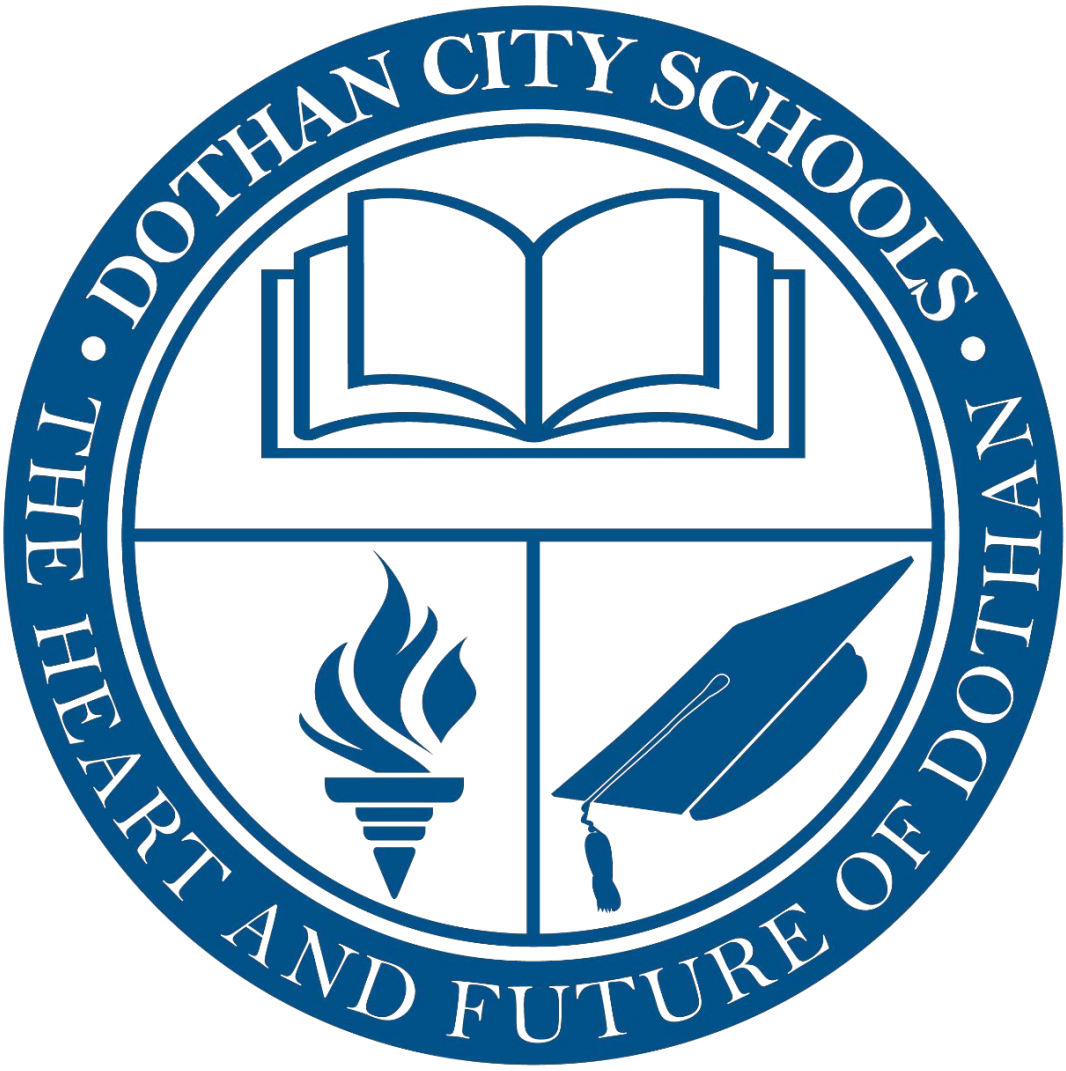


EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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Equal Employment Opportunity

The Dothan City Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or age in employment, programs, or other activities. Dothan City Schools participates in E-Verify to confirm the identity and employment eligibility of all persons hired to work in the United States. The district also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Unlawful Discrimination Prohibited

The Board is an equal opportunity employer. Personnel actions and decisions will be made without regard to factors or considerations prohibited by federal or state law (as such laws may from time to time be amended), including but not limited to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and genetics.

Implementing Regulations Authorized

The Superintendent is authorized and directed to implement such rules, regulations, procedures, and directives as necessary and appropriate to implement and enforce this policy and any law prohibiting discrimination in the workplace, including the designation of one or more complaint/grievance investigators, officials, or coordinators, the development of complaint or grievance procedures for responding to allegations of unlawful discrimination, the provision of training or dissemination of instructional materials and advisories to appropriate staff members, and the administration of corrective or remedial action in response to violations of the law and of this policy.

Equal Educational Opportunities

No student will be unlawfully excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the Board on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, disability, creed, national origin, sex, immigrant or migrant status, foster care, non-English speaking ability, or homeless status.

Title IX

Prohibition

In accordance with Title IX (20 U.S.C. §1681, *et seq.*), the Board strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex or gender in its programs or activities, including sexual harassment, as defined by law and Board policy. Sexual harassment complaints should be filed and reviewed under the Board's student sexual harassment policy. All other complaints under Title IX will be filed and reviewed according to the Board's general complaint and grievance procedures.

For questions regarding the implementation of Title IX or Equal Employment claims, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, Nicole Guilford at beguilford@dothan.k12.al.us

Personnel

General Requirements

Employees have a duty to perform their jobs responsibly and in a conscientious manner. In addition to any specific job requirements set forth in job descriptions or elsewhere, employees are expected to meet the following general performance and service standards:

a. Employees are required to be punctual and to attend work regularly.

b. Employees are required to perform the duties and responsibilities that are assigned to them by the Board, the Superintendent, or their supervisor(s). Such duties and assignments may extend beyond or outside the instructional day and may include off-campus functions, events, and activities.

c. Employees are expected to treat all students, co-employees, visitors, and guests of the Board with respect. Employees are expected to demonstrate moderation, restraint, and civility in their dealings with others and, in general, to serve as appropriate role models for students in their behavior and demeanor.

d. Employees are required to obey all laws, ordinances, Board policies, and supervisory directives, and are expected to follow the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics and other pertinent authority while carrying out duties for the Board.

e. Employees whose duties include the instruction or supervision of students must provide effective supervision, discipline, organization, and instruction of the students.

f. Employees shall not use a cell phone or other similar electronic communication device while driving a school system owned vehicle unless it is necessary due to an emergency situation.

g. Employees must complete and submit required reports accurately and in a timely fashion.

h. Employees must respect, protect, and exercise due care in the handling, use, and operation of Board property and equipment.

i. Employees shall at all times maintain appropriate, "professional" distance from students and shall not engage in conduct (including communication of any kind) that constitutes, solicits, or suggests sexual, romantic, or inappropriately familiar interaction with students.

j. Employees shall promptly disclose to the Board any fact that would disqualify them from employment or that limits their ability to perform their essential job functions. To permit an informed evaluation of the circumstances and in order to protect the school system and the students it serves, employees are required to report to the Superintendent, in writing, by telephone, or in person, within seventy-two (72) hours, any of the following:

1. A felony charge, indictment, complaint, conviction, or plea agreement; or

2. A misdemeanor charge, indictment, complaint, conviction, or plea agreement involving drugs or moral turpitude.

Special Requirements

a. Work Schedules (Certified)

1. Teachers – A specific work schedule for teachers will be set by the Superintendent or designee annually. Assignments and duties may extend beyond the instructional day and may include off-campus functions, events, and activities; conferences and meetings with parents; supervision of student arrival and departure; and preparation for the following instructional day. Teachers will be provided a minimum of thirty (30) minutes free of instructional and supervisory responsibilities each teaching day.

2. Principals – At a minimum, Principals and Assistant Principals shall be on duty thirty (30) minutes before students are scheduled to arrive on campus and are to remain on duty until 4 p.m. or until their supervisory duties are complete, whichever is later.

3. Central Office Personnel – The Superintendent is authorized to establish work schedules, including minimum work times, for central office personnel.

b. Work Schedules (Support Personnel) – The Superintendent is authorized to establish work schedules, including minimum work times, for support personnel.

c. Professional Certification – In addition to requirements established by the pertinent job description, professional employees must hold a degree from an accredited college or university and hold a current, valid, and properly endorsed Alabama Teacher's Certificate as may be required by law or regulation issued by the Alabama State Department of Education, which will be maintained in the Superintendent's office. A teacher who has completed the certification process but has not received the certificate may be employed on tentative or temporary compensation pending verification of certification from the State Department of Education. Upon receipt of such verification, appropriate adjustments will be made to the teacher's salary. If a teacher earns a higher certificate that merits increased compensation under the approved salary schedule, any salary increase will become effective upon Board approval following receipt of documentation of the new certification from the State Department of Education.

d. Teacher Assistants – Teacher assistants must, at a minimum, possess

1. a high school diploma or its equivalent;
2. a two-year diploma from a college or university (or the equivalent hours) or pass the Work Keys Assessment; and
3. a certificate from the State Department of Education verifying a "clear" status resulting from a background check.

e. Bus Drivers – In addition to the requirements established by the State Board of Education, a bus driver must:

1. hold a valid commercial driver's license,
2. complete a minimum of twelve (12) hours of approved instruction in school bus driving, and
3. satisfactorily complete a written examination driver's performance test approved or administered by the State Department of Education or State Superintendent. A bus driver must also meet any requirements of the entity providing the Board's automobile liability coverage.

Drug-Free Workplace

It is the policy of the Dothan City Board of Education that the use of alcohol and other drugs and the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illicit or illegal drugs is prohibited. Any employee violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment and referral to the appropriate authorities for prosecution. This policy has been adopted in accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. Nothing in this policy should be construed as precluding the Board from adopting additional or alternative programs, procedures, and penalties in order to achieve the goal of a drug- and alcohol-free public-school system.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1, 25-5-330 (1975)]

Illegal Drugs and Alcohol

The use, possession, distribution, and sale of alcohol and the illegal use, possession, distribution, and sale of drugs in a school building, on school grounds, on Board property, on school buses, or at school-sponsored functions is prohibited.

a. Penalties for Violations – In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for unauthorized possession of illegal drugs or alcohol:

1. Students – Students will be disciplined in accordance with the Board's Code of Student Conduct.

2. Employees – Employees will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.

3. Other Persons – Other persons may be denied re-entry to school property.

b. Notification of Law Enforcement – The appropriate law enforcement authority, which may include the city police, county sheriff, and the local district attorney, will be notified by the principal of violations of this policy.

Tobacco/Electronic Cigarettes

The use of tobacco products and the illegal possession, distribution, and sale of tobacco products on school property is prohibited. For the purpose of this policy, "tobacco product" is defined to include cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, vape pens, hookah pens, ehookahs, vape pipes and any similar type of device designed to deliver nicotine, flavor, and other chemicals via inhalation, cigars, blunts, bidis, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. "Tobacco use" includes smoking, vaping, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products.

a. Penalties for Violations

1. Students – Students who violate the tobacco prohibition will be disciplined in accordance with the Board's Code of Student Conduct.

2. Employees – Employees who violate the tobacco prohibition will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.

3. Other Persons – Other persons who violate the tobacco prohibition may be denied re-entry to school property.

b. Parental Notification – Parents and guardians may be notified of actual or suspected violations of the tobacco prohibition whether or not the student is charged with a violation of Board policy, which includes the Code of Student Conduct.

c. Additional Restrictions- In addition to the provisions above, students and employees are also subject to the Board's separate "Vape Awareness, Education, and Prevention" policy, which is required by state law, contains additional procedures, and also prohibits the use of tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, e-liquids, and alternative nicotine products by students and employees.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(1)(b)]

Drug and Alcohol Testing of Safety Sensitive Employees

The Board will conduct employee drug and alcohol testing for employees in safety sensitive positions as required by and in accordance with federal law. Testing will be required for all employees holding a commercial drivers' license (CDL) or who occupy a safety sensitive position as designated by the Board ("covered employees").

