

Highland Park ISD

2026-2027 Employee Handbook

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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are, have been summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to the Human Resources Department.

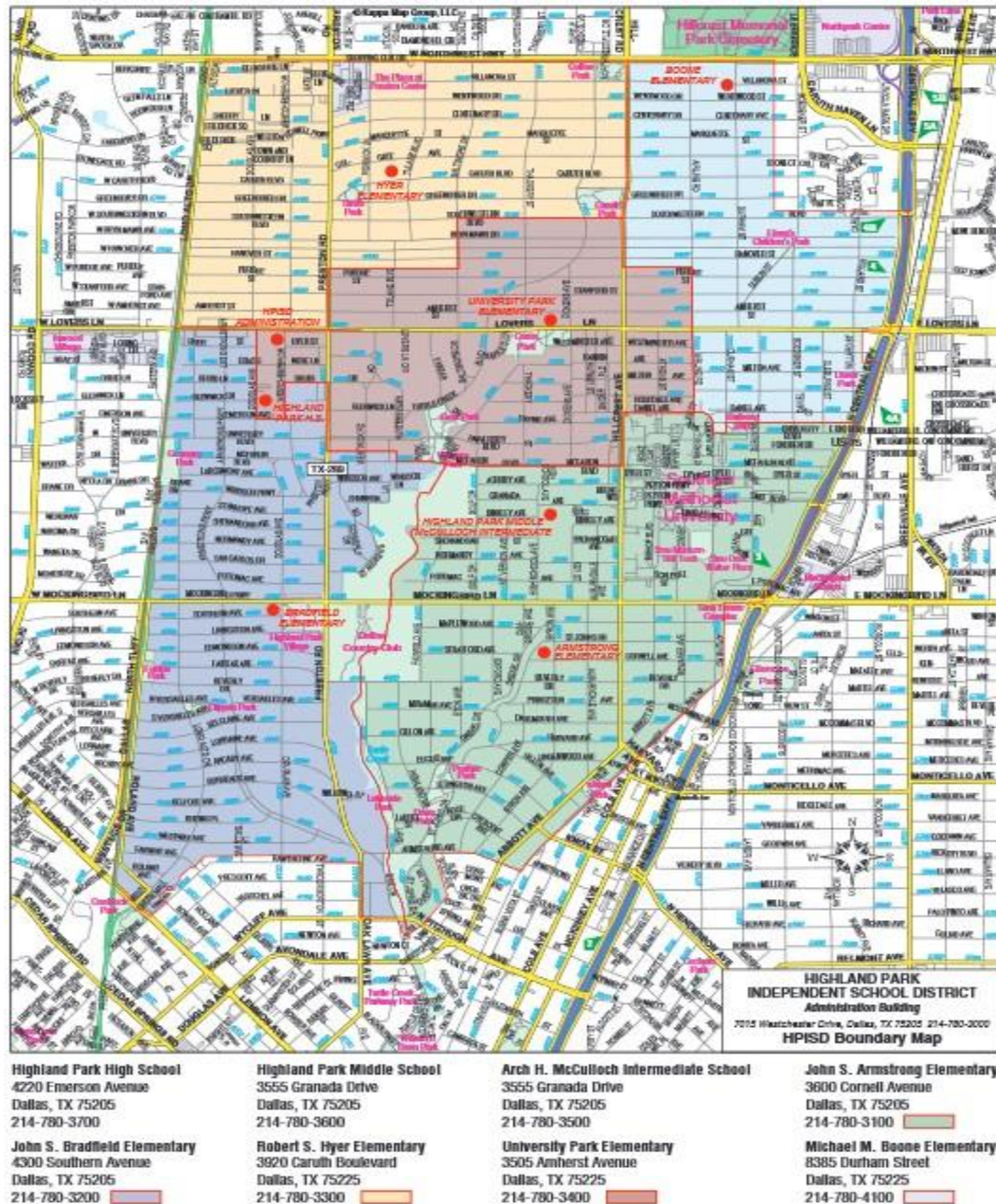
This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. District policies can be accessed online at www.hpsid.org.

District Information

Description of the District

Highland Park Independent School District is located immediately north of downtown Dallas in a six-square mile suburban area of Highland Park and University Park. Since Highland Park schools were founded in 1914, a consistent effort to build the tradition of excellence in both academics and extracurricular activities has been a top priority of staff and community.

District Map



Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives

Policy AE

Mission

Highland Park ISD, grounded in tradition and with an unyielding commitment to tradition, excellence, community, and integrity, provides an unrivaled and well-rounded education in academics, athletics, arts, and service, equipping all students to be citizen leaders and lifelong learners.

Vision

Highland Park ISD will be the preeminent public school district in Texas and the heart and soul of the Park Cities. HP Scots will be honorable in conduct, devoted to scholarship, and charitable to all.

Beliefs

We believe:

- The best interests of students must be at the center of all decision-making.
- Sustained excellence comes only through seeking continuous improvement.
- Education is a cooperative endeavor between schools, parents, and community, requiring effective collaboration and transparent communication amongst all stakeholders. "The spirit of a people is disclosed by the education of its youth."
- "Good citizenship requires a well-rounded development" with a balanced emphasis on academics, arts, athletics, and service.
- An excellent education provides foundational knowledge, stimulates intellectual curiosity, cultivates critical thinking, fosters growth through academic challenge, and develops capacity for both sustained individual effort and productive collaboration.
- An excellent education instills habits of personal responsibility and integrity in academic work and personal conduct.
- Faculty and staff who are passionate about students, experts in their field, and committed to continuous improvement are essential to providing an excellent education and must be equipped and supported through competitive compensation, targeted professional development, and effective evaluation.
- All district resources should be used efficiently and effectively to accomplish our mission and goals, addressing both present needs and long-term sustainability.

Strategic Objectives

- Increase academic growth and mastery in all content areas
- Provide a well-rounded offering of arts and extracurricular activities that enhance the development of character and community
- Protect the physical and emotional well-being and safety of students

- Improve the culture and retention of current staff while recruiting exemplary new hires
- Ensure competitive compensation & benefits for staff
- Invest in staff development and continuous improvement
- Improve parent and community satisfaction
- Strategically leverage and engage with community partners
- Optimize annual operating resources to meet district priorities
- Implement a long-term plan to strategically manage facilities and assets to support student experiences
- Facilitate strategic alignment and deployment of community raised funds to meet district priorities

Board of Trustees

Policies BA, BB series, BD series, and BE series

Texas law grants the board of trustees the power to govern and oversee the management of the district's schools. The board is the policy-making body within the district and has overall responsibility for the curriculum, school taxes, annual budget, employment of the superintendent and other professional staff, and facilities. The board has complete and final control over school matters within limits established by state and federal laws and regulations.

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the district to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the district's children. Board members are elected annually and serve 3-year terms. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the district.

Current board members include:

Maryjane Bonfield, President
Bryce Benson, Vice-President
Ellen Lee, Secretary
Doug Woodward, Finance Officer
Michael Denton, Trustee
Pete Flowers, Trustee
Blythe Koch, Trustee

The board usually meets the third or fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the William P. Clements Jr. Leadership Center Legacy Ballroom. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the district website and outside the Administration Building at least three business days before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a one-hour notice.

All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the board to go into a closed session from which the public and others are excluded. Closed session may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real-property acquisition, certain personnel matters including employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or consulting with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

Board Meeting Schedule

August 18, 2026	January 19, 2027	June 15, 2027
September 15, 2026	February 9, 2027	
October 20, 2026	March 23, 2027	
November 17, 2026	April 20, 2027	
December 15, 2026	May 18, 2027	

Administration

Dr. Mike Rockwood
Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Shorr Heathcote
Deputy Superintendent

Chris Scott
Assistant Superintendent for Business Services

Vacant
Assistant Superintendent for Education Services

Randy Allen	<i>Coordinator for Boys Athletics</i>
Susan Bailey	<i>Coordinator for Girls Athletics</i>
Dr. Tamela Crawford	<i>Chief Human Resources Officer</i>
Dr. Jacob Donnell	<i>Chief Operations Officer</i>
Maggie Garza	<i>Director of Food Services</i>
Shawn Guan	<i>Director of Business Services</i>
Jeremy Gilbert	<i>Director of Athletics</i>
Dr. Cynthia Hollingshead	<i>Director of Special Programs</i>
Charles Jackson	<i>Chief Technology Officer</i>
Makenzie McGurk	<i>Director of Communications</i>
Dr. Skip Moran	<i>Director of Assessment, Accountability, & ESL</i>
Dr. Geoffrey Orsak	<i>Executive Director of Moody Innovative Institute</i>
Liz Ospina	<i>Director of Transportation</i>
Mark Rowden	<i>Chief of Police</i>
Mary Smith	<i>Director of Student & Administrative Services</i>
Jerry Sutterfield	<i>Coordinator for Student Integrity</i>
Ericca Vandagriff	<i>Director of TAG/Curriculum Specialist</i>
Amy Wood	<i>Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction</i>

School Calendar

July 2026						
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April 2027						
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May 2027						
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June 2027						
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Dates at a Glance	
Aug. 11-18	Professional Development Days
Aug. 19	First Day of School
Sept. 7	Holiday
Oct. 12	Professional Exchange Day / Student Holiday
Nov. 2	Professional Development Day / Student Holiday
Nov. 3	Conference Day / Student Holiday
Nov. 23-27	Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 17	Student Early Release 5-12 only
Dec. 18	Student Early Release K-12
Dec. 19	Work Day for Staff
Dec. 21-Jan. 1	Holiday Break
Jan. 4-5	Professional Development Day / Student Holiday
Jan. 6	Classes resume
Jan. 18	Holiday
Feb. 15	Professional Exchange Day / Student Holiday
Feb. 16	Professional Development Day / Student Holiday
March 15-19	Spring Break
March 26	Bad Weather Make-Up Day
March 29	Bad Weather Make-Up Day
April 6-30 **	State assessment
May 3-14	AP testing
May 27	Student Early Release 5-12 only
May 28	Student Early Release K-12 / Last Day of School
May 29	Work Day for Staff
May 31	Holiday

**Please note that state assessment dates may change.

Grading Periods K-12	
First Semester - 79 Days	Second Semester - 93 Days
[Aug. 19-Oct. 16] - 1st Grading Period - 41 days (9 Weeks)	[Jan. 6-March 12] - 3rd Grading Period - 45 days (10 Weeks)
[Oct. 19-Dec. 18] - 2nd Grading Period - 38 days (8 Weeks)	[March 22-May 28] - 4th Grading Period - 48 days (10 Weeks)
187 Teacher Days	

Helpful Contacts

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department as listed below.

School Directory

Highland Park High School

4220 Emerson, Dallas, Texas 75205
(214) 780-3700

Dr. Kevin Hunt
Dr. Erica Redman
Troy Gray
Katie Navickas
Annur Ortiz
Michelle Shumate

Principal
Associate Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal

Highland Park Middle School

3555 Granada, Dallas, Texas 75205
(214) 780-3600

Stephanie Powell
Brianna Riddell
VACANT

Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal

Arch H. McCulloch Intermediate School

3555 Granada Dallas, Texas 75205
(214) 780-3500

Katie Schuttler
Tiffany McGuire
VACANT

Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal

John S. Armstrong Elementary School
3600 Cornell, Dallas, Texas 75205
(214) 780-3100

Betsy Cummins

Principal

Michael M. Boone Elementary School
8385 Durham St, Dallas, Texas 75225
(214) 780-4100

Ashraf Mobh

Principal

John S. Bradfield Elementary School
4300 Southern, Dallas, Texas 75205
(214) 780-3200

Dr. Aimee Hilton

Principal

Robert S. Hyer Elementary School
3920 Caruth Blvd, Dallas, Texas 75225
(214) 780-3300

Debbie Burt

Principal

University Park Elementary School
3505 Amherst, Dallas, Texas 75225
(214) 780-3400

Kim Banuelos

Principal

Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity

Policies DAA, DIA

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Highland Park ISD does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Additionally, the district does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not discriminate on the basis of sex and is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The prohibition against discrimination extends to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator for employees to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: *Mary Smith, Director of Student and Administrative Services, 7015 Westchester Dr, Dallas TX 75205, smithma@hpsid.org, 214-780-3000*. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, email, or phone. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator for employees for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: *Dr. Tamela Crawford, Chief Human Resources Officer, 7015 Westchester Dr, Dallas TX 75205, crawfot@hpsid.org, 214-780-3000*.

Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent.

Personnel Records

Professional personnel are required to have on file in the Human Resources Office:

1. Completed employment application
2. Official transcript(s) of college work showing degree(s)
3. A Texas Teacher's Certificate validated by TECAT, EXCET, or TEXES

4. A certified service record of all approved teaching experience
5. Employment eligibility verification form (I-9)
6. Copy of Social Security card if not electronically verified
7. Signed employment contract (electronic) (professional personnel only)
8. Copy of current driver's license or passport
9. Others – as may be required by the Texas Education Agency and local education agency

Job Vacancy Announcements

Policy DC

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis to the district's website.

Employment after Retirement

Policy DC

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed under certain circumstances on a full- or part-time basis without affecting their benefits, according to TRS rules and state law. Detailed information about employment after retirement is available in the TRS publication *Employment after Retirement*. Employees can contact TRS for additional information by calling 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. Information is also available on the TRS Website (www.trs.texas.gov).

Contract and Noncontract Employment

Policy DC series

State law requires the district to employ all full-time professional employees in positions requiring a certificate from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and nurses under probationary, term, or continuing contracts. Employees in all other positions are employed at-will or by a contract that is not subject to the procedures for nonrenewal or termination under Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code. The paragraphs that follow provide a general description of the employment arrangements used by the district.

Probationary Contracts. Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the district and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification must receive a probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after a two-year lapse in district employment or employees who move to a position requiring a new class of certification may also be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one-year contracts. The probationary period for those who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district may not exceed one school year.

For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three school years (i.e., three one-year contracts) with an optional fourth school year if the board determines it is doubtful whether a term or continuing contract should be given.

Term Contracts. Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses will be employed by term contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract. Employment policies can be accessed Online or copies will be provided upon request.

Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees. Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as noninstructional administrators) are employed by a one-year contract that is not subject to the provisions for nonrenewal or termination under the Texas Education Code.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees. All paraprofessional and auxiliary employees, regardless of certification, are employed at will and not by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district.

Certification and Licenses

Policies DBA, DF

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or a professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to The Human Resources Department in a timely manner. Employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) must notify The Human Resources Department when there is action against, or revocation of, their license.

A certified employee's contract may be voided without Chapter 21 due process and employment terminated if the individual does not hold a valid certificate or fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to renew or extend a temporary certificate, emergency certificate, probationary certificate, or permit. A contract may also be voided if SBEC suspends or revokes certification because of an individual's failure to comply with criminal history background checks. Contact The Human Resources Department if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

Recertification of Employment Authorization

Policy DC

At the time of hire all employees must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (Form I-9) and present documents to verify identity and employment authorization.

