



**Kosciusko School District
Personnel Handbook
2026-2027**

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Compliance Statement – Educational Amendments

It is the policy of the Kosciusko School District to comply with all applicable provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Kosciusko School District Board of Education prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or religion in any program, activity, or employment opportunity offered by the district. This policy applies to all students, employees, and applicants for employment. Individuals with questions or concerns regarding compliance may contact:

Dr. Josh Dodd, Title IX Coordinator
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662-289-4771

Board of Trustees

Allison Schuler	President
Dr. Kenneth Quick	Vice-President
Farrah Wilder	Secretary
Sonny Sparks	Member
Veronica Brooks	Member

The Kosciusko School District Board of Trustees reserves the right to revise, modify, discontinue, or adopt district policies and procedures as required by applicable law, Mississippi Department of Education directives, or emergency circumstances.

Foreword

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students, parents, and staff with important information regarding the organization and administration of the Kosciusko School District. The handbook outlines graduation requirements, student organizations, school rules and regulations, attendance expectations, and other information necessary for the successful operation of the school. Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to read this handbook carefully. While every effort has been made to provide accurate and complete information, the handbook cannot address every situation. The contents of this handbook have been approved by the Kosciusko School District Superintendent and the Board of Trustees and are intended to support understanding of the district's educational program.

Superintendent's Message

Dear Kosciusko School District Employees,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! It is my privilege to welcome both returning and new employees to another year of learning, growth, and achievement in the Kosciusko School District.

The Kosciusko School District is dedicated to fostering academic excellence, innovation, and leadership for students from kindergarten through 12th grade. With a strong commitment to community, character, and preparing students for future success, KSD is proud to provide a supportive and engaging learning environment for all.

Our success begins with our people. Every employee plays a vital role in ensuring that our students receive the highest quality education and support. Whether you serve in the classroom, office, cafeteria, transportation department, maintenance team, or any other capacity, your work makes a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and families.

This Personnel Handbook serves as a resource to guide you through district policies, procedures, expectations, and benefits. It is designed to support a positive, safe, and professional work environment while helping us maintain consistency and excellence across the district.

As we begin this school year, I encourage each of us to embrace our district theme:

Every Student. Every Day. Excellence Without Exception.

This theme reflects our unwavering commitment to providing every student with exceptional opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed. It challenges us to maintain high expectations, build strong relationships, foster a culture of continuous improvement, and ensure that every decision we make is centered on student success.

Thank you for your dedication, professionalism, and commitment to the students and families of Kosciusko School District. Together, we will continue to inspire excellence, cultivate leadership, and prepare our students for a bright and successful future.

I am honored to serve alongside you and look forward to a successful 2026–2027 school year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Danya Turner
Superintendent of Education
Kosciusko School District

District Administration

Superintendent	Dr. Danya Turner
Assistant Superintendent	Dr. Josh Dodd
Business Manager	Sandy McBride
Director of Exceptional Services	Kayla Briscoe
Director of Child Nutrition	Laura Carraway
Director of Technology	Jeffrey Mitchell
Director of Transportation	Evan Horn
Director of Maintenance	Stacy Davis
Director of Athletics	Hogan Briscoe
Chief SRO	Mark Gilmore
Human Resources/Payroll	Patricia Parker
Accounts Payable/MSIS/SAMS	Amanda Dismuke
Federal Programs Admin Asst. Fixed Assets Manager	Nicole Witzel
Computer IT	Jennifer Blount
Receptionist	Wanda Turnbo

School Administration

Lower Elementary	Monica Harris
Middle Elementary	Logan Cheek
Upper Elementary	Will Anderson
Junior High	Eli Dew
High School	Macy Wilbanks
Alternative School	Semone Olive

The following acronyms may be used in this handbook:

KSD	Kosciusko School District
KLE	Kosciusko Lower Elementary
KME	Kosciusko Middle Elementary
KUE	Kosciusko Upper Elementary
KJHS	Kosciusko Junior High School
KHS	Kosciusko Senior High School

District Directory

Lower Elementary 109 Veterans Memorial Dr. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.3364	Middle Elementary 233 South Wells St. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.4653	Upper Elementary 120 Fourth Ave. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.2264	Junior High 317 East Jefferson St. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.3737
High School 415 Veterans Memorial Dr. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.2424	Alternative School 822 South Huntington St. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.1188	District Office 229 West Washington St. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.4771	Exceptional Services 206 South Huntington St. Kosciusko, MS 39090 662.289.7193

Kosciusko School District Academic Calendar 2026-2027

July 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
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August 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
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September 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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October 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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November 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					
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December 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
S=14 T=14						

January 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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31						
S=18 T=19						