Prohibited Alcohol and Controlled Substance-Related Conduct

In addition to activities identified in other policies, rules, and procedures, Board employees are prohibited from the following:

a. Reporting for duty or remaining on duty to perform safety-sensitive functions while having an alcohol concentration in excess of the standard set by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA);
b. Being on duty or operating a vehicle while possessing alcohol

c. Consuming alcohol while performing safety-sensitive functions;
d. Consuming alcohol within eight hours following an accident for which a post-accident alcohol test is required, or prior to undergoing a post-accident alcohol test, whichever comes first;
e. Refusing to submit to an alcohol or controlled substance test required by post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, or follow-up testing requirements;
f. Consuming alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol within eight (8) hours of going on duty, operating, or having physical control of a vehicle;
g. Reporting for duty or remaining on duty when using any controlled substance, except when instructed by a physician who has advised the driver and the Board that the substance does not adversely impact the performance of any safety sensitive duty;
h. Reporting for duty, remaining on duty, or performing safety sensitive functions with controlled substances in the employee's system.

In the event of a violation of this policy, the employee shall be removed immediately from safety-sensitive duties and shall be subject to such further actions, including disciplinary action up to and including termination, as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent and the Board.

Testing Program Authorized

The Superintendent is directed to establish a testing program whereby all covered employees will be tested for the presence of alcohol and controlled substances. The following tests may be conducted:

a. Pre-employment Testing – Prior to the first time a covered employee performs a safety-sensitive function for the Board, the employee must undergo testing for alcohol and controlled substances.

b. Post-accident Testing – Each surviving driver who is involved in an accident involving a school bus shall submit to testing as soon as practicable following such accident if such driver:

(1) Was performing a safety-sensitive function with respect to such vehicle and the accident involved the loss of human life, or

(2) Such driver receives a citation within eight (8) hours of the occurrence under state or local law for a moving traffic violation arising from the accident and the accident involved either:

(i) Bodily injury to any person who, as a result of the injury, immediately receives medical treatment away from the scene of the accident, or

(ii) One or more motor vehicles incurs disabling damage requiring the motor vehicle to be transported away from the scene by a tow truck or other motor vehicle.

Each such driver shall remain readily available for such testing and if he does not remain so readily available, may be deemed to have refused to submit to testing. Transportation supervisors shall provide drivers with necessary post-accident information, procedures and instructions, prior to the driver operating the school bus, so that drivers will be able to comply with the requirements of this policy.

The tests required by this subsection shall be administered as soon as practicable following the accident. If the alcohol test is not administered within two hours following the accident, the supervisor will prepare and maintain a record stating the reasons. If the alcohol test is not administered within eight hours, and the controlled substances test within 32 hours, the same record shall be made and further efforts to administer such tests shall cease.

c. Random Testing – The Board will conduct unannounced random alcohol and controlled substance testing of its covered employees.

d. Reasonable Suspicion Testing – A covered employee must submit to alcohol or controlled substance testing whenever there is reasonable suspicion of alcohol misuse or the use of controlled substances based on specific, contemporaneous, and articulable observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech, or bodily odors of the employee.

e. Return-to-Duty Testing – A covered employee must submit to return-to work alcohol and/or controlled substance test before being permitted to return to work following a positive alcohol or controlled substance test or other violation of this policy or federal regulations.

f. Follow-up Testing – Any employee who continues performing safety sensitive functions for the Board, following a determination that the employee requires assistance in resolving problems associated with alcohol misuse or the use of controlled substances, shall be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol or controlled substance testing as directed by the Board's substance abuse professional (SAP).

g. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Reporting- FMCSA regulations require employers to notify drivers and diver-applicants that the following information will be reported to the Clearinghouse:

(1) A verified positive, adulterated, or substituted drug test result;
(2) An alcohol confirmation test with concentration of 0.04 or higher;
(3) A refusal to submit to a drug or alcohol test;
(4) An employer's report of actual knowledge, as defined at 49 CFR § 382.107;
(5) On duty alcohol use pursuant to 49 CFR § 382.205;
(6) Pre-duty alcohol use pursuant to 49 CFR § 382.207;
(7) Alcohol use following an accident pursuant to 49 CFR § 382.209;

(8) Drug use pursuant to 49 CFR § 382.213;
(9) A SAP's report of the successful completion of the return-to-duty process;
(10) A negative return-to-duty test; and
(11) An employer's report of completion of the follow-up test.
[Reference: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)]

Administration of Program

The Superintendent is authorized to oversee the Board's testing program, to contract with appropriate providers to implement the program, to develop guidelines, rules and regulations, to implement training programs, to develop and distribute educational materials and appropriate notices to covered employees, and to take such further action as may be required by federal law.

[Reference: Omnibus Transportation and Employment Act of 1991]

Board Employees and Weapons

Prohibition on the Possession of Firearms

The possession of a firearm in a school building, on school grounds, on Board property, on school buses, or at school sponsored functions is prohibited except for authorized law enforcement personnel and as provided by law. For purposes of this policy, the term "firearm" has the same definition as is found in 18 U.S.C §921.
a. Penalties for violations – In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for unauthorized possession of firearms:

1. Students – Students will be expelled for a period of one year. The expulsion requirement may be modified in writing by the Board upon recommendation of the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis. Students who are expelled for firearm possession may not attend regular school classes, but may be permitted to attend alternative schools or education programs established by the Board. Discipline of students with disabilities who violate the firearm possession policy will be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with federal and state law. Parents of students who violate this policy will also be notified by the principal of violations.

2. Employees – Employees will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.

3. Other Persons – Other persons may be denied re-entry to school property.

b. Notification of Law Enforcement – The appropriate law enforcement authority, which may include the city police, county sheriff, and the local district attorney, will be notified by the principal of violations of this policy.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1, 24.3 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02; Federal Gun Free Schools Act, 20 U.S.C. 7151; Federal Gun Free School Zone Act of 1995 (18 U.S.C. §922(q)]

Prohibition on the Possession of Weapons

The possession of a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument in a school building, on school grounds, on school property, on school buses, or at school-sponsored functions is prohibited except for authorized law enforcement personnel. For purposes of this policy, the terms "deadly weapon" and "dangerous instruments" include but are not limited to explosives, incendiary devices, projectiles, knives with a blade length of more than two (2) inches, archery equipment, devices designed to expel projectiles at a high rate of speed, any device so classified under state or federal law, and any device either used or intended to be used in such manner as to inflict bodily harm, provided that the terms "deadly weapon" and "dangerous instruments" will exclude, to the extent permitted by law, devices and equipment that are used for the purpose of and in connection with school or Board sanctioned educational, team, or competitive activities.

a. Penalties for Violations – In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for unauthorized possession of deadly weapons or dangerous instruments:

1. Students – Students will be disciplined in accordance with the Board's Code of Student Conduct.

2. Employees – Employees will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.

3. Other Persons – Other persons may be denied re-entry to school property.

b. Notification of Law Enforcement – The appropriate law enforcement authority, which may include the city police, county sheriff, and the local district attorney, will be notified by the principal of violations of this policy.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(1)(b)]

Searches

Searches (Personnel)

Board Property – All school system property, facilities, and grounds may be entered, inspected, and searched for any lawful purpose by Board officials or their designees at any time, without prior notice and to the fullest extent permitted by law. The right to enter, inspect, and search includes and extends to (but is not limited to) Board owned or controlled offices, desks, file cabinets, lockers, storage areas, computers, files, documents, data, and devices however and wherever kept, stored, or maintained.

Employee Property – The Board reserves the right to inspect employees' vehicles, purses, files, and other personal property if a supervisor forms a reasonable individualized suspicion that the property contains evidence of a violation of Board policy or contains any material, object, or substance that otherwise creates or presents a risk of harm or injury to the school, the workplace, or persons therein.

Use of Recovered Items – Property, material, substances, information, or records that are obtained, discovered, or recovered as a result of a search may be retained and used for any lawful purpose.

Complaints and Grievances

General Complaints (Grievances)

Subject to the limitations set forth below and elsewhere in this policy manual, any employee or member of the public may present to the school system a concern, complaint, grievance, or request for corrective action regarding any aspect of school system operations. Before requesting corrective action or relief from the Superintendent, persons with such complaints, grievances, or requests should present them for resolution to the employee, supervisor, or administrator at the lowest administrative level who has the authority and ability to address the problem or to implement the requested action. The Superintendent is authorized to develop specific procedures that will provide for fair consideration and orderly review of complaints and grievances. Such procedures may not unreasonably burden or delay the presentation or processing of such matters, and will be subject to Board review, modification, and approval.

Limitations Regarding Availability and Application of General Complaint/ Grievance Policy

The general complaint/grievance policy and any procedures adopted thereunder do not apply to specific complaint or grievance policies and procedures that are established by Board policy or law for application to special factual or legal circumstances (e.g., sexual harassment grievance procedures; review of personnel matters under state law; "due process" hearings provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). In such instances, the specific statutory, regulatory, or policy-based process is the applicable procedure. The general complaint/grievance procedures that are authorized under the terms of this policy may not be invoked for the purpose of challenging or seeking review or reconsideration of adverse personnel decisions that have received final Board approval. A grievance may be based on an alleged misapplication of Board policies, regulations, or procedures, but may not be used to challenge the Board's exercise of its discretion to adopt, approve, modify, or repeal a policy, regulation, or procedure or on its failure to exercise such discretion (e.g., adoption of a school calendar, compensation policies, etc.).

Student Complaints and Grievances

Complaints, grievances, and requests for corrective action may be brought to the attention of the Board by or on behalf of students with respect to academic, athletic, extracurricular, or other non-disciplinary matters, issues, and concerns only after reasonable efforts to resolve the matter at the school and administrative levels have been exhausted. Administrative judgments concerning academic or curricular matters or participation in extracurricular activities may be set aside by the Board only upon a showing that the action or decision in question is arbitrary and capricious, fundamentally unfair, or that it violates Board policy or the student's legal rights. The Superintendent is authorized to develop specific procedures that will provide for fair consideration and orderly review of such complaints and grievances. Such procedures will not unreasonably burden or delay the presentation or processing of the complaint or grievance and will be subject to review and approval by the Board.

Student Disciplinary Matters

The Board may consider appeals of student disciplinary decisions or actions in accordance with standards and procedures specified in the Code of Student Conduct.

Americans with Disabilities Act Complaint Procedure

a. Complaint Criteria – Persons who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits covered by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act may file a written complaint with the ADA Coordinator.

b. Complaint Form – The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination including the name, address, phone number of complaining party and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

c. Complaint Process – The complaint should be submitted to the ADA Coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than thirty (30) days after the alleged violation. The ADA Coordinator will meet with the complaining party to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within fifteen (15) calendar days of the meeting, the ADA Coordinator will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complaining party, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of the Board and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

d. Appeal Procedure – If the response by the ADA Coordinator does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complaining party may appeal the decision within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the response to the Superintendent. Within fifteen (15) calendar days, the Superintendent will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.

e. Records Retention – All written complaints received by the ADA Coordinator, appeals to the Superintendent, and records relating thereto will be retained by the Board for at least three (3) years.

f. Additional Procedures Authorized – The Superintendent is authorized to develop such procedures as are necessary to implement this policy.

[Reference: 42 U.S.C.A. §12131, et seq.]

