCSD Fab Lab must maintain a permanent three-part receipt book in which to record all receipts. A person remitting activity funds for deposit will be given the original receipt, the second copy will be attached to the transmittal report to the Business Office, and the third copy will be kept in the book and on permanent file in the Bookkeeper of the Attendance Center’s Office, Jackson County Technology Center Office and JCSD Fab Lab Office. All of these pre-numbered receipts must be accounted for. A copy of the deposit slip indicating the amounts of money deposited to the bank must also be attached to the transmittal report. The deposit slip should indicate the sequence of receipt numbers that particular deposit covers. No more than Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) shall be maintained in a school building beyond bank closing hours.

Funds raised by any organization (such as PTA, PTO, PTSO or Booster Club) will be separate and not part of the activity fund.

If any organization donates any assets to the school district, the school board must acknowledge in its official minutes who has title to the donated assets.

Pre-numbered tickets shall be used at any event at a local school for which a fee is charged for admission.

Any disbursements of activity funds must be made from the account on pre-numbered checks. The disbursement shall be adequately supported by an invoice or statement. All purchases made with activity funds must comply with the state purchasing laws.

The activity funds account shall be audited annually.

Any activity fund which becomes dormant and inactive may have its surplus, if any, transferred to another activity fund if approval is granted by the school board.

This school board may authorize to conduct, on behalf of the school district, fund-raising activities deemed by the board, in its discretion, to be appropriate or beneficial to the official or extracurricular programs of the district. Any proceeds of such fund-raising activities shall be treated as activity funds and shall be accounted for as are other activity funds. Approval of all fund-raising activities must have prior approval of the Principal, Superintendent and School Board. Booster Club accounts are exempt from this step.

Fund-raising activities conducted or authorized by the board for the sale of school pictures, the rental of caps and gowns or the sale of graduation invitations for which the school board receives a commission, rebate or fee shall contain a disclosure statement advising that a portion of the proceeds shall be contributed to the student activity fund.

Any arrangement between a local school and a company supplying merchandise, such as school pictures, class rings and caps and gowns, shall be by written contract, signed by the Superintendent and the company's representative, approved by the school board, and on file available for public review in the Superintendent's office. The contract shall include all provisions of the arrangement including any rebate or commission to the school. Any rebate or commission provision in a contract shall be fully disclosed in the school board minutes and to any prospective purchasers of the merchandise. In cases where the merchandise is purchased by the student directly from the vendor, any such rebate or commission to the school shall be paid by check from the company directly to the school's activity fund. Under no circumstances shall a company or a purchaser make a payment directly to an individual person.

Purchases made for school activities which are totally financed with privately generated funds that are not accounted for in a school district's financial accounting system (e.g. student purchases directly from a vendor) are not required to be made pursuant to state purchasing laws or have prior approval by the school board (ex. Club accounts).

NOTE: Please also refer to Financial Accounting Manual for Mississippi School District.

Expenses for the following may be made prior to Board approval:

Athletic Officials, Game guarantees, ROTC purchases, Tournament fees, Field Trips (only if vendor will not accept a purchase order at the time of entrance).

Expenses related to travel incurred for scheduled athletic activities (as sanctioned by MHSAA Mississippi High School Activities Association). Examples of such expenses are: meals, hotel accommodations, etc.

These reports will be presented as part of the transmittal report on the claim docket.

Exceptions to this policy will be approved by the Superintendent of Education and presented on the Board at the next scheduled board meeting.

Legal Reference: Mississippi Code Section 37-7-301(s)  
Cross Reference: Policies DI- Accounting and Reporting  
DJEA-Purchasing Authority  
DK-Student Activities Fund Management

### **FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES**

The school board may authorize to conduct, on behalf of the school district, fund-raising activities deemed by the board, in its discretion, to be appropriate and beneficial to the official or extracurricular programs of the district. Any proceeds of such fund-raising shall be treated as activity funds and shall be accounted for, as are other activity funds. All fund-raising activities must have prior approval of the Principal, Superintendent and School Board in accordance with Policy DK. Food sold on campus during the school day to students must meet Federal smart snack regulations.

### **LENDING EQUIPMENT**

The Jackson County School District maintains property records for all Fixed Assets and has custodial responsibility for all such equipment. These Fixed Asset records document the value of all buildings, equipment and all highly walkable items. It may be necessary, from time to time, for school employees to use school equipment away from school (and during non-school hours) in the performance of their job responsibilities.

In such an occasion, appropriate records should be kept documenting the removal of said equipment from school property. Furthermore, use of any school equipment for non-school purposes shall be strictly prohibited. Specifically, use of any school equipment for personal use by employees of the district or loaning of school equipment to others for non-school business shall be strictly prohibited.

### **BORROWING EQUIPMENT**

Borrowing district equipment for personal use is prohibited.

### **CARE OF ROOMS**

Desks are expected to be kept in an orderly arrangement. Ingenuity on the part of the teacher can improve the appearance of classrooms. Care should be taken to see that each class leaves the classroom in a neat and clean condition. The teacher should carefully check desktops, tables, etc., for marks and see that paper is off the floor and out of the desks. When the teacher is out, the room lights are to be off, and the door is to be locked.

### **ENERGY**

As most employees realize, energy costs have more than doubled in the past few years. In order to maintain a reasonable budget for utilities, please be "energy conscious" in the use of water, lights, air conditioning, and heat.

## **TOBACCO AND VAPE FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

It is the philosophy of the Board of Education of The Jackson County School District that the use of tobacco and vapes threaten the physical well-being of students and employees in the environment, is addictive, results in increased maintenance for facilities and grounds, and is not in the best interest of students or employees of the school system. In addition, tobacco and vape use on campus is a violation of federal law. Therefore, it shall be the policy of this board to create a tobacco and vape free environment in The Jackson County School District. This includes all tobacco and vape products and electronic cigarettes.

