GAINESVILLE ISD

2026-2027 Employee Handbook

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of a disability, please email arains@gainesvilleisd.org.

Table of Contents

Employee Handbook Receipt **6**

Introduction **7**

District Information **8**

GISD Vision Statement 8
GISD Mission Statement 8
GISD Core Beliefs 8
Board of Trustees 9
Board Meeting Schedule 9
Administration 10
School Calendar 11
Helpful Contacts 123
School Directory 13

Employment **14**

Equal Employment Opportunity 14
Job Vacancy Announcements 14
Employment after Retirement 155
Contract and Noncontract Employment 15
Certification and Licenses 16
Recertification of Employment Authorization 16
Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing 16
Health Safety Training 17
Reassignments and Transfers 188
Workload and Work Schedules 18
ADA Accommodations 19
Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk 19
Pregnant Workers Fairness Act 20
Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications 20
Outside Employment and Tutoring 21
Performance Evaluation 21
Employee Involvement 22
Staff Development 22
Mental Health Training 22

Compensation and Benefits **23**

Salaries, Wages, and Stipends 23
Paychecks 23
Automatic Payroll Deposit 24
Payroll Deductions 24
Overtime Compensation 24
Travel Expense Reimbursement 25

Health, Dental, and Life Insurance 255
Supplemental Insurance Benefits 266
Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125) 266
Workers' Compensation Insurance 266
Unemployment Compensation Insurance 277
Teacher Retirement 27
Other Benefit Programs 27

Leaves and Absences 28

Personal Leave 29
State Sick Leave 30
Local Leave 30
Extended Leave 31
Vacation 311
Sick Leave Bank (or Pool) 311
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions 32
Local Procedures for Implementing Family and Medical Leave Provisions 355
Temporary Disability Leave 366
Workers' Compensation Benefits 37
Assault Leave 37
Bereavement Leave 38
Jury Duty 38
Compliance with a Subpoena 38
Truancy Court Appearances 38
Religious Observance 39
Military Leave 39
Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers and Licensed Telecommunicators 39
Quarantine Leave for Peace Officers 40
Leave for Police Officers for Illness or Injury 40
Payment for Accumulated Leave Upon Separation 41

Employee Relations and Communications 422

Employee Recognition and Appreciation 422
District Communications 422

Complaints and Grievances 433

Employee Conduct and Welfare 444

Standards of Conduct 44
Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation 51
Harassment of Students 52
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse 52
Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children 53
Reports to Texas Education Agency 54
Reporting Crime 55

Scope and Sequence 55
Technology Resources 55
Personal Use of Electronic Communications 56
Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents 57
Public Information on Private Devices 60
Criminal History Background Checks 60
Employee Arrests and Convictions 60
Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention 61
Tobacco and Nicotine Products and E-Cigarette Use 61
Fraud and Financial Impropriety 62
Conflict of Interest 63
Gifts and Favors 63
Copyrighted Materials 63
Associations and Political Activities 64
Charitable Contributions 64
Safety and Security 64
Possession of Firearms and Weapons 65
Visitors in the Workplace 65
Asbestos Management Plan 65
Pest Control Treatment 66
Employee Dress Code 66

General Procedures 67

Emergency School Closing 67
Emergencies 68
Purchasing Procedures 68
Name and Address Changes 68
Personnel Records 69
Facility Use 69

Termination of Employment 69

Resignations 69
Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees 71
Dismissal of Noncontract Employees 71
Discharge of Convicted Employees 71
Prohibition on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 72
Prohibited Classroom Instruction 72
Exit Interviews and Procedures 72
Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding 72

Student Issues 73

Equal Educational Opportunities 73
Student Records 73
Parent and Student Complaints 74
Administering Medication to Students 74

Dietary Supplements 74
Psychotropic Drugs 75
Student Conduct and Discipline 75
Student Attendance 75
Bullying 76
Hazing 76

Employee Handbook Receipt

Name _____

Campus/Department _____

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the GAINESVILLE ISD Employee Handbook. I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document.

Employees have the option of receiving the handbook in electronic format or hard copy. To receive electronic format, complete the Employee Handbook Receipt form in the GISD Frontline Central Self-Service Portal.

Please indicate your choice by checking the appropriate box below:

- ❒ I choose to receive the employee handbook in electronic format and accept responsibility for accessing it according to the instructions provided above.
- ❒ I choose to receive a hard copy of the employee handbook and understand I am required to contact Human Resources to obtain a hard copy.

The information in this handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in district policies may supersede, modify, or render obsolete the information summarized in this document. As the district provides updated policy information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes.

I understand that no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will employment relationships are intended by this handbook.

I understand that I have an obligation to inform my supervisor or department head of any changes in personal information such as phone number, address, etc. I also accept responsibility for contacting my supervisor or the Department of Human Resources if I have questions or concerns or need further explanation.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Please sign and date this receipt and forward it to your campus administrator.

Introduction

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

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. District policies can be accessed Online at https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/336.

District Information

Gainesville ISD Vision Statement
Reaching every student every day to be learners and leaders.