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment

The Board strictly prohibits unlawful discrimination in all of its programs, offices, departments and facilities. Sexual harassment, as defined by law, is a form of unlawful discrimination and will not be tolerated from employees or other persons associated with the Board.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

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

a. Submission to such conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of employment or other employment benefits provided by the Board;

b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting the individual's employment, or other benefits provided by the Board; or

c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Examples of Prohibited Conduct

The following are examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment, depending on individual circumstances:

a. Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature, including graphic or derogatory comments, the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, and sexual propositions;

b. Repeated unwelcome solicitation of sexual activity or sexual contact;

c. Unwelcome, inappropriate sexual touching;

d. Demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats with regard to an individual's employment status.

Employee Complaint Resolution Procedure

a. Reporting – Any employee with reason to believe that he or she has been or is being subjected to any form of sexual harassment should report the matter immediately. Under no circumstances will an employee be required to present the complaint to the person who is the subject of the complaint.

b. Informal Complaint – An employee may choose to submit a sexual harassment complaint to a supervisor for investigation and resolution at the departmental or local level without resorting to formal complaint procedures. If the supervisor is the subject of the complaint, the complaint may be submitted to the Superintendent for resolution. If the complaint is not resolved informally to the satisfaction of the complaining employee, the employee must contact the Superintendent to initiate formal complaint procedures.

Formal Complaint Procedure

a. Persons Responsible for Receiving and Investigating Formal Complaints – The Superintendent is responsible for receiving and investigating formal complaints regarding sexual harassment. The Director of Personnel is an additional official to which formal complaints can be reported. If the Superintendent is unavailable or is the subject of the complaint, the alternate should be contacted regarding the formal complaint.

b. Complaint form, contents – Formal complaints should be made in writing, signed by the complainant, and fully describe the circumstances surrounding the alleged harassment. Harassment complaints that cannot be made in writing should be memorialized by the Superintendent or designated alternate official.

c. Investigation – The Superintendent will promptly investigate the complaint, review the results of any investigation with legal counsel or other appropriate officials, make any findings that are supported by the investigation, and recommend appropriate action based on these findings. The complainant will be informed of any action that is taken as a result of the investigation.

d. Review by the Superintendent and the Board – A complaining party who is not satisfied with the investigation or resolution of the complaint may request that the Superintendent take additional or different action or present the complaint to the Board for its review and action. In such case, the Board will render a final decision as soon as practicable.

Confidentiality

To the extent possible, reports of sexual harassment will be kept confidential; however, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Retaliation Prohibited

No retaliation or adverse action may be imposed as a result of a good faith complaint or report of sexual harassment. False accusations that are made in bad faith or for improper reasons may result in disciplinary action.

Penalties for Violation

Any employee who violates the terms of this policy or who impedes or unreasonably refuses to cooperate with a Board investigation regarding allegations of sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employee Dress

Employee Dress Code

a. Purpose – The professional status of staff members is reinforced by appropriate dress and appearance. Since students learn by example, it is important that employees serve as role models for students. Moreover, the community's attitude toward the school system and the education profession is related to the manner in which employees present themselves. Research has proven that there is a direct correlation between appropriate dress and how others perceive the individual as well as the organization. In addition, professional attire can be a useful tool in classroom management in that it can project an image of respect and authority and can help to establish a sense of formality.

b. General Requirement – The Dothan City Board of Education recognizes that professional attire helps set the tone of an educational system. All employees shall exercise good judgment in their choice of appearance at work by dressing in a way that is appropriate to the situation and in a manner that will invoke a positive impression with students and the community. Such professional dress should promote a working and learning environment that is conducive to high student and staff performance. Inappropriate clothing, paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, accessories, or body adornments that are in

any way disruptive or potentially disruptive to the learning environment are prohibited. Employees should at all times be distinguishable from students in their attire.

c. Enforcement – Principals and other administrative supervisors are delegated the authority and bear the responsibility for ensuring compliance with this mandatory policy and are expected to counsel and/or discipline employees they supervise on professional appearance in conformance with this mandatory policy. Any employee whose attire or dress is not professional in the opinion of the principal/supervisor shall be directed to conform to this policy. An employee, who is inappropriately dressed, in the opinion of the principal/supervisor, may be sent home and required to return to work in acceptable attire. The employee will not be paid for time away from work. Repeat offenses may receive written notification of their violations to be placed in their personnel file.

d. Procedures Authorized – The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for implementation of this policy. All administrators, teachers, clerical staff, members of the instructional staff (including paraprofessionals assigned to the classroom), and support staff shall dress in a manner and style in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures set forth by the Superintendent.

e. Authorized Exemptions – In enacting dress code policy, the Dothan City Schools recognizes that there are occasions when individuals may need to wear specific clothing due to medical reasons or as a part of a bona fide personal religious practice. When such is the case, the employee shall provide documentation to his or her supervisor of the medical necessity or the bona fide personal religious practice that gives rise to the need for deviation from this dress code policy.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-27-4 (1975)]

Employee Conflicts of Interest

Employees may not use their offices or positions for personal gain and must adhere to applicable provisions of the Alabama Ethics Law. Employees may only engage in outside employment under the following terms and conditions:

a. Employees will not engage in outside business activities, operate a personal business, or render any service for another employer during such time as duties and responsibilities have been assigned by the Board. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, utilizing a cell phone, computer, or other electronic device to engage in such activities.
b. Employees will not accept outside employment that would interfere with or impair the ability of the employee to perform duties as a Board employee effectively;
c. Employees engaging in outside employment, subject to the above provisions, may not provide services to the Board or any of its schools;
d. Employees may not accept work that could compromise the employee's independent judgment in the exercise of duties for the Board;
e. Employees may not use or disclose confidential information acquired through Board employment for their personal gain or for the benefit of a third party.

Employee Gifts

Employees may accept gifts from students or other members of the public if the gifts are in accordance with the Alabama Ethics law and any other applicable law. The Board allows employees to accept gifts or gift cards purchased from pooled donations within a class, team, or other school group or organization for the employee's personal use provided that each individual gift complies with the Ethics law. Nothing in this policy should be construed to create restrictions on gifts beyond those that are specifically provided for by law or to allow conduct specifically prohibited by law. Any person with a question about the application of the Ethics law to a particular gift should contact the Ethics Commission for clarification.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §36-25-1, et seq.; Alabama Ethics Opinion 2011-12 & 2016-34]

Employee Evaluations

Certified Personnel

Certified employees (other than contract principals) will be evaluated in accordance with an evaluation program approved for use by the Alabama State Board of Education. Contract principals will be evaluated in accordance with rules, regulations, and requirements promulgated by the State Department of Education or as may otherwise be permitted by law.

Non-Certified Personnel

Non-certified personnel will be evaluated in accordance with criteria and procedures to be developed by the Superintendent and approved by the Board. The evaluation criteria and procedures will, at a minimum, include the following:

a. A structured evaluation cycle or schedule that may include unannounced observations or assessments during the course of the evaluation period;
b. A written evaluation form that specifies job-related evaluation criteria;
c. Group or individual employee orientation regarding the evaluation process;
d. An opportunity for the employee to confer with the evaluator following the evaluation; and
e. An opportunity for the employee to disagree (in writing) with the evaluation and to have the disagreement maintained with the evaluations.

Use of Evaluations in Connection with Employment Decisions

Unless prohibited by law (including applicable regulations) or the terms of the evaluation instrument, employment evaluations may be considered in making employment decisions, together with such other information and considerations as may reasonably bear upon the wisdom, necessity, or advisability of the employment decision. However, employment evaluations are intended to enhance the overall quality of the school system's instructional program and are not intended to confer, constitute, or give rise to any individual right, entitlement, or enforceable expectation of continued employment or advancement. Accordingly, except as may be specifically provided otherwise in state law applicable to "contract principals," employees do not acquire any employment right or right of legal action based on any actual or alleged failure on the part of the Board or the evaluator to follow specific evaluation policies, regulations, or procedures.

Special Evaluation Situations

The Superintendent, the Chief School Financial Officer, and other employees who serve in positions of special trust or sensitivity may be evaluated by such means as may be permitted by law or applicable regulation or as agreed to in an

employment contract.

Exempt Personnel
Except when required by law or contract, temporary, substitute, and occasional employees, or employees appointed to supplemental positions (e.g., coaches, extracurricular activity sponsors) will not be formally evaluated in those roles.

Personnel Records

Content of Personnel Files
A central personnel file will be maintained for all regular employees. The personnel file may contain information regarding the employee's current assignment, payroll status, and work history, including but not limited to job qualifications, certification, licenses, employment contract(s), evaluation data, disciplinary information, and such other documents, written materials, and data as may be reasonably deemed necessary and appropriate by the Board for sound and efficient personnel administration. Anonymous material and other matters that are prohibited by law, regulation, or Board policy from being maintained in personnel files may not be included therein. Employees may reasonably supplement or respond in writing to any material contained in the personnel file with which they disagree and such responses will also be included in the personnel file.

Alternate Data Storage
Personnel file data may be stored or maintained electronically or digitally.

Confidentiality
In general, the contents of an employee's personnel file will be deemed confidential except for documents, information, and materials that are matters of public information or public record under applicable state or federal law.

Access to Personnel Files
The Superintendent, Board administrators (including principals), employees of the Human Resources Department, and other persons whose duties reasonably require access to personnel files are authorized to view, copy, and use the contents of personnel files for purposes that are required by or in keeping with their official duties on behalf of the Board.
[REFERENCE: ALA. CODE §16-22-14]

Aiding and Abetting Sexual Abuse 20 U.S.C.§ 7926

In accordance with the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) "Prohibition on aiding and abetting sexual abuse" of minors or students codified at 20 U.S.C.§ 7926, the Board is authorized and directed to establish, implement and revise more detailed regulations and guidelines for the purpose of meeting the standards for adherence with the regulations.

Guidelines
Dothan City schools, in accordance with the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) "prohibition on aiding and abetting sexual abuse" of minors or students hereby implement the following notice to all school employees, contractors, or agents of the guidelines listed below:

a. DCS prohibits any individual serving as a school employee, contractor, or agent "…from assisting a school employee, contractor, or agent in obtaining a new job, apart from the routine transmission of administrative and personnel files, if the individual or agency knows, or has probable cause to believe, that such school employee, contractor, or agent engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of the law." 20U.S.C.§ 7926

b. DCS employees with specific duties in transmission of administrative and personnel files upon request of an outside agency for records will submit information pertaining to the individual for whom the request is made.
c. DCS employees are bound by this law to submit to requesting outside agencies any information with regard to an individuals' "… sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of the law" to include any records, knowledge of, or information regarding administrative and personnel records.
d. Exceptions noted in the regulations are as follows and reflects the areas where the law does not apply:

1. "The matter has been reported to law enforcement with jurisdiction over
2. alleged sexual misconduct and properly reported to any other authorities as
3. specified by law or regulation and
4. has been officially closed with notification (to DCS) of insufficient information to
5. establish probable cause that there was sexual misconduct regarding a minor or a
6. student in violation of the law
7. individual has been charged by law enforcement with, and acquitted or otherwise
8. exonerated of alleged misconduct or
9. the investigation remains open and there have been no charges filed against or
10. indictment of the individual within 4 years of the date on which the information was
11. reported to law enforcement".

Penalties for violation

In addition to criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for violation of this policy.

a. Immediate investigation to the alleged act of "aiding and abetting sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of the law"
b. Pending the results of the investigation, employees who violate this policy and law will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include but are not limited to suspension, termination, and notification to appropriate law enforcement authority with jurisdiction.

Reduction-In-Force

This policy applies to reductions-in-force (layoffs) within the meaning of ALA.CODE §16-1-33 (1975). As used herein, the term "layoff" means an unavoidable reduction in the work force beyond normal attrition due to decreased enrollment or shortage of revenues. The term "layoff" does not include, and the provisions of this policy do not apply to, decisions to terminate or not to extend the appointment of occasional, temporary, or "at-will" employees, or to decisions not to extend or renew the employment of employees following the expiration of annual or other specified terms of appointment. The Board may declare a reduction-in-force as to the system as a whole or as to any component parts of the system (for example, one or more particular schools, departments, areas, groupings, or classifications of employees), as is called for by the facts and circumstances at the time. Any reduction-in-force declared and implemented by the Board is not subject to challenge or review under the Students First Act.