February 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28						
S=19 T=19						

March 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30	31			
S=15 T=15						

April 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	
S=22 T=22						

May 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
S=18 T=19						

June 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
S=0 T=0						

Semester 1 = 88 Total Student Days = 180
Semester 2 = 92 Total Staff Days = 187
Total Year = 180

Board Approved January 12, 2026

	New Teacher Orientation
	First Day of 9 Weeks
	Professional Development Days
	Progress Reports/Report Cards
	Holidays (Schools/Offices Closed)
	60% School Day
	Graduation

July 29, 30, 31	Professional Development Days
August 3	First Day of School
September 7	Labor Day
September 9	1st Nine Weeks Progress Reports
October 5-9	Fall Break Holiday
October 12	Professional Development Day
October 13	2nd Nine Weeks Begins
October 14	1st Nine Weeks Report Cards
November 11	2nd Nine Weeks Progress Reports
November 23-27	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 18	60% School Day
December 21 - January 1	Christmas Holiday
January 4	Professional Development Day
January 5	3rd Nine Weeks Begins
January 6	2nd Nine Weeks Report Cards
January 18	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
February 10	3rd Nine Weeks Progress Reports
February 15	Presidents' Day Holiday
March 8-12	Spring Break Holiday
March 15	Professional Development Day
March 16	4th Nine Weeks Begins
March 17	3rd Nine Weeks Report Cards
March 26	Good Friday
March 29	Easter Monday/Incl. Weather Day
April 14	4th Nine Weeks Progress Reports
May 21	KHS Graduation
May 26	60% School Day
May 27	Professional Development Day
May 31	Memorial Day Holiday



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Kosciusko School District is to empower every student to discover and pursue their path, achieving their goals in higher education, careers, and personal growth.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Empower Student Achievement

- Instill high standards, increase rigor, expand AP courses, and challenge students.
- Develop well-rounded individuals through real-world experiences, diverse student pathways, and enhanced CTE instruction.
- Establish a shared vision of high-impact classroom instruction.
- Promote a culture of growth mindset.

Foster Professional Growth

- Recruit and retain exceptional teachers.
- Cultivate teacher growth through dynamic learning communities.
- Leverage data to drive targeted professional development.
- Develop and empower instructional leaders.

Enhance Resources and Facilities

- Elevate the maintenance and beautification of school campuses.
- Conduct annual assessments and replenish technology needs for each school.
- Implement targeted incentives and resources for teachers.
- Ensure campus safety through comprehensive logistical analysis.

PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to convey information to employees regarding their jobs. Hopefully, many of the important questions which are of interest to employees will be answered herein. It is the belief of the administration of this school district that an informed faculty is the key to the solution of many school problems. This handbook is one important step in keeping faculty informed.

It should be noted, however, that this handbook does not and cannot address every question or problem which will arise over the course of a school year. Questions and perhaps misunderstandings will arise regarding some of the procedures described herein. This is to be expected. When those questions arise, address them to your principal.

Situations will arise which call for exceptions to these policies and procedures. Exceptions may be granted by the superintendent when the facts warrant such action. Should you believe that a given set of facts warrant an exception, discuss the situation with your principal before action is taken.

The policies and procedures contained herein are intended to clarify and simplify the job of teaching. If everyone does their part, this can be accomplished. Unauthorized deviation from these standards will be dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. All policies, procedures, and practices of the Kosciusko School District are in accordance with state and federal regulations governing the operation of public schools. Any statutory or policy change affecting the operation of public schools will be reflected in modifications of the Kosciusko School District's Policies and Procedures Manual located in the Superintendent's office.

District Directory

Dr. Danya Turner
Superintendent
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Dr. Josh Dodd
Assistant Superintendent
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Kayla Briscoe
Exceptional Services
206 South Huntington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.7193

Sandy McBride
Business Manager
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Jeffrey Mitchell
Technology
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Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Mark Gilmore
Security/Safety
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Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Laura Carraway
Child Nutrition
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Stacy Davis
Maintenance
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Evan Horn
Transportation
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

Hogan Briscoe
Athletics
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4771

School Directory

Monica Harris
Lower Elementary
109 Veterans Memorial Drive
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.3364

Logan Cheek
Middle Elementary
233 South Wells Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.4653

Will Anderson
Upper Elementary
120 Fourth Avenue
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.2264

Eli Dew
Junior High School
206 South Huntington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.3737

Macy Wilbanks
High School
415 Veterans Memorial Drive
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.2424

Semone Olive
Alternative School
820 South Huntington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662.289.1188

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Overview

The Kosciusko School District adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as outlined in this document. FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Personnel Acknowledgement and Training

This document is included in the Kosciusko School District Personnel Handbook. All personnel are required to sign a statement indicating they have read the FERPA policy. In addition, the Federal Programs Director conducts annual training to ensure staff understanding and compliance.