Gainesville ISD Mission Statement
We ensure students and staff develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for immediate and future success, through a cooperative effort of school, home and community.

Gainesville ISD Core Beliefs
Equity- We believe access to a world class education in Gainesville is a right for all not a privilege for a few. We will never allow race, economic status or our own systems to be barriers to the education all students deserve.

Excellence- We believe in challenging ourselves and the bar we have created for academic, social and emotional success in Gainesville. We will always raise the bar by believing that excellence is in our reach but not quite in our hands.

Diversity- We believe that a diverse student and staff population enriches the learning environment. We value the unique identity of every adult and student in GISD and will actively seek diversity in all that we do.

Innovation- We believe we are preparing students for a future we cannot predict. We must empower students with the tools, leadership and facilities to drive innovation in thought and in action.

Partnership- We believe strong partnerships are critical to achieving our vision. Partnerships provide innovative ideas and expertise that benefit our staff, students, families and community.

Safe and comfortable environment- We are committed to creating a learning environment that is safe, secure and comfortable, both physically and emotionally for all students.

Board of Trustees
Policies BA, BB series, BD series, and BE series

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

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

Current board members include:

- Corey Hardin, President
- Marvin Royal, Vice President
- Nathan Dempsey, Secretary
- Jennifer Presson, Member
- Laura Otts, Member
- Pamela Clegg, Member
- Dan Doss, Member

The board usually meets the third Monday of the month at 5:00 P.M. In the event that large attendance is anticipated, the board may meet at an alternate location that will be announced in advance. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the district website and at the GISD Administration Building at least three business days before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a one-hour notice.

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

Board Meeting Schedule

August 17, 2026	September 21, 2026	October 19, 2026
November 16, 2026	December 14, 2026	January 19, 2027
February 16, 2027	March 22, 2027	April 19, 2027
May 17, 2027	June 21, 2027	July 19, 2027

Administration

Superintendent- **Dr. DesMontes Stewart**

Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction- **Dana Dudenhoeffer**

Director of Human Resources/State & Federal Programs- **Amber Rains**

Director of Finance-

Director of Special Education- **Mary Flanagan**

Director of Technology- **Jordan Howard**

Director of Public Relations- **Leslie Crutsinger**

Director of Athletics- **Neil Searcy**

Director of Fine Arts- **Cameron Green**

Director of Transportation- **Alvin Thomas**

Director of Maintenance and Operations- **Joe Warren**

School Calendar

Teacher Calendar- page 11
Student Calendar- page 12

GAINESVILLE ISD
2026-2027 TEACHER CALENDAR
Every Leopard. Every Day!

JULY/AUGUST 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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30	31					

SEPTEMBER 2026

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OCTOBER 2026

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NOVEMBER 2026

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DECEMBER 2026

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27	28	29	30	31		

New Teacher Orientation
First/Last Day of School
District Holiday
Teacher Flex Day

CAMPUS INSTRUCTION HOURS

Head Start	7:25 A.M. - 3:05 P.M.
Edison Elementary	7:35 A.M. - 3:15 P.M.
Chalmers Elementary	7:45 A.M. - 3:25 P.M.
Gainesville Intermediate	7:55 A.M. - 3:35 P.M.
Gainesville Junior High	8:05 A.M. - 3:45 P.M.
Gainesville High School	8:15 A.M. - 3:55 P.M.

IMPORTANT DATES

July 28-30	New Teacher Orientation
August 3-7;10-11	Teacher Staff Day
September 7	Labor Day
September 17	End of 1st Six Weeks
September 18	Teacher Staff Day
October 12	Columbus Day
October 29	End of 2nd Six Weeks
October 30	Teacher Staff Day
Nov 23-27	Thanksgiving Break
December 18	End of 3rd Six Weeks
December 18	Student Half Day
Dec 21 - Jan 1	Christmas Break
January 4	Teacher Staff Day
January 18	MLK, Jr. Day
February 11	End of 4th Six Weeks
February 12	Teacher Staff Day
February 15	President's Day
March 1	Teacher Flex Day
March 8	Teacher Flex Day
March 15-19	Spring Break
March 26	Good Friday
March 29	Teacher Flex Day
April 1	End of 5th Six Weeks
April 2	Teacher Staff Day
April 5	Bad Weather Makeup
April 12	Teacher Staff Day
April 19	Teacher Flex Day
April 26	Teacher Flex Day
May 3	Teacher Flex Day
May 10	Bad Weather Makeup
May 17	Teacher Flex Day
May 24	Teacher Flex Day
May 27	Student Half Day
May 28	Teacher Staff Day

Teacher Days: 180 **Minutes: 75,900**
Student Days: 165 **Banked Days: 0**

JANUARY 2027

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FEBRUARY 2027

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MARCH 2027

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APRIL 2027

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MAY 2027

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Teacher Staff Day
Grading Period Ends
Bad Weather Makeup Day
Student Half Day

GAINESVILLE ISD
2026-2027 STUDENT CALENDAR
Every Leopard, Every Day!