Criteria for Determining if a RIF is Necessary

The Board may declare a RIF and implement such if it determines that financial circumstances or enrollment data require such action in order to maintain effective provision of educational services. The Board may consider the following criteria, as applicable to the circumstances:

a. The Board's determination of its educational needs, requirements, and priorities;
b. Current data and projected trends in revenue collection, anticipated expenditures, and/or enrollment;
c. The extent to which cost savings or other appropriate administrative objectives can be realized by taking into consideration voluntary retirements, resignations, transfers, and other normal attrition in the workforce;
d. Such other facts, circumstances or criteria that the Board deems reasonable given the circumstances.

Implementing Layoffs

Once the Board determines that the financial circumstances and/or enrollment data and/or projections require a RIF, the Board may implement elimination of positions and layoff of employees based upon consideration of the following criteria, as applicable to the circumstances:

a. The comparative abilities of persons currently holding positions subject to elimination to meet the needs and requirements of the school system, taking into account such considerations as:

1. education,
2. training,
3. experience,
4. quality of job performance,
5. any special skills and aptitudes,
6. possession of necessary and appropriate licensure or certification, proficiency in performing a variety of tasks, responsibilities, and functions;

b. Other factors being equal, the comparative length of employees' service in the position and with the Board;

c. Any nondiscrimination requirements that may be imposed by state or federal law;

d. Such other facts, circumstances or criteria that the Board deems reasonable given the circumstances.

Recall

Recall of laid-off employees is not guaranteed. This policy shall not be construed in any way to create a right or entitlement to recall; the opposite effect is the intent of the Board. Circumstances permitting, and to the extent practicable, any recall of laid-off employees will be based on consideration of the criteria described above for layoffs and on relative length of separation from employment, other factors being equal. Under no circumstances will the Board be required to recall any laid-off employee after one year from the effective date of the employee's layoff. Employees who are recalled within one year from the effective date of their layoff will be credited with time-in-service, and the pay and benefit status they enjoyed on the effective date of their layoff. No pay, benefits, tenure (or non-probationary) status, or other employment right will accrue or be credited to any laid-off employee for or during the time he was not employed.

A laid-off employee will be eligible for recall if:

a. The facts and/or circumstances justifying the need for a RIF have changed materially;

b. The nature of the position and qualifications therefore have not changed materially;

c. The laid-off employee remains properly qualified, licensed, and certified; and

d. The laid-off employee confirms in writing his/her availability for and interest in reemployment to the Board's Director of Human Resources within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of notice of layoff from the Board.

Notice

Notification of any implemented layoff, and any recall implemented, will be by United States certified or registered mail, hand delivery, or by other means that are permitted for such purposes by law. Upon receipt of notification of any implemented recall, a laid-off employee will have thirty (30) calendar days from the date of said notice within which to respond affirmatively to the notice of recall in accordance with such specific directions or instructions as may be contained therein. Any laid-off employee who does not so respond or who otherwise declines an offer of reemployment by the Board will be deemed to have waived any reemployment under the terms of this policy.

Reservation of Board Authority

Nothing in this policy will be deemed or construed to restrict or impair the authority of the Board to reorganize, consolidate, eliminate, reallocate, or otherwise modify the nature and configuration of its workforce.

Teachers' Bill of Rights

The Teachers' Bill of Rights requires every teacher to have an approved classroom management plan and affords teachers the right to exclude disruptive students from their classrooms in certain circumstances. The purpose of this policy is to outline the standards applicable to the development and approval of required classroom management plans; the standards applicable to the exclusion of a student from the classroom by a teacher; and the appeal process available to a teacher if a student is returned to the classroom by the principal. For purposes of this policy, the term principal also includes assistant principal, vice principal, or his or her designee.

Classroom Management Plans

Each classroom plan must be approved by the principal before the tenth day of instruction for students during each academic year. Principals are authorized to set a deadline for submission of classroom management plans by teachers that provides them with ample time to review and approve plans and seek revisions. Complete policy details can be found in the DCS Policy Manual Section 5.20
GENERATED PURSUANT TO ACT 2024-409 (TEACHERS' BILL OF RIGHTS)

Use of Board Property

Equipment, Supplies, Materials, Vehicles

Equipment, supplies, materials, vehicles, and other movable or consumable property owned by or under lease to the Board may not be used by or made available to persons or entities for private or personal use, benefit, or consumption, or for any non-Board related use or purpose. Such property may not be removed from Board premises except as necessary to serve a school or Board-related function or purpose, and with the knowledge and approval of the appropriate supervisor, administrator, or the Superintendent.

Board Facilities

Schools and other Board owned or controlled facilities may be made available for use by sanctioned or generally recognized school support organizations if the use of the facility will not disrupt school operations or be inconsistent with the purpose and mission of the school system, and if adequate advance provision is made for security, supervision, maintenance, damage prevention, post-event clean-up, liability insurance, and other risk management measures appropriate to the proposed use.
Use of Board facilities for non-school organizations may be approved by the Superintendent or their designee if the foregoing conditions are satisfied and a rental contract (or the equivalent thereof) that includes a reasonable fee or rental charge and other appropriate terms and conditions is executed by the organization. Schools or school property may not be used for political functions.

Advertising

Board property will not be used for commercial advertising except upon such terms and conditions as may be expressly approved by the Board.

Political Activity

Board employees may participate in political activities to the full extent permitted by the United States Constitution and federal and state laws securing the right to engage in such activities, subject to the following restrictions:

a. Employees may not appropriate Board property or resources for use in political campaigns, and may not engage in partisan political activities (including but not limited to the distribution of campaign material or literature) during regular school or duty hours or at Board sponsored or sanctioned events, functions, or at activities at which the employee is on duty or assigned official responsibilities;

b. Employees may not represent their political beliefs or positions on political matters to be those of the Board or other Board officials, or to falsely assert or imply that their political activities or positions are endorsed by or undertaken in the name of the Board or other Board officials.
c. In order to avoid disruption to the classroom and the school, employees may not wear or display political buttons, clothing, or banners during regular school or duty hours or at Board sponsored or sanctioned events, functions, or at activities at which the employee is on duty or assigned official responsibilities.
d. In order to avoid obstructing the parking lot or otherwise disrupting school activities, employees may not place large signs or billboards in or on personal vehicles in the school parking lot;
e. Candidates and representatives of candidates for political office may not be invited or allowed to address student groups except when such candidates are participating in a forum or like format that is designed to provide all candidates
f. the opportunity to participate. Such forums may be conducted only for appropriate age groups, and with the advance approval of the school principal and the Superintendent; and
g. Political signs may not be placed on schools or school board property. Campaign literature and other material may not be distributed on Board property during the regular school or work day, and may not be distributed at school or Board sponsored events or activities in a manner that impedes the normal and safe movement of pedestrian or vehicular traffic, that creates any other safety hazard or risk, or that disturbs or disrupts the function, activity, or event.

[REFERENCE: ALA. ATTY. GEN. OPINION. 2019-1]

Service Animals

In accordance with regulations contained under Title III of the Americans Disability Act (ADA) at 28C.F.R. 36.104, Dothan City Schools makes accommodations for the use of a "service animal" to include "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability including, but not limited to, a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, other mental disability, or autism. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for purposes of the definition set in the law." ADA regulations also include "miniature horses" in appropriate circumstances. Dothan City schools will comply with all state and federal laws, regulations and rules regarding the use of service animals by students with disabilities under appropriate circumstances. Procedures governing this decision will be outlined by Dothan City Schools in compliance with ADA.

Employee On-Line Fundraising and Crowdfunding

Any property, money, or other resources that are obtained by a Board employee through grants, fundraising, online giving, or like means in the name of or for the benefit of the school system or its students becomes the property of the school system and are subject to board policies and procedures governing board property and resources. The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures governing the approval and administration of any outside fundraising or crowdfunding activities.

Payroll
Employee Compensation

Salaries and Pay Rates

Board employees will be compensated at rates of pay that are approved by the Board. When required, such salary or compensation rates will be included in a schedule to be developed and adopted by the Board in accordance with state law. Employees may receive supplements or other additional compensation when specifically approved by the Board. All compensation must be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Board, regardless of the source of funding.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-13-231.1 (1975)]

Salary Administration

Employees are expected to fulfill the work requirements of the position held for the full term of their appointment. Compensation will be prorated to reflect the number of days actually worked, subject to appropriate adjustments, credits, and allowances for available leave. Salaries for full time employees will be paid over twelve months, regardless of the contract term.

However, employees in the first year of employment with the Board may opt to be paid over thirteen (13) months. Personnel will be paid in accordance with customary payroll procedures, which may be modified from time to time as the needs of the system require. No employee is entitled to compensation except for work performed by the employee in accordance with an approved contract or the applicable terms of appointment. Compensation may be withheld pending the employee's timely, accurate, and complete submission of all required records, data, and reports.

Salary Deductions

Mandatory salary deductions will be made in accordance with applicable law, and employees are required to complete and submit all forms and provide such information as may be required or reasonably required for such purpose. The Board will make voluntary deductions as a service to employees upon written request of the individual employee to the extent permitted by law.

Deductions for membership dues will be made for organizations with at least 20 active members, as established by membership lists provided to the Board by the organization, if such deductions are allowed under state law and the organization has timely provided to the Board all certifications and expenditure reports required by law. Such membership lists will be corrected, updated, and returned to the Board by the Board no later than November 10 of each school year. Deductions will be based on the membership lists unless an employee revokes authorization for such deductions by providing written notice to the Board on or before September 15th of each school year.

Upon termination of employment, any amounts owed under the terms of an employee authorization will be deducted from the employee's final pay. The Board will not be liable for any good faith error made in implementing a salary deduction that has been authorized by the employee.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-22-6 (1975)]

Minimum Wage and Overtime

In compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA"), the Board will pay required minimum hourly

wages and overtime to all employees who are not exempt employees under the FLSA. For purposes of determining overtime, the workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday and ends at midnight on the succeeding Friday. All non-exempt employees who work more than forty (40) hours in a work week will be given compensatory time in lieu of payment or paid overtime. Employees must accurately report all time worked for the Board. Non-exempt employees are not authorized to work more than forty (40) hours in a workweek without specific direction or authorization to do so by the Superintendent, the employee's supervisor, or the supervising school principal.

Compensatory Time

Non-exempt employees who work more than forty (40) hours in a workweek may, upon agreement between the employee and the Board, be paid overtime in the form of compensatory time. Compensatory time will be based on time worked beyond forty (40) hours in a workweek, and will be recorded in minimum time units of one-quarter hour rounded to the nearest quarter of an hour. No more than forty (40) hours of compensatory time may be accumulated. The Board reserves the right to require an employee to use compensatory time as its needs require and may "pay down" any compensatory time balance in its discretion. The Superintendent is hereby authorized to develop procedures and forms for use in implementing this policy.

Expense Reimbursement

Board members and employees will be reimbursed for reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred in connection with official Board business. Reimbursement will be in accordance with Board approved rates and such procedures and standards for submitting and documenting such expenditures as may be developed by the Chief School Financial Officer or provided in the approved Finance Manual.