To accomplish this end, the following conditions shall be met:

1. The use or display of tobacco, vape, or electronic cigarettes in any form, including smokeless tobacco products, by employees and/or visitors shall be prohibited while such employees and/or visitors are on or in property, facilities, and vehicles owned by the district or under its control.
2. This prohibition includes any school function or extracurricular activity which is held on any school property, including outdoor athletic fields or recreational areas.

Penalties for violations of this board policy shall be the following:

1. Upon the first violation, the employee will be given a written reprimand stating the date and the place of the violation. This reprimand will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
2. The employee will receive a warning that further violations shall be considered an act of insubordination and will result in further consequences stated in items 3 and 4. The written reprimand will be removed from the employee's file if the employee remains free of tobacco and vape incidents for a period of two years.
3. The second violation shall result in the employee's suspension without pay for ten (10) working days. However, if the employee agrees to immediately enroll in and complete an approved tobacco or vape cessation program, this suspension will be reduced to five (5) working days without pay.
4. A third violation shall result in the initiation of dismissal procedures, subject to appropriate procedural requirements.
5. Possession or use of tobacco or vapes by students, administration, and staff is prohibited while on school property, at any school sponsored activity, or while under the supervision of the school personnel, or District Office Human Resources.

REFERENCES: Mississippi Adult Tobacco Use on Educational Property Act of 2000. (Sections 97-32-25, 97-32-27, and 97-32-29).

Failure to maintain a Tobacco Free Environment will jeopardize the receipt of all federal funds.

## **GUM CHEWING**

Teachers are not to chew gum while instructing.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

The number of grades and grading policy must be followed according to the student handbook. Grades will be posted in a timely manner based on the grade level.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

All students will receive progress reports according to the approved school calendar.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Grades will be posted according to the approved school calendar. Report cards will be sent home to parents by students four times during the school year one week after each nine-week term ends. All students will receive their reports the same day.

Grades will be issued for academic work. No student is to receive a report card unless he/she has been enrolled in the school for at least one-half the current term. When a student transfers from another school during the course of the nine weeks term, the grades the student had earned at the previous school until time of withdrawal should be included when computing that student's nine-week average.

If a student is financially indebted to the school for damage, misuse, or loss of school property, such as library fines, charges for lost or damaged textbooks, Chromebook, or disciplinary fines imposed for vandalism, the Principal may hold all report cards until the debt is cleared. Students withdrawing from school prior to the last day of the term will not receive a report card. A withdrawal form will be issued to those students with partial grades recorded by the teacher. There will be no exceptions.

## **CUMULATIVE AND PERMANENT RECORDS**

The keeping of cumulative and permanent records is required by state law. The records are to be kept in black ink and are the responsibility of the person(s) designated by the building Principal. The recording of grades on progress reports, grade sheets, and grade books is the responsibility of the teacher. Averages are to be reported no later than two weeks after the first semester and before the teacher checks out at the end of the school year.

## **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records with 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school Principal or appropriate school official, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask The Jackson County School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school Principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel; a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, the district discloses educational records without consent.

The district discloses directory information regarding its students. Directory information means information contained in an educational record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It may include the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the district designate any or all types of information about the student as directory information. The parent or eligible student must notify the Principal (or designee) in writing within five (5) days of receipt of the Handbook and Code of Conduct for Students and Parents that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information. Otherwise, consent is implied for The Jackson County School District to release directory information to others including military recruiters as outlined below.



In the event that the school district provides either post-secondary educational institutions or perspective employers of secondary student's access to its school campuses, it must also provide military recruiters the same type of access. The school district must also provide, upon request of military recruiters, the names of students, their addresses, and telephone numbers unless the secondary school student or the parent has requested that the school not release this information without prior written parental consent.

The district may disclose directory information about former students without meeting these conditions.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Legal Reference: Section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act (PL. 93-380)  
November 17, 1974  
Section 37-15-1, 37-15-3; Mississippi Code of 1972  
45, CFR Part 99, 45 CFR Part 121A

### **TEXTBOOKS AND CHROMEBOOKS**

Textbooks and Chromebooks are the responsibility of the teacher issuing the books. The condition of textbooks and Chromebooks should be noted when issued to students and condition recorded.

Teachers are responsible for assessing and collecting fines for lost or damaged textbooks and Chromebooks. Teachers should stress proper use and care of books and Chromebooks.

If a textbook or Chromebook is lost or not returned by a student who withdraws from the district, the parent or legal guardian will be required to compensate the district for the fair market value of the book(s) or Chromebooks. (HB1063) Assessment of damages which show unnecessary wear or abuse of textbooks or Chromebooks will be left to the judgement of the school administrator.

### **LUNCH FEES FOR TEACHERS**

All lunches must be paid for at the time of sale. Adults will not be allowed to charge their lunches. Advance sales are available.

### **COLLECTION OF MONEY**

School Board Policy DK should be followed in the collection of money. Class funds, school club funds, and other student funds must be turned in on the day collected to the office of the Principal to be banked. For any funds collected from students or parents, receipts will be given.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOSS OF FUNDS**

Money will be accepted in the office Monday through Friday until 1:00 P.M. No monies will be accepted on Saturday. Money is not to be left in the classroom and is the responsibility of the teacher.