Student and Parent Rights

FERPA grants parents certain rights regarding their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student once they reach the age of 18 or attend a school beyond the high school level, at which point the student becomes an "eligible student." Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of the records unless circumstances, such as distance, make on-site review impractical. In such cases, schools may charge a fee for copies.

Requesting Record Amendments

Parents or eligible students may request that the school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school declines to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to a formal hearing. Should the outcome of the hearing not result in amendment, the parent or eligible student may add a statement to the record expressing their perspective on the disputed information.

Disclosure of Records

Generally, written consent from the parent or eligible student is required for the release of any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose records without consent to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with a legitimate educational interest
- Other schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- Compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in health and safety emergencies
- State and local authorities within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law

Directory Information

FERPA permits schools to disclose "directory information" without consent. This may include a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. Schools must inform parents and eligible students of what is classified as directory information and allow a reasonable amount of time to request non-disclosure.

Annual Notification

Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The method of notification is determined at the discretion of each school.

Confidentiality and Compliance

Kosciusko School District will only disclose personally identifiable information as permitted by federal, state, or local statutes or guidelines. All disclosures are handled in accordance with FERPA provisions to ensure the privacy and security of student information.

Title IX Compliance

The Kosciusko School District adheres to all provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Any parent, employee, or student who has knowledge of such discrimination or who has experienced or is experiencing sexual harassment or discrimination should contact:

Dr. Josh Dodd
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
(662) 289-4771
josh.dodd@kosciuskoschools.com

Section 504

The Kosciusko School District does not discriminate on the basis of a disability in its employment practices, educational programs, or activities, which it operates. Any parent, employee, or student who has knowledge of such discrimination or who has experienced or is experiencing discrimination on the basis of a disability in his/her role should contact:

Dr. Josh Dodd
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
(662) 289-4771
josh.dodd@kosciuskoschools.com

Equal Employment Opportunities

The Kosciusko School District is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and to the provision of equity in its educational programs, services, and activities for all students and employees. The district shall not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, political beliefs, or military status regarding any policy, procedure, or program operation. The following individual has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies of the school district:

Sandy McBride
229 West Washington Street
Kosciusko, MS 39090
(662) 289-4771
sandy.mcbride@kosciuskoschools.com

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Each educator, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes several obligations—one of which is to adhere to a set of principles that define professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following Code of Ethics, which outlines the standards of professional behavior expected of educators and communicates those standards to the public.

Applicability and Purpose

This Code of Ethics applies to all individuals licensed according to the rules established by the Mississippi State Board of Education. Its purpose is to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of students and educators.

Definition of Ethical and Unethical Conduct

Ethical conduct includes any behavior that promotes the health, safety, welfare, discipline, and morals of students and colleagues. In contrast, unethical conduct refers to any behavior that impairs a license holder's ability to effectively perform their professional duties or demonstrates a pattern of behavior detrimental to the health, safety, welfare, discipline, or morals of students and colleagues.

Consequences and Reporting Obligations

Any educator or administrator license may be revoked or suspended for engaging in unethical conduct, particularly conduct involving educator/student relationships. Superintendents are required to report any license holder who engages in such conduct to the Mississippi Department of Education.

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

1.1 - Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards.
- Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment.
- Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning.
- Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter, and pedagogical practices.
- Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establishing appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children.

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

- Harassment of colleagues.
- Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials.
- Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity.
- Physical altercations.
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity during professional practice and does not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

2.1 - Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children.
- Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

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

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following:
 - Employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification.
 - Information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies.
 - Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel.
 - Reasons for absences or leave.
 - Information submitted during an official inquiry or investigation.
- Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes and local school board policies.

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

- The commission or conviction of a felony or sexual offense. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Educator/Student Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

4.1 - Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy, and encouragement for students.
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.
- Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.

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

- Committing any act of child abuse.
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment.
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act.
- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, or disability.
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.
- Soliciting, encouraging, participating, or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical, or romantic relationships with students. Examples of these acts may include but not be limited to sexual jokes, sexual remarks, sexual kidding or teasing, sexual innuendo, pressure for dates or sexual favors, inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing, grabbing, rape, threats of physical harm, sexual assault, electronic communication such as texting, invitation to social networking, remarks about a student's body, consensual sex.

Standard 5: Educator/Collegial Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with colleagues, both in and outside the classroom.

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

- Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- Interfering with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.
- Using coercive means or promise of special treatment to influence professional decisions of colleagues.

Standard 6: Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

6.1 - Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and abuse to students during professional practice.

