ANNUAL POLICY NOTIFICATION 2025–2026
Policy Management

All employees are asked to take a few minutes to review the attached information, which is intended to inform employees of governance requirements for the 2025–2026 school year. There are several links on the district's public website, www.houstonisd.org, to the Houston Independent School District (HISD) policy manual, *Policy Online*. It is the responsibility of all employees to know the district's governance including laws, board policies, and administrative regulations.

What is Board Policy?
Policy conveys the School Board's intent and describes the district's programs and practices. Simple, direct statements are invaluable to district staff in fulfilling board mandates and help ensure that policies are readily understood by all. Policies are usually approved by the board in two readings.

What are Administrative Regulations and Exhibits?
A process or procedure implementing district policy is commonly defined as an administrative regulation. These documents are termed "REGULATIONS" by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). Forms or supplemental information related to these regulations are "EXHIBITS."

Organization of HISD's governance documents
Governance documents, comprised of LEGAL and LOCAL policies, administrative regulations, and exhibits, are organized according to the TASB codification system. The sections are devoted to the following areas of school governance:

A - Basic District Foundations
B - Local Governance
C - Business and Support Services
D - Personnel
E - Instruction
F - Students
G - Community and Governmental Relations

Accessing governance documents
All governance documents (i.e., legal policies, local policies, administrative regulations, and exhibits) are incorporated into a single online manual called *Policy Online*. Searches can be performed by governance code or keyword.

The following specific district governance should be reviewed annually by all employees as changes may occur throughout the year. Leaders of HISD are responsible for ensuring their employees have access to district policies that may affect them. Not every employee has access to a computer with an internet connection, so leaders are asked to share the documents with employees who lack electronic access because **all employees are responsible for reviewing policies annually**.

If you have any questions or concerns related to governance, contact Policy Management via e-mail (PolicyManagement@houstonisd.org). Electronic copies of all referenced policies are available through the embedded links in this document.

For All Employees

The School Board has set forth a vision, goals, and constraints for the whole district. HISD's Employee Conduct Policy, DH(LOCAL), carries serious consequences governing employee conduct.

Note: If a "series" is indicated, please review all documents with the policy code identifier that begins with the two or three letters shown. This may include a legal policy, a local policy, one or more regulations, one or more exhibits, or a subset of these.

Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation: To support a safe environment and common decency, all employees need to be versed in our discrimination, harassment, bullying, and retaliation governance. It is imperative that those who interact with students be aware of their responsibilities to respond immediately and appropriately to allegations. Relevant policies include:

- DH series, FO series, and FNC legal policy—Policies, administrative regulations, and exhibits addressing standards of conduct for employees and students.
- DIA series, FB series, and FFH series—Policies regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, including the relevant exhibits containing the contact information for reporting such behavior, for employees and students.

Bullying: A dedicated policy, FFI(LOCAL), addresses student bullying, including cyberbullying, and establishes procedures for reporting, investigating, and dealing with bullying of district students. Additionally, because this conduct may rise to the level of discrimination or harassment, if based on a protected characteristic, this policy should be reviewed annually, along with FFH(LOCAL) and FFH(EXHIBIT). DH(LOCAL), DIA(LOCAL), DIA3(REGULATION), and CQ5(REGULATION) are policies and regulations prohibiting bullying by employees.

Child abuse and neglect: Education commissioner rules require all employees to be aware of how and to whom to report suspicion or knowledge of child abuse or neglect. Please review the state rules on reporting child abuse and neglect in 19 TAC 103.1401 to familiarize yourself with the procedures. The toll-free phone number of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services is 1-800-252-5400. Policy information related to these concerns may be found at:

- BQ(LEGAL)—Policy referring to the district plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children;
- DH series—Policies, administrative regulations, and exhibits addressing employee standards of conduct;
- FFG series—Policies, administrative regulation, and exhibit addressing child abuse and neglect, trafficking, and maltreatment of students; and
- GRA series—Policies addressing child abuse investigations.

Crisis Intervention: The district has a program that supports early mental health intervention and suicide prevention as outlined in the FFB series.

Drug-free workplace: State and federal laws require all new employees to review district policies establishing a drug-free workplace. In HISD, these policies are found at DH(LOCAL) and DHE(LOCAL).

Standards of Conduct and Conflict of Interest: Conflict of interest arises when there is incompatibility between professional duties and personal interests. The following governance defines conduct that

constitutes a conflict of interest and specifies the sanctions for violations: the DH series; CAA series; CDC series; and DBD series for all employees. Please see DBD2(REGULATION) for annual disclosure process.

