



## Annual Policy Notification 2026–2027

All employees are asked to take a few minutes to review the attached information, which is intended to inform employees of governance requirements for the 2026–2027 school year. There are several links on the district's public website, [www.houstonisd.org](http://www.houstonisd.org), to the Houston Independent School District (HISD) policy manual, [Policy Online](#). It is the responsibility of all employees to know the district's governance including laws, board policies, and administrative regulations.

### What are Legal Frameworks?

Legal frameworks are provided by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). They contain legal context, drawing from the national and state constitutions, federal and state law, case law, attorney general opinions, and rules from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and State Board of Education (SBOE). The School Board does not approve these documents and district staff cannot change them.

### What is Board Policy?

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

### What are Administrative Regulations and Exhibits?

A process or procedure implementing district policy is commonly defined as an administrative regulation. These documents are termed REGULATIONS by TASB. Not all regulations are in *Policy Online* or in the TASB format; for example, many are in department manuals. Forms or supplemental information related to policies and regulations are EXHIBITS. The School Board does not approve these documents.

### Organization of HISD's Governance Documents

Governance documents, comprised of legal frameworks, local policies, administrative regulations, and exhibits, are organized according to the TASB codification system. The sections are devoted to the following areas of school governance:

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

Changes may occur throughout the year, so departments and schools should routinely review and update generated material (forms, brochures, manuals, and all other relevant documentation) to ensure compliance with district governance.

After approval but before publication in *Policy Online*, revisions may be viewed in the Recently Updated Governance Documents section of <https://www.houstonisd.org/board-governance/policies-regulations>; the revisions are shown as tracked changes.

## Accessing Governance Documents

Governance documents (i.e., legal frameworks, local policies, administrative regulations, and exhibits) are incorporated into a single online manual called [Policy Online](#), except for regulations contained elsewhere (such as the *Finance Procedures Manual*). Searches can be performed by governance code or keyword.

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

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

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

## For All Employees

The School Board has set forth a [vision and goals](#) for the whole district. All employees should be working in support of the vision and goals.

The governance documents referenced below are relevant to all employees and should be reviewed by everyone annually.

All employees are responsible for reviewing policies annually. Electronic copies of all referenced policies are available by clicking the links.

### Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

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

- [DH series](#), [DHA\(LEGAL\)](#), [FO series](#), and [FNC legal framework](#)—Governance documents addressing standards of conduct for employees and students.
- [DIA series](#), [FB series](#), and [FFH series](#)—Governance documents regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, including the relevant exhibits containing the contact information for reporting such behavior, for employees and students.

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## **Bullying**

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

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

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

- [BQ\(LEGAL\)](#)—Framework referring to the district plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children;
- [DH series](#)—Governance documents addressing employee standards of conduct;
- [DHA\(LEGAL\)](#)—The *Educator's Code of Ethics*;
- [FFG series](#)—Governance documents addressing child abuse and neglect, trafficking, and maltreatment of students; and
- [GRA series](#)—Governance documents addressing child abuse investigations.

## **Crisis Intervention**

The district has a program that supports early mental health intervention and suicide prevention as outlined in the [FFB series](#).

## **Drug-free Workplace**

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

## **Standards of Conduct and Conflict of Interest**

[DHA\(LEGAL\)](#) includes the *Educator's Code of Ethics*, which is codified in state law and applies to all Texas educators; it is enforced by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). HISD's employee conduct policy, [DH\(LOCAL\)](#), carries serious consequences governing employee conduct. Conflict of interest arises when there is incompatibility between professional duties and personal interests. The following governance defines conduct that constitutes a conflict of interest and specifies the sanctions for violations: the [DH series](#); [CAA series](#); [CDC series](#); and [DBD series](#) for all employees. Please see [DBD2\(REGULATION\)](#) for the annual disclosure process.

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### Technology and Technology Resources

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

- [CQ series](#)—Governance documents addressing technology for employees and students.
- [CQD series](#)—Governance documents addressing the use of artificial intelligence by employees and students.
- [CY series](#)—Governance documents addressing copyright restrictions for employees and students.