### **ADVERTISING OR PROMOTIONS WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

There will be no advertising or promotional materials of any type passed out to students at school or displayed within the school without consent of the Principal and Superintendent. All other advertising or promotional materials will be approved by the Principal.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The Board of Education of The Jackson County School District has the power, authority and duty to exclude from school employees and/or students with what appears to be infectious or contagious diseases; provided, however, such employee or student may be allowed to return to school upon presenting a certification from a public health officer, duly licensed physician or nurse practitioner that the individual is free from such disease. Section 37-7-301(h) (1995)

#### **SECTION I**

Any employee or student having evidence of communicable diseases will have a physician diagnose the disease and prescribe suitable treatment. Common communicable diseases will automatically result in exclusion from school and school-related activities for the designated period of time.

An employee with a communicable disease should remain at home until the disease is no longer a threat to others. If any employee is absent more than five (5) consecutive days due to illness, he/she shall submit a medical excuse from a medical doctor regarding the time missed from work.

#### **SECTION II**

Decisions regarding a person infected with a disease(s) shall be made on an individual basis with regard to the behavior, physical condition of the employee and the expected interactions with others in that setting.

These decisions shall be made using the team approach, including the employee or student's physician, public health personnel, and personnel associated with the educational setting and/or workplace. In each case, risks and benefits to all affected shall be weighed. As conditions change, cases may be reevaluated.

Legal Reference: Mississippi Code Section 37-7-301(h) (1995)

## **PROCEDURES FOR CARING FOR ILL AND INJURED STUDENTS**

### **1. ROUTINE ILLNESS and/or INJURY**

- a. Send student to the office. Refer to District Student Information System or other District approved resources for specific medical condition and/or instructions.
- b. If student is seriously ill or injured and cannot remain in school, school authorized personnel shall call parent/guardian to notify him/her of child's condition. Parent or approved designee will come to the school and have student dismissed in his/her care.
- c. If student is NOT seriously ill or injured; requiring dismissal from school, school authorized personnel shall administer appropriate first aid treatment.
- d. Dependent upon the severity and nature of the illness and/or injury, notify parent/guardian of the condition and treatment given.
- e. If the student's condition indicates evidence of his/her having a communicable disease, send the student to the office. Notify the parent/guardian or parent approved designee, and have the student dismissed in his/her care.
- f. Authorized school personnel are to record date, student's name, type of condition and treatment in a log.

### **2. EMERGENCY ILLNESS and/or INJURY**

- a. In the case of a medical emergency, DO NOT MOVE student or leave student unattended. Send for the Principal or designee. Follow first aid procedure.
- b. If student is able to be moved, school authorized personnel will accompany student to office.
- c. Refer to District Student Information System or other District approved resources for specific medical condition and/or instructions. Notify parent/guardian immediately.
- d. If emergency is life-threatening:
  - i. Principal or school-authorized personnel should call ambulance (911).
  - ii. Parent or approved designee will be called.
- e. Authorized school personnel are to record dates, student's name, type of condition and treatment in a log.
- f. If not life-threatening but immediate medical attention is required, notify nurse and parent/guardian. If parent/guardian or approved designee cannot be contacted within a reasonable length of time, the Principal or authorized personnel may have the student transported to the nearest hospital, but will continue to try and contact the parent/guardian. Any expense involved will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

## **TITLE IX and TITLE VI**

The Jackson County School System does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability, and is in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Please contact Human Resources at P.O. Box 5069, Vancleave, Mississippi 39565, or reach out by phone at 228-283-3000 (See JCSD Board Policy JAA and GAEA, PL 92-318).

Grievance Procedure – The basic intent of the grievance procedure is to provide quick and fair resolution of complaints of discrimination.

- Step #1 Any person with an alleged grievance of discrimination shall file a written complaint with the local school Principal, forwarding a copy to the Department of Human Resources.
- Step #2 If the problem is not mutually solved; the complainant shall appeal to the Department of Human Resources.
- Step #3 If the problem is not mutually solved, the complainant shall further appeal to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Step #4 If the problem is not mutually solved, the complainant may appeal to the Board of Education.

### **ATHLETICS and ACTIVITIES**

All programs for athletics will be under the supervision of the Athletic Director, Principal and the Assistant Superintendent.

Athletic Schedule – The Athletic Director will be responsible for finalizing schedules in all sports with approval of the Assistant Superintendent

Athletic Contests – The Athletic Director will be responsible for the assignment of duties to the coaches at all contests.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

The Jackson County Board of Education recognizes the need and desirability of field trips to enrich the experiences of students. A well-planned field trip is considered a worthwhile educational experience. Therefore, educational field trips related to class subjects may be authorized:

1. The Principal shall be notified in advance of the trip. Field trips must have the endorsement of the Principal and must be designed to augment the lesson plans of the teacher.
2. A trip permission form must be endorsed by the Assistant Superintendent in advance of the trip.
3. All field trip arrangements are the teacher's responsibility, including transportation, waivers, chaperones, etc. Students shall be under the direct supervision of a teacher and/or other school personnel. Students will not be excluded because additional supervision for them is needed. The teacher must request in advance for additional supervision. School buses may be used for transportation for field trips. Only authorized personnel may drive a school bus.
4. Before each field trip, each pupil must present to his/her teacher a document signed by the parent/guardian, giving the pupil permission to participate in the field trip.

5. Field trips shall not be taken after May 1. An exception to the May 1 deadline can be made if the following conditions are met:
  - a. If the trip complies with the guidelines and approval process stated in this policy.
  - b. If the trip has been approved by the Assistant Superintendent.
6. Fees charged for trips using district-owned vehicles will be charged .50 per mile each way. Individual schools will be responsible for paying this fee. The sponsoring school is also responsible for driver fees, additional gasoline and oil, and other incidental fees. Reward trips are trips that are not necessarily related to instructional goals but are a form of reward for students/organizations. If students may be excluded from such trips for not meeting the criteria established by the Principal (or designee), parents shall be notified said criteria and shall sign a document verifying receipt of the notification from the school. Students should not be arbitrarily disallowed from participation in these trips.