Technology and Technology Resources: The district has an obligation to protect student and employee information. Access to the district's technology resources including e-mail is a privilege and provided for academic and district business purposes. Altering software configurations and/or disabling security features are prohibited. Relevant policies include:

- CQ series—Policies, Regulations, and Exhibits addressing technology for employees and students.
- CY series—Policies, Regulations, and Exhibits addressing copyright restrictions for employees and students.

Social Media: The communication and collaboration inherent in the use of social media can increase student engagement and expand the district's instructional resources when used responsibly and safely. While the district believes there are significant educational advantages to using social media, a suite of policy changes has been approved to ensure the use of social media supported by the district is safe and adheres to federal and state laws as well as board policy.

The following governance defines social media use:

- Employee Standards of Conduct DH(LOCAL)
- Technology Resources CQ(LOCAL)
- Intellectual Property CY(LOCAL)

Equal Educational Opportunity: Under Title II, HISD ensures communications with individuals with hearing, vision, speech, or other sensory impairments are as effective as communications with others. When an auxiliary aid or service is required to assist with communication, HISD will provide an opportunity for individuals with disabilities to request the auxiliary aids and services of their choice and must give primary consideration to the choice expressed by the individual. "Primary consideration" means that the district must honor the choice, unless it can demonstrate that another equally effective means of communication is available. FB1(REGULATION) addresses "effective communication" under Title II.

Enforcement of Meal Policies: The U.S. Department of Agriculture regulates requirements regarding collecting payment for school meals; notifying families of low or negative balances; and enforcing other aspects of the meal charge policy. See the CO series regarding school meals. For more information, see the USDA's memo, *Unpaid Meal Charges: Guidance and Q&As*.

Information pertaining to student discipline: Education Code 37.018 requires that each teacher and administrator review Chapter 37, sections 37.001 through 37.023, dealing with student discipline, as well as all relevant local district policies. Therefore, in addition to the Chapter 37 sections, please review the FN series and FO series. We also recommend that teachers and administrators review the *Student Code of Conduct* as approved by the School Board and the *Student Handbook*.

Note: Education Code 37.001 requires the *Student Code of Conduct* to be posted and prominently displayed at each school campus or to be made available for review in the campus principal's office.

Information pertaining to field trips: All students shall be invited to participate in school-sponsored field trips and other enrichment activities. The district has adopted reasonable procedures for waiving a deposit or fee if a student or the student's parent or guardian is unable to pay it. See FP(LOCAL).

Note: FP(LEGAL) requires posting of the process for waiving fees in a central location in each school facility as well as the school and student handbooks.

Employment Policies: Employees with education certification, including probationary, term, and continuing contracts, should review the district's employment policies. Employment policies include (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) policies, regulations, and exhibits found within the district's online policy manual. All employees should review the following policies.

Policy Code	Policy Title	Policy Code	Policy Title
DAA	Employment Objectives: Equal Employment Opportunity	DFBA series	Term Contracts: Suspension/Termination During Contract
DAB	Genetic Nondiscrimination and Criteria for Personnel Decisions	DFD	Termination of Employment: Hearings Before Hearing Examiner
DBAA	Employment Requirements and Restrictions: Pre-Employment Reviews	DFE	Termination of Employment: Resignation
DBB	Medical Examinations and Communicable Diseases	DFF	Termination of Employment: Reduction in Force
DBD	Employment Requirements and Restrictions: Conflict of Interest	DFFA	Reduction in Force: Financial Exigency
DC series	Employment Practices	DFFB	Reduction in Force: Program Change
DCA	Employment Practices: Probationary Contracts	DG	Employee Rights and Privileges
DCB	Employment Practices: Term Contracts	DGBA	Personnel-Management Relations: Employee Complaints/Grievances
DCC	Employment Practices: Continuing Contracts	DH series	Employee Standards of Conduct
DEA series	Compensation and Benefits: Compensation Plan	DHB	Employee Standards of Conduct: Reports to State Board for Educator Certification
DEAA	Compensation Plan: Incentives and Stipends	DHE	Employee Standards of Conduct: Searches and Alcohol/Drug Testing
DEC series	Compensation and Benefits: Leaves and Absences	DI series	Employee Welfare
DECA series	Leaves and Absences: Family and Medical Leave	DIA	Employee Welfare: Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation
DECB	Leaves and Absences: Military Leave	DK	Assignment and Schedules
DF series	Termination of Employment	DMA	Professional Development: Required Staff Development
DFAA	Probationary Contracts: Suspension/Termination During Contract	DN series	Performance Appraisal
DFAB	Probationary Contracts: Termination at End of Year	DNA	Performance Appraisal: Evaluation of Teachers
DFAC	Probationary Contracts: Return to Probationary Status	DNB	Performance Appraisal: Evaluation of Campus Administrators

Electronic copies of all referenced policies are available by clicking the links above.

All employees are responsible for reviewing policies annually.