Unauthorized Payments

Notification to the Employee

Upon discovery of any unauthorized or erroneous payment or disbursement of funds to an employee, the Board will attempt in good faith to notify the employee of such unauthorized payment and to reach agreement with the employee, if possible, regarding the amount and terms of repayment. Notification to the employee will consist of a letter mailed or delivered to the employee's last known address. The notice will specify the amount owed, the method by which the amount was calculated, a proposed schedule of repayment, an opportunity for the employee to review or examine any documents or other evidence supporting the claimed overpayment, and an opportunity for the employee to object in person or in writing to the amount or manner of the proposed withholding to provide an alternative plan of repayment. Unless the Board's ability to recover funds in question could be jeopardized by doing so, the Board will arrange a reasonable schedule of repayment so as to avoid undue hardship to the employee.

Retention and Recovery Authorized

If no objection to the proposed withholding is received within a reasonable time (to be specified in the notification letter), monies may be retained in the manner and to the extent described in the notification. If the employee objects to the proposed withholding, the Superintendent or his designee may, upon consideration of the objection and information and argument (if any) submitted in connection therewith, take such action as may be warranted under the circumstances and inform the employee in writing of the decision. If the employee is dissatisfied, he may contest the decision through the Board's complaint procedure. Monies may be withheld by the Board pending completion of the grievance process, provided that, should the Board later pay over to the

employee monies that have been retained under authority of this policy, such payment(s) will reflect all appropriate deductions and will include accrued interest from the date of withholding at the rate specified by the then-effective rate applicable to interest on unpaid judgments under Alabama law. If, after exhausting reasonable efforts to do so, the Board is unable to contact the employee in the first instance, the Board may retain or withhold from compensation or other payments due the employee an amount sufficient to satisfy the indebtedness; provided that any such retention or withholding will be subject to review and reconsideration at the request of the employee.

Repayment Required as a Condition of Reemployment

The Board reserves the right to require repayment of any outstanding indebtedness as a condition to reemployment of any former employee.

Procedures Not Exclusive

The provisions, procedures, and method of review specified herein are in addition to those that are otherwise available to the parties under law for the retention or recovery of funds, and for administrative or judicial review thereof

Pay for Higher Degree

An official transcript should be sent to Brittany Smith in the HR office as soon as possible so the appropriate paperwork can be completed and sent to the State Department. Once the request has been approved by the State Department the employee will be notified.

Note: Employees will not be paid for years of experience that are not verified. Employees have 60 days to get their previous years of experience verified and submitted to the Office of Human Resources from their date of hire.

Payday

Payday is the last business day of the month. Dothan City Schools has a paperless payroll system. Paystubs are sent to the employees designated email.

Mandatory Deductions

a. Federal/State Income Taxes: Deductions are withheld based on the tax information the employee provides on their A4 for State form or W4 for Federal Form.
b. Social Security/Medicare: Deductions are withheld as required by law. This deduction cannot be changed by the employee.
c. Retirement: Deductions are withheld based on current State requirements. This deduction cannot be changed by the employee.
d. Garnishments: If a garnishment is served to the Dothan City Board of Education for payment of debts of an employee, then DCS is required by law to make deductions from the employee's paycheck for payment to the court. Employees will be notified in writing when a garnishment is received.

Voluntary Deductions

a. Medical Insurance: Deductions are based on information that is provided to PEEHIP. These deductions

can be changed by the employee by contacting PEEHIP directly.

b. Other premiums: Premiums can be deducted from an employee's paycheck for any company that is approved for payroll deduction. The employee should contact the specific company for information regarding their policies.
c. Compensation Plans: Federal and State tax-sheltered deductions for Deferred Compensation Plans are available to employees by contacting the company that offers these plans.
d. Dues: Dues to organizations that are approved for payroll deduction can be deducted from an employee's paycheck. Upon an employee's termination, amounts owed for the remainder of the year will be deducted from the final paycheck. To cancel a deduction to a due's organization, the employee should contact the organization.

Direct Deposit

Direct deposit is mandatory for all employees.

Demographic Changes (Name, Address, Phone number)

To make changes to demographic information you must complete the Name Change form and Address change form in TalentEd.

Important Phone Numbers:
PEEHIP/Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA): 1-877-517-0020
Aflac: 1-800-992-3522
American Fidelity: 1-800-662-1113
Liberty National: 1-800-333-0637
VSP: 1-800-877-7195
Washington National: 1-800-525-7662

Health Insurance

The Public Education Employees Health Insurance Program (PEEHIP) provides for the following health insurance plans:

Hospital/Medical	Blue Cross Blue Shield
Hospital/Medical Supplemental*	Blue Cross Blue Shield

Optional Coverages:
- Hospital Indemnity
- Cancer
- Dental
- Vision Care

* The supplemental Hospital/Medical plan will cover most deductibles, co-payments, and coinsurance not covered by the primary plan provided by another employer.

Eligible employees may participate in any of the plans listed above under the guidelines established by the program. Terms and conditions of the plans are available on the PEEHIP website at www.rsa-al.gov

The Board will pay the state allocated amount each month towards the purchase of insurance for each employee

who earns an allocation. An employee must work at least half the working days in any month to earn the allocation for that month. If an employee does not earn his/her allocation for any reason, the employee can continue insurance coverage through COBRA.

Monthly Premiums as of October 1, 2023:

HOSPITAL/MEDICAL COVERAGE:

Blue Cross Blue Shield	Individual	$ 30.00
	Individual plus non-spouse dependents (no spouse)	$ 207.00
	Individual plus spouse only (no other dependents)	$ 282.00
	Individual plus spouse plus other dependents	$ 307.00
	Tobacco User Surcharge (per person)	$ 50.00
	Wellness Premium (per person)	$ 50.00

OPTIONAL COVERAGES:

Hospital Indemnity	Single or Family	$ 38.00 (Southland)
Cancer	Single or Family	$ 38.00 (Southland)
Dental	Single Coverage	$ 38.00 (Southland)
	Family Coverage	$ 50.00 (Southland)
Vision Care Southland	Single or Family	$ 38.00 (Southland)
Vision Care VSP	Single or Family	
		$ 8.84 (VSP C)
		$ 17.70 (VSP B)
		$ 18.92 (VSP D)
		$ 30.24 (VSP A)

** Premiums are set by PEEHIP, not the Dothan City Board of Education

If an employee does not want hospital/medical coverage, his/her allocation is enough to cover the cost of all four optional coverages or the hospital/medical supplemental. The employee would pay no premium in this case.

Important Phone Numbers:	PEEHIP	1-877-517-0020
	Blue Cross	1-800-327-3994
	Southland National	1-800-476-3010

New Employees:
New employees may elect to enroll with PEEHIP effective their date of employment, the first day of the month following employment, or October 1. Enrollment must be completed within 30 days of the employee's start date.

Open Enrollment Period:
For all active employees, the Open Enrollment period begins July 1, and ends August 31, for paper changes. All online Open Enrollment changes are to be submitted by midnight on September 10. Open Enrollment changes are effective October 1.

Financial Procedures Manual

For all financial related procedures, please refer to the Dothan City Schools Financial Procedures Manual. This manual provides detailed guidelines and protocols to ensure compliance and consistency in financial operations.

Purchase Order

No employee should obligate Dothan Board of Education funds without an approved purchase order. A purchase order must be issued for all goods to be purchased. The Board will not be responsible for purchases made without an approved purchase order. The Dothan Board of Education may choose not to pay for an expenditure that was made without prior approval, thus the employee would be personally responsible for payment.

Employee Leave

Work Attendance an Essential Job Function

Punctual, regular attendance is an essential job function of every job and position, and employees are expected to report to work when scheduled to work and to remain at work each working day.

Absences

Except as otherwise authorized under Board policy, employees may be absent from work only in the following circumstances:

a. Illness, injury or other qualifying reason for sick leave or on-the-job injury leave under state law or the Family Medical Leave Act;

b. Personal leave;

c. Vacation leave;

d. Professional leave;

e. Military leave;

f. Court leave;

g. Other unpaid leave that is specifically approved by the Board upon a showing of substantial hardship or extraordinary circumstances.

h. Paid Parental Leave- The Board provides paid parental leave (PPL) in accordance with the Alabama Public Employee Paid Parental Leave Act of 2025, codified at ALA.CODE § 36-6A-1, et seq. (1975), and administrative rules adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education.

[Reference: Ala. Code §36-6A-1, et. seq. (1975)]

Employees who know in advance that they will be absent from work must notify their direct supervisor of the expected absence in accordance with procedures specified by the Superintendent. In the event of an emergency or incapacity that makes advance notice impractical, employees must notify the Board of their absence as early as possible. Except as otherwise provided or permitted, an employee who is absent from work without approved leave will be considered absent without leave in violation of Board policy and subject to appropriate disciplinary measures. Employees who are approved for paid leave or absences will be paid at the regular daily rate of pay; however, a day of paid leave or absence will not be counted as a day worked for the purposes of computing overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Pay will be reduced on a pro rata basis for leaves or absences not covered by sick, vacation, personal, or other appropriate form of paid leave. The continuation of benefits during an approved absence is subject to the provisions of the particular benefit policy or plan.

Paid Sick Leave

a. Persons Eligible for Paid Sick Leave – All regular full-time employees are eligible for paid sick leave.

b. Earning and Accumulation of Paid Sick Leave – All eligible employees earn sick leave days at the rate provided for in state law. Eligible employees may accumulate sick leave as provided by state law.

Use of Sick Leave – Eligible employees may only use paid sick leave for absences cause by the following:

1. Personal illness or doctor's quarantine:

2. Incapacitating personal injury;

3. Attendance upon an ill member of the employee's immediate family, defined as a spouse, parent, child, sibling, foster child in the care and custody of the employee, child currently in the care and custody of the employee for whom a petition for adoption has been filed; or any person with a close personal tie

4. Death of a family member, including a spouse, parent, child, sibling, mother or father-in-law, son or daughter-in-law, brother or sister-in-law, nephew or niece, grandparent, grandchild, aunt or uncle;

5. Death or care of an individual with whom unusually strong personal ties exist because of a relationship other than those listed above.

6. Attendance upon an adopted child, who is three years of age or younger. Sick leave taken for the purpose of attending to an adopted child may be taken for a maximum of eight weeks, or 320 consecutive hours. Taking sick leave that is not provided for by state law is a violation of board policy and may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

c. Certification – Employees must certify that sick leave was used for one of the reasons provided in state law and specify the reason. If an employee is on sick leave for five (5) or more consecutive days or if there is probable cause to believe that an employee has abused or misused sick leave, the employee

shall be required by their immediate supervisor to provide a statement signed by a doctor certifying to the illness or injury.

d. Restrictions – The following restrictions shall apply to sick leave:

1. Sick leave for certificated employees shall not be granted in increments of less than one-half (1/2) day.

2. Sick leave for support employees shall not be granted in increments of less than two (2) hours.

3. Full pay for sick leave shall be allowed only if the absences fall within the definition of sick leave as defined in this policy and the employee has sufficient accumulated sick leave days.

4. Using the balance or any part of accrued and unused sick leave at the time of retirement will not be permitted, unless the employee meets the conditions for use of sick leave as defined above. However, an employee who is eligible for service retirement is entitled to use the accrued unused sick leave toward retirement as prescribed by rules of the Alabama Teacher's Retirement System.

5. No cash payments for accrued and unused sick leave will be made by the Board.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-18.1 (1975)]

On-The-Job Injury Leave

On-the-job injury includes an accident or injury to an employee that occurs in the course of performing job duties for the Board or when the employee is directed or requested by the employer to be on the property of employer and which prevents the employee from working or returning to the job. Employees who are accidentally injured on the job may be approved for paid "on the-job injury" leave without using sick days, provided that:

a. The injured employee submits written medical certification from the attending licensed physician stating that the employee was injured and cannot return to work due to a specified injury, if there is a reasonable expectation that the employee will return to work and, if so, the expected date of that return. The Board may require a second opinion from a Board specified physician, at its expense.

b. The employee submits a signed written account of the accident attested by a principal or department head within twenty-four (24) hours after the injury occurred. If the injured employee is not able to notify the Board, another person reasonably knowledgeable about the employee's condition and circumstances leading to the injury may provide the required notification.