AUGUST 2026

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SEPTEMBER 2026

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OCTOBER 2026

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NOVEMBER 2026

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DECEMBER 2026

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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

CAMPUS INSTRUCTION HOURS

Head Start	7:25 A.M. - 3:05 P.M.
Edison Elementary	7:35 A.M. - 3:15 P.M.
Chalmers Elementary	7:45 A.M. - 3:25 P.M.
Gainesville Intermediate	7:55 A.M. - 3:35 P.M.
Gainesville Junior High	8:05 A.M. - 3:45 P.M.
Gainesville High School	8:15 A.M. - 3:55 P.M.

IMPORTANT DATES

August 12	First Day of School
September 7	Labor Day
September 17	End of 1st Six Weeks
September 18	No School
October 12	Columbus Day
October 29	End of 2nd Six Weeks
October 30	No School
Nov 23-27	Thanksgiving Break
December 18	End of 3rd Six Weeks
December 18	Student Half Day
Dec 21 - Jan 1	Christmas Break
January 4	No School
January 18	MLK, Jr. Day
February 11	End of 4th Six Weeks
February 12	No School
February 15	President's Day
March 1	No School
March 8	No School
March 15-19	Spring Break
March 26	Good Friday
March 29	No School
April 1	End of 5th Six Weeks
April 2	No School
April 5	Bad Weather Makeup
April 12	No School
April 19	No School
April 26	No School
May 3	No School
May 10	Bad Weather Makeup
May 17	No School
May 24	No School
May 27	Last Day/Student Half Day

JANUARY 2027

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FEBRUARY 2027

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MARCH 2027

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APRIL 2027

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MAY 2027

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

First/Last Day of School | Student Holiday | Bad Weather Makeup Day
Grading Period Ends | District Holiday | Student Half Day

Teacher Days: 180 Minutes: 75,900
Student Days: 165 Banked Days: 0

Helpful Contacts

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

School Directory

Gainesville Head Start
912 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.
940.665.4619

Thomas A. Edison Elementary
1 Edison Dr.
940.665.6091

W. E. Chalmers Elementary
600 S. F.M. 3092
940.665.4147

Gainesville Intermediate School
2100 N. Grand
940.668.6662

Gainesville Junior High School
1201 S. Lindsay
940.665.4062

Gainesville High School
2201 S. I-35
940.665.5528

Gainesville ISD – DAEP
1000 FM 3092
940.665.0277

Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity

Policies DAA, DIA

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

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

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator for employees to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: Amber Rains, Director of Human Resources, 900 N Grand Ave Gainesville, Texas 76240, arains@gainesvilleisd.org, 940-668-3632. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, email, or phone. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator for employees for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: Mary Flanagan, Director of Special Education, 900 N Grand Ave Gainesville, Texas 76240, mflanagan@gainesvilleisd.org, 940-665-6007.

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

Job Vacancy Announcements

Policy DC

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

Employment after Retirement

Policy DC

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

Contract and Noncontract Employment

Policy DC series

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

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

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

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

Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees. Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as noninstructional administrators) are not employed by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district.

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

Certification and Licenses

Policies DBA, DF

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

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

Recertification of Employment Authorization

Policy DC

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

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

Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing

Policy CQ, DHE

Noninvestigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no

legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the district reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The district may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including district-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on district premises or work sites or used in district business. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may result if an employee refuses to submit to testing or is found to violate district policy.

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

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

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

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

Health Safety Training

Policies DBA, DMA

District employees who are head directors of a marching band or head coaches or chief sponsors of an extracurricular athletic activity (including cheerleading) that is sponsored or sanctioned by the district or UIL must maintain and submit to the district proof of current certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another authorized organization that provides equivalent training and certification. **Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to the district Lead Nurse: Angela Sloop by October 2, 2026.**

Nurses, athletic coaches or sponsors, PE teachers, marching band directors, cheerleading coaches, and other certain employees must obtain and maintain certification in the principles

and techniques of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) provided by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another authorized organization that provides equivalent training and certification. **Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to the district Lead Nurse: Angela Sloop by October 2, 2026.**

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

Reassignments and Transfers

Policy DK

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit his or her request by completing the Google Transfer Form on or before the due date outlined in the form. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Human Resource's office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

Workload and Work Schedules

Policies DEAB, DK, DL

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

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation including conferences. **The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at**

least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The district may require teachers to supervise students during lunch one day a week when no other personnel are available.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees. Support employees are employed at will and receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. See Overtime Compensation on page 24 for additional information.

ADA Accommodations

Policies DAA, DBB, DIA

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

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

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

Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk

Policies DEAB, DG

Gainesville ISD is designated as a Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite. The district supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk.

The district provides a private location(s), that is not a bathroom, is shielded from view and free from intrusion, and is equipped for the purpose of milk expression. A nearby, clean, and safe water source, a sink for washing hands and rinsing out breast pump equipment, and a hygienic storage option for mothers to safely store breast milk is also available.