Field trips will follow School Board Policy IFCB.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Employees should refer to School Board Policy EBBC and supervisors for drill procedures. Each school will follow its school crisis plan during bad weather days or in any time of emergency or crisis.

### **EMPLOYEE BADGES**

All staff are required to wear employee ID badges while on campus. There is a fee associated for replacement badges. Contact Human Resources for more information.

### **SICK LEAVE POLICY**

Employees should refer to School Board Policies GBRI and CGPGB and supervisors for sick leave policies governing certified, non-certified, and administrative procedures. Sick leave is only to be used when an employee or a member of their immediate family is ill.

Pursuant to Section 37-7-307, Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, each employee at the beginning of each school year, shall be credited with a minimum sick leave allowance, with pay, of seven (7) days for absences caused by illness or physical disability of the employee during that school year. Employees who work ten, eleven or twelve months will receive an additional day of sick leave for each additional month of full-time work. Part-time employees shall receive sick leave on a prorated basis for their equivalent schedule of workdays. Employees hired after the beginning of the school year shall receive a prorated leave allowance equivalent to the number of days on their contract.

Sick leave can only be used for illness or physical disability of the employee or the employee's family during the school year. Sick leave may be used for illness, or death of members of the immediately family: father, mother, spouse, brother, sister, child, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or foster parents and foster children, grandparents of employee or spouse. Sick leave may also be used to bond with the newborn child of, adopted child of, or child placed for foster care with the employee. Bonding may only be used within twelve (12) months of the birth or placement.

Any unused portion of the sick leave or previously gained cumulative sick leave days shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such employee as sick leave if the employee remains continuously employed in the school district.

After being absent five (5) consecutive days due to any employee, family illness, or physical disability, a certified employee is required to submit a written statement to the JCSD Superintendent for school board review. This requirement is waived for employees who are on FMLA. An individual abusing this policy may have all cumulative and credited current leave canceled.

After being absent five (5) consecutive days due to an employee, family illness, or physical disability, an employee may be required to submit a written statement to his/her supervisor for review. If requested, the employee will furnish the JCSD Superintendent with an official medical statement of justification for the extended absence for possible review by the Board of Education. These requests will not be made to employees out on FMLA. An individual abusing this policy may have all cumulative and credited current leave canceled.

For the first ten (10) days of absence of a certified employee because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee, there shall be deducted from the pay of such certified employee the established substitute amount of certified employee compensation paid in that local school district. In lieu of deducting the established substitute amount from the pay of such certified employee, the policy may allow the certified employee to receive full pay for the first ten (10) days of absence because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such certified employee. Thereafter, the regular pay of such absent certified employee shall be suspended and withheld in its entirety for any period of absence because of illness or physical disability during that school year.

For the first ten (10) days of absence of an employee due to illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to the employee, there shall be deducted from the pay of such employee the amount equal to the minimum wage rate times the number of hours that employee was absent. Thereafter, an amount equal to the annual salary divided by the number of hours per year the person is to be on duty times the number of hours absent will be deducted from his/her salary.

If a certified employee is absent ½ day or less, ½ day of leave will be charged. Certified employees absent more than ½ day will be charged one full day leave. If a non-certified employee is absent from work their time will be charged hour for hour.

### **PERSONAL AND VACATION LEAVE**

Vacation and personal leave are governed by policies GBRI and CGPGB.

### **Leaves and Absences**

Except as otherwise provided for herein, for purposes of this policy, the term “employee” means any employee of the Jackson County School District other than bus drivers and bus

aides, who are recommended to work twenty (20) hours or more per week. "Certified employees" means any employee of the Jackson County School District required to hold a valid license by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development. This policy is mean to comply with Miss. Code Ann. §37-7-307 and shall be interpreted in accordance therewith.

**Sick Leave:**

Each employee at the beginning of each school year, shall be credited with a minimum sick leave allowance, with pay, of seven (7) days for absences caused by illness or physical disability of the employee during that school year. Part time employees shall receive sick leave on a prorated for their equivalent schedule of work days. Employees hired after the beginning of the school year shall receive a prorated leave allowance equivalent to the number of days on their contract.

Any unused part of the total sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such employee if the employee remains employed with the District. In the event certified employee or teacher assistant transfers to another public school district in Mississippi, any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance credited to such certified employee or teacher assistant shall be credited to such certified employee or teacher assistant in the computation of unused leave for retirement purposes under Miss. Code Ann. §25-11-109. Accumulation of sick leave allowed under this policy shall be unlimited.

Employees shall be credited one (1) additional day of sick leave, cumulative to seven (7) days per school year. Employees who work ten, eleven, or twelve months per their contracts will receive an additional day of sick leave for each additional month of full time work.

No deduction from the pay of such employee may be made because of absence of such employee caused by illness or physical disability until after all sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee or teacher assistant has been used.

Sick leave can only be used for illness or physical disability of the employee or employee's family during the school year. Sick leave may be used for illness, or death of members of the immediate family: father, mother, spouse, brother, sister, child, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or foster parents and foster children, or grandparents of employee or spouse. Sick leave may also be used to bond with the newborn child of, adopted child of, or child placed for foster care with the employee. Bonding may only be used within twelve (12) months of the birth or placement.

After being absent five (5) consecutive days due to any employee or family illness or physical disability, a certified employee is required to submit a written statement to the JCSD superintendent for school board for review. This requirement is waived for certified employees who are on FMLA. An individual abusing this policy may have all cumulative and credited current leave canceled.