Upon a determination that the employee has been injured on the job and cannot return to work, the Board may maintain the employee's salary and benefits for the period of incapacity caused by the injury, not to exceed ninety (90) days. An employee who is injured on the job may file a request for unreimbursed medical expenses and costs with the State Board of Adjustment. The Board will provide such reasonable assistance to the employee in filing the Board of Adjustment claim as is required by law, but assumes and will have no responsibility or liability for processing the claim or directly reimbursing the employee any unreimbursed medical expenses and costs. On-the-job injury leave will be administered in accordance with and subject to the

requirements and limitations imposed by state law regarding such leave.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-18.1 (1975)]

Personal Leave

All regular, full time employees are eligible for five (5) personal leave days annually (two days provided by State and three additional local days). Employee who take more than two (2) full days of personal leave during a school year will be charged the current daily rate of pay for the employee's substitute (regardless of whether or not a substitute is employed) for each additional leave day taken.

Personal leave days are noncumulative from year to year. Personal leave must be requested in writing in accordance with such procedures as may be established by the Superintendent or the Board. Personal leave should not routinely be requested before or after a school holiday or in the first or last ten days of a school term.

The employee may convert any unused state-funded personal leave days to sick leave or compensation paid at the current daily rate of pay for the employee's substitute. Unused, locally-funded personal leave days may be converted to sick leave days; however, compensation is not available for locally-funded days.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-8-26 (1975)]

Vacation

a. Eligible Employees – Twelve-month (240 day) full-time employees are eligible for paid vacation.

b. Vacation Benefits – Eligible employees will earn 6 hours and forty minutes of vacation time per month, up to eighty (80) hours per scholastic year, subject to the following limitations regarding accrual of vacation days.

c. Accumulation of Vacation Time – Employees may carry over unused vacation days from one scholastic year to the following scholastic year, but no employee may carry over more than two hundred forty (240) hours of vacation days for use in any fiscal year. Any accrued, but unused, vacation days in excess of two hundred forty (240) hours will be forfeited after the close of business on June 30th of each year. Vacation days may not be bought, sold or donated. Employees will be paid for accrued vacation time if not used prior to the effective date of resignation or retirement, subject to the preceding limitations regarding accrual of vacation days.

d. Scheduling – Vacations must be scheduled with the knowledge and approval of the employee's supervisor and shall be scheduled to ensure minimal disruption to the operation of the school system. No individual employee may take in excess of one hundred twenty (120) vacation hours in any given month without the express written authorization of the Superintendent or his designee.

e. Special Circumstances –

1. Contract – The amount of vacation leave may be adjusted for personnel who are employed under a special contract (e.g., the Superintendent).

2. Past Accrued Time – Employees who had accrued in excess of two hundred forty (240) hours of vacation leave as of November 17, 2008, shall not forfeit those excess hours. Payment for those accrued excess hours shall be made based on the employee's daily rate of pay in effect on November 17, 2008.

f. Payment for Unused Vacation Time – Payment of accrued, but unused, vacation leave up to the limits contained in the above section shall be made upon separation from employment provided notice to separate employment has been made and approved by Board action. Such request to be paid for accrued unused vacation leave must be approved by the immediate supervisor and shall be in writing to the Chief Financial Officer. This payment of unused accrued vacation leave shall not extend an employee's contract. Payment of unused accrued vacation leave shall be made at the employee's daily rate of pay in effect on the date of death, retirement, resignation, or other termination. The payment so made shall be

in full discharge of the Board's obligation to the employee for the payment of accrued but unused vacation pay.

Professional Leave

The Superintendent is authorized to grant professional leave with pay to Board employees to engage in educational activities which, in the judgment of the Superintendent, serve the needs and interests of the school system. The number of days approved for such leave will be at the discretion of the Superintendent. All out-of-state travel must be approved by the Superintendent.

Military Leave

Military leave is available to all eligible employees in accordance with state and federal law.

Court Leave

Permanent and full-time employees are entitled to regular compensation while performing jury duty (ALA. CODE §12-8-25) or when the employee is summoned under subpoena or other legal requirement to testify at trial in a court of law or in an administrative proceeding constituted under the statutory authority of the agency conducting the proceedings. Paid leave is not authorized for employees to meet with attorneys, to attend depositions, or to otherwise prepare for legal proceedings unless the presence of the employee is requested or required by the Board.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Eligible Employees

The FMLA is applicable to all persons who have been employed for at least twelve (12) months and have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours during that twelve (12) month period.

Medical Leave Provided by the Act

Under the FMLA, eligible employees are entitled to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave during any twelve (12) month period for one or more of the following reasons:

a. The birth and first year care of a newborn child;

b. The placement of a foster child or adoption;

c. The care of an immediate family member, defined as a spouse, child or parent, with a serious health condition;

d. The taking of medical leave because of the employee's own serious health condition.

For the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child, the entitlement to leave for child care expires at the end of the twelve (12) month period beginning on the date of birth, adoption, or placement. Leave associated with

the illness of a child will only be provided if the child is under eighteen (18) years of age or is incapable of self-care due to physical or mental disability.

Serious Health Conditions

The term "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves the following:

a. Any period of incapacity in connection with or following inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility.

b. Continuing treatment by a health-care provider, to include any period of incapacity due to:

1. A health condition, including treatment and recovery, lasting more than three (3) consecutive days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition;

2. Pregnancy or prenatal care;

3. A chronic, serious health condition which continues over an extended period of time, requires periodic visits to a health care provider, and may involve episodes of incapacity (e.g., asthma and diabetes);

4. A permanent or long-term condition for which treatment may not be effective (e.g. Alzheimer's, severe stroke) and for which supervision of a health-care provider is required;

5. Multiple treatments for restorative surgery or for a condition which would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three (3) days if not treated.

Military Family Leave Provided by the Act

a. Qualifying Exigency Leave – Under the FMLA, an eligible employee with a spouse, child, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may utilize the twelve (12) week medical leave entitlement to address qualifying exigencies resulting from that service.

b. Military Caregiver Leave – An eligible employee, who is the spouse, child, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member, is entitled to take up to twenty-six (26) weeks (including any medical leave provided by the Act) of unpaid leave during any twelve (12) month period (beginning the first day of the leave) to care for an individual covered service member with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating. A covered service member is a member of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty.

Spouse Employed by the Board

Spouses who are both employed by the Board are limited to a combined total of twelve (12) weeks of family leave for the birth and care of a newborn child, for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care, for the care of a parent who has a serious health condition, and for qualifying exigency leave. Spouses who are both employed by the Board are limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) weeks for military caregiver leave.

Intermittent Leave

An employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule only when medically necessary to care for a spouse, parent, or child or to receive planned medical treatment. Intermittent leave should be scheduled to the extent practicable so as not to unduly disrupt the operations of the Board. Intermittent leave may be further limited for teachers in accordance with federal law.

Use of Vacation and Sick Leave

If an employee has available sick leave, vacation leave, paid parental leave, or other applicable paid leave, the employee must utilize those forms of leave before taking unpaid leave under the FMLA. In that instance, the paid leave and the FMLA leave will run concurrently and the employee's twelve (12) weeks of unpaid FMLA leave will be reduced by the paid leave utilized, as long as the need for such leave results from one or more of the qualifying reasons under the FMLA.

Notice

Employees seeking leave under the FMLA must provide thirty (30) days advance notice of the need to take leave when the need is foreseeable. When the need for leave is unforeseeable, employees should notify their supervisors as soon as possible. Employees must also provide notice of the need for qualifying exigency leave as soon as practicable.

Certification for Medical or Military Caregiver Leave

Every request for FMLA leave based upon the serious health condition of the employee or employee's spouse, children, or parents, or leave as a military caregiver must be supported by medical certification issued by the appropriate health care provider on forms provided by the Board. For leave based on a serious health condition of the employee or employee's spouse, child, or parent, the Board reserves the right to obtain a second opinion from an independent health-care provider designated by the Board. If the opinion received by the employee and the second opinion conflict, the Board and the employee must agree on a third provider to issue a binding opinion. Both the second and third opinions (if necessary) will be at the expense of the Board.

Certification for Qualifying Exigency Leave

Certification will be required by the Board for requests for qualifying exigency leave. Certification must be timely submitted on forms available from the Board. For the first such request, certification may include a copy of the military service member's duty orders or other military documentation.

Return to Work

The Board may require an employee who has taken leave due to the employee's own serious medical condition to provide the Board with a healthcare provider's certification in order to return to work. Any employee who takes leave under these provisions will be entitled to be restored to the original position held when the leave commenced or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

Maintenance of Benefits

Benefits accrued by the employee before leave is taken are not lost when approved FMLA leave is taken. Employees who are on approved FMLA leave will remain eligible to participate in benefit programs in which the employee was enrolled at the time of the leave, provided that the employee will continue to be responsible for payment of employee's portion of any cost, premium, or like payment that is required to maintain eligibility for the coverage or benefit. An employee that does not return to work after FMLA leave, will be required to reimburse the Board for the cost of benefits coverage extended to the employee during the leave, unless the reason for the employee's failure to return to work is

a. a continuing serious health condition suffered by either the employee or a family member, or
b. other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Instructional Employees

Medical leave taken by eligible instructional employees is subject to further limitations and provisions established by the FMLA. The Superintendent or his designee is authorized to develop additional information and guidelines concerning Instructional Employees.

Sick Leave Bank

A "Sick Leave Bank" plan for full-time certified and classified employees is hereby established in accordance with applicable provisions of state law. A Sick Leave Bank Committee will be established to oversee the operations of the Sick Leave Bank in accordance with state law and the following provisions:

a. Sick Leave Bank Committee – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will be composed of one member representing the Board and four members representing participating members of the sick leave bank. Board Representative – The Member representing the Board will be appointed by the Superintendent, subject to Board approval. Participant Representatives – The participant representatives will be selected by the sick leave bank members.

b. Procedures for Selecting Employee Representatives on Committee

1. Nomination – Before each election of participant representatives, the Board will hold an open nomination period. Any employee who is eligible to participate in the sick leave bank may be nominated for one of the participant representative positions. Nominations must be written and must be received in the Human Resources Department by the deadline specified in a notice to be

provided by the Superintendent or his designee through Board publications and other means of communication that are generally used for such purposes.

2. Voting – Each eligible nominee will be placed on the Sick Leave Bank Committee ballot. Voting will take place by ballot at Board facilities at the time specified or as may otherwise be provided by the Board. Supervision of voting will be by local facility personnel. Voting members will be required to verify their ballot by signing the Board's voter record. Votes will be forwarded to the Human Resources Department for final tabulation. The four candidates receiving the highest number of votes will serve as participant representatives on the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

c. Term of Committee Members – Sick Leave Bank Committee members will serve for a term of one year and may not serve for more than five years.

d. Chairman of the Sick Leave Bank Committee – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will elect a chairman from among its representatives at its first annual meeting. The chairman will be responsible for recording organizational minutes, for conducting meetings, and for organizing meetings as necessary.

e. Meetings – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will meet at least annually following each enrollment period. The Committee will also meet as necessary in its discretion.

f. Sick Leave Bank Committee Duties – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will develop proposed rules and regulations for the Sick Leave Bank, to be submitted to participating members for approval. At a minimum, said rules and regulations must include those terms and provisions that are required by statute. The Committee has the authority to review both participation in the Bank and requests for leave to ensure compliance with state law, policy, and such rules and regulations as may be adopted by the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

g. Employee Participation – Participation in the Sick Leave Bank is voluntary and open to all full-time employees of the Board. However, employee participation is subject to such rules and regulations regarding enrollment procedures, deposits, withdrawals, and participation as may be developed by the Committee.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-22-9 (1975)]

Internet Safety and Use of Technology

Access to Technology Resources

The Board permits restricted and conditional access to and use of its technology resources, including but not limited to computers, the "Internet," network storage areas, and electronic mail. Such access and use are restricted to employees, students, and other persons who are engaged in bona fide educational and administrative activities that serve and are consistent with identified educational objectives or authorized support functions, and who, by signing an "Acceptable Use Agreement" and/or by utilizing the school system's

technology resources, agree to abide by all Board policies, rules, and regulations regarding technology use. The Acceptable Use Agreement will be developed by the Superintendent for approval by the Board.