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

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

Standard 7: Public Funds and Property

An educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use funds, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

7.1 - Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds.
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.

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

- Knowingly misappropriating, diverting, or using funds, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain.
- Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents, or any school-related function.
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay.
- Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts.
- Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

Standard 8: Remunerative Conduct

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

8.1 - Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Ensuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain.
- Ensuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.

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

- Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body.
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board.
- Accepting or offering gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or are given to obtain special advantage. Note: This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 9: Maintenance of Confidentiality

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

9.1 - Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a legitimate purpose or is required by law.
- Diligently maintaining the security of standardized test supplies and resources.

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

- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status/income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
- Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing, including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school board or state directions for test use.
- Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 10: Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment

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

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

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

Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System and Performance Levels

Domain I: Lesson Design

Teachers must be skilled in planning instruction that is appropriate for their students, fully aligned to state standards and reflect teaching to high standards of student learning.

- Lessons are aligned to standards and represent a coherent sequence of learning.
- Lessons have high levels of learning for all students.

Domain II: Student Understanding

Teachers build the classroom to develop students' competence and confidence. This includes a wide range of inputs and processes such as modeling, collaborative and cooperative learning experiences, and assessments.

- The teacher assists students in taking responsibility for learning and monitors student learning.
- The teacher provides multiple ways for students to make meaning of content.

Domain III: Culture and Learning Environment

Teachers build a learning environment that is predictable with established routines and procedures, one in which they know their students as people and as learners, and one in which students thrive.

- The teacher manages a learning-focused classroom community.
- The teacher manages classroom space, time, and resources effectively for student learning.
- The teacher creates and maintains a classroom of respect for all students.

Domain IV: Professional Responsibilities

Teachers engage with the professional community both within the school and beyond, demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning, collaborate productively with colleagues and contribute to the life of the school.

- The teacher engages in professional learning.
- The teacher establishes and maintains effective communication with families/guardians.

Level 4

This teacher demonstrates advanced instructional practices, particularly those that foster student ownership of learning and the environment. In Level 4 teaching, a community of learners has been created in which students assume a large part of the responsibility for the success of a lesson and their own learning. Level 4 practice goes beyond the expectations for an effective teacher. This practice exceeds Level 3 practice.

Level 3

This teacher demonstrates effective instructional practices. Level 3 teaching is characterized by “teacher-directed success” while Level 4 teaching is characterized by “student-directed success.” Level 3 practices are expected of all effective teachers.

Level 2

A teacher demonstrating Level 2 practices is making attempts but does not demonstrate effectiveness. This teacher has the potential to become effective, but requires clear, specific, and actionable feedback to improve his/her practice. A teacher whose practice is at Level 2 is a high potential teacher. High quality feedback is essential in improving his/her practice.

Level 1

This teacher should receive immediate and comprehensive professional learning and support designed to address the identified area(s) for growth.

Qualifications

All teachers employed for the first time must possess a college degree from an institution accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and hold at least a Class “A” Certificate in their field. If a properly qualified and certified teacher is not available, the superintendent may recommend, on an emergency basis, the employment of a teacher holding a Class “A” permit. This recommendation must be made with the understanding that the teacher will meet the requirements for a Class “A” Certificate as soon as possible. The following credentials are required for the appointment of a candidate and must be on file in the superintendent’s office before a contract can be issued: a properly completed application, a valid teaching certificate issued by the State of Mississippi, a complete transcript of college credits, verification of prior teaching experience, and any other documents required by state law and/or school board regulations.

Professional Development

Professional development activities are provided in accordance with Section 37-17-8 of the Mississippi Code. These activities are designed to enhance instructional delivery and to maximize student learning, as measured by standardized achievement tests. Professional development may include a review of the teacher effectiveness criteria outlined in observation tools, curriculum refinement activities, and other topics related to effective teaching, student mastery, and the development of successful schools. Time for in-service professional development is built into the school calendar, and participation in these activities is considered mandatory. The nature and timing of each activity will be communicated well in advance.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Kosciusko School District prohibits discrimination against “qualified individuals with disabilities.” A qualified individual with a disability is one who can perform the essential functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodation. The district will

provide reasonable accommodations unless doing so would place an undue hardship on operations. Employees requiring accommodations should communicate with their immediate supervisor to address and resolve issues related to disabilities.

Teacher Contract and Employment Procedures

Recommendations for Reemployment

Teachers will be recommended by the principal and submitted to the Superintendent by a designated time set forth by the Kosciusko School District. The Superintendent will then submit these recommendations to the KSD Board of Trustees for approval.

Contract Issuance and Response

Teachers approved for continued employment will be offered contracts for the following school year. Each teacher has ten (10) calendar days to accept or reject the contract. Any contract not signed and returned to the principal within ten calendar (10) days will be considered void.