After being absent five (5) consecutive days due to an employee, family illness, or physical disability, an employee may be required to submit a written statement to his/her supervisor

for review. If requested, the employee will furnish the JCSD superintendent with an official medical statement of justification of the extended absence for possible review by the board of Education. These requests will not be made for employees out of FMLA. An individual abusing this policy may have all cumulative and credited current leave canceled.

For the first ten (10) days of absence of a certified employee because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee, there shall be deducted from the pay of such certified employee the established substitute amount of certified employee compensation paid in that local school district. In lieu of deducting the established substitute amount from the pay of such certified employee, the policy may allow the certified employee to receive full pay for the first ten (10) days of absence because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such certified employee. Thereafter, the regular pay of such absent certified employee shall be suspended and withheld in its entirety for any period of absence because of illness or physical disability during that school year.

For the first ten (10) days of absence of an employee due to illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to the employee, there shall be deducted from the pay of such employee the amount equal to the minimum wage rate times the number of hours that employee was absent. Thereafter, an amount equal to the annual salary divided by the number of hours per year the person is to be on duty times the number of hours absent will be deducted from his/her salary.

The monthly cut-off date used for twelve (12) month staff shall be as follows: Dock pay will be turned in on twelve month staff through the end of the month if the employee is expected to be out through that date. If dock pay has already been turned in prior to a twelve month employee's absence not covered by leave days, a telephone call shall be made to payroll before direct deposit/paychecks are processed for that month, followed by revised dock sheets.

**Professional Leave:**

Paid leave for professional development, training, or other work outside the employee's normal workdays may be approved by the employee's supervisor. Each employee shall be credited with a professional leave allowance, with pay, for each day of absence by reason of such employee's required attendance at a regular or special meeting held within the State of Mississippi of the State Board of Education, The Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development, the Commission on School Accreditation, the meetings of the state textbook rating committees, or other meetings authorized by local school board or superintendent.

**Personal Leave and Vacation:**

Each employee will be credited with two (2) personal days for absences caused by personal reasons during the school year. Personal days may be used in lieu of sick days only when all sick days have been exhausted. Employees may not utilize more than two (2) consecutive personal days during a school year without prior approval from the Superintendent. In the



event an employee wishes to seek approval to utilize more than two (2) consecutive personal days during a school year, the requesting employee shall submit a letter of request to the Superintendent before the first proposed day of absence from duty.

Personal leave shall not be taken by employees on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday, or a day after a holiday, except in the following circumstances: (i) Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee is being deployed for military service. (ii) Personal leave may be taken on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if an employee of a school district has either a minimum of ten (10) years' experience as an employee of that school district or a minimum of thirty (30) day of unused accumulated leave that has been earned while employed in that school district. (iii) Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, the employee has been summoned to appear for jury duty or as a witness in court.

Full-time employees who work twelve (12) months will receive ten (10) days of vacation days per year. If a 12 month employee leaves early in a fiscal year, that employee will have 0.83 days of vacation removed from their balance for each full month not worked.

Any unused personal and vacation leave at the end of the school year, up to five (5) days, may be carried over to the next school year, if the employee remains employed in the District. Any unused personal or vacation leave at the end of the school year, in excess of five (5) days, shall be converted to sick leave and carried over to the next school year (as sick leave). Thus, unused personal and vacation leave beyond five (5) days will convert to sick leave the following school year. The annual conversion of unused vacation or personal leave for sick days shall not exceed the allowable number of personal leave days provided in Miss. Code Ann. §25-3-93. The annual total number of converted unused vacation and/or personal days added to the annual unused sick days for any employee shall not exceed the combined allowable number of days per year provided in Miss. Code Ann. §25-3-93 and §25-3-95.

If a certified employee is absent  $\frac{1}{2}$  day or less,  $\frac{1}{2}$  day of leave will be charged. Certified employees absent more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  day will be charged one full day leave. If a non-certified employee is absent from work their time will be charged hour for hour.

**Disposition of Leave upon Notice of Termination or Retirement:**

Employees, upon termination, will be compensated for any unused compensatory leave balance, per school policy GADB.

Certified employees, upon retirement from employment, may elect to be paid for not more than thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave earned while employed with this district at a rate equal to the daily long-term substitute teacher rate per day. Upon retirement from employment, employees may elect to be paid for not more than 240 hours of unused accumulated leave earned while employed with this district at a rate equal to the federal minimum wage per hour. The payment shall be made on their final paycheck and shall be treated in the same manner for retirement purposes as a lump sum payment for personal

leave as provided in Miss. Code Ann. §25-11-103. Any remaining lawfully credited unused leave, for which payment has not been made, shall be credited to PERS subject to the limitations provided by law.

In the event of death, a maximum of thirty (30) days of paid leave may be reported as wages. All such payments are subject to the maximum annual earnings limitation.

Unless retiring, under no circumstances will a terminating employee receive compensation for any accumulated leave. Unused leave will be counted as credited service and certified to PERS.

Legal Reference: MS Code of 1972, Section 37-7-307 (2015) MS Code of 1972, Section 25-3-93 (2013) MS Code of 1972, Section 25-3-95 (2013) AG Opinion No 2003-0335 dated July 7, 2003

### **WORKERS COMPENSATION**

All employees of the Jackson County School District are protected under the Mississippi Workers Compensation Law (MWCL). The MWCL provides indemnity and medical payments for work-related injuries. Indemnity payments cover your loss of wages if you are unable to work due to an injury and medical payments cover any/all medical expenses including mileage. Indemnity is paid at 66 2/3% of your average weekly earnings based on the previous 12 months from the date of injury. For more information concerning maximum indemnity rates, mileage rates, and fee schedules go to the Mississippi Workers Compensation Commission's website ([www.mwcc.state.ms.us](http://www.mwcc.state.ms.us)).