Restriction or Loss of Technology Privileges

Persons who violate any Board policy, rule, or regulation regarding technology use may be denied use of the Board's technology resources and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

Ownership of Technology Resources and Data

All technology resources, including network and Internet resources, e-mail systems, and computers or other access devices owned, leased, or maintained by the Board are the sole property of the Board. Authorized board personnel or their designee may, at any time and without prior notice, access, search, examine, inspect, collect, or retrieve information of any kind from the Board's technology resources, including computer or related equipment, files, and data, to determine if a user is in violation of any of the Board's policies, rules, and regulations regarding access to and use of technology resources, for or in connection with any other matter or reason related to the safe and efficient operation or administration of the school system, or for any other reason not prohibited by law. Users of school system technology resources have no personal right of privacy or confidentiality with respect to the use or content of such resources.

Adoption of Rules and Regulations

The Superintendent is authorized to develop for Board approval additional or more specific rules and regulations regarding access to and use of its technology resources and to require adherence to such rules and regulations through such means as the "Acceptable Use Agreement" and application of appropriate disciplinary policies and procedures. Such rules and regulations will address or provide:

a. Measures to block or filter Internet access to pictures that are obscene, that constitute child pornography, or that are harmful to minors;

b. Restriction of access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet;

c. The safety and security of minors when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;

d. Prevention of "hacking" and other forms of unauthorized use of or access to computer or Internet files, sites, databases or equipment; and

e. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and

f. Restriction of minors' access to harmful material.

g. Educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Disclaimer – The Board makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the Board's technology resources will be error-free or without defect. The Board will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data or interruption of service.

[Reference: 47 U.S.C. §254(h) and (l)]

Data Governance and Use

The Superintendent is authorized to establish procedures governing the storage, use, and sharing of data maintained electronically by the school system. Such procedures shall comply with applicable state and federal law and shall include provisions for data security (including physical security measures), access controls, quality control, and data exchange and reporting (including external data requests, and third-party data use). Nothing in this policy or in any procedures authorized hereunder creates or expands any entitlement to confidentiality of records beyond that which is established by law or specific Board policy.

Social Media

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the orderly operation of the district's schools by establishing standards for the operation of school district social media accounts and personal social media accounts, and to differentiate between personal and School Related social media accounts and those accounts controlled by the district.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Public Information Office will develop procedures to implement and enforce this policy.

Definitions

1. Discriminatory or Harassing Comments – comments or imagery that attack or mock an individual due to his/her real or perceived race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion, or which otherwise constitute bullying.

2. Limited Public Forum – a government operated location where the public may comment and post online, subject to viewpoint neutral guidelines.

3. Non-public Forum – a government operated location where the public may not comment or post online; free expression by the public is restricted regardless of message or viewpoint.

4. School-Sponsored Social Media Account (School-Sponsored Account) – a social media account, regardless of platform, that is operated by or on behalf of a school district employee or School Board member, or their designee in his/her professional capacity, or on behalf of a school sponsored organization or group, and that is designed to further the educational mission of the school district by communicating with members of the school district community and the general public.

5. School-Related Organizations and Groups Social Media Account (School-Related Account) – a social media account, regardless of platform, that is operated by or on behalf of a volunteer, student, parent, alumnus, or other member of the public on behalf of a school-related organization or group, including but not limited to a PTO, Booster Organization, etc. school-related social media accounts are operated by volunteers as outlined above and not operated by school district employees or School Board members as a part of their primary employed function.

6. Personal Social Media Account (Non-School Account) – a social media account, regardless of platform, that is operated by a school district employee or School Board member for his/her personal use, including personal professional development. A personal social media account is not regularly used to promote or communicate about school district events or activities, or the activities of students nor identifies the individual as an employee of the district.

7. Social Media – forms of electronic communication, such as Internet applications and websites for social networking and microblogging, through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content, such as videos. Current social media platform examples include Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Tik-Tok, Vimeo, YouTube, Flickr, Twitch, Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp, etc. Personal websites, web logs (blogs), wikis, online forums, virtual worlds, video-sharing websites and on-line gaming are also included in this definition.

Guidelines

Establishing a School-Sponsored Social Media Account
• Approval must be obtained from the Public Information Officer prior to creating any DCS social media presence. Notify the DCS Public Information Office when you create an official social media presence.

School-Sponsored Social Media Accounts
• School-sponsored social media accounts must remain professional, and consistent with the educational mission of the school district at all times. The operators of school-sponsored social media accounts are responsible for ensuring that content is accurate and stays current. Postings should be factchecked and spell checked.

Account Ownership
• School-sponsored social media accounts are owned by the school district, and operated by school district employees or School Board members on behalf of the school district. The Public Information Officer or his/her designee shall maintain a list of all school-sponsored social media accounts, along with a list of credentials to access all school-sponsored accounts. It is the responsibility of the individual who creates the school-sponsored social media account to report the account's credentials to the Public Information Office.

Photos, Videos, & Livestreams of Students
• School-sponsored social media account operators may post photographs, videos, and livestreams of students engaged in the educational process or at school-related events unless the student's parents/guardians have opted the student out of FERPA's directory information sharing, or if parents/guardians have declined to sign the district's media release form. The operators of school-sponsored social media accounts are responsible for complying with this provision.

Public Comments

• All school-sponsored social media accounts shall operate as a limited public forum, where the public may comment publicly on the posts – subject to certain guidelines.
• Account operators must have the profanity filter set to "Strong" on Facebook and Instagram and hide any inappropriate comments. Postings and comments of an inappropriate nature or containing information unrelated to official or district business must be reported and/or deleted promptly.
• Operating as a limited public forum, school sponsored social media accounts are moderated and all comments are subject to review by Dothan City School moderators. All DCS social media accounts shall include a prominent link and additional information to the following comment guidelines, posted on the school district's website. While comments will not be edited or screened for viewpoint, DCS reserves the right to remove certain comments. Please see the DCS policy for additional details.

Consequences for Violation of This Policy

Employees that violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Surveillance Camera

The Dothan City Schools District seeks to promote and foster a safe, secure, and effective teaching and learning environment for students and faculty; to create a safe working environment for all employees; to promote public safety for members of the community who visit the school or use school facilities; to provide safe transportation for students; and to protect school facilities, equipment and property. After having carefully considered and balanced the individual's right to be free from invasion of privacy with the Dothan City School District's interest and duty to foster the health, welfare and safety of students and staff as well as the health, safety and welfare of members of the general public who have occasion to use school facilities and enhance the protection of school property, the School District supports and reserves the right to place and use surveillance cameras, when necessary and appropriate, in its schools, school facilities, school buses and/or on its school grounds. Purpose of Surveillance Cameras The primary uses of surveillance cameras are as follows:

a. to promote a safe environment by deterring conduct that violates the law, Board approved policies and/or school-based rules; and
b. to record images for future identification of individuals in the event of violations of law, Board approved policy and/or school-based rules;
c. to aid in search of lost or missing children, and
d. to assist emergency services personnel. Surveillance camera use is limited to uses that do not violate Federal or State constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizure, reasonable expectation of privacy and other applicable laws prohibiting wiretapping and electronic surveillance of aural communications. Surveillance cameras will be utilized in public areas of schools, school facilities, school buses and school grounds and in areas of schools, school facilities, school buses and school grounds deemed to be at risk for either vandalism or student misconduct. Surveillance cameras will not be used in restrooms, showers, locker rooms and dressing rooms, areas designated by the Superintendent and any other area in which there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. The use of surveillance cameras and the monitoring of any resultant recordings will be conducted in a professional, ethical and legal manner and in a manner consistent with all existing Dothan City School Board policies and State and Federal

laws and will not be based on a subject's personal characteristics, including race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or other protected characteristics.

Surveillance cameras are not a guarantee of safety but are a tool that helps deter crime and assist in promoting the safety and security of individuals and property. Surveillance camera shall not utilize automatic identification, facial recognition, or automatic tracking technologies. Only authorized school personnel, as determined by the Superintendent or designee, shall be involved with and/or have access to surveillance cameras and any resultant recordings. Additionally, surveillance cameras will be installed and configured to prevent tampering with or unauthorized duplication of recorded information.

Furthermore, no surveillance cameras will be installed unless said installation has been approved in advance by the Superintendent of Schools or designee. Surveillance camera recordings are not considered Directory Information and may be subject to confidentiality restrictions, including but not limited to requirements under the Federal Family Educational Rights Privacy Act. Cameras may be used to monitor areas in which an employee works, even if there is only one employee in that area. Cameras installed or utilized for criminal investigations by law enforcement agencies are subject to appropriate state and federal laws and are excluded from the scope and application of this policy. This policy also does not apply to legitimate academic use of video cameras for educational purposes that have been approved by the Superintendent or designee. Release of Information Requests for viewing a recording must be made in writing to the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

Professional Development and Training

The Superintendent will develop and implement an ongoing program of professional training and development that is designed to enhance the competencies of professional and support staff. Employee attendance and participation in such training institutes, workshops, seminars, and programs may be made mandatory by the Superintendent. The unexcused failure of an employee to attend or participate in such professional development activities may constitute grounds for termination of employment or other disciplinary action

Additional training—annual training, new hire orientation/training, and IT-specific modules are assigned at the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the year. Each training has a designated deadline that must be met. Failure to complete the required training may result in disciplinary action and could lead to the suspension of email access and other technology services.

Transfers and Resignations

Tenured Teachers

Teachers including tenured teachers may be transferred to any grade, position outside the school, campus or facility. The transfer must meet the following criteria:

a) It can be to any grade or position outside the school, campus or facility;
b) The teacher must be properly certified for the position;
c) There can be no loss of pay;
d) The teacher must receive notice no later than the 20th calendar day after classes start (unless caused by an act of God or disaster); and
e) The teacher can only be involuntarily transferred once a year.

Probationary Teacher or Classified Employee

There is no limitation on when reassignment can happen during the school year.

Teacher Resignations (30-day rule)

No public K-12 teacher shall be permitted to terminate his or her employment within 30 calendar days before the first day of the next school term for students, unless the termination is mutually agreed upon. A public K-12 teacher may terminate his or her employment at any other time by giving 30 days' written notice to the employing board of education. Any public K-12 teacher terminating his or her employment in violation of this section is guilty of unprofessional conduct, and the State Superintendent of Education may revoke or suspend the certificate of the violating teacher.

(Act 2011-270, p. 494, §11; Act 2018-83, §1.)

Written Report of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

Explanation of certain provisions of the Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Law
(Code Of Alabama 1975. Sections 26-14-1 through 26-14-13)

In order to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through abuse and neglect, this law provides for the reporting of such cases to appropriate authorities. The law also contains immunity provisions so that any person making a report pursuant to the statute is immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

The following institutions and persons are required by law to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect under a penalty of a misdemeanor, fine or sentence: hospitals, clinics, sanitariums, doctors, physicians, surgeons, medical examiners, coroners, dentists, osteopaths, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists, nurses, school teachers and officials, peace officers, law enforcement officials, pharmacists, social workers, day care workers or employees, mental health professionals, physical therapists**, public and private K-12 employees, employees of public and private institutions** or any other person called upon to render aid or medical assistance to a child when that child is known or suspected to be abused or neglected. **When a child is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect, the mandatory reporter him/herself is required to report orally by telephone or direct communication immediately, followed by a written report to a duly constituted authority.** In addition, any other person may make a report if that person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected.