Purpose of the Contract

Contracts are intended to protect both the teacher and the KSD Board of Trustees. It is the intent of the KSD Board of Trustees to uphold the terms of the contract, and it is expected that the teacher will do the same.

Contract Attachments

The KSD Board of Trustees reserves the right to include attachments to the standard employee contract. These attachments are considered part of the contract and serve to inform the employee of conditions that may affect continued employment. With proper attention to the conditions outlined in the attachment, continued employment may be maintained. Teachers are encouraged to carefully review their contracts prior to signing. Any questions regarding contract terms should be directed to the building principal.

Resignations

After contracts have been signed, resignations will be accepted only when a satisfactory replacement can be found, except in cases of mental or physical disability verified by a physician's certificate. Resignations must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent and the KSD Board of Trustees. The teacher will be notified of the KSD's Board of Trustees' decision regarding the acceptance or rejection of the resignation.

Licensed Employee

The term licensed employee refers to any employee of a public school district who is required to hold a valid license issued by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development, as defined in Mississippi Code § 37-7-307.

Background Check

Pursuant to Mississippi Code and the School Board, a background check of all employees is required. Employees must give permission to be fingerprinted and allow a background screening check with law enforcement, the Child Abuse Registry, previous employers, and any other persons to determine their suitability in working with children. Employment may be terminated if a disqualifying criminal record check is received.

Assignments and Reassignments

The superintendent has the authority to make assignments of all employees and to make reassignments when necessary. A reassignment of a licensed employee may only be to an area in which the employee has a valid license.

Evaluation of Staff

Classified Evaluations

All classified employees shall be evaluated annually. Evaluations may be conducted at any time during the school year, as determined by the supervisor.

Certified Evaluations

All certified employees shall be evaluated annually. Evaluations may be conducted at any time during the school year, as determined by the supervisor.

Pay Schedule

Teachers are employed based on a 187-day teaching contract and will be paid on a 12-month prorated schedule. Each pay period ends on the last working day of the month. Mandatory deductions, including federal and state income taxes, Social Security, and state retirement, will be made from each paycheck as required by law. W-2 forms and related payroll information can be accessed online via Active Resources at www.kosciuskoschools.com. By September 1, all employees are required to file a state income tax exemption certificate (Form M-4-EC) and a Federal income tax exemption certificate (Form W-4). Changes to these authorizations will not be permitted during the school year except in cases involving birth, death, or other exceptional circumstances.

Employment Benefits Protection

Job Restoration

An employee who completes a period of leave and fully complies with all terms of this policy shall be restored either to the same position held prior to the leave or to a position that is genuinely equivalent in pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. The taking of leave shall not result in the loss of any previously accrued seniority or employment benefits.

Benefit Accrual

Except for health benefits, no other employment benefits will accrue during the leave period.

Key Employee Exception

The school district may deny job restoration to a key employee—defined as an employee among the highest-paid 10 percent of the district's workforce within a 75-mile radius—if reinstating the employee would cause substantial and grievous injury to the instructional program. The district will notify the key employee of its intent to deny reinstatement at the time the leave request is made or as soon as the determination is made. If leave has already begun, the key employee will be given the choice of whether to return to work after receiving notice. If the employee chooses not to return, they will be on leave for the remainder of their approved leave period.

Health Coverage and Premium Recovery

Health benefits will continue throughout the leave period, including for key employees who are notified of non-reinstatement. The district may recover health insurance premiums paid during leave if the employee fails to return to work, **except** in the following cases: a key employee has received notice of non-reinstatement and chooses to continue leave or the employee fails to return due to the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition, or other circumstances beyond the employee's control, all of which are subject to the certification requirements outlined in Section II above.

Prohibited Acts

The Kosciusko School District shall not interfere with, restrain, or deny an eligible employee's right to exercise any provision outlined in this policy. This policy became effective on August 5, 1993, and remains in force

from that date forward. An employee's service prior to this effective date shall be counted when determining eligibility for leave under this policy.

Donating Leave to Another Employee

Any employee of the Kosciusko School District may donate a portion of their unused, accumulated personal or sick leave to another district employee who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, or who has a member of their immediate family suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness. This donation is subject to the following conditions:

Designation and Notification

The employee donating leave (the "donor employee") must designate the employee who is to receive the leave (the "recipient employee") and specify the amount of unused accumulated personal or sick leave to be donated. The donor employee must notify the Superintendent or their designee of this designation.

Donation Limits

The maximum amount of personal leave that may be donated cannot reduce the donor employee's remaining personal leave balance to fewer than seven (7) days. The maximum amount of sick leave that may be donated is fifty percent (50%) of the donor's unused accumulated sick leave.