Employees whose immigration status, employment authorization, or employment authorization documents have expired must present new documents that show current employment authorization. Employees should file the necessary application or petition sufficiently in advance to ensure that they maintain continuous employment authorization or valid employment authorization documents. Contact The Human Resources Department if you have any questions regarding reverification of employment authorization. Failure to verify employment authorization may result in termination.

Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing

Policy CQ, DHE

Noninvestigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the district reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The district may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including district-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on district premises or work sites or used in district business. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may result if an employee refuses to submit to testing or is found to violate district policy.

Employees Required to Have a Commercial Driver's License. Any employee whose duties require a commercial driver's license (CDL) is subject to alcohol and drug testing. This includes all drivers who operate a motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more people counting the driver, drivers of large vehicles, or drivers of vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials. Teachers, coaches, or other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements if their duties include driving a commercial motor vehicle.

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted when reasonable suspicion exists, at random, when an employee returns to duty after engaging in prohibited conduct, and as a follow-up measure. Testing may be conducted following accidents. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty.

All employees required to have a CDL or who otherwise are subject to alcohol and drug testing will receive a copy of the district's policy, the testing requirements, and detailed information on alcohol and drug abuse and the availability of assistance programs.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug testing policies and related educational material should contact The Human Resources Department.

Health Safety Training

Policies DBA, DMA

District employees who are head directors of a marching band or head coaches or chief sponsors of an extracurricular athletic activity (including cheerleading) that is sponsored or sanctioned by the district or UIL must maintain and submit to the district proof of current certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another authorized organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to Human Resources.

Nurses, athletic coaches or sponsors, PE teachers, marching band directors, cheerleading coaches, and other certain employees must obtain and maintain certification in the principles and techniques of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) provided by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another authorized organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to the Lead Nurse by the first day of school.

School nurses and employees with regular contact with students must complete a Texas Education Agency approved, Online training regarding seizure disorder aware-ness, recognition, and related first aid.

Reassignments and Transfers

Policy DK

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the superintendent or designee when the superintendent or designee determines that the assignment or reassignment is in the best interest of the district. Reassignment is a transfer to another position, department, or facility that does not necessitate a change in the employment contract. Campus reassignments must be approved by the principal at the receiving campus except when reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or program changes. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be reassigned at any time unless an extracurricular or supplemental duty assignment is part of a dual-assignment contract. Employees who object to a reassignment may follow the district process for employee complaints as outlined in this handbook and district policy DGBA(Local).

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit his or her request by April 30th. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Human Resources Office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor. Any current HPISD employee

may be considered for an open position for which he or she is qualified within the District by completing an application for that position.

Workload and Work Schedules

Policies DEAB, DK, DL

District employees will be expected to work each day according to the established schedule for their position. Modifications of schedule may only be made by the Superintendent. Employees are not authorized to work remotely without prior approval from their supervisor and Human Resources Department.

An employee will not be allowed to have his or her child(ren) present, in the work setting, during the employee's scheduled work time.

Professional Employees. Professional employees and academic administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10-, 11-, or 12-month basis, according to the work schedules set by the district. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation including conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The district may require teachers to supervise students during lunch one day a week when no other personnel are available.

Between the time when teachers are scheduled to report for duty and the beginning of the regular instructional day, and from the time the school day ends to the end of the teacher's scheduled workday, teachers shall be available to those students who need help beyond that which they receive in the classroom. Teachers shall receive no additional pay for such service. Individual help during the regular school day may lessen or remove the need for tutoring.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees. Support employees are employed at will and receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. See Overtime Compensation on page 36 for additional information.

All paraprofessional and Auxiliary staff must clock in and out using the time clock. The time clock is the only way the Payroll Department knows how many hours an employee worked and how much to pay the employee. The time clock indicates an employee's arrival and departure times. In addition, the employee shall punch in/out, when applicable, for lunch, and whenever the employee may have a brief absence from work, (e.g.: a doctor's or dentist's appointment). All

employees are required to keep their supervisor advised of departures from and returns to the premises during the workday.

All non-exempt employees will utilize the time clock machine and will not have access to edit their timesheet manually. This ensures actual arrival and departure times are reflected on timesheets.

The employee is responsible for his own time. Employees are not permitted to clock in more than seven (7) minutes before their scheduled starting time and no more than seven (7) minutes after their scheduled quitting time without the supervisor's approval.

No one may record hours worked for another employee. Tampering with a co-worker's time is cause for disciplinary action, including dismissal of both employees. Falsification of time records is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

End of Semester Work Days

Not all assignments are assigned the End of Semester Work Days. Please refer to the Reporting Days Calendar or contact the Human Resources Office to determine if the End of Semester Work Days apply to you.

Administrative Staff- All Administrative staff will have three options for End of Semester Work Days on December 19, 2026 and May 29, 2027.

- Complete six hours of approved non-contract, work-related activities or professional development training completed prior to the End of Semester Work Day;
- Use a full day of Leave (Vacation, or Leave Without Pay) which needs to be recorded in Skyward Time Off no later than the morning of the End of Semester Work Day.
- Report to work for pre-approved hours on December 19, 2026 and May 29, 2027 for a minimum of 6 hours (based on a full-time employee who works 37.5 hours a week).

Exempt Staff- All professional staff will have three options for End of Semester Work Days on December 19, 2026 and May 29, 2027 as approved by their supervisor:

- Complete six hours of approved non-contract, work-related activities or professional development training completed prior to the End of Semester Work Day;
- Use a full day of Leave (Vacation- if applicable or Leave Without Pay) which needs to be recorded in Skyward Time Off no later than the morning of the End of Semester Work Day.

- Report to work for pre-approved hours on December 19, 2026 and May 29, 2027 for a minimum of 6 hours (based on a full-time employee who works 37.5 hours a week).

Non-Exempt Staff- All non-exempt staff on a 230-day work calendar do not have End of Semester workday as a required day.

All non-exempt staff who are required to work the End of Semester work days will have three options for End of Semester Work Days on December 19, 2026 and May 29, 2027 as approved by their supervisor:

- Complete six hours of approved non-clocked professional development training completed prior to the morning of the End of Semester Work Day;
- Use a full day of Leave (Comp Hours or Vacation- if applicable or Leave Without Pay) which needs to be recorded in Skyward Time Off no later than the morning of the End of Semester Work Day. Comp hours must be used prior to any other leave except Professional Development.
- Report to work for pre-approved hours on December 19, 2026 and May 29, 2027 for a minimum of 6 hours (based on a full-time employee who works 37.5 hours a week). Employees may use a combination of the above options in half-day increments to cover the required days.

Early Release Days

Use of Personal Leave for the Early Release Days on our K-6 campuses shall be handled in the following manner:

- Exempt Staff - An AM Half-Personal Day may be approved. However, exempt staff will need to take a half-day leave without pay if they wish to be out the entire day.
- Non-Exempt Staff - An AM Half-Personal Day may be approved. However, non-exempt staff will have the option of using accrued Comp Hours or take a half-day leave without pay if they wish to be out the entire day.

This is aligned with our typical practice prohibiting the use of discretionary Personal Leave Days on District Professional Development Days.

ADA Accommodations

Policies DAA, DBB, DIA

The district will provide reasonable accommodations to employees with a disability if the accommodation would allow the individual to perform the essential functions of their job, unless doing so would create an undue hardship. An employee or their supervisor may initiate a request for accommodation by contacting the Human Resources Department and identifying an adjustment or change at work that is needed because of a disability. An employee may also submit a written request to HR using the ADA Accommodation Request Form, which is available on the district website.

Upon receiving the reasonable accommodation request, HR will meet with the employee and conduct an informal, interactive discussion to identify an accommodation that will allow the employee to perform the essential functions of the job effectively. The district may request medical information concerning the employee's disability and to assist in determining what accommodation(s) may be available and appropriate. The employee will be responsible for obtaining the information from their health care provider. Medical information received will be confidential and kept separate from the employee's personnel file.

After meeting with the employee and reviewing medical documentation, HR will determine whether the employee is a qualified individual with a disability and develop a reasonable accommodation plan for the employee. Accommodation will be determined on a case-by-case basis. HR will work closely with the employee and supervisor to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided and effective.

Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk

Policies DEAB, DG

The district supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk. A place, other than a multiple user bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from other employees and the public where the employee can express breast milk will be provided.

A reasonable amount of break time will be provided when the employee has a need to express milk. For nonexempt employees, these breaks are unpaid and are not counted as hours worked. Employees should meet with their supervisor to discuss their needs and arrange break times.

The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections of Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) requires an employee to notify the district if they believe the district is out of compliance in providing breaks for a nursing mother. The employee must give the district 10 days to come into compliance before making any claim of liability against the district. An employee with concerns should contact the Chief Human Resources Officer at 214-780-3000.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) provides consideration of accommodations to employees who have known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. An employee seeking a PWFA accommodation should contact the Human Resources Office at 214-780-3000 to begin the interactive process.

Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications

Policies DK, DBA

In schools receiving Title I funds, the district is required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to notify parents at the beginning of each school year that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. ESSA also requires that parents be notified if their child has been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements.

Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to an uncertified substitute, inappropriately certified teacher or an uncertified teacher. This notice is not required if parental notice under ESSA is sent. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit, including substitutes. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request. Employees who have questions about their certification status can call the Human Resources Office.

Outside Employment and Tutoring

Policy DBD

All employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor any outside employment that may create a potential conflict of interest with their assigned duties and responsibilities or the best interest of the district. Supervisors will consider outside employment on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it should be prohibited because of a conflict of interest.

If working with any HPISD students, the employee must include and notify the parents of the disclaimer that this is not provided as part of their HPISD employment.

Private Tutoring- Private tutoring is defined as instruction for compensation by teachers (or other professional personnel employed by the district) that occurs off-campus, outside of the contract day. Teachers or other professional personnel shall not tutor for pay students from their own classes or students whom they counsel or whose needs they diagnose. Tutoring for pay shall not

be performed on school premises and teachers shall be encouraged not to accept more than one tutoring job on any one school day. Tutoring shall be done outside of regular school hours, and tutors shall not be authorized to give grades to their students.

Employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor the names of HPISD students of whom they are tutoring for pay.

Recommendations by teachers, counselors, administrators, and other professional personnel for tutoring shall be considered only after all reasonable efforts within the regular program have been exhausted.

Other Employment- Any employment outside of HPISD must be disclosed in writing to the immediate supervisor.

Other Activities or Sponsorships- Any employee that receives payment for or is reimbursed for cost of activities must disclose the names of any students to the immediate supervisor.

Administrators. An employee (other than employees primarily responsible for in-class instruction) who has significant administrative duties relating to the operation of a school district, including the operation for a campus, program, or other subdivision of the district may not receive financial benefits for performing personal services for any business entity that conducts or solicits business with the district. With exceptions as noted below, administrators are also prohibited from receiving financial benefits for performing personal services for any education business that provides services regarding the curriculum or administration of any school district or financial benefits for performing personal services for other school districts, open enrollment charter schools, and education service centers.

Exceptions apply to an administrator who is not a superintendent, assistant superintendent, or member of a board of managers if the board approves as required by statute. To be approved, services must be performed on the administrator's personal time. Contact Human Resources for more information.

Performance Evaluation

Policy DN, DPB series

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the district. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda also can be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, participate in a performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

Upon receiving a report, a nursing review committee may review a nurse's nursing services, qualifications, and quality of patient care, as well as the merits of a complaint concerning a nurse, and a determination or recommendation regarding a complaint. A nurse may request, orally or in writing, a determination by the committee regarding conduct requested of the nurse believed to violate the nurse's duty to a patient.

All evaluations or memoranda must be submitted to Human Resources department and maintained in the employee's relations file.

Employee Involvement

Policies BQA, BQB

At both the campus and district levels, Highland Park ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from Education Services Department. Additional opportunities for employee involvement are available throughout the school year.

Staff Development

Policy DMA

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the district. Staff development for instructional personnel is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, addressed in the campus improvement plan, and approved by a campus-level advisory committee. Staff development for noninstructional personnel is designed to meet specific licensing requirements (e.g., bus drivers) and continued employee skill development.

Individuals holding renewable SBEC certificates are responsible for obtaining the required training hours and maintaining appropriate documentation.

All other staff are required to work with their supervisors in designing, completing and reporting staff development that is required to meet job expectations or that improve performance and efficiency of the District. The District may require specific training for all staff members.

What is Professional Learning?

The District's Professional Learning Program supports professional growth for all employees based upon diagnosed needs of professional goals as they relate to the Board, campus, and program goals. The program's purpose is to ensure professional growth for improving job performance and organizational development that ultimately results in student achievement and success. DMA(LOCAL)

The Highland Park ISD School Board and staff recognize that well-trained personnel are essential to the effective operations of a school district. Professional growth is a necessary, continuous, and systematic effort to improve district programs by involving all employees in learning opportunities, whether as a participant or a trainer. These opportunities will enhance staff members' academic preparation, instructional delivery, assessment skills, and conceptual thinking to foster students' social, emotional, and academic growth, or specific skills required for the position.

All employees are required to report to work and participate in each of the scheduled Professional Days listed on the District Calendar. Six hours of staff development activities are planned for each full day of Professional Learning.

Required Safety and Regulatory Training Plans

All employees must complete certain safety and regulatory training requirements – HPISD Board Policy DMA (LOCAL). The courses are available through the District's Public School WORKS online training system and can be completed at the convenience of the employee. Non-exempt employees may earn Comp Time for the completion of these courses if completed during nonwork hours. In order to earn credit toward Exchange Days or Saturday work days, the employee must complete during non-work hours.

All school districts must provide employees initial training and annual refresher training in accordance to their roles and responsibilities. Examples of training that may be required are:

- Anaphylaxis Awareness and Response
- Asthma Awareness and Response
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Bullying Prevention
- Cybersecurity
- Diabetes
- Employee Handbook, Board Policy, Responsible Use Agreement
- Human Trafficking
- Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting
- Managing Food Allergies
- Reporting Work Injuries/Incidents
- Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children
- Teen Dating Violence
- Suicide Prevention
- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Misconduct – Staff to Student
- Social Media: Personal and Professional Use
- Standard Response Protocol
- Student Privacy Rights (FERPA)

- Tornado Safety
- Title IX Overview

Each year staff members should plan for professional growth activities that will help them complete their required training. The following expectations for professional development reflect the mission of the district based on specific duties and responsibilities:

1. Staff members are required to attend professional learning on designated campus and district professional development days.
2. K-2 professional staff will be required to complete a district approved early literacy training within five years.
3. K-4 and all English Language Arts teachers will be required to complete a district approved literacy training within five years.
4. All TAG teachers (K-1, TAG specialists/teachers and campus principals) must have **30 hours of specified TAG training** that include the Nature and Needs of Gifted Students, Curriculum Differentiation for Gifted Students, The Assessment and Identification of Gifted Students and some hours that may fall into a category labeled “Other”.