All accidents should be reported to your immediate supervisor immediately and the school must complete all required forms and submit them to the Human Resources Department in the District Office within 24 hours, even if the employee does not seek treatment. Should you need further information about workers compensation, please contact the Director of Human Resources (228-283-3000).

### **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides an entitlement of up to 12 work weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave during any 12-month period to eligible, covered employees for the following reasons: 1) birth and care of the eligible employee's child, or placement for adoption or foster care of a child with the employee; 2) care of an immediate family member (spouse, child, parent) who has a serious health condition; or 3) care of the employee's own serious health condition. It also requires that employee's group health benefits are maintained during the leave. The FMLA is administered by the Employment Standards Administration's Wage and Hour Division within the U.S. Department of Labor.

An eligible employee must have been employed with the District for one year and they must have worked 1,250 hours in the previous 12 months prior to the commencement of the beginning of FMLA leave. An eligible employee shall be entitled to a total of 12 work-weeks of family and medical leave during any 12-month period. The District uses a calendar year method to determine how much time an employee is entitled to under FMLA.

**Military Family Leave:**

Military Caregiver Leave (also known as Covered Service-Member Leave): Under the first of these military leave entitlements, eligible employees who are family members of covered service members will be able to take up to 26 work-weeks of leave in a “single 12-month period” to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty on active duty. Based on recommendation of the President’s Commission on Care for America’s Returning Wounded Warriors, this 26 work-week entitlement is a special provision that extends FMLA job-protected leave beyond the normal 12 work weeks of FMLA leave. This provision also extends FMLA protection to additional family members (i.e., next of kin) beyond those who may take FMLA for other qualifying reasons.

- Qualifying Exigency Leave: The second military leave entitlement helps families of members of the National Guard and Reserves manage their affairs while the member is on active duty in support of a contingency operation. This provision makes the normal 12 work-weeks of FMLA job protection leave available to eligible employees with a covered military exigency arising out of the fact that covered military member is on active duty or called to active duty status in support of a contingency operation. The Department’s final rule defines qualifying exigency by referring to a number of broad categories for which employees can use FMLA leave:

- 1) Short-notice deployment
- 2) Military events and related activities
- 3) Childcare and school activities
- 4) Financial and legal arrangements
- 5) Counseling
- 6) Rest and recuperation
- 7) Post-deployment activities
- 8) Additional activities not encompassed in the other categories but agreed to by the employer and the employee

Requests for leave should be made through Human Resources Department.

Paid leave runs concurrently with FMLA.

**Advance Notice and Medical Certification:**

The employee may be required to provide advance leave notice and medical certification. Taking leave may be denied if requirements are not met.

The employee ordinarily must provide 30 days advance notice when the leave is foreseeable.

An employer may require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition and may require second or third opinions (at the employer’s expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work is required prior to returning to work.

**Job Benefits and Protection:**

For the duration of FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any group health plan.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent posts with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

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

**Unlawful Acts by Employers:**

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to: interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

**Enforcement:**

The U.S. Department of Labor is authorized to investigate and resolve complaints of violations.

An eligible employee may bring a civil action against an employer for violations. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement, which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

**For Additional Information:**

Contact the nearest office of the Wage and Hour Division, listed in most telephone directories under U.S. Government, Department of Labor at the following website:  
<https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/index.htm>

**NOTICE OF EMPLOYEES RIGHTS TO CONTINUE GROUP HEALTH COVERAGE**

On April 7, 1986, a federal law was enacted (Public Law 99-272, Title X) requiring that more employers sponsoring group health plans offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage (called continuation coverage) at group rates in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end.

This notice is intended to inform you, in a summary fashion, of your rights and obligations under the continuation coverage provisions of the law. (Both you and your spouse should take the time to read this notice carefully).

If you are an employee of The Jackson County School District covered by the Public-School Employees Health Insurance Plan (PSEHIP), you have a right to choose this continuation coverage if you lose your group health coverage because of a reduction in your hours of employment or the termination of your employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct on your part).

If you choose continuation coverage, coverage is identical to the coverage provided under the plan to similarly situated employees or family members. The law requires that you be afforded the opportunity to maintain continuation coverage for three years. If you lose group health coverage because of a termination of employment or a reduction in hours, the required continuation coverage period is 18 months. These 18 months may be extended to 36 months if other events (such as death, divorce, legal separation, or Medicare entitlement) occur during that 18-month period. The only time that coverage is extended beyond 36 months is in the event of the death of an active employee with less than 25 years of service. Coverage for that event will be extended to 48 months.

The 18 months may be extended to 29 months if an individual is determined to be disabled (for Social Security disability purposes) and the Claims Administrator is notified of that determination within 60 days. The affected individual must also notify the Claims Administrator within 30 days of any final determination that the individual is no longer disabled. In no event (except death of an employee with less than 25 years of service) will continuation coverage last beyond 3 years from the date of the event that originally made a qualified beneficiary eligible to elect coverage.

However, the law provides that the continuation coverage may be terminated for any of the following five reasons:

1. Jackson County School District no longer provides group health coverage to any of its employees;
2. The premium for your continuation coverage is not paid on time;
3. You become covered by another group plan, unless the plan contains any exclusions or limitations with respect to any pre-existing condition you or your covered dependents may have;
4. You become entitled to Medicare; or
5. You extend coverage for up to 29 months due to your disability and there has been a final determination that you are no longer disabled.

You do not have to show that you are insurable to choose continuation coverage. However, under the law, you may have to pay all or part of the premium for your continuation coverage. There is a grace period of 30 days for payment of the regularly scheduled premium.