Eligibility to Receive Donated Leave

An employee must have exhausted all available personal and sick leave before becoming eligible to receive donated leave. Eligibility will be determined based on a review and approval by the donor employee's supervisor.

Medical Certification Requirement

Before receiving donated leave, the recipient employee must submit a physician's statement to the Superintendent or designee. This statement must confirm that the condition meets the catastrophic criteria, include the start date of the illness or injury, provide a description and prognosis, and indicate the anticipated return-to-work date.

Review Committee

The Superintendent shall appoint a review committee to evaluate and approve or disapprove leave donation requests. The committee is also responsible for determining whether the condition qualifies as catastrophic under the criteria outlined in this policy.

Unused Donated Leave

If the total amount of donated leave is not fully used by the recipient, the unused whole days will be returned to the donor employees on a pro rata basis. This will be calculated based on the ratio of days donated by each employee to the total days donated.

Restrictions

Donated leave may not be used in place of disability retirement benefits.

Catastrophic Injury or Illness

A catastrophic injury or illness is a life-threatening condition affecting the employee or their immediate family that completely incapacitates the employee from work, as verified by a licensed physician. It must result in the exhaustion of all earned leave and lead to a loss of district compensation. Short-term conditions (e.g., influenza, measles) and common injuries are not considered catastrophic. However, chronic or long-term illnesses or injuries (e.g., cancer, major surgery) that cause extended or intermittent absences may qualify as catastrophic.

Immediate Family

For the purposes of this policy, immediate family includes a spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child, stepchild,

grandparent, stepbrother, or stepsister.

Procedures

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement procedures to support this policy.

Leaving School

Teachers are expected to take care of personal business outside of school hours. Being seen in the community during school hours is considered unprofessional and should be avoided. Therefore, teachers should refrain from requesting to leave campus during the school day except in cases of true emergency. Teachers must not leave campus during working hours without the knowledge and/or permission of their building principal.

Sick Leave Allowance

The Kosciusko School District Board shall establish, through rules and regulations, a policy providing sick leave with pay for licensed employees and teacher assistants. This policy includes the following minimum provisions for sick or emergency leave:

Leave Accrual Policy

At the beginning of each school year, each licensed employee and teacher assistant shall be credited with a minimum of seven (7) sick leave days and two (2) personal leave days for absences due to illness or physical disability during that school year. Employees may accrue up to a maximum of five (5) personal leave days. Any personal leave days accrued beyond this limit will be converted to sick leave days.

Carryover and Accumulation

Any unused portion of the sick leave allowance will be carried over to the next school year and credited to the employee, provided they remain employed in the district. Sick leave accumulation is unlimited.

Transfer of Leave

If a licensed employee or teacher assistant transfers from one public school district in Mississippi to another, any unused sick leave shall be credited to the employee in accordance with Mississippi Code § 25-11-109 for the purposes of retirement leave computation.

Pay Deductions

No pay deduction shall occur due to illness or physical disability until all credited sick leave has been used. For the first ten (10) days of absence due to illness or disability more than the credited allowance, the district may deduct from the employee's pay an amount equal to the established substitute rate in that district or allow the employee to receive full pay for those ten (10) additional days, based on local policy. After these ten days, all regular pay will be suspended and withheld for any further absences due to illness or physical disability during that school year.

Garnishments and Levies

Each school district employee is expected to manage their personal financial affairs. When a garnishment or levy is received by the superintendent's office, the employee will be notified. A properly signed release should be obtained prior to the issuance of the next paycheck. If a release is not provided, twenty-five percent (25%) of the employee's net monthly salary will be withheld until the garnishment amount, and associated court costs are fully satisfied. Garnishments or levies will be attached to the release and filed in the employee's personnel record. A processing fee of \$25 will be assessed for each garnishment.

Retirement System

In accordance with state law, all teachers are required to become members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) of Mississippi. Information regarding retirement benefits, eligibility, and policies is available through PERS:

Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi

429 Mississippi Street

Jackson, MS 39201-1005

Phone: 1-800-444-7377 or 601-359-3589

Website: www.pers.ms.gov

Mississippi Deferred Compensation

Mississippi Deferred Compensation is a supplemental defined contribution retirement savings plan available to all individuals covered under a Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) plan. For more information, contact:

Mississippi Deferred Compensation Plan

111 East Capitol Street, Suite 260

Jackson, MS 39201

Phone: 1-800-846-4551

Emergency and Personal Leave

Notification Requirements

The principal must be notified as far in advance as possible of any emergency or personal leave needs. In cases involving pregnancy, prolonged illness, or major surgery, the employee must provide both the expected start and end dates of the leave to allow time for securing a suitable substitute.