Flexible work schedules including breaks and work patterns to provide time for expression of breast milk will be provided. For nonexempt employees, these breaks are unpaid and are not counted as hours worked. Employees should meet with their supervisor to discuss their needs and arrange break times.

The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections of Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) requires an employee to notify the district if they believe the district is out of compliance in providing breaks for a nursing mother. The employee must give the district 10 days to come into compliance before making any claim of liability against the district. An employee with concerns should contact Amber Rains, Director of Human Resources, 940-668-3632.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) provides consideration of accommodations to employees who have known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. An employee seeking a PWFA accommodation should contact Amber Rains, Director of Human Resources, 940-668-3632 to begin the interactive process.

Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications

Policies DK, DBA

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

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

Outside Employment and Tutoring

Policy DBD

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

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

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

Performance Evaluation

Policy DN, DPB series

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

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

Employee Involvement

Policies BQA, BQB

At both the campus and district levels, Gainesville ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from the Human Resources Department.

Staff Development

Policy DMA

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

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

Mental Health Training

Policy DMA

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

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

Compensation and Benefits

Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The district's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All district positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as nonexempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek. (See *Overtime Compensation*, page 23.)

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

Employees should contact the Department of Human Resources for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

Paychecks

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

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

September 15, 2026	December 15, 2026	March 15, 2027	June 15, 2027
October 15, 2026	January 15, 2027	April 15, 2027	July 15, 2027
November 13, 2026	February 12, 2027	May 14, 2027	August 13, 2027

Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of five work days is necessary to activate this service. Contact Kimberly Gardner, Payroll Specialist, for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll Deductions

Policy CFEA

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

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

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance; annuities; and higher education savings plans or prepaid tuition programs. Employees also may request payroll deduction for payment of membership dues to professional organizations, Alternative Certification Programs and United Way Contributions. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

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

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

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

Overtime Compensation

Policies DEAB, DEC

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees and paraprofessional

employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

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

Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour workweek and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours.

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

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

Travel Expense Reimbursement

Policy DEE

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and the Superintendent's Office must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the district. Employees must submit receipts, to the extent possible, to be reimbursed for allowable expenses other than mileage. When being reimbursed with federal funds, receipts are REQUIRED.

Health, Dental, and Life Insurance

Policy CRD

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school employee health insurance program. The district's contribution to employee insurance

premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

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

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

Supplemental Insurance Benefits

Policy CRD

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for additional health needs. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact, Ashley Long, Benefits Specialist, for more information.

Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)

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

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

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Policy CRE

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from Edward's Risk Management, effective September 1, 2010.

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

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the campus nurse, or your direct supervisor. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See *Workers' Compensation Benefits,* page 35 for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

Unemployment Compensation Insurance

Policy CRF

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact the Department of Human Resources.

Teacher Retirement

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

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify the Department of Human Resources as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the web (www.trs.texas.gov). See page 14 for information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

Other Benefit Programs

Leaves and Absences

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

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

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

- Comp Time
- Local Leave
- State Sick Leave accumulated before 1995-1996 SY
- State Personal Leave

Employees must follow district and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated or available paid leave shall result in deduction from the employee's pay.

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

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

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.
- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or another individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law
- Grandparent and grandchild
- Any person residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death

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

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

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

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

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

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

Personal Leave

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

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

Discretionary. Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor **2 days in advance** of the anticipated absence. The effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor.

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

State Sick Leave

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

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

Local Leave

All employees who work a minimum of 20 hours per week shall earn five workdays of local leave per school year, at the same rate as state personal leave. Local leave shall accumulate to a maximum of 15 workdays and shall be taken with no loss of pay. Upon separation of employment with the district, however, an employee shall forfeit all accumulated local leave. Local leave shall be used only for illness of the employee, illness of a member of the employee's immediate family, family emergency, and death in the employee's immediate family, which are the terms and conditions of state sick leave accumulated before 1995-96 school year [see DEC (LEGAL)]. (Exception to this is that an employee may use local leave for well-baby care within the first year after birth, adoption, or placement of a child or donate leave to a sick leave pool.)

Extended Leave

After all available paid leave days and any applicable compensatory time have been exhausted, an employee who has worked in the district for a minimum of one full year shall be granted in a school year a maximum of 30 leave days of extended sick leave to be used only for the employee's own catastrophic illness or injury, including pregnancy-related illness or injury.

A written request for extended sick leave must be accompanied by medical certification of the illness or injury.

The district shall deduct the average daily rate of pay of a substitute for the employee's position for each day of extended sick leave taken, whether or not a substitute is employed.

Vacation

Policy DED

Employees working 260 days earn vacation days based on years of service calculated from the latest hire date with the district. Employees who were previously employed with the district and return will utilize the latest hire date for vacation day calculations. Employees with zero years of service are eligible for 5 vacation days on the first anniversary date with the

district. For every year following the vacation days are pre-awarded in August.