To maintain the TAG professional learning certificate, a **six-hour update** is required each year. (Required groups: All kindergarten and 1st grade teachers, all TAG specialists/teachers, all teachers in grades 5–12 who teach a TAG class, administrators and counselors.)

All teachers must satisfy the district requirement of six hours of training in Nature and Needs of Gifted Students. 19 TAC 89.2 DMA (LEGAL)

5. Teachers of Advanced Placement courses may be required to attend content specific training as determined by the campus or district.
6. All educators must participate in training related to the implementation of Self Directed Appraisal System, SDAS. All administrators who appraise teachers must complete the required SDAS training orientation for supervisors. Update training is required.
7. All staff members who are involved with administering any state assessment are required to attend specific annual training.
8. For Campus Crisis Teams and other staff members as needed: HPISD will address the provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC); 37.0021, 19 T.A.C. Chapter 89 of confinement, restraint, seclusion, and time-out through The Texas Behavior Support Initiative (TBSI) Training. Principals will designate staff members to serve on that campus core team. A core team of personnel on each campus, including the principal or designee, must annually receive TBSI training and Crisis Prevention/Intervention (CPI) which is the Highland Park ISD designated program for restraint training.

A yearly update of CPI is required for core team members to remain certified. Training in the modular design of TBSI is required for general or special education personnel who implement seclusionary time-out based on requirements established in a student's IEP and BIP.

Personnel who have not been trained must receive annual training on TBSI/CPI within 30 school days of being assigned the responsibility for implementing seclusionary time-out based on an IEP/BIP. Personnel called upon to use restraint in an emergency and who have not received prior training must receive that training in the first 30 days of employment.

9. The following staff must receive and maintain certification in the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR): school nurse, assistant school nurse, athletic coach or sponsor, physical education instructor, marching band director, cheerleading coach. Also, each student who serves as an athletic trainer must receive this training.
10. Each member of and anyone who appoints members to the concussion oversight team is required to have training on concussions. This includes athletic trainers, athletic directors, coaches, school administrators, school nurses and other health care professionals. Training requirements include: signs of a concussion, treatment of a concussion and procedures for students suspected or identified as having a concussion.
11. District employees who serve as athletic coaches at or above the seventh grade level for extracurricular athletics must have training in illegal steroid use. Training will include an overview of signs of usage, health implications, and legal implications.

Exchange Day Requirements

In order to receive exchange hours for training achieved during non-contract, non-workday hours, all HPISD staff will complete an Individual Staff Development Plan. Plans must be preapproved by the campus principal or designee. A full day of training or 6 hours will be considered equivalent to one day of exchange time. Plans will be submitted and approved in May before the next school year so that summer training may count towards exchange days in the upcoming school year.

A supervisor may recommend certain sessions for staff members to attend in order to receive exchange time. All staff development approved by the district will count toward professional learning hours. The district will track all locally provided staff development. Staff members are responsible for keeping track of hours gained outside the district. Proof of attendance is required. One semester credit hour from an accredited university will equal 15 clock hours.

Employee Internships

All requests for employee internships require HR approval before placement begins.

Master's Degree and Progress Requirements

HPISD Board Policy DMC (LOCAL and Regulation) requires each professional employee to have or earn a Master's Degree or National Board Certification within the first seven years of employment.

Any teacher who begins employment with the District without a Master's degree shall be responsible for completing this requirement within seven years after beginning employment in accordance with Board Policy DMC (LOCAL and Regulation). A degree plan from the college granting the degree should be filed no later than March 1 of the second year of employment. All degree plans must be approved by the Executive Director of Human Resources for the District. The degree should be in the teacher's teaching field or an associated field relating to assignment. Any degree outside of the teacher's field or associated field of assignment must be reviewed to determine approval.

A teacher must make satisfactory progress toward the completion of the Master's degree within the seven year period. A teacher who has not obtained the Master's degree will only be eligible for a one-year contract.

If at any time the teacher abandons the plan filed or declares the intention not to complete the plan within the specified time period, the employee will be considered to have failed to fulfill his original contractual agreement and will be subject to dismissal.

Effective the 2021-2022 school year Master's degree transcripts may be submitted twice per year. Transcripts must be received in the HR office by August 31st in order to receive the \$3000 stipend beginning in the September paycheck, paid throughout the pay cycle. Transcripts must be received by January 31st to receive a prorated stipend of \$1500 beginning in the February paycheck, paid throughout the remaining pay cycle.

Master's degree and National Board Certification information does not pertain to part-time employees.

Master's Degree Program Progress Report

Each January, the building Principal will distribute to each B.A. level teacher on his/her teaching staff the progress report on personnel working on Master's degrees. Upon distribution of this form, the Principal will set a deadline for its return. The form shall provide information needed by the Principal to ascertain whether the teacher is making satisfactory progress on the Master's degree plan. In addition to this progress report the teacher will provide an updated transcript for the Principal's review. The Principal will also check to see that each first year B.A. level teacher has filed a plan to achieve a Master's degree in the teacher's teaching field or other approved field.

Reimbursement for Hours Earned Above a Master's Degree

An opportunity is provided for teachers hired prior to July 1, 2017 and were enrolled in graduate level courses by July 1, 2017, to be compensated for acquiring 12 hours and 24 hours above the required Master's degree.

Payments and Exclusions

1. Payments will be made in a lump sum in the December paycheck. [\$600 for 12 hours and \$1,200 for 24 hours]
2. Upon earning a Doctorate Degree, all Master's degree plus 12- or 24-hour recognition increments will cease.
3. Recognition for hours above the M.A. is payable only to classroom teachers or instructional support employees paid on pay grades 1-6 of the professional salary scale.

National Board Certification

As an alternative to obtaining a Master's Degree, those eligible may obtain a National Board Certification. To meet this requirement, the National Board Certificate must be valid.

HPISD will cover the initial application and initial submission of documents in order to obtain National Board Certification.

Those staff members who already hold a Master's Degree or higher are also eligible to obtain National Board Certification.

More information regarding National Board may be found in policy DMC Local.

Mental Health Training

Policy DMA

All district employees who regularly interact with students are required to complete an evidenced-based mental health training program that is designed to provide instruction regarding the recognition and support of children and youth who experience mental health or substance use issues that may pose a threat to school safety. Employees must provide a certificate of completion to the district that includes the name of the training course, along with supporting documentation confirming that the training meets the requirements of the commissioner rules for mental health training.

Campus staff required to complete the training includes, but is not limited to, teachers, coaches, librarians, instructional coaches, administrators, administrative support personnel, school resource officers, paraprofessionals, substitutes, custodians, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, crossing guards, and district special program liaisons, and supervisors of personnel who regularly interact with students.

Compensation and Benefits

Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The district's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All district positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as nonexempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek. (See *Overtime Compensation*, page 36.)

All employees will receive written notice of their pay and work schedules before the start of each school year. Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time nurses, and full-time counselors will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule.

Employees should contact the Payroll Office at 214-780-3023 and/or Human Resources Office at 214-780-3012 (paraprofessional staff) or 214-780-3011 (professional staff) for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

Paychecks

All professional and salaried employees are paid monthly. Hourly employees are paid semi-monthly. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization. Employees are responsible for regularly reviewing the accuracy of their pay statement and should contact Payroll if they have any questions.

The schedule of pay dates for the 2026-2027 school year follows:

July 20, 2026	January 20, 2027
August 20, 2026	February 19, 2027
September 18, 2026	March 19, 2027
October 20, 2026	April 20, 2027
November 20, 2026	May 20, 2027
December 18, 2026	June 17, 2027

Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of 2 weeks prior to payday is necessary to activate this service. Contact the Payroll office for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll Deductions

Policy CFEA

The district is required to make the following automatic payroll deductions:

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or Social Security employee contributions
- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance; annuities; and higher education savings plans or prepaid tuition programs. Employees also may request payroll deduction for payment of membership dues to professional organizations and certain charitable contributions approved by the board. TRS retired employees may be subject to surcharges associated with their employment after retirement. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

Overpayments. Employees are not entitled to any funds the district overpays. An overpayment occurs if an employee is paid more than the amount the employee should have been paid under the assigned pay grade and applicable supplemental pay.

If an overpayment is reported in the current fiscal year, a payment plan will be developed to recoup the payment. Generally, an overpayment will be paid in one pay cycle. However, if this creates an undue hardship for the employee, the district has the discretion to develop a plan for regular payroll deductions in the same fiscal year.

An agreement between an employee and the district must be in place in order to deduct any overpayment.

Overtime Compensation

Policies DEAB, DEC

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees and paraprofessional employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. Sunday and ends at 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for the hours set by the normal work schedule. Hours worked beyond the normal schedule up to 40 hours will be paid at a regular rate of pay. Except for extraordinary circumstances, nonexempt employees shall receive compensatory time off, rather than overtime pay, for overtime work.

An employee may use comp time in accordance with the District's leave policies and if such use does not unduly disrupt the operations of the District. The use of comp time shall not be restricted by the limits on discretionary use of leave as described in the District's leave and pay policy. An employee and his or her supervisor will work collaboratively to reduce excessive comp time balances. The District may require an employee to use comp time when in the best interest of the District. [See DEC(LOCAL)]

Employees may be compensated for overtime (i.e., hours beyond 40 in a workweek) at time-and-a-half rate with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees can accumulate up to 60 hours of comp time.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- An employee is required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

Travel Expense Reimbursement

Policy DEE

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and the Business Office must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the district. Employees must submit receipts, to the extent possible, to be reimbursed for allowable expenses other than mileage. Employees and supervisors must review travel guidelines established by the district and comply with all requirements. Any request for reimbursement that does not comply with the travel guidelines will not be approved.

Health, Dental, and Life Insurance

Policy CRD

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school employee health insurance program. The district's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

- Employees who are active, contributing TRS members
- Employees who are not contributing TRS members and who are employed for 10 or more regularly scheduled hours per week

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment each year or when they experience a qualifying event (e.g., marriage, divorce, birth). Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees. Employees should contact the benefits Office at 214-780-3010 for more information.

Supplemental Insurance Benefits

Policy CRD

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact the Benefits Office for more information.

457(b) Employee Retirement Plan

The District is excited to partner with FFIInvest and TCG to provide all district staff with a 457(b) employee retirement plan. The plan is intended to benefit all employees and is available during

the upcoming benefits enrollment for the 2026-27 school year in July and August. Adjustments can be made on the TCG website.

This 457(b) plan is an outstanding opportunity for all employees to easily prepare for and invest in their retirement.

Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e., disability, accidental death and dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, dental, and additional term life insurance). A third-party administrator handles employee claims made on these accounts.

New employees must accept or reject this benefit during their first month of employment. All employees must accept or reject this benefit on an annual basis and during the specified time period.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Policy CRE

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from TASB, effective upon the first day of employment.

Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the campus nurse or supervisor and file a report with the Workers' Comp Specialist at 214-780-3080. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See *Workers' Compensation Benefits*, page 50 for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

Unemployment Compensation Insurance

Policy CRF

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have

employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact the Payroll Office.

Teacher Retirement

All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least four and one-half months are members of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). Substitutes not receiving TRS service retirement benefits who work at least 90 days a year are eligible to purchase a year of creditable service in TRS. TRS provides members with an annual statement of their account showing all deposits and the total account balance for the year ending August 31, as well as an estimate of their retirement benefits.

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify TRS and the HR Office as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the web (www.trs.texas.gov). See page 17 for information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

All employees should set up and verify his/her TRS account online set up.

Leaves and Absences

Policies CRD, DBB, DEC, DECA, DECB, DED, DG

The district offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of more than five days should call Human Resources at 214-780-3012 for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the district.

With the exception of medically certified absences (Sick Days) and approved, accrued Vacation Days; employees may not take more than 3 consecutive leave days per absence period. This is particularly applicable to those individuals who have submitted notice of upcoming retirement/resignation date and wish to exhaust remaining accrued leave days.

Paid leave must be used in half day or full day increments. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

- Local
- Old Sick
- State Personal

Employees must follow district and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated or available paid leave shall result in deduction from the employee's pay. All absences, including Professional Development, Athletics, Meeting, etc. must be recorded in Skyward and approved by a supervisor. All positions requiring a substitute must also record their absence in Frontline to obtain a substitute.

If an hourly employee does not report or request leave of absence(s) according to district procedures, the incident is considered a "no call/no show". An employee who is absent for 3 consecutive days without notice is considered to have abandoned their job and may face disciplinary consequences up to and including termination.

Immediate Family. For purposes of leave other than family and medical leave, immediate family is defined as the following:

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.

- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law
- Grandparent and grandchild
- Any person residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death

For purposes of family and medical leave, the definition of family is limited to spouse, parent, son or daughter, and next of kin. The definition of these are found in Policy DECA(LEGAL).

Medical Certification. Any employee, who is absent more than 5 consecutive days because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee's fitness to return to work.

The district may require medical certification due to an employee's questionable pattern of absences or when deemed necessary by the supervisor or superintendent. The district may also request medical certification when an employee requests leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for the employee's serious health condition, a serious health condition of the employee's spouse, parent, or child, or for military caregiver leave.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits covered employers from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we ask that employees and health care providers do not provide any genetic information in any medical certification. 'Genetic information,' as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member, or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

Continuation of Health Insurance. Employees, on an approved leave of absence other than family and medical leave, may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under the FMLA will be paid by the district as they were prior to the leave. Otherwise, the district does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave.

Under TRS-Active Care rules, an employee is no longer eligible for insurance through the district after six months of unpaid leave other than FML. If an employee's unpaid leave extends for more than six months, the district will provide the employee with notice of COBRA rights.

Personal Leave

State law entitles all employees to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is available for use at the beginning of the year. A day of personal leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time. State personal leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. Personal leave may be used for two general purposes: nondiscretionary and discretionary.

Nondiscretionary. Leave taken for personal or family illness, family emergency, a death in the family, or active military service is considered nondiscretionary leave. Reasons for this type of leave allow very little, if any, advance planning. Nondiscretionary may be used in the same manner as state sick leave.

Discretionary. Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor 3 days in advance of the anticipated absence. The effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor.

Discretionary leave shall not be allowed in the following circumstances:

- The day before a school holiday
- The day after a school holiday
- Days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams
- Days scheduled for STAAR tests or state-required testing at campus of employment-excluding MIS/HPMS and HPHS cafeteria staff
- Professional or staff development days or Workdays
- The first and the last teaching days of each semester- excluding MIS/HPMS cafeteria staff
- For more than 3 consecutive days per absence period

Any exceptions must be approved by the supervisor and Human Resources. The employee must submit a request for exception form prior to the leave. Unapproved personal leave will result in a daily-rate salary reduction.