The law applies to the Public Employees Health Insurance Plan beginning on July 1, 1986. If you have questions about the law, please contact:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi  
Claims Administrator  
P O Box 23071  
Jackson, MS 39225-3071

Also, if you have changed marital status or you or your spouse have changed addresses, please call The Jackson County School Human Resources Department, 228-283-3000.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR STAFF**

Reference: School Board Policy GAE

Grievances of staff shall be processed according to the following procedures:

1. The grievant must inform orally his/her immediate supervisor of the grievance within five (5) days from the date of the alleged grievance. The grievant and immediate supervisor will attempt to resolve the grievance informally.
2. If the grievance is not resolved and the grievant elects to pursue the issue, he/she within five (5) days after meeting with the immediate supervisor, must file a written statement with the Assistant Superintendent or District Office Human Resources. This statement shall contain the time, place, and nature of the alleged violation of the grievant rights and shall be signed and dated by the grievant.
3. Within five (5) days, the Assistant Superintendent or District Office Human Resources shall provide his/her decision in writing with supportive evidence and reasons.
4. If the grievant chooses to appeal the decision of the Assistant Superintendent or Department of Human Resources he/she shall submit, within five (5) days, a written request of appeal to the Superintendent. Within five (5) days, the Superintendent shall provide his/her decision in writing with supporting evidence and reasons.
5. If the grievant chooses to appeal the decision of the Superintendent, he/she shall submit, within five (5) days of the Superintendent's decision, a written request to the Superintendent's office to present his/her grievance before the Board of Education at the next regular meeting or at a social meeting set by the Superintendent.
6. The Board shall render its decision within seven (7) days of the grievant hearing. The Superintendent shall provide copies of the decision to any parties involved.

**A grievance may be withdrawn at any time without prejudice or record.**

The following definitions shall apply to this grievance procedure:

1. A "grievance" is a complaint by an individual based upon an alleged violation of a person's 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 or vacation days.

In the adoption and implementation of this grievance procedure, it shall be understood that the Board of Education is not a court of law and that rules of jurisprudence shall not apply.

## **BULLYING – EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS**

The Jackson County School District does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior. 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 any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics 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 objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school Superintendent or Principal, renders the offending person’s presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

The Jackson County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subjected to bullying and 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 harassing behavior. The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official.

The Jackson County School Board directs the Superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors. The procedure should be appropriately placed in District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedures that deals with student or employee behavior. The discipline policies and procedures must recognize the fundamental right of every student to take “reasonable actions.” Furthermore, The Jackson County School District defines “reasonable action” as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, Principal, counselor or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

Reference: SB 2015; Mississippi Code Annotated 37-7-301€

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT – EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS**

The policy of the Board of Education forbids discrimination against any employee, or applicant for employment on the basis of sex. The Board of Education will not tolerate sexual harassment activity by any of its employees. This policy similarly applies to non-employee volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities.

#### **A. General Prohibitions**

- 1) Unwelcome conduct of a Sexual Nature may include
  - a) Verbal or physical sexual advances, including subtle pressure for sexual activity; touching, pinching, patting, or brushing against; comments regarded physical or personality characteristics of a sexual nature; and sexually-oriented “kidding,” “teasing,” double-entendres, and jokes.
  - b) Verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature when the allegedly harassed employee has indicated, by his or her conduct, that it is unwelcome.

- c) An employee who has initially welcomed such by active participation must give specific notice to the alleged harasser that such conduct is no longer welcome.
- 2) Sexual Harassment
- For the purpose of this policy, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment if:
- a) submission to the conduct is made either an explicit or implicit condition of employment;
  - b) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed employee; or
  - c) the conduct substantially interferes with an employee's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

## B. Specific Prohibitions

- 1) Administrators and Supervisors
  - a) It is sexually harassment for an administrator or supervisor to use his or her authority to solicit sexual favors or attention from subordinates when the subordinate's failure to submit will result in adverse treatment, or when the subordinate's acquiescence will result in preferential treatment.
  - b) No administrator shall reside in the same residence with anyone he/she supervises.
  - c) Administrators and supervisors who either engage in sexual harassment or tolerate such conduct by other employees shall be subject to sanctions, as described below.
- 2) Non-Administrative and Non-Supervisory Employees
  - a) It is sexual harassment for a non-administrative and non-supervisory employee to subject another such employee to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Employees who engage in such conduct shall be subject to sanctions as described below.
- 3) District Employees
  - a) Relationships between supervisors and an employee under their supervision is prohibited.
  - b) If there are relationships between individuals who occupy equal levels of authority, then these individuals will exhibit professional conduct in the workplace.

## C. Reporting, Investigating and Sanctions

- 1) It is the express policy of the Board of Education to encourage victims of a sexual harassment to come forward with such claims. This may be done through the Employee Grievance Resolution Procedure. (Policy GAE)
  - a) Employees who feel that administrators or supervisors are conditioning promotions, increases in wages, continuation of employment, or other terms or conditions of employment upon sexual favors, are encouraged to report the conditions to the appropriate administrator. If the employee's direct



administrator or supervisor is the offending person, the report shall be made to the next higher level of administration or supervision.

- b) Employees are also urged to report any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature by supervisors or fellow employees if such conduct is unwelcome, interferes with the individual's work performance, or creates a hostile or offensive working environment.
  - c) Confidentiality will be maintained and no reprisals or retaliation will be allowed to occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment.
- 2) In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated. The Superintendent has the responsibility of investigating and resolving complaints of sexual harassment, as stated in The Jackson County School District Policy GAE.
  - 3) Any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment shall be subject to sanctions, including, but not limited to warning, suspension, or termination subject to applicable procedural requirements.

### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY**

Reference: Jackson County School Board Policy GBRL.