Vacation Day Calculations:

0-1 year 0 vacation days
1-2 years 5 vacation days
3-6 years 10 vacation days
7+ years 15 vacation days

Sick Leave Bank (or Pool)

An employee who has exhausted all paid leave and who suffers from a catastrophic illness or injury may request the establishment of a sick leave pool, to which District employees may donate only local leave for use by the eligible employee. A routine illness, minor surgery, minor

injury, or an otherwise uncomplicated pregnancy shall not be eligible to receive donated days from a sick leave pool.

If the employee is unable to submit the request, a member of the employee's family or the employee's supervisor may submit the request to establish a sick leave pool.

A sick leave pool shall be composed of voluntary and confidential donations by District staff for a specific individual. Donated days shall be designated to a specific pool. An employee may donate up to three days of local leave per school year. Any days donated shall be forfeited by the employee donating the leave. An eligible employee shall receive a maximum of 30 workdays in a school year from a sick leave pool and shall be limited to 60 work-days in a five-year period.

A request for the establishment of a sick leave pool shall be submitted in writing to the Superintendent. The request must be accompanied by medical certification of the illness or injury. The medical certification shall be signed by the health care provider and must include the nature of the illness, injury, or disability of the employee; certification that the condition prohibits the employee from performing assigned duties; and an anticipated date of return to work.

The pool shall cease to exist when the employee no longer needs leave for the purpose requested, uses the maximum number of days allowed under a pool, or exhausts all leave days donated to the sick leave pool. Any unused days shall not be returned to the donors, and no general pool shall remain in existence.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions

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

What is FMLA leave?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Am I eligible to take FMLA leave?

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

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

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

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

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

How do I request FMLA leave?

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

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

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

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

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

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

What does my employer need to do?

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

- Allow you to take job-protected time off work for a qualifying reason,
- Continue your group health plan coverage while you are on leave on the same basis as if you had not taken leave, and
- Allow you to return to the same job, or a virtually identical job with the same pay, benefits and other working conditions, including shift and location, at the end of your leave.

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

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

If your employer determines that you are eligible, **your employer *must* notify you in writing**:

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

Where can I find more information?

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

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

WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

SCAN ME

Local Procedures for Implementing Family and Medical Leave Provisions

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

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

Combined Leave for Spouses. Spouses who are employed by the district are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FML to care for a parent with a serious health condition; or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

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

Fitness for Duty. An employee that takes FML due to the employee's own serious health condition shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification from the health care provider. When leave is taken for the employee's own serious health condition, the

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

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

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

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

District Contact. Employees that require FML or have questions should contact the Human Resources Department for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Temporary Disability Leave

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

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be accepted as a request for temporary disability leave. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days.

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

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

Workers' Compensation Benefits

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

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

Assault Leave

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to an employee who is injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An incident involving an assault is a work-related injury and should be immediately reported to the Human Resources Department.

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

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

district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

Bereavement Leave

Policy DEC

Bereavement leave, of up to two days may be granted for the death of a family member. The days will not be deducted from the employee's time off. Additional days of absence may result in a deduction of accumulated time off. The Bereavement days must be taken consecutively. The leave cannot be used more than once within a 12-month period.

Jury Duty

Policies DEC, DG

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

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

Compliance with a Subpoena

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

Truancy Court Appearances

An employee who is a parent, guardian of a child, or a court-appointed guardian ad litem of a child who is required to miss work to attend a truancy court hearing may use personal leave or compensatory time for the absence. Employees who do not have paid leave available will be docked for any absence required because of the court appearance.

Religious Observance

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

Military Leave

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

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

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

Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers and Licensed Telecommunicators

Policy DEC

A District peace officer who experiences a traumatic event in the scope of employment shall be granted a maximum of three days of mental health leave traumatic event. Such leave shall be

provided in accordance with administrative regulations and shall not be deducted from the employee's pay or leave balance.

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

Circumstances or reasons under which a peace officer may use mental health leave; Procedures for requesting mental health leave and maintaining the anonymity of the requester; The administrator authorized to approve requests for mental health leave; and

Other procedures deemed necessary for administering this provision.

Quarantine Leave for Peace Officers

Policy DEC

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

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

Continuation of all employment benefits and compensation for the duration of the leave; Reimbursement for reasonable costs related to the quarantine; and

Other procedures deemed necessary for administering this provision.

Leave for Police Officers for Illness or Injury

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

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

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

1. Circumstances or reasons under which a peace officer may use mental health leave;

2. Procedures for requesting mental health leave and maintaining the anonymity of the requester;

3. The administrator authorized to approve requests for mental health leave; and

4. Other procedures deemed necessary for administering this provision.

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

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

1. Continuation of all employment benefits and compensation for the duration of the leave;

2. Reimbursement for reasonable costs related to the quarantine; and

3. Other procedures deemed necessary for administering this provision.

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

Payment for Accumulated Leave Upon Separation

GISD staff who retire from TRS may elect to be compensated for unused State Personal Days. Staff may request to be paid up to 30 unused state days. Professional staff will be compensated at a rate of $50 for each day. Paraprofessional and Auxiliary staff will be compensated at a rate of $35.00. They payment for the days will be reflected on their service record.