A personal leave day must be used when absent for certification exams, internship hours, Master's work or Doctoral work.

All leave days must be entered in Skyward. Additionally, any absence that requires a substitute must also be entered in Frontline by the employee.

A teacher may be compensated for covering for another teacher or instructional assistant who is absent, only if the absence has been recorded in Frontline and Skyward. Teachers may cover a max of 1 period per day.

Leave Proration. If an employee separates from employment with the district before his or her last duty day of the year, or begins employment after the first duty day, state personal leave will be prorated based on the actual time employed. When an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck will be reduced by the amount of state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year.

State Sick Leave

State sick leave accumulated before 1995 is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. State sick leave may be used for the following reasons only:

- Employee illness
- Illness in the employee's immediate family
- Family emergency (i.e., natural disasters or life-threatening situations)
- Death in the immediate family
- Active military service

Local Leave

The District will provide 5 days of Personal/Sick leave per year to each employee. A day of leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee's usual assignment, whether fulltime or part-time. These days are accruable but not transferable to other districts. Under this plan, Personal/Sick leave accumulates at the rate of 1/2-day credit for every 18 workdays until five are reached for the year. Please view the district Compensation Manual, Leaves and Absences for a break-down of days earned.

Vacation

Policy DED

Availability and Use of Vacation Days for 12 Month Employees

Administrative and support staff employed on a 12-month basis begins July 1 and ends June 30. These employees are compensated for working 226, 230 and 235 days. These employees are

required to report for duty every day that the District is open for business. Vacation Days will be advanced to all 12 month employees on July 1. All 12 month employees' vacation days will be prorated. All 226 and 235 day employees will receive 15 days of vacation, 230 day employees will receive 10 days of vacation annually.

New employees who begin their employment on July 1 will be able to use vacation leave immediately. New employees hired after the July 1 start date will receive a prorated number of days to be available as vacation. Vacation days/hours shall be prorated based on the actual time employed. If an employee separates from employment before the last duty day on the Reporting Days Calendar, the employee's vacation days/hours shall be prorated in accordance with the proration schedule in administrative regulations. Employees must have their vacation use approved by their supervisor. The District can require that employees use their vacation.

Vacation days/hours shall accumulate without limit for eligible employees hired before July 1, 2017. Employees hired or transferred into a 12 month position on or after July 1, 2017, will receive reimbursement of up to 30 days/240 hours of unused vacation days. The District shall pay an employee for any unused vacation days/hours at the employees' current daily/hourly rate when he or she separates from employment with the District. The District will not pay active employees for unused vacation days.

Sick Leave Bank

The Highland Park Sick Leave Bank was established to provide sick leave days to members of the bank who are unable to work because of catastrophic illness, injury of self or immediate family member. Workdays are requested from the bank when the member has exhausted all of his/her accumulated paid state and local leave days.

Any employee of the district who is scheduled to work at least thirty hours per week in a budgeted position and earns at least three days of local leave during the school year is eligible to join the Sick Leave Bank. Each applicant for membership in the Sick Leave Bank must contribute three days from his/her accrued local sick leave. Additional information can be found at www.hpsid.org in the Human Resources section under Current Employees.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions

The following text is from the federal notice, *Your Employee Rights Under the Family and Medical Leave Act*. Specific information that the district has adopted to implement the FMLA follows this general notice.

What is FMLA leave?

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that provides eligible employees with **job-protected leave** for qualifying family and medical reasons.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) enforces the FMLA for most employees. Eligible employees can take **up to 12 workweeks** of FMLA leave in a 12-month period for:

- The birth, adoption or foster placement of a child with you,
- Your serious mental or physical health condition that makes you unable to work,
- To care for your spouse, child or parent with a serious mental or physical health condition, and
- Certain qualifying reasons related to the foreign deployment of your spouse, child or parent who is a military servicemember.

An eligible employee who is the spouse, child, parent or next of kin of a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness **may take up to 26 workweeks** of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember.

You have the right to use FMLA leave in **one block of time**. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, you may take FMLA leave **intermittently in separate blocks of time, or on a reduced schedule** by working less hours each day or week. Read Fact Sheet #28M(c) for more information.

FMLA leave is **not paid leave**, but you may choose, or be required by your employer, to use any employer-provided paid leave if your employer's paid leave policy covers the reason for which you need FMLA leave.

Am I eligible to take FMLA leave?

You are an **eligible employee** if *all* of the following apply:

- You work for a covered employer,
- You have worked for your employer at least 12 months,
- You have at least 1,250 hours of service for your employer during the 12 months before your leave, and
- Your employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of your work location

Airline flight crew employees have different "hours of service" requirements.

You work for a **covered employer** if **one** of the following applies:

- You work for a private employer that had at least 50 employees during at least 20 workweeks in the current or previous calendar year,
- You work for an elementary or public or private secondary school, or
- You work for a public agency, such as a local, state or federal government agency. Most federal employees are covered by Title II of the FMLA, administered by the Office of Personnel Management

How do I request FMLA leave?

Generally, **to request FMLA leave you *must*:**

- Follow your employer's normal policies for requesting leave,
- Give notice at least 30 days before your need for FMLA leave, or
- If advance notice is not possible, give notice as soon as possible.

You **do *not* have to share a medical diagnosis** but must provide enough information to your employer so they can determine whether the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. You ***must* also inform your employer if FMLA leave was previously taken** or approved for the same reason when requesting additional leave.

Your **employer *may* request certification** from a health care provider to verify medical leave and may request certification of a qualifying exigency.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

State employees may be subject to certain limitations in pursuit of direct lawsuits regarding leave for their own serious health conditions. Most federal and certain congressional employees are also covered by the law but are subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or Congress

What does my employer need to do?

If you are eligible for FMLA leave, your employer ***must*:**

- Allow you to take job-protected time off work for a qualifying reason,
- Continue your group health plan coverage while you are on leave on the same basis as if you had not taken leave, and

- Allow you to return to the same job, or a virtually identical job with the same pay, benefits and other working conditions, including shift and location, at the end of your leave.

Your **employer *cannot* interfere with your FMLA rights** or threaten or punish you for exercising your rights under the law. For example, your employer cannot retaliate against you for requesting FMLA leave or cooperating with a WHD investigation.

After becoming aware that your need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, your **employer *must* confirm whether you are eligible** or not eligible for FMLA leave. If your employer determines that you are eligible, **your employer *must* notify you in writing:**

- About your FMLA rights and responsibilities, and
- How much of your requested leave, if any, will be FMLA-protected leave.

Where can I find more information?

Call **1-866-487-9243** or visit dol.gov/fmla to learn more.

If you believe your rights under the FMLA have been violated, you may file a complaint with WHD or file a private lawsuit against your employer in court. **Scan the QR code to learn about our WHD complaint process.**



Local Procedures for Implementing Family and Medical Leave Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period beginning on the first duty day of the school year.

Use of Paid Leave. FML runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, compensatory time, assault leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The district will designate the leave as FML, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently. Teachers have the option of not using paid leave during an FML absence for pregnancy or birth or adoption of a child.

Intermittent Leave. When medically necessary or in the case of a qualifying exigency, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. The district does not permit the use of intermittent or reduced-schedule leave for the care of a newborn child or for adoption or placement of a child with the employee.

Fitness for Duty. An employee that takes FML due to the employee's own serious health condition shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification from the health care provider. When leave is taken for the employee's own serious health condition, the certification must address the employee's ability to perform essential job functions. The district shall provide a list of essential job functions (e.g., job description) to the employee with the FML designation notice to share with the health care provider. Fitness for duty is not required when an employee returns to work following leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition; to care for a child following birth, adoption, or foster care placement; or for qualifying exigency leave.

Reinstatement. An employee returning to work at the end of FML will be returned to the same position held when the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

In certain cases, instructional employees desiring to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue on family and medical leave until the end of the semester. The additional time off is not counted against the employee's FML entitlement, and the district will maintain the employees group health insurance and reinstate the employee at the end of the leave according the procedures outlined in policy (see DECA(LEGAL)).

Failure to Return. If, at the expiration of FML, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the district may require the employee to reimburse the district's share of insurance premiums paid during any portion of FML when the employee was on unpaid leave. If the employee fails to return to work for a reason beyond the employee's control, such as a continuing personal or family serious health condition or a spouse being unexpectedly transferred more than 75 miles from the district, the district may not require the employee to reimburse the district's share of premiums paid.

District Contact. Employees that require FML or have questions should contact Human Resources at 214-780-3012 for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Temporary Disability Leave

Certified Employees. Any full-time employee whose position requires certification from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is eligible for temporary disability leave. The purpose of temporary disability leave is to provide job protection to full-time educators who cannot work for an extended period of time because of a mental or physical disability of a temporary nature. Temporary disability leave must be taken as a continuous block of time. It may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability.

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be accepted as a

request for temporary disability leave. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days.

If an employee is placed on temporary disability leave involuntarily, he or she has the right to request a hearing before the board of trustees. The employee may protest the action and present additional evidence of fitness to work.

When an employee is ready to return to work, the Human Resources Office should be notified at least 30 days in advance. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able to resume regular duties. Certified employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned if an appropriate position is available. If an appropriate position is not available, the employee may be assigned to another campus, subject to the approval of the campus principal. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, the employee will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

Premium Responsibility After FMLA Exhaustion Once an employee has exhausted their 12 weeks of job-protected Family and Medical Leave (FML), they will become responsible for the entire cost of their health insurance premium (this includes both the district's contribution and the employee's standard portion). This full premium responsibility will remain in effect until the employee is able to officially return to work. The maximum duration of leave will be 180 calendar days.

Reasonable Accommodations

ADA requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified individual with a disability, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on business operations. An accommodation is considered an undue hardship if it is significantly difficult or expensive for the particular employer. Whether an accommodation for a person with a disability is reasonable or unreasonable will be determined on a case-by-case basis. A reasonable accommodation must be made when an employee with a disability is unable to perform the essential functions of his or her position.

The accommodation process must be an interactive, collaborative effort between the employee and the district. The employee's requests for an accommodation must be made to Human Resources, not the campus/department supervisor. Once an employee makes a request for a reasonable accommodation, the district and employee should engage in an informal process to clarify what the employee needs and to identify the appropriate accommodation. When possible, accommodations are identified, the district, not the employee, chooses the appropriate accommodation. All accommodations must be approved and authorized by Human Resources.

Service Animals/Pets

Animals present in the workplace by an employee is prohibited. If an employee is requesting to have his or her service animal or emotional support animal in the workplace, then this request is considered a request for a reasonable accommodation and will follow the ADA accommodation process. If the employee has a classroom pet or animal, then this request must be approved by the campus administrator. A classroom pet is considered an animal that is able to safely be left unattended overnight and has secured and appropriate accommodations.

Workers' Compensation Benefits

An employee absent from duty because of a job-related illness or injury may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits if the absence exceeds seven calendar days.

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use available, partial-day increments of sick leave or any other paid leave benefits to make up the difference between wage benefits and pre-injury or -illness wages. While an employee is receiving workers' compensation wage benefits, the district will charge available leave proportionately so that the employee receives an amount equal to the employee's regular salary.

Assault Leave

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to an employee who is injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An incident involving an assault is a work-related injury and should be immediately reported to the Workers' Comp Specialist in the HPISD Police Department at 214-780-3080.

An injury is treated as an assault if the person causing the injury could be prosecuted for assault or could not be prosecuted only because that person's age or mental capacity renders the person nonresponsible for purposes of criminal liability.

An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take all the leave time medically necessary (up to two years) to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. At the request of an employee, the district will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

Bereavement Leave

Accrued state leave and/or local sick leave may be used for a death in the immediate family, subject to the approval of the District. Highland Park ISD does not offer additional Bereavement Leave. See pages 40-41 for definition of immediate family.

Jury Duty

Policies DEC, DG

The district provides paid leave to employees who are summoned to jury duty including service on a grand jury. The district will not discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate, or coerce any regular employee because of juror or grand juror service or for the employee's attendance or scheduled attendance in connection with the service in any court in the United States. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides. An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and will be required to provide the district a copy of proof of attendance to document the need for leave.

An employee may be required to report back to work as soon as they are released from jury duty. The supervisor may consider the travel time required and the nature of the individual's position when determining the need to report to work. A copy of the release from jury duty or documentation of time spent at the court may be required.

Compliance with a Subpoena

Employees will be paid while on leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding and will not be required to use personal leave. Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

Other absences for court appearances related to an employee's personal business must be taken as personal leave or leave without pay if no personal leave is available. All subpoenas are required to be submitted to the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Truancy Court Appearances

An employee who is a parent, guardian of a child, or a court-appointed guardian ad litem of a child who is required to miss work to attend a truancy court hearing may use personal leave or

compensatory time for the absence. Employees who do not have paid leave available will be docked for any absence required because of the court appearance.

Religious Observance

The district will reasonably accommodate an employee's request for absence for a religious holiday or observance. Accommodations such as changes to work schedules or approving a day of absence will be made unless they pose an undue hardship to the district. The employee may use any accumulated personal leave for this purpose. Employees who have exhausted applicable paid leave may be granted an unpaid day of absence.

Employees are expected to notify their principal/supervisor as far in advance as possible, but no less than three days in advance of the holiday or day they wish to take off. Highland Park ISD schedules all national holidays on the day designated by common public school practice.

Military Leave

Paid Leave for Military Service. Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to 15 days of paid leave per fiscal year when engaged in authorized training or duty orders by proper authority. An additional seven days of leave per fiscal year are available if called to state active duty in response to a disaster. In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service.

Reemployment after Military Leave. Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. Employees returning to work following military leave should contact the Human Resource Office. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

Continuation of Health Insurance. Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24 months. Employees should contact the Benefits Office at 214-780-3010 for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers and Licensed Telecommunicators

A District peace officer who experiences a traumatic event in the scope of employment shall be granted a maximum of three days of mental health leave per traumatic event. Such leave shall be provided in accordance with administrative regulations and shall not be deducted from the employee's pay or leave balance.

The Superintendent shall develop regulations regarding mental health leave that address the following:

1. Circumstances or reasons under which a peace officer may use mental health leave;
2. Procedures for requesting mental health leave and maintaining the anonymity of the requester;
3. The administrator authorized to approve requests for mental health leave; and
4. Other procedures deemed necessary for administering this provision.

Quarantine Leave for Peace Officers

A District peace officer shall be granted quarantine leave when ordered by the local health authority or the peace officer's supervisor to quarantine or isolate due to possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while on duty. Such leave shall be provided in accordance with administrative regulations and shall not be deducted from the employee's pay or leave balance.