The Jackson County School District will maintain a drug-free workplace. This will be assured by:

1. The district will publish a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the schools, buildings, on campus, or on any property otherwise under the control of The Jackson County School District, with the penalty of taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or, requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;
2. The district will establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about
  - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace
  - b. The District's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace
  - c. Available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and other assistance programs
  - d. The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug use violations occurring in the workplace
3. Each present employee and each newly employed employee engaged by The Jackson County School District will be given a copy of this document, especially Section 1.
4. The district will notify each employee and each newly employed employee that, as a condition of employment, the employee will:
  - a. Abide by the terms of this policy, and

- b. Notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace as identified in Section 1, no later than five (5) days after such conviction.
5. The school district shall notify such agencies as require this certificate, within ten (10) days after receiving such notice in Section 4.b., from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction.
6. The district will take one of the following actions within thirty (30) days of receiving notice under Section 4.b. with respect to any employee who is so convicted.
  - a. Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee up to and including termination; or
  - b. Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
7. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of Sections 1 through 6.

**SECTION 504 / AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, AMERICANS  
WITH DISABILITIES ACT, TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964,  
AND TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATIONAL AMENDMENTS OF 1972

The Jackson County School District is in compliance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its program and activities to the extent provided by law.

The Jackson County School District is an equal opportunity employer. The Jackson County School District does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sex, military status, or any other classification that is protected by federal, state, or local law in any of its activities or operations. These activities include but are not limited to, hiring and firing of employees, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our employees, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

The person holding the position of Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Tanya Sonnier has been designated as the Section 504 and ADACoordinator:

Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Dr. Tanya Sonnier  
4700 Colonel Vickrey Road  
Vanceleave, MS 39565  
228-283-3000

The Title VI, and Title IX Coordinator will handle inquiries regarding The Jackson County School District's nondiscrimination policies covering discrimination. Any person having inquiries concerning The Jackson County School District's compliance with the regulations regarding discrimination is directed to contact:

Director of Human Resources  
Karen Glass  
Title IX Coordinator  
4700 Colonel Vickrey Road  
Vanceleave, MS 39565  
228-283-3000

### **PREVENTION OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

The Jackson County School District shall be in compliance with the following Mississippi Code:

SECTION 1. Section 97-37-17, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

97-37-17. (1) The following definitions apply to this section:

"Educational property" shall mean any public or private school building or bus, public or private school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used or operated by any local school board, school college or university board of trustees, or directors for the administration of any public or private educational institution or during a school related activity; provided however, that the term "educational property" shall not include any sixteenth section school land or lieu land on which is not located a school building, school campus, recreational area or athletic field.

"Student" shall mean a person enrolled in a public or private school, college or university, or a person who has been suspended or expelled within the last five (5) years from a public or private school, college or university, whether the person is an adult or minor.

"Switchblade knife" shall mean a knife containing a blade or blades which open automatically by the release of a spring or similar contrivance.

"Weapon" shall mean any device enumerated in subsection (2) or (4) of this section.

It shall be a felony for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind, or any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine or powerful explosive on educational property. However, this subsection shall be not apply to a BB gun, air rifle, or air pistol. Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), or committed to the custody of the State Department of Corrections for not more than three (3) years, or both.

It shall be a felony for any person to cause, encourage or aid a minor who is less than eighteen (18) years old to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol or other firearm of any kind or any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine or powerful explosive on educational property. However, this subsection does not apply to a BB gun, air rifle, or air pistol. Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), or committed to the custody of the State Department of Corrections for not more than three (3) years, or both.

It shall be a misdemeanor for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any BB gun, air rifle, air pistol, Bowie knife, dirk, dagger, slingshot, leaded can, switchblade knife, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razors, razor blades (except solely for personal shaving), and any sharp-pointed or edged instrument except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for preparation of food, instruction and maintenance on educational property. Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), or be imprisoned not to exceed six (6) months, or both.

It shall not be a violation of this section for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind on educational property if:

- a) The person is not a student attending school on the educational property and
- b) The firearm is within a motor vehicle and
- c) The person does not brandish, exhibit, or display the firearm in any careless, angry or threatening manner.

This section shall not apply to:

- a) A weapon used solely for educational or school-sanctioned ceremonial purposes, or used in a school-approved program conducted under the supervision of an adult whose supervision has been approved by the school authority.
- b) Armed forces personnel of the United States, officers and soldiers of the militia and National Guard, law enforcement personnel, any private police employed by an educational institution, State Militia or Emergency Management Corps and any guard or patrolman in a state or municipal institution, when acting in the discharge of their official duties.
- c) Home schools as defined in the compulsory school attendance law, Section 37-13-91, Mississippi Code of 1972.
- d) Competitors while participating in organized shooting events.
- e) Any person as authorized in Section 97-37-7 while in the performance of his official duties.
- f) Any mail carrier while in the performance of his official duties.
- g) Any weapon not prescribed by Section 97-37-1 which is in a motor vehicle under the control of a parent, guardian, or custodian, as defined in Section 43-21-105, which is used to bring or pick up a student at a school building, school property or school function.

### **COMPUTER / INTERNET APPROPRIATE USE POLICY**

Employees should use computers only for work purposes. Abuse of Appropriate Use Policy IJ-R will not be tolerated.

### **PERSONAL SAFETY**

1. Users will not disclose, use, disseminate, or divulge personal and/or private information about him/her, minors or others including personal identification information, etc. Jackson County School District will not disclose personal information on websites – such as their full name, home or email address, telephone number, and social security number.
2. Users will immediately report to The Jackson County School District authorities any attempt by other Internet users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal contact.

### **ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT CODE**

All employees are required to sign and follow the state and district ethics and standards of conduct code located in Policy GAA.

**ALL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ARE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW ALL SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES THAT CAN BE FOUND ON OUR DISTRICT WEBSITE.**