### Social Media

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

The following governance defines social media use:

- [DH\(LOCAL\)](#), *Employee Standards of Conduct*
- [DHA\(LEGAL\)](#), *Employee Standards of Conduct: Educator Code of Ethics*
- [CQ\(LOCAL\)](#), *Technology Resources*
- [CY\(LOCAL\)](#), *Intellectual Property*

### Equal Educational Opportunity

Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), HISD ensures communications with individuals who have hearing, vision, speech, or other sensory impairments are as effective as communications with others. When an auxiliary aid or service is required to assist with communication, HISD will provide an opportunity for individuals with disabilities to request the auxiliary aids and services of their choice and must give primary consideration to the choice expressed by the individual. Primary consideration means that the district must honor the choice, unless it can demonstrate that another equally effective means of communication is available. [FB1\(REGULATION\)](#) and [FB2\(REGULATION\)](#) address effective communication under Title II.

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## Employment Policies

Texas Education Code (TEC) 21.204(d) requires the School Board to provide teachers, at the teacher's request, a copy of the board's employment policies. This law applies only to employees with educator term contracts, but all employees should review the district's employment policies and related governance documents. These documents include:

[DAA](#), *Employment Objectives: Equal Employment Opportunity*

[DBAA](#), *Employment Requirements and Restrictions: Pre-Employment Reviews*

[DBB](#), *Medical Examinations and Communicable Diseases*

[DBD](#), *Employment Requirements and Restrictions: Conflict of Interest*

[DC series](#), *Employment Practices*

[DCA](#), *Employment Practices: Probationary Contracts*

[DCB](#), *Employment Practices: Term Contracts*

[DCC](#), *Employment Practices: Continuing Contracts*

[DEA series](#), *Compensation and Benefits: Compensation Plan*

[DEAA](#), *Compensation Plan: Incentives and Stipends*

[DEC series](#), *Compensation and Benefits: Leaves and Absences*

[DECA series](#), *Leaves and Absences: Family and Medical Leave*

[DECB](#), *Leaves and Absences: Military Leave*

[DF series](#), *Termination of Employment*

[DFAA](#), *Probationary Contracts: Suspension/Termination During Contract*

[DFAB](#), *Probationary Contracts: Termination at End of Year*

[DFAC](#), *Probationary Contracts: Return to Probationary Status*

[DFBA series](#), *Term Contracts: Suspension/Termination During Contract*

[DFD](#), *Termination of Employment: Hearings Before Hearing Examiner*

[DFE](#), *Termination of Employment: Resignation*

[DFF](#), *Termination of Employment: Reduction in Force*

[DFFA](#), *Reduction in Force: Financial Exigency*

[DFFB](#), *Reduction in Force: Program Change*

[DG](#), *Employee Rights and Privileges*

[DGBA](#), *Personnel-Management Relations: Employee Complaints/Grievances*

[DH series](#), *Employee Standards of Conduct*

[DHA](#), *Employee Standards of Conduct: Educator Code of Ethics*

[DHB](#), *Employee Standards of Conduct: Reports to State Board for Educator Certification*

[DHE](#), *Employee Standards of Conduct: Searches and Alcohol/Drug Testing*

[DI series](#), *Employee Welfare*

[DIA](#), *Employee Welfare: Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation*

[DK](#), *Assignment and Schedules*

[DMA](#), *Professional Development: Required Staff Development*

[DN series](#), *Performance Appraisal*

[DNA](#), *Performance Appraisal: Evaluation of Teachers*

[DNB](#), *Performance Appraisal: Evaluation of Campus Administrators*

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## For Employees Who Enforce Meal Policies

### Enforcement of Meal Policies

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

## For Teachers and Administrators

### Information Pertaining to Student Discipline

TEC 37.018 requires that each teacher and administrator review [Chapter 37](#), sections 37.001 through 37.023, dealing with student discipline, as well as all relevant local district policies. Therefore, in addition to the Chapter 37 sections, please review the [FN series](#) and the [FO series](#). Teachers and administrators should also review the [Student Code of Conduct](#) as approved by the School Board and the [Student Handbook](#).

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

### Information Pertaining to Field Trips

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

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