The Superintendent shall develop regulations regarding quarantine leave that address the following:

1. Continuation of all employment benefits and compensation for the duration of the leave;
2. Reimbursement for reasonable costs related to the quarantine; and
3. Other procedures deemed necessary for administering this provision.

Leave for Police Officers for Illness or Injury

A full-time district employed licensed police officer who regularly serves in a law enforcement capacity in a district police department is entitled to a paid leave of absence (LOA) for an illness or injury related to the person's line of duty. If necessary, the leave shall continue for at least one year.

If unable to return to work at the end of the paid leave and any extension, a police officer may use accumulated sick, vacation, and other accrued leave before being placed on unpaid temporary leave. At the end of temporary leave, the police officer will be reinstated at the same rank and with the same seniority the person had before going on temporary leave.

Payment for Accumulated Leave Upon Separation

The District does not pay for unused Local or State leave upon separation. Unused State days are transferrable to another Texas school district. Please see page 43 for details on Vacation pay for 12 month employees.

Employee Relations and Communications

Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the district. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the district newsletter, and through special events and activities. Recognition and appreciation activities also include the Employee Recognition and Retirement Banquet.

District Communications

Throughout the school year, the Communication Department publishes newsletters, graphics, calendars, news releases, and various other communication materials. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements. They include the following:

- Weekly district e-News
- Staff e-Newsletters
- Press releases
- District calendar
- District profile
- School closings
- Emergency communications
- District website
- Facebook
- Instagram
- X (formerly known as Twitter)
- YouTube

Complaints and Grievances

Policy DGBA

In an effort to hear and resolve employee concerns or complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted an orderly grievance process. Employees are encouraged to discuss their concerns or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time.

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees. For ease of reference, the district's policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints is reprinted as follows:

Complaints

In this policy, the terms "complaint" and "grievance" shall have the same meaning.

Other Complaint Processes

Employee complaints shall be filed in accordance with this policy, except as required by the policies listed below. Some of these policies require appeals to be submitted in accordance with DGBA after the relevant complaint process:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination, including violations of Title IX (gender), Title VII (sex, race, color, religion, national origin), ADEA (age), or Section 504 (disability), shall be submitted in accordance with the DIA series.
2. Complaints alleging certain forms of harassment, including harassment by a supervisor and violation of Title VII, shall be submitted in accordance with the DIA series.
3. Complaints concerning retaliation relating to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted in accordance with the DIA series.
4. Complaints concerning instructional resources shall be submitted in accordance with the EF series.

5. Complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the District shall be submitted in accordance with the CKE series.
6. Complaints concerning the proposed nonrenewal of a term contract issued under Chapter 21 of the Education Code shall be submitted in accordance with DFBB.
7. Complaints concerning the proposed termination or suspension without pay of an employee on a probationary, term, or continuing contract issued under Chapter 21 of the Education Code during the contract term shall be submitted in accordance with DFAA, DFBA, or DFCA.

Notice to Employees

The District shall inform employees of this policy through appropriate District publications.

Guiding Principles

Informal Process

The Board encourages employees to discuss their concerns with their supervisor, principal, or other appropriate administrator who has the authority to address the concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

Informal resolution shall be encouraged but shall not extend any deadlines in this policy, except by mutual written consent.

Direct Communication with Board Members

Employees shall not be prohibited from communicating with a member of the Board regarding District operations except when communication between an employee and a Board member would be inappropriate because of a pending hearing or appeal related to the employee.

Formal Process

An employee may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, employees are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. An employee whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or "mini-trial" at any level.

Freedom from Retaliation

Neither the Board nor any District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against an employee for bringing a concern or complaint.

Whistleblower Complaints

Whistleblower complaints shall be filed within the time specified by law and may be made to the Superintendent or designee beginning at Level Two. Timelines for the employee and the District set out in this policy may be shortened to allow the Board to make a final decision within 60 calendar days of the initiation of the complaint. [See DG]

Complaints Against Supervisors

Complaints alleging a violation of law by a supervisor may be made to the Superintendent or designee. Complaint forms alleging a violation of law by the Superintendent may be submitted directly to the Board or designee.

General Provisions

Filing

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication, including email and fax, or by U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall be timely

filed if they are received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the electronic communication. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.

Scheduling Conferences

The District shall make reasonable attempts to schedule conferences at a mutually agreeable time. If the employee fails to appear at a scheduled conference, the District may hold the conference and issue a decision in the employee's absence.

Response

At Levels One and Two, "response" shall mean a written communication to the employee from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered, sent by electronic communication to the employee's email address of record, or sent by U.S. Mail to the employee's mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.

Days

"Days" shall mean District business days, unless otherwise noted. In calculating timelines under this policy, the day a document is filed is "day zero." The following business day is "day one."

Representative

"Representative" shall mean any person who or an organization that does not claim the right to strike and is designated by the employee to represent him or her in the complaint process.

The employee may designate a representative through written notice to the District at any level of this process. The representative may participate in person or by telephone conference call. If the employee designates a

representative with fewer than three days' notice to the District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the District's counsel. The District may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

Consolidating Complaints

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. Employees shall not file separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

When two or more complaints are sufficiently similar in nature and remedy sought to permit their resolution through one proceeding, the District may consolidate the complaints.

Untimely Filings

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the employee, at any point during the complaint process. The employee may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

Costs Incurred

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

Complaint and Appeal Forms

Complaints and appeals under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the District.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the employee

does not have copies of these documents, they may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the employee unless the employee did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint or appeal form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be refiled with all the required information if the refiling is within the designated time for filing.

Audio Recording

As provided by law, an employee shall be permitted to make an audio recording of a conference or hearing under this policy at which the substance of the employee's complaint is discussed. The employee shall notify all attendees present that an audio recording is taking place.

Level One

Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within 15 days of the date the employee first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and
2. With the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

In most circumstances, employees on a school campus shall file Level One complaints with the campus principal; other District employees shall file Level One complaints with their immediate supervisor.

If the only administrator who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Superintendent or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator must note the date and time the complaint form was received and

immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator.

The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and schedule a conference with the employee within ten days after receipt of the written complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the administrator shall provide the employee a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any other relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

Level Two

If the employee did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the employee may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two administrator. The employee may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the employee at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.

4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision.

The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level One. At the conference, the employee may provide information concerning any documents or information relied upon by the administration for the Level One decision. The Superintendent or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the employee a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Superintendent or designee may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Superintendent or designee believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

Level Three

If the employee did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the employee may appeal the decision to the Board.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level Two response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level Two response deadline. The request shall include an outline of the problem and a statement that the employee has met with the Levels One and Level Two administrators.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform the employee of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board the record of the Level Two appeal. The employee may request a copy of the Level Two record.

The Level Two record shall include:

1. The Level One record.
2. The notice of appeal from Level One to Level Two.
3. The written response issued at Level Two and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the administration in reaching the Level Two decision.

The appeal shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level Two, except that if at the Level Three hearing the administration intends to rely on evidence not included in the Level Two record, the administration shall provide the employee notice of the nature of the evidence at least three days before the hearing.

The District shall determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. [See BE]

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, including an opportunity for the employee and administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Three presentation. The Level Three presentation, including the presentation by the employee or the employee's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the complaint. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to

and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If the Board does not make a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

HIGHLAND PARK ISD-DALLAS COUNTY
DGBA(LOCAL)-X
UPDATE 123
DATE ISSUED: 5/13/2024

Employee Conduct and Welfare

Employee Dress code

Policy DH

An employee's dress and grooming shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment, and in accordance with any additional standards established by his or her supervisor and approved by the Superintendent.

Standards of Conduct

Policy DH, DHA

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the district and to be courteous to students, one another, and the public. Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor in advance or as early as possible in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and failure to follow procedures for reporting an absence may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Know and comply with department and district policies and procedures.
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism through appropriate channels.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
- Use district time, funds, and property for authorized district business and activities only.

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a district investigation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal

record, must be reported to SBEC by the Superintendent. See *Reports to the Texas Education Agency*, page 73 for additional information.

The *Educators' Code of Ethics*, adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification, which all district employees must adhere to, is reprinted below:

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

Purpose and Scope

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification. (19 TAC 247.1(b))

Enforceable Standards

1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

Standard 1.1 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

Standard 1.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.3 The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

Standard 1.4 The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.5 The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 1.6 The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.7 The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.

Standard 1.8 The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

Standard 1.9 The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.

Standard 1.10 The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.

Standard 1.11 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.

Standard 1.12 The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse, or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.

Standard 1.13 The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

Standard 2.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 2.2 The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

Standard 2.3 The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

Standard 2.4 The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Standard 2.5 The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 2.6 The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

Standard 2.7 The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

Standard 2.8 The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

3. Ethical Conduct toward Students

Standard 3.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 3.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

Standard 3.3 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

Standard 3.4 The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 3.5 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

Standard 3.6 The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

Standard 3.7 The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

Standard 3.8 The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

Standard 3.9 The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

1. the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
2. the subject matter of the communication;
3. whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

4. whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
5. whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
6. whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

Cash Handling Guidelines

Policy CFD

Cash handling is an area that has a high risk for fraudulent activity. Therefore, adequate controls and procedures must be in place to protect all employees and parties involved in cash transactions.

Cash must be secured in a safe at all times. Campus personnel shall be made aware of cash handling procedures and informed of the requirement to store cash in a secure safe. Cash should never be taken home or stored unsecured in classrooms or desk drawers.

Cash collected by sponsors should be documented and receipts should be issued every time cash is transferred. Any time a staff member is taking cash from another individual, both parties should verify the amount delivered and a written receipt of the transfer should be provided. The potential for misappropriation is greatest when the person preparing the deposit has no documentation of the amount received and the person providing the cash has no proof of how much was transferred.

All cash collected shall be promptly deposited to PlainsCapital bank within 48 hours. A cash receipt form should be provided immediately to the Business Office with the bank deposit receipt to reconcile the deposit to the bank and properly code the deposit to the correct account in Skyward Finance.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Policies DH, DIA

Employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other employees, unpaid interns, student teachers, or students. While acting in the course of their employment, employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment of other persons including board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents. A substantiated charge of harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated or retaliated against or harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the campus principal, supervisor, or appropriate district official. If the campus principal, supervisor, or district official is the subject of a complaint,

the complaint should be made directly to the superintendent. A complaint against the superintendent may be made directly to the board.

Any district employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, or believes that another employee has experienced such prohibited conduct, should immediately report the alleged acts. The employee may report the alleged acts to his or her supervisor, the campus principal, the Title IX coordinator, or the superintendent. The district's Title IX coordinator's name and contact information is listed in the Equal Employment Opportunity section of this handbook.

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation can be found in DIA (Local)

Harassment of Students

Policies DF, DH, DHB, FFG, FFH, FFI

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited.

Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. Any district employee who suspects or receives direct or indirect notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, of a student shall immediately notify the district's Title IX coordinator, the ADA/Section 504 coordinator, or superintendent and take any other steps required by district policy.

All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect occurred child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*, page 71 and *Bullying*, page 94 for additional information.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Policies DG, FFG, GRA

All employees with reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §261.001, are required by state law to make a report to a law enforcement agency, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering the facility) within 24 hours after the employee first has reasonable cause to believe that the child has been abused or neglected. Law enforcement

agency includes the Texas Department of Public Safety, a municipal police department, a county sheriff's office, or a county constable's office and does not include the district police.

If the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect involves a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of a child (including a teacher), the report of alleged abuse or neglect must be made to DFPS even if a report is made to law enforcement.

Employees are also required to make a report if they have reasonable cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or person with a disability.

Reports to DFPS can be made using the Texas Abuse Hotline <https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx> or (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Under state law, a person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the district is prohibited from taking an adverse employment action against a certified or licensed professional who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

An employee's failure to make the required report may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agency.

Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer's request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children

Policy FFG

The district has established a plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed in the district Improvement Plan. As an employee, it is important

for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or maltreated. Abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined to include any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare, including conduct that constitutes the offense of continuous sexual abuse of a young child or disabled individual, indecency with a child, improper relationship between an educator and a student, sexual assault, or encouraging a child to engage in sexual conduct, as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Maltreatment is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

Reports to Texas Education Agency

Policies DF, DHB, DHC

The conduct of an employee must be reported to TEA **within 48 hours** if there is evidence that the employee was involved in any of the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor, or any other unlawful conduct with a student or a minor
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual contact or a romantic relationship with a student or minor
- Engaged in inappropriate communication with a student or minor
- Failed to maintain appropriate boundaries with a student or minor

For a certified employee, the conduct below must also be reported not later than the seventh business day after termination or resignation or notice from the principal:

- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of district or school property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit for the purpose of promotion or additional compensation
- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on district property or at a school-sponsored event.

The reporting requirements above are in addition to the superintendent's ongoing duty to notify TEA when a certified employee or an applicant for certification has a reported criminal history or engaged in conduct violating the assessment security procedures established under TEC §39.0301. "Reported criminal history" means any formal criminal justice system charges and dispositions including arrests, detentions, indictments, criminal information, convictions, deferred adjudications, and probations in any state or federal jurisdiction that is obtained by a means other than the Fingerprint-based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT).

Reporting Crime

Policy DG

The Texas Whistleblower Act protects district employees who make good faith reports of violations of law by the district to an appropriate law enforcement authority. The district is prohibited from suspending, terminating the employment of, or taking other adverse personnel action against, an employee who makes a report under the Act. State law also provides employees with the right to report a crime witnessed at the school to any peace officer with authority to investigate the crime.

Scope and Sequence

Policy DG

If a teacher determines that students need more or less time in a specific area to demonstrate proficiency in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for that subject and grade level, the district will not penalize the teacher for not following the district's scope and sequence.

The district may take appropriate action if a teacher does not follow the district's scope and sequence based on documented evidence of a deficiency in classroom instruction. This documentation can be obtained through observation or substantiated and documented third-party information.

Technology Resources

Policy CQ, CQD

The district's technology resources, including its networks, computer systems, email accounts, devices connected to its networks, and all district-owned devices used on or off school property, are primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use is permitted if the use:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the district.
- Does not unduly burden the district's technology resources.
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) should only be used as a support tool to improve student outcomes, not to replace the decisions made by teachers or students.

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the district's acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of

privileges and may lead to disciplinary and/or legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Technology Department.

Personal Use of Electronic Communications

Policy CQ, CY, DHA

Electronic communications include all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic communications also include all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

As role models for the district's students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as district employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic communications as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic communications interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic communications for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the district's computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, mealtimes, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct district business.
- The employee shall not use district and campus trademarks, including names, logos, mascots, and symbols or other copyrighted material on social media or in texts without express written consent.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on district business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
 - Confidentiality of student records. [See Policy FL]
 - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law. [See DHA(LEGAL)]
 - Confidentiality of district records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses. [See Policy GBA]
 - Copyright law [See Policy CY]
 - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system. [See DHA(LEGAL)]

See *Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents*, below, for regulations on employee communication with students through electronic media.

Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents

Policy DH

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may use electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in the district. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. Electronic communications between all other employees and students who are enrolled in the district are prohibited. Employees are not required to provide students with their personal phone number or email address.

An employee is not subject to the provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

- The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol;

- The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school;
- The parent understands that the employee's communications with the student are excepted from district regulation; and
- The parent is solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the employee and the student.

The following definitions apply for the use of electronic media with students:

- *Electronic communications* means any communication facilitated by the use of any electronic device, including a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. The term includes email, text messages, instant messages, and any communication made through an Internet website, including a social media website or a social networking website.
- *Communicate* means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee's personal social network page or a blog) is not a *communication*: however, the employee may be subject to district regulations on personal electronic communications. See *Personal Use of Electronic Media*, above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not a *communication*.
- *Certified or licensed employee* means a person employed in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, school psychologists, and athletic trainers.

An employee who communicates electronically with students shall observe the following:

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the district unless a specific exception is noted below.
- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:
 - The employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message;

- The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
- For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee's district email address.
- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics including:
 - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
 - Copyright law [Policy CY]
 - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DH]
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.

- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district's record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in an improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

Public Information on Private Devices

Policy DH, GB

Employees should not maintain district information on privately owned devices. Any district information must be forwarded or transferred to the district to be preserved. The district will take reasonable efforts to obtain public information in compliance with the Public Information Act. Reasonable efforts may include:

- Verbal or written directive
- Remote access to district-owned devices and services

Criminal History Background Checks

Policy DBAA

All employees are subject to a review of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted and entered into the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Clearinghouse. This database provides the district and SBEC with access to an employee's current national criminal history and updates to the employee's subsequent criminal history.

Employee Arrests and Convictions

Policy DH, DHB, DHC

An employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony, and any of the other offenses listed below:

- Crimes involving school property or funds
- Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator

- Crimes that occur wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity
- Crimes involving moral turpitude

Moral turpitude includes the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit
- Theft
- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor
- Crimes involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance
- Felonies involving driving while intoxicated (DWI)
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code.

If an employee is arrested or criminally charged, the superintendent is also required to report the educator's criminal history to the Division of Investigations at TEA.

The superintendent and directors are required to report the misconduct or criminal history of an employee to TEA. Information about misconduct or allegations of misconduct of an employee obtained by a means other than the criminal history clearinghouse will be reported to TEA. Refer to Policies DHB(OLEGAL) and DHC (LEGAL) for timelines and conduct that will result in reporting.

Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention

Policy DH

Highland Park ISD is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities on or off school property. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours

may be dismissed. The district's policy regarding employee drug use can be found in Policy DH (Local).

Tobacco and Nicotine Products and E-Cigarette Use

Policies DH, FNCD, GKA

State law prohibits smoking, using, or possessing e-cigarettes or tobacco products on all district-owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off school property. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of district-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes while inside the vehicle. Notices stating that smoking is prohibited by law and punishable by a fine are displayed in prominent places in all school buildings.

"E-cigarette" means an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device or a consumable liquid solution or other material aerosolized or vaporized during the use of an electronic cigarette or other device, regardless of whether the liquid solution or material contains nicotine. The term does not include a prescription medical device, prescription medication, or other prescribed substance unrelated to the cessation of smoking. The term "e-cigarette" includes:

1. A device regardless of whether it is manufactured, distributed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, or e-pipe or under another product name or description; and
2. A component, part, or accessory for the device, regardless of whether the component, part, or accessory is sold separately from the device.

Employees are prohibited from possessing or using any type of nicotine product, including nicotine pouches, regardless of whether the product contains tobacco, while on school property or while attending an off-campus school-related activity. Exceptions may be made for smoking cessation products with supervisor approval.

Fraud and Financial Impropriety

Policy CAA

All employees should act with integrity and diligence in duties involving the district's financial resources. The district prohibits fraud and financial impropriety, as defined below. Fraud and financial impropriety include the following:

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the district
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document

- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other district assets including employee time
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of district financial transactions
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of district information or activities
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the district
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the district, except as otherwise permitted by law or district policy
- Inappropriately destroying, removing, or using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state, or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or district policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the district
- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards

Conflict of Interest

Policy CB, DBD

Employees are required to disclose in writing to the district any situation that creates a potential conflict of interest with proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities or creates a potential conflict of interest with the best interests of the district. This includes the following:

- A personal financial interest
- A business interest
- Any other obligation or relationship
- Non-school employment

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information. Employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor the names of HPISD students of whom they are tutoring for pay.

Gifts and Favors

Policy DBD

Employees may not accept gifts or favors that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor, or service by an administrator or teacher that might reasonably tend to influence the selection of textbooks, electronic textbooks, instructional materials or technological equipment may result in prosecution of a Class B misdemeanor offense. This does not include staff development, teacher training, or instructional materials such as maps or worksheets that convey information to students or contribute to the learning process.

Copyrighted Materials

Policy CY

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law and policy relating to the use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Electronic media, including motion pictures and other audiovisual works, are to be used in the classroom for instructional purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Associations and Political Activities

Policy DGA

The district will not directly or indirectly discourage employees from participating in political affairs or require any employee to join any group, club, committee, organization, or association. Employees may join or refuse to join any professional association or organization.

An individual's employment will not be affected by membership or a decision not to be a member of any employee organization that exists for the purpose of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work. Use of district resources including work time for political activities is prohibited.

The district encourages personal participation in the political process, including voting. Employees who need to be absent from work to vote during the early voting period or on election day must communicate with their immediate supervisor prior to the absence.

Charitable Contributions

Policy DG

The Board or any employee may not directly or indirectly require or coerce an employee to make a contribution to a charitable organization or in response to a fundraiser. Employees cannot be

required to attend a meeting called for the purpose of soliciting charitable contributions. In addition, the Board or any employee may not directly or indirectly require or coerce an employee to refrain from making a contribution to a charitable organization or in response to a fundraiser or attending a meeting called for the purpose of soliciting charitable contributions.

Safety and Security

Policy CK series

The district has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety and security of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety and security program includes written guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. See Emergencies on page 86 for additional information.

Employees must follow established protocols and response to emergencies for each campus and department. Refer to written security procedures specific to your location and work area.

To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve district equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules.
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times.
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor.
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization.
- Refrain from propping open any exterior doors.

While driving on district business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on district business are prohibited from texting and using other electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgment on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact HPISD Police Department at 214-780-3080.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Policies DH, FNCG, GKA

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-

sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other district provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisor or call the HPISD Police Department at 214-780-3080 immediately.

Visitors in the Workplace

Policy GKC

All visitors are expected to enter any district facility through the main entrance and sign in or report to the building's main office. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the district premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge.

Asbestos Management Plan

Policy CSC

The district is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for each school. A copy of the district's management plan is kept in the Facility Services office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Pest Control Treatment

Policies CLB, DI

Employees are prohibited from applying any pesticide or herbicide without appropriate training and prior approval of the integrated pest management (IPM) coordinator. Any application of pesticide or herbicide must be done in a manner prescribed by law and the district's integrated pest management program.

Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a district building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located in the Facility Services Department. In addition, individual employees may request in writing to be notified of pesticide applications. An employee who requests individualized notice will be notified by telephone, written, or electric means. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

General Procedures

Emergency School Closing

Policy EB

The district may close schools because of severe weather, epidemics, or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the district's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post an announcement via:

- Text via School Messenger
- The District website at www.hpsd.org (there will be an announcement on the main page)
- District wide e-mail
- The main switchboard at (214) 780-3000
- Television and radio stations (It is their decision whether to air the information)

If classes are cancelled, makeup days are scheduled for March 13, 2026 and April 6, 2026.

Emergencies

Policies CKC, CKD

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to emergencies, including a medical emergency. Employees should locate evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas and be familiar with shelter in place, lockout, and lockdown procedures. Emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with safety and evacuation procedures. Each campus is equipped with an automatic external defibrillator. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all district buildings. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use. HPISD follows the Standard Response Protocol when responding to emergencies.

Purchasing Procedures

Policy CH

All requests for purchases must be submitted thru Skyward to your supervisor and to the Purchasing department on an official district purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the district can be made without a PO number. The district will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the district's business office. Contact

the Purchasing Coordinator at 214-780-3021 for additional information on purchasing procedures.

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Human Resources office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. The form to process a change in personal information can be obtained from the district website.

Personnel Records

Policy DBA, GBA

Most district records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. In most cases, an employee's personal email address is confidential and may not be released without the employee's permission.

Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

- Address
- Phone number, including personal cell phone number
- Emergency contact information
- Information that reveals whether they have family members

The choice to not allow public access to this information or change an existing choice may be made at any time by submitting a written request to Human Resources. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information may be released to the public until a request to withhold the information is submitted or another exception for release of information under law applies. An employee is responsible for notifying the district if he or she is subject to any exception for disclosure of personal or confidential information.

Facility Use

Policies DGA, GKD

Employees who wish to use district facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. Facility Services is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact the Facility Services office at 214-780-3051 to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

Termination of Employment

Resignations

Policy DFE, DHB

Contract Employees. Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received at least 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the superintendent or other persons designated by the board of trustees, which includes Human Resources. Supervisors who have not been designated by the board to accept resignations shall instruct the employee to submit the resignation to the superintendent or other person designated by board action.

Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the superintendent or the board of trustees. Resignation without consent may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of an educator's resignation within seven business days of the following:

- Certain misconduct, abuse, unlawful act
- Involvement or solicitation of a romantic relationship with a student or minor
- Solicitation or engaging in sexual conduct with a student or minor
- Inappropriate communications with a student or minor
- Failure to maintain appropriate boundaries with a student or minor
- Possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- Illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of district or school property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit for the purpose of promotion or additional compensation
- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on district property or at a school-sponsored event.

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to TEA.

Noncontract Employees. Noncontract employees may resign their position at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the Human Resources office at least two weeks prior to the effective date. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so.

The principal or director is required to notify the superintendent of a noncertified employee's resignation or termination within seven business days for any of the following:

- Alleged incident of misconduct of abuse or otherwise committed an unlawful act with a student or minor,
- Was involved in or solicited a romantic relationship with a student or minor
- Engaged in inappropriate communications with a student or minor
- Failed to maintain appropriate boundaries with a student or minor

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to TEA.

Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

Policies DF Series, DHB, DPA, DPB

Employees on probationary, term, and continuing contracts can be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Employees on probationary or term contracts can be nonrenewed at the end of the contract term. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay, or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The timelines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or nonrenewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to an employee.

The reporting requirements for termination of a contract employee are the same as those listed above in Resignations/Contract Employees.

Advance notification requirements do not apply when a contract employee is dismissed for failing to obtain or maintain appropriate certification or when the employee's certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the DF series policies that are provided to employees or are available Online.

Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

Policies DCD, DHC, DPA, DPB

Noncontract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Noncontract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (See *Complaints and Grievances*, page 56.)

The reporting requirement for termination of a noncertified employee are the same as those listed above in Resignations/noncontract Employees.

Job Abandonment

Policies DCD, DF, DFBB

An employee may be deemed to have voluntarily resigned from the District if the employee is:

- Absent for five consecutive days; and
- Not on an approved leave; or
- Unable to be reached via email, phone, or mail by the supervisor and/or Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO); or
- Refusing to report to work

Discharge of Convicted Employees

Policy DF

The district shall discharge any employee who has been convicted of a felony under Title 5 Penal Code or convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for the following:

- An offense requiring the registration as a sex offender
- Improper relationship between an educator and a student
- Sale, distribution, or display of harmful materials to a minor
- Public indecency
- A felony offense involving school property

If the Title 5, Penal Code offense is more than 30 years before the date the person's employment began or the person satisfied all terms of the court order entered on conviction the requirement to discharge does not apply.

Prohibition on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Policies DF, DH

Except as required by state or federal law, district employees are prohibited from engaging in diversity, equity, and inclusion activities, including assigning diversity, equity, and inclusion duties to any person. Any employee who intentionally or knowingly engages in or assigns diversity, equity, and inclusion duties to another person will be subject to appropriate discipline, including termination of employment.

Prohibited Classroom Instruction

Policies DF, DH

District employees are prohibited from engaging in an act prohibited by Education Code 28.0022 (Certain Instructional Requirements and Prohibitions). Any district employee intentionally or knowingly engaging in or assigning to another individual activities related to controversial topics described in Education Code 28.0022 is subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Exit Interviews and Procedures

Exit interviews will be scheduled for all employees leaving the district. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at this time. Separating employees are asked to provide the district with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the district with feedback on his or her employment experience. All district keys, books, property, including intellectual property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding

The district is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance. Notice of the following must be sent to the support recipient and the court or, in the case of child support, the Texas Attorney General Child Support Division:

- Termination of employment not later than the seventh day after the date of termination
- Employee's last known address
- Name and address of the employee's new employer, if known

Student Issues

Equal Educational Opportunities

Policies FB, FFH

In an effort to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Highland Park ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to Susan Bailey, Coordinator for Girls' Athletics, 6900 Douglas Ave, Dallas TX 75205, baileys@hpsid.org, 214-780-3041, the district Title IX coordinator for students. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Cynthia Marlow Gould, Director of Special Programs, 8385 Durham St, Dallas TX, 75225, marlowc@hpsid.org, 214-780-3092, the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator for students. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to the Superintendent.

Student Records

Policy FL

Student records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records. The following people are the only people who have general access to a student's records:

- Parents: Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights
- The student: The rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A district is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student's records before this time.
- School officials with legitimate educational interests

The student handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the campus principal for assistance.

Parent and Student Complaints

Policy FNG

In an effort to hear and resolve parent and student complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted orderly processes for handling complaints on different issues. Any campus office or the superintendent's office can provide parents and students with information on filing a complaint.

Parents are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with the teacher or the appropriate administrator at any time. Parents and students with complaints that cannot be resolved to their satisfaction should be directed to the campus principal. The formal complaint process provides parents and students with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with a principal's response.