INSTRUCTIONS

Print or type all known information. Attach additional pages as needed.

SECTION I - CHILDREN ALLEGEDLY ABUSED OR NEGLECTED

Enter identifying information (name, sex, ethnicity, date of birth or approximate age) for each child in the family who is suspected to be abused or neglected. If the report is for more than one (1) child and they are not all members of the same' family, a separate report (1593) must be completed. This includes if the children live in separate households or are a separate family within the same household. Enter the child(ren)'s address and telephone number.

SECTION II - OTHER PERSONS LIVING WITH THE CHILDREN

Enter identifying information (name, date of birth or approximate age, ethnicity, and relationship) for each person living in the home with the child(ren) named in Section I.

SECTION III - PERSON(S) ALLEGEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Enter identifying information (name, sex, ethnicity, date of birth or approximate age, and relationship to the child(ren) named in Section I) for each person believed to be responsible for the suspected abuse or neglect.

SECTION IV - ABUSE OR NEGLECT ALLEGATIONS

Describe the alleged abuse or neglect; how it affected the child (physical injury; behavior exhibited by the child due to the suspected abuse/neglect); and provide the date(s) the abuse or neglect occurred, if known. Provide information on how you became aware of the suspected abuse or neglect. Enter the name, address, telephone number and relationship of anyone who may have knowledge of the abuse or neglect or the child's/family's situation. If the child(ren) received treatment or evaluation by a doctor or hospital due to the abuse or neglect, provide identifying information on the doctor or hospital (if not the reporter).

SECTION V - OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

Enter any other information which may be helpful (e.g., prior abuse/neglect; name of child's school; parents' employment or working hours; safety concerns for DHR staff who visit the child/family).

SECTION VI - REPORTER (Information is confidential and not released unless required by a court order)

You are requested to enter your name, address, telephone number and agency or relationship to the children identified in Section I. Indicate whether you made a verbal (telephone or in-person) report to either the local Department of Human Resources or a local law enforcement agency. If a verbal report was made, identify the specific person, agency, and date the report was made. Sign and date the form.

STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

WRITTEN REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Please print or type all know information The Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Law and instructions are explained on the back of this form.

SECTION I - **CHILDREN ALLEGEDLY ABUSED OR NEGLECTED**

	NAME (First, Middle Initial, Last)	SEX	ETHNICITY	DATE OF BIRTH/AGE
1.		☐M ☐F		
2.		☐M ☐F		
3.		☐M ☐F		
4.		☐M ☐F		
5.		☐M ☐F		
6.		☐M ☐F		

ADDRESS

Street Address City State Zip Telephone Number

SECTION II - **OTHER PERSONS LIVING WITH THE CHILDREN** (Include parents/custodians and other children in the home)

	NAME (First, Middle, Last)	DATE OF BIRTH / AGE	ETHNICITY	RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHILDREN
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

SECTION III - **PERSON(S)ALLEGEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

NAME (First, Middle, Last) SEX ETHNICITY DATE OF BIRTH/AGE

1. ☐M ☐F

Street Address City State Zip Telephone Number Relationship To Children Allegedly Abused/Neglected

2. ☐M ☐F

Street Address City State Zip Telephone Number Relationship To Children Allegedly Abused/Neglected

SECTION IV -ABUSE OR NEGLECT ALLEGATIONS (Describe what happened, how it affected the children, and the date(s) occurred, if known)

Did you see the abuse or neglect when it occurred? D Yes D No If no, how did you find out about it?

Please identify other people who witnessed the abuse/neglect or who may have information about the child's or family's situation.

	Name	Address	Telephone#	Relationship to Children
1.				
2.				

SECTION V - OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

SECTION VI - REPORTER

Name Address Telephone Number Title/Agency/Relationship To Children

Did you verbally report the allegations to the Department of Human Resources or law enforcement? D Yes (specify to whom in section below) D No

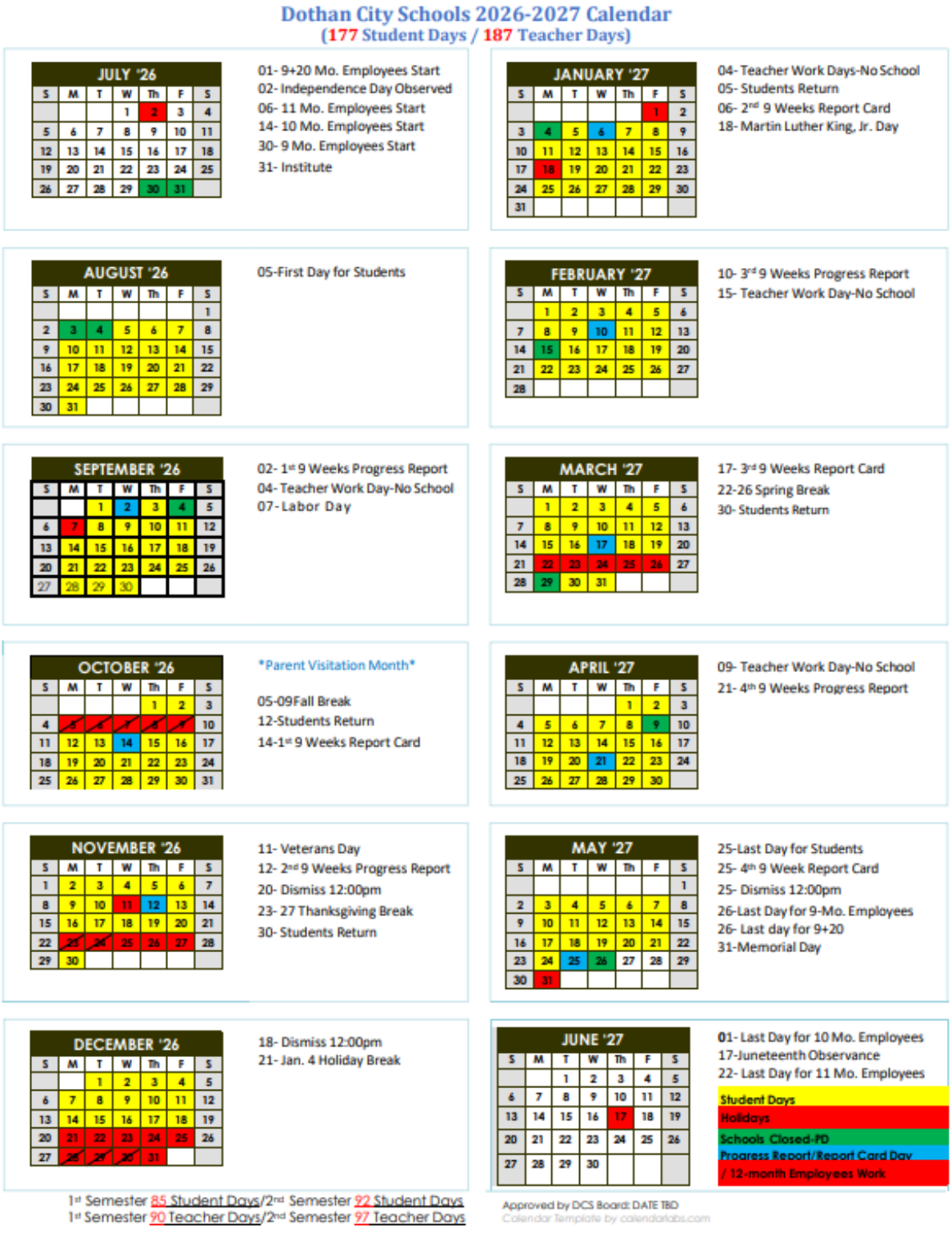
Name Name of County OHR, Police Department, or Sheriff's Department Date Reported

Signature _____ Date _____

For DHR Use Only County _____ Case# ---------- Date Report Received _____

DHR-FCS-1593 (August 2016)

School Calendar for 2026-2027 School Year



Alabama Educator Code of Ethics

Introduction
The primary goal of every educator in the state of Alabama must, at all times, be to provide an environment in which all students can learn. In order to accomplish that goal, educators must value the worth and dignity of every person, must have a devotion to excellence in all matters, must actively support the pursuit of knowledge, and must fully participate in the nurturance of a democratic citizenry. To do so requires an adherence to a high ethical standard.

The Alabama Educator Code of Ethics defines the professional behavior of educators in Alabama and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The code protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators; outlines objective standards of conduct for professional educators; and clearly defines actions of an unethical nature for which disciplinary sanctions are justified.

Code of Ethics Standards
Standard 1: Professional Conduct
An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in the development and maintenance of high standards.
- Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional and supportive learning environment.
- Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to developing professionally in order to promote student learning.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the certificate holder's ability to function in his or her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Harassment of colleagues
- Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
- Inappropriate language on school grounds
- Physical altercations
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students

Standard 2: Trustworthiness
*An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practic*e.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
- Embodying for students the characteristics of intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal record, or employment history when applying for employment or certification
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state, and/or other governmental agencies.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts
An educator should abide by federal, state and local laws and statutes.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission of conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Teacher/Student Relationship
An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Fulfilling the roles of trusted confidante, mentor, and advocate for students' growth
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students
- Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement
- Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Committing any act of child abuse, including physical or verbal abuse
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, or disability
- Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs

Standard 5: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession
An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
- Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or using tobacco. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc., where students are involved.

Standard 6: Public Funds and Property
An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious used of said funds
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Misusing public or school-related funds
- Failing to account for funds collected from students and parents
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
- Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
- Using school property without the approval of the local school board or education/governing body

Standard 7: Remunerative conduct
An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- ensuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
- Ensuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Soliciting students or parents of student to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body
- Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there appears to be a conflict of interest
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education

Standard 8: Maintenance of Confidentiality
An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law
- Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status/income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law

- Violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violation of local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items.
- Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state of local policy

Standard 9: Abandonment of Contract

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer
- Refusing to perform services required by the contract

Reporting

Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics as soon as possible, but no later than sixty (60) days from the date the educator became aware of the alleged breach, unless law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of their local school board policies and procedures and/or chain of command for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the local or state school boards, or with the State Department of Education Teacher Certification Section, must be filed in writing and must include the original signature of the complainant.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05(1)-5-C

Each Superintendent shall submit to the State Superintendent of Education within ten calendar days of the decision, the name and social security number of each employee holding an Alabama certificate or license who is terminated, or non-renewed, resigns, or is placed on administrative leave for cause, and shall indicate the reason for such action.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action shall be defined as the issuance of a reprimand or warning, or the suspension, revocation or denial of certificates. "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate issued by the authority of the Alabama State Department of Education.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.22

(1) Authority of the State Superintendent of Education
  (a) The Superintendent shall have the authority under existing legal standards to:
    1. Revoke any certificate held by a person who has been proven guilty of immoral conduct or unbecoming or indecent behavior in Alabama or any other state or nation in accordance with Ala. Code § 16-23-5 (1975).
    2. Refuse to issue a certificate to an applicant whose certificate has been subject to adverse action by another state until after the adverse action has been resolved by that state.
    3. Suspend or revoke an individual's certificate issued by the Superintendent when a certificate or license issued by another state is subject to adverse action.
    4. Refuse to issue, suspend, or recall a certificate for just cause.

Any of the following grounds shall also be considered cause for disciplinary action:

- Unethical conduct as outlined in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, Standards 1-9

- Order from a court of competent jurisdiction
- Violation of any other laws or rules applicable to the profession
- Any other good and sufficient cause

An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, or substitute teacher during the period of his or her revocation, suspension, or denial.