Medical and Extended Leave

When leave is related to pregnancy, major surgery, or a diagnosed extended illness, the employee must notify the principal in writing. The request must be accompanied by a letter from the attending physician verifying the following: the need for emergency leave, the date the leave should begin, the expected date of return to full duty, and a statement of fitness to continue teaching duties until the leave begins. If an incapacity exceeds thirty (30) school days, the principal will recommend to the Superintendent whether the employee should resign or be placed on leave. (See *Substitute Teachers* for additional information.)

Performance Considerations

An employee's continued participation in a regular instructional program will depend on their consistent ability to perform in a professional capacity and in the best interest of student learning.

Leave Conditions and Pay

All personal leave will be assessed in full-day increments. This does not apply to leave taken under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which is governed by separate guidelines. Any form of leave not specifically addressed under the emergency or personal leave provisions of this handbook is ineligible for reimbursement. In such cases, the employee will be charged an amount equal to their daily contractual salary.

Misuse and Penalties

If a teacher provides a materially false statement regarding the cause of an absence, penalties may include full pay deduction or other disciplinary action. Accumulated or future sick leave may also be forfeited if the absence was caused by optional medical or dental procedures that could have been scheduled during a non-instructional period without medical risk.

Substitute Reimbursement and Unapproved Absences

Teachers who request a substitute or who take unapproved leave must submit absentee slips for the time missed upon return. At the principal's discretion, the teacher may be docked the full substitute payrate for any unapproved absence.

Leave Recordkeeping

A leave record for each teacher will be maintained at the school-level by the principal or his/her designee. This documentation is also recorded at the district level by the Payroll Clerk. Teachers are encouraged to carefully review their absentee slip prior to signing. Any questions regarding the absentee slip should be directed to the building principal.

Absence from Duty – Personal Leave Allowance

Each licensed employee is credited at the start of each school year with a minimum of two (2) personal leave days with pay for absences due to personal reasons. Personal leave **may not** be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, the day before or after a holiday, or state testing days. Once a certified employee has exhausted all leave, a daily rate, which is calculated by the accounting software, will be docked from the salary. A maximum of 5 personal days is all that is allowed within a calendar year. Any remaining personal days will be carried over to the next school year and credited to the employee as a sick day. **Note:** A certified employee must teach 145 days within the school year to receive credit for a year of service.

Leaves and Absences

All Kosciusko School District employees have an important role in the education of children and in the operation of our school district. Therefore, regular and reliable attendance is an essential job function for all employees and is a basic expectation of the District. Excessive absences are not acceptable since it has a direct negative impact on the accomplishment of the Kosciusko School District's mission. Excessive absence is defined as more than is provided each year by the Kosciusko School District's leave policy (not what has been accumulated).

Substitute Teacher

All Substitute teachers shall be paid \$70.00 per day except for a certified teacher or retired teacher shall be paid \$100.00 per day.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

General Overview

Due to the complexity of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which intersects with the district's leave policies, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), and other federal and state laws, it is not practical to develop a detailed, one-size-fits-all policy. Each request must be evaluated individually due to the wide range of medical conditions and personal circumstances. It is strongly recommended that the district obtain competent analysis and reference materials on FMLA rules and regulations when evaluating individual requests. The district's attorney should always be consulted when uncertainty arises.

Posting and Notification Requirements

The district must conspicuously post a notice explaining the FMLA's provisions in each school and office where employees work or apply for employment. Notices must be no smaller than 8 x 11 inches with fully legible text. Failure to display this notice may result in the district being prohibited from taking adverse action against employees and being liable for fines imposed by the Department of Labor. Information about FMLA rights and obligations must be included in employee handbooks or guidance documents. A fact sheet outlining FMLA provisions is available from the nearest Wage and Hour Division Office. When an employee provides notice of the need for FMLA leave, the district must inform the employee in writing of expectations and responsibilities. This notice must include:

- Whether a medical certification or recertification is required, and the consequences for not providing it.
- Whether a fitness-for-duty certificate will be required before returning to work.
- That the leave counts against the employee's FMLA entitlement.

- Whether the employee may or must substitute paid leave (sick, personal, or vacation) for FMLA leave, and any conditions attached.
- Whether the employee qualifies as a “key employee,” and if restoration to their position may be denied, with explanation.
- Whether the employee must pay health insurance premiums while on leave and the arrangements for doing so.
- That if the employee fails to return, they may be liable for health insurance premiums paid by the district.
- That the employee has the right to return to the same or an equivalent job upon return from leave.
- The district is expected to act in good faith in answering questions about FMLA rights and responsibilities.