Administering Medication to Students

Policy FFAC, FFAF

Only designated employees may administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. Exceptions apply to the administration of medication for respiratory distress, medication for anaphylaxis (e.g., EpiPen®), opioid antagonists, and medication for diabetes management, if the medication is administered in accordance with district policy and procedures. A student who must take any other medication during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine in its original, properly labeled container. Contact the principal or school nurse for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

Dietary Supplements

Policies DH, FFAC

District employees are prohibited by state law from knowingly selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to a student with whom the employee has contact as part of his or her school district duties. In addition, employees may not knowingly endorse or suggest the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

Psychotropic Drugs

Policy FFAC

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

District employees are prohibited by state law from doing the following:

- Recommending that a student use a psychotropic drug
- Suggesting a particular diagnosis
- Excluding from class or school-related activity a student whose parent refuses to consent to a psychiatric evaluation or to authorize the administration of a psychotropic drug to a student

Student Conduct and Discipline

Policies in the FN series and FO series

Students are expected to follow the classroom rules, campus rules, and rules listed in the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. Teachers and administrators are responsible for taking disciplinary action based on a range of discipline management strategies that have been adopted by the district. Other employees that have concerns about a particular student's conduct should contact the classroom teacher or campus principal.

Student Attendance

Policy FEB

Teachers and staff should be familiar with the district's policies and procedures for attendance accounting. These procedures require minor students to have parental consent before they are allowed to leave campus. When absent from school, the student upon returning to school, must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. These requirements are addressed in campus training and in the student handbook. Contact the campus principal for additional information.

Bullying

Policy FFI

Bullying is defined by §TEC 37.0832. All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying, including cyberbullying, to the campus principal. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and can be found in policy FFI (Local).

Hazing

Policy FNCC

Students must have prior approval from the principal or designee for any type of “initiation rites” of a school club or organization. While most initiation rites are permissible, engaging in or permitting “hazing” is a criminal offense. Any teacher, administrator, or employee who observes a student engaged in any form of hazing, who has reason to know or suspect that a student intends to engage in hazing or has engaged in hazing must report that fact or suspicion to the designated campus administrator.

Auxiliary

Cafeteria, Custodial, Maintenance, and Transportation

Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are maintained for each position in Auxiliary Services. When duties and responsibilities are changed, job descriptions will be updated.

Prior to being hired, each Auxiliary employee must successfully pass the pre-employment processes of background fingerprint check.

Wage and Salary Policies

Auxiliary Services employees are employed by Highland Park ISD and will be carried directly on the bi-weekly payroll.

The term “service” year for Custodial and Maintenance Services is defined as July 1st to June 30th of each year. The term “service” year for the Food Service and Transportation Department is defined as August 1st to July 31st of each year.

The Auxiliary Services workweek begins on Sunday at 12:01 a.m. and ends on Saturday at 12:00 Midnight.

Compensation/Pay

All employees will be paid at the hourly rate in which they were hired or at the hourly compensation rate as approved by the Board according to the Compensation Manual and are expected to work their assigned schedule. In circumstances that require an employee to work time beyond their weekly assigned schedule, prior supervisory/manager approval is required. In the event that weekly hours worked exceed 40 hours an employee will be compensated at an overtime rate of one and a half times their hourly rate.

All Auxiliary staff will receive annualized compensation.

Pay Cycle

Calendar Pay Period/Bi-Weekly: All Auxiliary staff will receive annualized compensation spanning 26 paychecks. If the regular payday falls on a holiday, employees will be paid on the workday immediately preceding the holiday. Payroll information is due to the Payroll Specialist each

Tuesday by noon the week prior to payday. A Payroll Calendar will be issued by July of each year including payroll dates for the following school year.

The schedule of bi-weekly pay dates for the 2026-2027 school year follows:

July 10, 2026	January 8, 2027
July 24, 2026	January 22, 2027
*August 7, 2026	February 5, 2027
August 21, 2026	February 19, 2027
**September 4, 2026	March 5, 2027
September 18, 2026	March 19, 2027
October 2, 2026	April 2, 2027
October 16, 2026	April 16, 2027
October 30, 2026	April 30, 2027
November 13, 2026	May 14, 2027
November 27, 2026	May 28, 2027
December 11, 2026	June 11, 2027
December 24, 2026	June 25, 2027

* First check for Cafeteria for 2026-2027 school year (last check 7/23/2027)

** First check for Transportation for 2026-2027 school year (last check 8/20/2027)

Paycheck Distribution

Paychecks are directly deposited to the checking or savings account designated by the employee, or are distributed by the supervisor/manager. Any changes to direct deposit information is due two weeks prior to payday.

Work Hours/Lunches/Breaks

Facility Services Operations - The regular operating hours for Maintenance Operations are 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. All employees are assigned to work a forty (40) hour workweek. Employees will receive a sixty (60) minute unpaid lunch break daily. Hourly Maintenance staff assigned at the Maintenance Building at the time of lunch shall punch in/out for lunch. Maintenance staff working at sites other than the Maintenance Building should clock out at that building for lunch.

A lunch break should be at least 20 minutes. Employees are not allowed to work through lunch in order to arrive late or to leave early or to work extra time, unless prior permission has been given by their immediate supervisor.

Fifteen (15) minute breaks are allowed, although not required, in the morning and afternoon depending on work assignment. It is not a requirement to punch in/out for breaks. Maintenance employees should take their breaks at job sites and not return to Maintenance Shop or any other location. Any deviation from this schedule must be cleared through the immediate supervisor.

During the summer months, the hours of all employees may be changed to accommodate the changes in work needs of the District and will be set by the Facility Services Manager.

Custodial Operations – The regular operating hours for Custodial Operations will be dependent on the campus and the job responsibility. All employees are assigned to work a forty (40) hour workweek. Employees will receive a 30 minute unpaid lunch break daily. Custodial staff are required to punch in/out for the lunch break. Employees are not allowed to work through lunch in order to arrive late or to leave early or to work extra time, unless prior permission has been given by their immediate supervisor.

Fifteen (15) minute breaks are allowed, although not required, in the morning and afternoon depending on work assignment. It is not a requirement to punch in/out for breaks.

During the summer months, the hours of all employees may be changed to accommodate the changes in work needs of the District.

Food Services Operations – The regular operating hours for each individual cafeteria will vary depending on the student enrollment and serving hours. Generally, the hours for elementary school cafeterias are 6:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and secondary cafeterias, 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Employees are assigned to work 40 hours each week.

At the secondary level, employees receive a thirty-(30) minute unpaid lunch break. The time will be dependent on the cafeteria and job responsibility. Secondary School Food Service employees are required to punch in/out for lunch. Employees are not allowed to work through lunch in order to arrive late or to leave early or to work extra time, unless prior permission has been given by their immediate manager.

Time Guidelines

Time clocks at each Cafeteria and Maintenance location are the official time keeping records for HPISD.

The time clock is the only way the Payroll Department knows how many hours an employee worked and how much to pay the employee. The time clock indicates an employee's arrival and departure times. In addition, the employee shall punch in/out, when applicable, for lunch, and whenever the employee may have a brief absence from work, (e.g.: a doctor's or dentist's appointment). All employees are required to receive prior approval for an unscheduled

departure and keep their manager/supervisor advised of approved departures from and returns to the premises during the workday.

The employee is responsible for his/her own time. If an employee forgets to punch in or makes an error on his time clock and are not able to correct it themselves, the employee should email their manager/supervisor with the dates/times that need to be adjusted. The manager/supervisor will make necessary changes to the employees time sheet based on the information in the email. Employees are not permitted to punch in more than seven (7) minutes before their scheduled starting time and no more than seven (7) minutes after their scheduled quitting time without the manager's/supervisor's approval.

Employees are responsible for their own timesheet submission. Employees must submit their timesheet no later than noon on Mondays following the previous workweek. It is ideal that employees review their timesheet at the end of each workweek as they are clocking out and submit.

No one may record hours worked for another employee. Tampering with a co-worker's time is cause for disciplinary action, including dismissal of both employees. Falsification of time records is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

A non-exempt employee shall be docked for hours missed when all available local days or state days have been exhausted.

Wage Garnishments

Whenever court-ordered deductions are to be withheld from the employee's paycheck, the employee will be notified.

Other Deductions/Direct Deposit

An employee may authorize Highland Park ISD to make additional deductions from his/her paycheck such as Credit Union payments, payroll savings plans, etc., or to deposit his/her paycheck directly into a savings or checking account at any financial institution that is equipped to handle ACH transfers. Contact the Payroll Office for details or go to the HPISD website under Staff and Current Employee Resources for additional guidance. ACH changes will need to complete an electronic form acquired from the Payroll Office.

Jury Duty

Auxiliary employees will follow the same jury duty guidelines as outlined on page 51.

Bereavement Leave

Auxiliary employees will follow the same bereavement guidelines as outlined on page 51.

Reporting Time Pay – Inclement Weather or Catastrophic Event

In the event a non-exempt employee reports to work without being notified in advance that HPISD is temporarily closed due to special circumstances, the employee will receive a minimum of two hours of straight time pay. Special circumstances include inclement weather, fire, flood or some other catastrophic event. The employee may be asked to perform available work for the two (2) hour period. It is at the manager's/supervisor's discretion to make final work assignments. Auxiliary employees are required to contact their manager/supervisor to confirm reporting time, which may be different than other HPISD reporting times.

Termination and Severance Pay

Auxiliary Services does not pay departing employees severance pay. When an employee leaves the employment of an Auxiliary position he/she will be paid for actual time worked, plus any unused vacation time (Facility Services only) earned as specified under "Vacation Leave" in the "Benefits" section of this handbook.

Vacation Leave (Facility Services only)

Full-time employees of Facility Services are eligible for yearly vacation leave. On each Facility Services employee's employment anniversary date after the first year of employment, the employee receives 80 hours of vacation time. Unused vacation time will be carried over. A new employee must be employed with HPISD for 12 months before he is eligible to receive vacation time.

Vacation Use Guidelines

Every effort will be made to grant the employee the requested vacation leave desired. However, vacations cannot interfere with the operations of Facility Services and therefore must be approved by the supervisor at least 2 weeks in advance. If any conflicts arise in requests for vacation time, preference will be given to the employee who requested leave first.

Vacation time may be taken in as little as one-hour increments and no more than 2 weeks per absence period. Specific dates of vacation must be established by prior arrangement with the supervisor. HPISD will attempt to grant each employee's request provided the staffing needs of the department can still be met.

Payment in Lieu of Vacation

The purpose of a vacation is to provide time to rest and relax; therefore, no additional wages or salary will be paid in lieu of vacation, except those days owed upon termination of employment.

Holidays

Recognized holidays will be scheduled and communicated through the annual Auxiliary Services Payroll Calendar, as posted in the Compensation Plan manual each year.

An employee who wishes to observe a religious holiday other than those scheduled by HPISD must make arrangements in advance to request to use a Personal day to obtain time off. Employees are expected to notify their supervisor as far in advance as possible, preferably at least two weeks prior, but no less than three days in advance of the holiday or day they wish to take off and be considered for approval.

Highland Park ISD schedules all national holidays on the day designated by common public school practice.

If a recognized holiday occurs during a Facility Services employee's scheduled vacation time, that holiday will not count against the accrued vacation time.

Accepting Employment or Self-Employment while on Leave of Absence due to FMLA or Worker's Compensation

If an employee accepts any employment or goes into business while on a leave of absence due to FMLA or Worker's Compensation from the Auxiliary Services, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned without notice from employment with HPISD as of the day on which they began their leave of absence.

Excessive Absences, Tardies, and LWOP

Auxiliary employees are considered tardy after 7 minutes of their assigned start time. Employees with 4 or more tardies are subject to disciplinary action. Auxiliary employees with 10 or more absences in a work year, not related to FMLA or Worker's Comp, could be considered excessive.

If an absence is taken after all paid leave has been exhausted, it will be Leave Without Pay (LWOP). LWOP days should be used sparingly and will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

To utilize LWOP, an employee must meet one of the following criteria:

- Require a standard 2-week prior approval from the supervisor, or
- Require a doctor's note confirming the illness to excuse the absence

Any employee who takes 3 LWOP days within a 6-month period will receive a write up.

Disciplinary action, up to and including termination may result.

Education/Training (Attending Seminars/Training Sessions)

From time-to-time, Auxiliary Services may arrange to have both formal and informal training and staff development programs to enable the employee to progress in their technical knowledge of the job. Several times a year, employees may be selected to attend vendor schools, workshops, or training programs that are offered off-District premises. Employees will be paid for the time at the programs and will be reimbursed for eligible expenses (registration, travel, etc.) depending on the nature of the course. Check with your supervisor for details.

If any employee becomes aware of a particular seminar that he believes is appropriate for enhancing his skills (and/or those of fellow employees), please bring it to the attention of the supervisor. Since these seminars are usually offered only at specified times in a geographical area, please be sure to notify the supervisor as far in advance as possible. This allows the supervisor to schedule the workload to accommodate the employee's desire to attend the seminar.

Discipline

The Discipline Policy applies to all HPISD employees. This policy pertains to matters of conduct as well as the employee's competence. However, an employee who does not display satisfactory performance and accomplishment on the job may be dismissed. It is the District's intention to take a constructive approach to disciplinary matters and performance problems. Where appropriate, HPISD will follow the progressive steps outlined below to correct any disciplinary or performance problems. However, in certain circumstances, it may be necessary to impose immediate disciplinary action, including termination of employment, without prior notice or counseling.

Step One: Verbal Reminder

The supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the problem, making sure that the employee understands the nature of the violation and expected correction. The supervisor will document the Verbal Reminder.

Step Two: Written Warning

When verbal reminders are insufficient to bring about improvement in an employee's conduct or performance, or the nature of the problem warrants more formal intervention, a written warning will be issued to the employee.

The supervisor will complete a Warning Notice Form to document the warning and will review it with the employee during the performance conference. A copy of the written warning must be sent to Human Resources within 5 business days.

Step Three: Paid or Unpaid Administrative Leave

If the above steps do not result in significant and lasting improvement in an employee's job performance and conduct, the employee may be placed on Paid or Unpaid Administrative Leave for a period determined by the Superintendent or designee. The purpose of Paid or Unpaid Administrative Leave is to give the employee the opportunity to consider his/her performance and conduct and decide whether he/she wishes to continue employment with HPISD under the conditions required for acceptable performance.

During the leave, the supervisor will communicate with Human Resources staff to evaluate the circumstances surrounding the administrative leave.

If the employee returns to work following the Administrative Leave, he/she will be placed on a 60-day probationary status. During the probationary period, any failure to follow work rules and directives will result in recommendation to Human Resources for immediate discharge.

Immediate Discharge

Obviously, some misconduct is so serious in nature as to warrant immediate termination of employment. Where appropriate, the District may place an employee on Administrative Leave with or without pay while an investigation of the matter is conducted by Human Resources Staff.