Employee Relations and Communications

Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the district. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the district newsletter, and through special events and activities. Recognition and appreciation activities also include High Five Awards, Teacher of the Month/Year, Employee of the Month/Year, Rookie of the Year, End of Year Awards, etc.

District Communications

Throughout the school year, the communications office publishes newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements. They include the following:

Weekly campus smore e-newsletters distributed to campus staff and parents via Parent Square- published by campus principals and managed by the communications department;

Biweekly district smore e-newsletters distributed to all staff and all parents via Parent Square- published and managed by the communications department;

Management of campus and district google calendars which are published to the district website; news releases published to district social media, website, and distributed to local media

Complaints and Grievances

Policy DGBA

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

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

GISD Local Complaints and Grievances Policy

Employee Conduct and Welfare

Standards of Conduct

Policy DH, DHA

Each District employee shall perform his or her duties in accordance with state and federal law, District policy, and ethical standards. The district holds all employees accountable to the Educators' Code of Ethics. [See DHA(LEGAL)]

Each District employee shall recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community and shall work cooperatively with others to serve the best interests of the district.

An employee wishing to express concern, complaints, or criticism shall do so through appropriate channels. [See DGBA]

Violations of Standards of Conduct

Each employee shall comply with the standards of conduct set out in this policy and with any other policies, regulations, and guidelines that impose duties, requirements, or standards attendant to his or her status as a District employee. Violation of any policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering a false statement, or refusing to cooperate with a District investigation, may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. [See DCD, DCE, and DF series]

Weapons Prohibited

The district prohibits the use, possession, or display of any firearm, location-restricted knife, club, or prohibited weapon, as defined at FNCG, on District property at all times.

Exceptions

No violation of this policy occurs when:

1. Use or possession of a firearm by a specific employee is authorized by Board action [see the CKE series];
2. A District employee who holds a handgun license in accordance with state law stores a handgun or other firearm in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area provided by the district, provided the handgun or other firearm is not in plain view; or
3. The use, possession, or display of an otherwise prohibited weapon takes place as part of a District-approved activity supervised by proper authorities. [See FOD]

Electronic Communication

Use with Students

A certified employee, licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the Superintendent or a campus principal may use electronic communication, as this term is defined by law, with currently enrolled students only about matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities.

Unless an exception has been made in accordance with the employee handbook or other administrative regulations, an employee shall not use a personal electronic communication platform, application, or account to communicate with currently enrolled students.

Unless authorized above, all other employees are prohibited from using electronic communication directly with students who are currently enrolled in the district. The employee handbook or other administrative regulations shall further detail:

1. Exceptions for family and social relationships;
2. The circumstances under which an employee may use text messaging to communicate with individual students or student groups;
3. Hours of the day during which electronic communication is discouraged or prohibited; and
4. Other matters deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.

In accordance with ethical standards applicable to all District employees [see DHA(LEGAL)], an employee shall be prohibited from using electronic communications in a manner that constitutes prohibited harassment or abuse of a District student; adversely affects the student's learning, mental health, or safety; includes threats of violence against the student; reveals confidential information about the student; or constitutes an inappropriate communication with a student, as described in the Educators' Code of Ethics.

An employee shall have no expectation of privacy in electronic communications with students. Each employee shall comply with the district’s requirements for records retention and destruction to the extent those requirements apply to electronic communication. [See CPC]

Personal Use

All employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic communication as for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic communication violates state or federal law or District policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting Improper Communication

In accordance with administrative regulations, an employee shall notify his or her supervisor when a student engages in improper electronic communication with the employee.

Disclosing Personal Information

An employee shall not be required to disclose his or her personal email address or personal phone number to a student.

Prohibited Classroom Instruction or Activities

An employee is prohibited from intentionally or knowingly engaging in or assigning to another individual instruction, guidance, activities, or programming prohibited by law [see EMB].

Prohibited Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Duties

An employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment, if the employee, intentionally or knowingly:

- Engages in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) duties.
- Assigns to another individual DEI duties.

[See BT(LEGAL)]

Social Transitioning

An employee shall be prohibited from assisting a District student with social transitioning, as the term is defined in law. This prohibition includes providing any information to a District student about social transitioning or guidelines intended to assist a District student with social transitioning.

Safety Requirements

Each employee shall adhere to District safety rules and regulations and shall report unsafe conditions or practices to the appropriate supervisor.

Harassment or Abuse

An employee shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of:

1. Other employees. [See DIA]
2. Students. [See FFH; see FFG regarding child abuse and neglect.]

While acting in the course of employment, an employee shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other persons, including Board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents.

An employee shall report child abuse or neglect as required by law. [See FFG]

Relationships with Students

An employee shall not form romantic or other inappropriate social relationships with students. Any sexual relationship between a student and a District employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

As required by law, the district shall notify the parent of a student with whom a District employee or person acting as a service provider for the district is alleged to have engaged in certain misconduct.

[See FFF for parent notification requirements and DHB and DHC for reporting requirements.]