Unacceptable Activities

So that employees are aware of their responsibilities of HPISD and their fellow employees, the following list sets forth, by way of example and without limitation, conduct which may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of employment:

1. Willful violation of any District or department rule: any deliberate action that is extreme in nature and is obviously detrimental to the Auxiliary Services' efforts to achieve the District's mission.
2. Willful violation of security or safety rules or failure to observe safety rules or Auxiliary Services' safety practices; failure to wear required safety equipment; tampering with Department equipment or safety equipment.
3. Negligence or any careless action, which endangers the life or safety of another person.
4. Failure to follow the District's substance abuse policy or use of tobacco products on District premises or while performing services for HPISD.
5. Unauthorized possession of dangerous or illegal firearms, weapons, or explosives on District property.
6. Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by your supervisor pertaining to your work; refusal to help on a special assignment.
7. Threatening, intimidating or coercing fellow employees on or off the premises – at any time, for any purpose.

8. Engaging in an act of sabotage; willfully or with gross negligence causing the destruction or damage of District property, or the property of fellow employees, students, patrons, staff, suppliers, or visitors in any manner.
9. Theft of District property or the property of fellow employees; unauthorized possession or removal of any District property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission from management; unauthorized use of District equipment or property for personal reasons; using District equipment for profit.
10. Dishonesty; willful falsification or misrepresentation on your application for employment or other work records; lying about sick or personal leave; falsifying reasons for a leave of absence or other data requested by Auxiliary Services; alteration of District records or District documents.
11. Violating the nondisclosure agreement; giving confidential Auxiliary Services information to unauthorized employees; breach of confidentiality of personnel or student information.
12. Malicious gossip and/or spreading rumors; engaging in behavior designed to create discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another employee on the job; willfully restricting work output or encouraging others to do the same.
13. Immoral conduct or indecency including any form of harassment.
14. Conducting a lottery or gambling on District premises.
15. Any conduct contrary to HPISD's equal employment opportunity or sexual harassment policy, including verbal or physical conduct constituting sexual or other harassment.
16. Unsatisfactory or careless work; failure to meet production, safety/sanitation or quality standards as explained to you by your supervisor; mistakes due to carelessness or failure to get necessary instructions.
17. Leaving work before the end of a workday or not being ready to work at the start of a workday without approval of your supervisor; stopping work before time specified or leaving your work assignment during your work hours without the permission of your supervisor, except to use the restroom.
18. Sleeping on the job; loitering or loafing during working hours.
19. Excessive use of District or personal electronic communication devices for personal use.
20. Posting, removing or altering notices on any bulletin board on District property without permission of an administrator of Auxiliary Services.
21. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
22. Obscene or abusive language toward any supervisor, employee, student, patron or staff member; indifference or rudeness towards a student, patron, staff member or fellow employee; any disorderly/antagonistic conduct on district premises.
23. Speeding or careless driving of equipment or District vehicles.
24. Failure to immediately report damage to, or an accident involving District equipment.
25. Soliciting during working hours and/or in working areas; selling merchandise or collecting funds of any kind for charities or others during business hours without authorization, or at a time or place that interferes with the work of another employee on District premises.

26. Failure to maintain a neat and clean appearance in terms of the standards established by Auxiliary Services; any departure from defined modes of dress or personal grooming; wearing improper or unsafe clothing.
27. Failure to use your timecard; alteration of your own timecards or records or attendance documents; punching or altering another employee's timecard or records, or causing someone to alter your timecard or records. You may not authorize another individual to use your timecard to clock you in or out on the time clock.
28. Failure to adhere to the rules of operation and conduct established by HPISD, including but not limited to those policies and procedures set forth in their manual, the Board Policy manual, and any other written employment policies.
29. Any other practice, whether or not mentioned in this manual that may be inconsistent with the ordinary and reasonable rules of conduct necessary to the welfare of the District, its students, employees, and patrons.

OTHER POLICIES

Calling in Absent or Tardy

An employee who expects to be absent or tardy is required to notify the manager/supervisor at least 1 hour prior to the beginning of the scheduled workday. If the absence is due to an emergency situation and you are not able to contact your manager prior to your start time, you must contact your manager within 2 hours of your scheduled start time for the absence not to be considered a No Call/No Show. It is important that the employee personally contacts the supervisor and does not have another individual communicate for the employee. If the employee leaves a voicemail or text message, it is important to verify receipt of that notification. Personal communication with your manager/supervisor is required. Employees are expected to give the District as much notice as possible prior to the start of the workday so the position can be covered.

If the employee arrives and clocks in more than 7 minutes late he/she the employee may not extend their work day unless otherwise authorized by the Director of Food Service or Facilities Manager. Absence from work for three (3) consecutive days without notifying the supervisor will be considered abandonment of employment and processed as a voluntary resignation.

Absences of 5 consecutive days or longer due to illness require a doctor's note to return to work.

District and Department Meetings

From time to time throughout the year the district may schedule meetings and staff development sessions to communicate information that will assist employees in the safe and efficient performance of their job duties. These meetings will be scheduled during the working

day and employees are required to attend these meetings (mandatory), unless other arrangements have been made in advance.

Dress Code/Personal Appearance

Facility Services

The personal appearance of employees contributes significantly to the positive impression made to students, patrons, and staff. Employees are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to their position and type of work.

All Facility Services employees are issued uniform shirts. Facility Services' employees must wear these uniform shirts everyday while on duty. The employee is responsible for laundering and maintaining the garments in good repair. Replacement uniform garments are provided each year. Each supervisor has the responsibility to counsel his or her employees to ensure adherence to this policy. Employees who do not report to work wearing the proper uniform will be sent home to obtain the proper attire. The employee will not be paid for the time off the job for this purpose.

Facility Services employees may wear blue jeans, slacks, or a skirt with their shirt. These items must be clean, not torn. Legging pants for women are not allowed. The uniform shirt should be worn tucked in at all times.

Facility Services employees are to wear proper fitted, slip/resistant shoes with a closed toe and heel. Sandals and platform shoes may not be worn.

Failure to adhere to this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Food Services

The personal appearance of employees contributes significantly to the positive impression made to students, patrons, and staff. Employees are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to their position and type of work.

All Food Service employees are issued some uniform clothing courtesy of their respective campus Cafeteria PTA/PTO. Food Service employees must wear an approved uniform everyday while on duty (to include: name badge, department issued top/shirt, pants/slacks/skirt, slip resistant shoes, apron and appropriate hair restraint). The employee is responsible for laundering and maintaining the uniform garments in good repair and to report to work daily in a clean uniform. Replacement uniform garments are provided as approved by respective campus Cafeteria PTA/PTO. Each supervisor has the responsibility to counsel his or her employees to ensure adherence to this policy. Employees who do not report to work wearing the proper approved uniform will be sent home to obtain the proper attire. The employee will not be paid for the time off the job for this purpose.

If the courtesy uniform clothing does not include pants then employees may wear slacks, pants, or skirt with their shirt. Blue jeans may only be worn on approved days. These items must be clean, not torn. Leggings/jeggings for women are not allowed. The uniform shirt should be worn tucked in at all times.

Employees are to wear proper fitted; slip/resistant shoes with a closed toe and heel. Sandals and platform shoes may not be worn.

Food Service employees shall wear hair restraints such as hats, hair coverings or nets, beard restraints, and clothing that covers body hair (longer than ¼" in length), which are designed and worn to effectively keep their hair from contaminating exposed food.

No artificial fingernails or dangling jewelry is allowed. False eye lashes and facial piercings are not permitted.

Failure to adhere to this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Transportation

Highland Park ISD Transportation employees are public representatives of the district and are expected to present a professional image at all times. Employees shall maintain a neat, clean, and well-groomed appearance while on duty, attending District functions, or representing the Transportation Department. Employees are strongly encouraged to wear District-issued or District-branded apparel whenever possible. Transportation uniforms, spirit wear, or approved HPISD-branded shirts help promote a professional and unified appearance.

- Clothing shall be clean, neat, professional, and in good condition - free of rips and tears.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must cover at least three-quarters (3/4) of the thigh.
- Shirts must be appropriately fitted and may not completely cover shorts or skirts.
- Cut-off shorts are prohibited.
- Muscle shirts, tank tops, sleeveless shirts, and other revealing garments are prohibited. All shirts must have at least a cap sleeve.
- Appropriate undergarments shall be worn and shall not be visible.
- While performing duties as a School Bus Driver or Monitor, footwear must be **fully enclosed**, securely attached to the foot, and provide safe operation of the vehicle.
 - No sandals, flip-flops, slides, or backless shoes.
 - No CROCs or CROCs-style footwear.
 - No heels higher than one (1) inch, no footwear with only a strap across the heel.
 - No tights or leggings worn as outerwear.
- Employees shall maintain good personal hygiene and grooming standards. Hair must be clean, neat, and maintained in a professional manner. Extreme hairstyles or unnatural hair colors that may be distracting in a professional educational environment are not permitted.
- Facial hair must be neatly trimmed and well-maintained. Excessively overgrown or unkempt facial hair is not permitted.

- Clothing, jewelry, tattoos, or accessories displaying inappropriate language, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence, political messaging, or material inconsistent with the educational mission of the district are prohibited.

Field Trip Attire:

- Drivers assigned to field trips shall wear an approved HPISD Transportation shirt or other District-approved apparel.
- Employees should be mindful of the campus or organization they are representing and maintain a professional appearance throughout the trip.
- Athletic shorts are prohibited.

The Transportation Director or designee reserves the right to determine whether attire, grooming, or appearance is appropriate for the workplace and may require corrective action when standards are not met.

Employees who report to work in violation of the dress code may be required to change clothing, return home to correct the issue, or otherwise remedy the violation before beginning work.

Housekeeping

Each employee is expected to maintain his work area in a neat and orderly fashion at all times – it is a required safety precaution. Always be aware of good health and safety standards, including fire and loss prevention. Please report anything that needs repairing or replacing to your supervisor immediately.

Key Control

Employees who are given keys to Highland Park ISD cafeteria and campus spaces in conjunction with their job duties are expected to comply with the following:

- Employees should have access only to those keys necessary to perform their daily duties. If you have unnecessary keys in your possession, please return them to your manager.
- Do not leave keys unsecured.
- Keys may only be carried and used by the individual to whom they are issued, unless prior approval has been given by the appropriate manager.
- Do not utilize key chains (nor mark the key chain) that identify the building to which they provide access.
- Do not mark any keys with insignias or initials that describe what the key opens.
- Duplication of keys is forbidden.
- Loss of keys may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, or cost of replacement.
- Additional key control rules include: Keys must be returned to management during summer break, transfer, or separation.

Parking Lot

Parking is difficult in the District. Employees are expected to park in areas that are properly designated for employee parking. Remember to lock vehicles every day and park within the specified areas. Courtesy and common sense in parking will avoid accidents, personal injuries, and damage to personal and District vehicles and to the vehicles of other employees. If an employee should damage another car while parking or leaving, immediately report the incident, along with the license number of both vehicles and any other pertinent information you may have to your supervisor.

Personal Phone Calls and Mail

Personal phone calls must be kept to a minimum and they must not interfere with an employee's work. Employees are permitted to use personal cell phones for essential personal business during lunch or "break" periods only. Emergency calls regarding illness or injury to family members, changed family plans, or calls for similar reasons may be made at any time.

Use of cell phones in the kitchen, cashier station and serving line areas is strictly prohibited. Employees may be required to store their cell phones in designated areas to prevent sanitation/safety concerns.

The Auxiliary Services Department should not be listed as a personal mailing address or phone contact for any employee.

Personal Property

The Auxiliary Services Department cannot assume any responsibility for loss or damage to personal property of any employee.

Personal Use of District Property

Employees are not allowed to borrow District property for personal use without supervisor approval. Supervisor must document approval.

Purchase Order Guidelines

All purchases made in the name of the District require prior authorization through the issuance of an approved purchased order. Any purchases not made in accordance with the District purchasing policies and procedures could become the responsibility of the employee making such purchases. Reference District Policy CH(Local)

Property and Equipment Care

It is the employee's responsibility to understand how to use and care for the equipment needed to perform their duties. Good care of any equipment that is used during the course of employment, as well as the conservative use of supplies, will benefit the employee and the Department. If the employee finds that equipment is not working properly or in any way appears unsafe, the employee should notify the supervisor immediately so that repairs or adjustments may be made. Under no circumstances should an employee start to operate a machine they do not deem safe or understand how to properly operate, nor should the employee adjust or modify the safeguards provided.

Return of District or Cafeteria PTA/PTO Property

Any Auxiliary Services Department property issued to the employee, such as keys, tools, safety equipment, or uniforms must be returned to the Facility Services, Food Services or the Transportation Department at the time of dismissal or resignation, or whenever it is requested by the supervisor or a member of the administration. The employee is responsible for payment of any lost, unreturned, or damaged items upon resignation or termination. This includes, but is not limited to, items such as uniforms, keys, badges, and parking passes.

Security

Maintaining the security of Highland Park ISD buildings is every employee's responsibility. Develop habits that ensure security as a matter of course. For example:

- Know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers, and familiarize yourself with the proper procedure for using them, should the need arise.
- When leaving any HPISD building make sure that all entrances are properly locked and secured. Exterior doors are not allowed to be propped open and left unsecured at any time. Failure to comply with this standard safety protocol could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Solicitations and Distributions

Solicitation for any cause during working time and in working areas is not permitted. Employees are not permitted to distribute non-District literature in work areas at any time during working time. Work hours are defined as the time assigned for the performance of your job and does not apply to break periods and meal times. Working areas do not include the parking lot areas. Solicitation during authorized meal and break periods is permitted so long as it is not conducted in work areas and the solicitation materials are not against district policy. However, employees are not permitted to sell chances, merchandise or otherwise solicit money or contributions without prior administrative approval.

Persons not employed by Highland Park ISD are prohibited from soliciting or distributing literature on District property.

Driver's License & Driving Record

Employees whose work requires operation of a District-owned motor vehicle must present and maintain a valid driver's license and a driving record acceptable to the District's insurer. Any changes in an employee's driving record must be reported to the Human Resources Department immediately.

Traffic Violations

If an employee is authorized to operate a District vehicle in the course of his assigned work, the employee will be considered completely responsible for any fines or traffic violations incurred. All HPISD vehicles carry insurance as required by the state. Excessive traffic violations will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment.

Use of District Vehicles

Any employee authorized to use a Facility Services Department vehicle for District business must adhere to the following rules:

1. Must be a licensed driver.
2. Responsible for following all the manufacturers recommended maintenance schedules to maintain valid warranties, and for following the manufacturer's recommended oil change schedule.
3. Responsible for paying any moving violation tickets, along with parking violation tickets.
4. Must keep the vehicle clean at all times, washed and vacuumed as often as necessary.
5. Must not allow persons who are not authorized or employed by the District to operate or ride in a District vehicle.
6. Must not be under the influence while operating vehicle.
7. Must not use personal cell phone while operating vehicle.
8. Prior to operation of any District vehicle, the supervisor will train the employee on appropriate steps to take if the employee is involved in an accident – filling out the accident report, getting names of witnesses, etc.

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