Tobacco and Nicotine Products and E-Cigarettes

An employee is prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, e-cigarette, or any other electronic vaporizing device while on school property, in a District vehicle, or while attending an off-campus school-related activity. An employee is also prohibited from possessing or using any type of nicotine product, including nicotine pouches, regardless of whether the product contains tobacco, while on District property, in a District vehicle, or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

An employee's supervisor is authorized to approve an exception to this policy for a smoking cessation product.

Alcohol and Drugs / Notice of Drug-Free Workplace

As a condition of employment, an employee shall abide by the terms of the following drug-free workplace provisions. An employee shall notify the Superintendent in writing if the employee is convicted for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace in accordance with Arrests, Indictments, Convictions, and Other Adjudications, below.

An employee shall not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances during working hours while on District property or at school-related activities during or outside of usual working hours:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.

3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.
4. Any other intoxicant or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug.

An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered "under the influence" of a controlled substance.

Exceptions

It shall not be considered a violation of this policy if the employee:

1. Manufactures, possesses, or dispenses a substance listed above as part of the employee's job responsibilities;
2. Uses or possesses a controlled substance or drug authorized by a licensed physician prescribed for the employee's personal use; or
3. Possesses a controlled substance or drug that a licensed physician has prescribed for the employee's child or other individual for whom the employee is a legal guardian.

Sanctions

An employee who violates these drug-free workplace provisions shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions may include:

1. Referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs;
2. Referral to employee assistance programs;
3. Termination from employment with the district; and
4. Referral to appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution.

Notice

Employees shall receive a copy of this policy.

Arrests, Indictments, Convictions, and Other Adjudications

An employee shall notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the employee for any felony, any offense involving moral turpitude, and any of the other offenses as indicated below:

1. Crimes involving school property or funds;
2. Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator;
3. Crimes that occur wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity; or
4. Crimes involving moral turpitude, which include:

- Dishonesty; fraud; deceit; theft; misrepresentation;
- Deliberate violence;
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor;
- Felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance defined in Chapter 481 of the Health and Safety Code;
- Felony driving while intoxicated (DWI); or
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code.

Dress and Grooming

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

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

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

Purpose and Scope

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

Enforceable Standards

1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Ethical Conduct toward Students

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;

2. the subject matter of the communication;

3. whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

4. whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;

5. whether the communication was sexually explicit; and

6. whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Policies DH, DIA

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

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

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

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is reprinted below:

GISD Local Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy

Harassment of Students

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

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

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

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

Procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students are listed below:

GISD Local Harassment of Students Policy

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Policies DG, FFG, GRA

All employees with reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §261.001, are required by state law to make a report to a law enforcement agency, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering the facility) within **24 hours** after the employee has reasonable cause to believe that the child has been abused or neglected. Law enforcement agency includes the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), a municipal police department, a county sheriff's office, or a county constable's office and does not include the district police.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children

Policy FFG

The district has established a plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at each GISD campus office. As an employee, it is important

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

Reports to Texas Education Agency

Policies DF, DHB, DHC

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting Crime

Policy DG

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

Scope and Sequence

Policy DG

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

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

Technology Resources

Policy CQ, CQD

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

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

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

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

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

Personal Use of Electronic Communications

Policy CQ, CY, DHA

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

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

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

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

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

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

Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents

Policy DH

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

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

- The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol;
- The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school;
- The parent understands that the employee's communications with the student are excepted from district regulation; and

- The parent is solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the employee and the student.

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

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

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

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

- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics including:
    - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
    - Copyright law [Policy CY]
    - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DH]
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.
- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district's record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in an improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

Public Information on Private Devices

Policy DH, GB

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

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

Criminal History Background Checks

Policy DBAA

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

Employee Arrests and Convictions

Policy DH, DHB, DHC

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

- Crimes involving school property or funds
- Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator
- Crimes that occur wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity
- Crimes involving moral turpitude

Moral turpitude includes the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit

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

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

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

Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention

Policy DHE

Gainesville ISD is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities on or off school property. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours may be dismissed. The district's policy regarding employee drug use follows:

GISD Local Alcohol and Drug Use Policy

Tobacco and Nicotine Products and E-Cigarette Use

Policies DH, FNCD, GKA

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

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

1. A device regardless of whether it is manufactured, distributed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, or e-pipe or under another product name or description; and

2. A component, part, or accessory for the device, regardless of whether the component, part, or accessory is sold separately from the device.

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

Fraud and Financial Impropriety

Policy CAA

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

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the district
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other district assets including employee time
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of district financial transactions
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of district information or activities
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the district
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the district, except as otherwise permitted by law or district policy
- Inappropriately destroying, removing, or using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment

- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state, or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or district policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the district
- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards

Conflict of Interest

Policy CB, DBD

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

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

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

Gifts and Favors

Policy DBD

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

Copyrighted Materials

Policy CY

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

purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Associations and Political Activities

Policy DGA

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

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

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

Charitable Contributions

Policy DG

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

Safety and Security

Policy CK series

The district has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety and security of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety and security program includes written guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. See Emergencies on page 63 for additional information.

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

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the GISD Police Chief.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Policies DH, FNCG, GKA

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other district provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisor or call the GISD Police immediately.

Visitors in the Workplace

Policy GKC

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

Asbestos Management Plan

Policy CSC

The district is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for each school. A copy of

the district's management plan is kept in the Director of Maintenance and Operation's office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Contact the following for more information:

Joe Warren
Certified State Asbestos Manager
940-668-3640

Pest Control Treatment

Policies CLB, DI

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

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

Contact the following person for more information:

Ty Lawson
Certified IPM
940-668-3640

Employee Dress Code

Employee Dress and Grooming Standards:

PANTS:

- Must not have any rips, tears, holes, or frayed edges
- No overalls or cargo pants
- Blue jeans are permitted on designated spirit days with Gainesville ISD school spirit shirts only
- Capri pants must fall below the knee
- Dress or casual slacks are permitted; yoga pants, leggings or exercise clothing worn as slacks are not permitted

SHORTS AND WINDSUITS:

- Allowed for PE teachers/coaches and wind suits/warm-ups must be school designed/approved
- Shorts are allowed for PE/coaching activities and are NOT permissible in the classroom, office area, cafeteria/common areas, etc.
- Allowed for all staff members on designated days only

SCRUBS:

- Allowed for nurses and nurse's aides

SHIRTS, BLOUSES, DRESSES, & SKIRTS:

- Must not be see-through
- Tank tops must be covered with a shirt
- No cleavage showing
- No t-shirts with advertisements/slogans of any kind
- Collared shirts (men) i.e., nice dress shirts, mock turtlenecks
- No bare midriffs
- Skirts must be at least to or at the knee. No shorter
- Gainesville ISD school spirit shirts only

SHOES:

- No house shoes of any type
- No rubber or foam flip flops
- No sandals (men only)

BODY PIERCING:

- No earrings on men
- Limit to two earrings per ear (women)
- No facial piercing
- All other body piercing must not be visible. (Must be removed or fully covered by clothing)

General Procedures

Emergency School Closing

Policy EB

The district may close schools because of severe weather, epidemics, or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the district's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to

release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post a notice on the district's website and notify the following radio and television stations:

KGAF Radio 1580 AM
KXII Television- Channel 12
KTEN Television- Channel 10

Emergencies

Policies CKC, CKD

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

Purchasing Procedures

Policy CH

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

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Human Resource's office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. Contact HR to obtain the form to process a change in personal information.

Personnel Records

Policy DBA, GBA

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

Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

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

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

Facility Use

Policies DGA, GKD

Employees who wish to use district facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. The campus administrator is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact the Superintendent's Office to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

Termination of Employment

Resignations

Policy DFE, DHB

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

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

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

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

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to TEA.

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

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

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

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to TEA.

Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

Policies DF Series, DHB, DPA, DPB

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

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

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

Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

Policies DCD, DHC, DPA, DPB

Noncontract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Noncontract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (See *Complaints and Grievances*, page 42.)

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

Discharge of Convicted Employees

Policy DF

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

- An offense requiring the registration as a sex offender
- Improper relationship between an educator and a student

- Sale, distribution, or display of harmful materials to a minor
- Public indecency
- A felony offense involving school property

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

Prohibition on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Policies DF, DH

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

Prohibited Classroom Instruction

Policies DF, DH

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

Exit Interviews and Procedures

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

Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding

The district is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance. Notice of the following must be

sent to the support recipient and the court or, in the case of child support, the Texas Attorney General Child Support Division:

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

Student Issues

Equal Educational Opportunities

Policies FB, FFH

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

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to Amber Rains, Director of Human Resources, 900 N Grand Avenue Gainesville, Texas 76240, arains@gainesvilleisd.org, 940-668-3632, the district Title IX coordinator for students.

Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Mary Flanagan, Director of Special Education, 900 N Grand Avenue, Gainesville, Texas 76240, mflanagan@gainesvilleisd.org, 940-668-6007, the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator for students.

All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to the Superintendent.

Student Records

Policy FL

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

- Parents: Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights

- The student: The rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A district is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student's records before this time.
- School officials with legitimate educational interests

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

Parent and Student Complaints

Policy FNG

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

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

Administering Medication to Students

Policy FFAC, FFAF

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

Dietary Supplements

Policies DH, FFAC

District employees are prohibited by state law from knowingly selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to a student with whom the employee has contact as part of his or her school district duties. In addition,

employees may not knowingly endorse or suggest the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

Psychotropic Drugs

Policy FFAC

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

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

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

Student Conduct and Discipline

Policies in the FN series and FO series

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

Student Attendance

Policy FEB

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

Bullying
Policy FFI

Bullying is defined by §TEC 37.0832. All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying, including cyberbullying, to campus administration. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and is reprinted below:

GISD Local Bullying Policy

Hazing
Policy FNCC

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