Recordkeeping Requirements

The district must make, keep, and preserve records of its FMLA obligations, following the requirements of Section 11(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and FMLA. No specific format or order is required, and there is no obligation to revise computerized payroll systems, although some specific items must still be retained.

Definitions

Eligible Employee

An individual employed at a facility where at least 50 employees are employed within a 75-mile radius, who has worked for the district for at least 12 months and has completed at least 1,250 hours of service in the past 12 months. Casual, intermittent, or occasional work for 52 weeks qualifies as 12 months of employment. FLSA-exempt employees are presumed to have worked 1,250 hours.

Spouse

Defined in accordance with Mississippi law.

Son or Daughter

A biological, adopted, or foster child; a legal ward; or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis. Must be under 18 or incapable of self-care due to mental or physical disability.

Parent

A biological parent or an individual who stood (or stands) in loco parentis to the employee, not including in-laws.

Immediate Family Member

Spouse, son, daughter, or parent, as defined above.

Serious Health Condition

An illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition requiring inpatient care or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider.

Leave Provisions

An eligible employee is entitled to up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave during a 12-month period for any of the following: the birth and care of a newborn child (within 12 months of birth), placement of a child for adoption or foster care (within 12 months of placement), to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition, for the employee’s own serious health condition that makes them unable to perform job functions Service Member Exigency Leave: For qualifying exigencies when a spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty, or Military Caregiver Leave: To care for a service member (spouse, child, parent, or next of kin) with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty.

Determining the 12-Month Period

The district must use one of the following methods consistently to calculate the 12-month leave period: Calendar year, a fixed 12-month leave year (e.g., fiscal year or anniversary of employment date), a 12-month period measured forward from the first date of FMLA leave, or a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date the employee uses FMLA leave (not extending before August 5, 1993). When both spouses are employed by the district, their combined leave may not exceed 12 weeks for the same qualifying event, except in cases involving personal illness or care of a sick child or spouse. Siblings employed by the district share a 12-week total to care for a parent.

Special Rules for Instructional Personnel

Special rules apply to instructional employees—those whose primary role is to teach or instruct students. This includes teachers, instructional aides, assistant teachers, coaches, driver's education instructors, and special education assistants. These employees may be required to take leave on a reduced or intermittent basis or be restricted from taking leave at specific points, such as near the end of a semester. Non-instructional employees may request intermittent leave or a reduced schedule for qualifying health or family care needs.

Notice Requirements

Employees must provide at least 30 days advance notice when the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable (e.g., for childbirth, adoption, or planned medical treatment). If 30 days' notice is not possible due to lack of knowledge or medical emergencies, notice must be given as soon as practicable—typically within one or two working days of when the need becomes known. Failure to provide timely notice for foreseeable leave may result in the delay or denial of FMLA leave until the notice period has been satisfied.

Required Certification

Eligible employees must provide the Superintendent with certification from a health care provider for any serious health condition affecting the employee or a qualifying family member. This certification must accompany the required written notice or be submitted within three (3) working days after providing written notice. No leave may begin without the Superintendent's approval, and such approval will not be granted without both the written notice and the required certification.

Certification Details

The certification must be signed by the health care provider and must include the following information: the date the serious health condition began, the probable duration of the condition, relevant medical facts regarding the condition, a statement that the employee is needed to care for a spouse, parent, or child—along with an estimate of the time required—or a statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of their job, for intermittent leave, the expected duration of treatment, and the signature of the health care provider.

Second and Third Opinions

The school district may require a second medical opinion, which will be obtained at the district's expense. This second opinion must come from a health care provider not employed by the school district. If the first and second opinions conflict, the district may require a third opinion from a mutually agreed-upon health care provider. This third opinion will be at the district's expense and will be considered final and binding.

Recertification

The district may require written recertification of the medical condition on a reasonable basis.

Admission to School District Events

Staff ID's and State Passes will admit the *employee only* into home athletic events that are not playoff games or fundraisers. The passes are only valid for the person whose name and picture are on the pass.

Cellphones

The District recognizes advances in technology and the impact that these new pieces of equipment can have on education; however, they also recognize that inappropriate use of personal cellular phones, pagers, and other electronic devices during instructional time can often disrupt student learning. Staff members need to be mindful of the appropriate ways to incorporate these new technologies into the educational setting and use them with integrity and professionalism outside of the school day. Therefore, the following guidelines are being instituted to remind employees to use these devices in a professional manner. The following guidelines define the use of cellular phones and other electronic devices as they pertain to school and District employees:

1. Employees may possess cellular phones and other electronic devices while in school and at school activities.
2. When employees do use cellular phones or other electronic devices, they must use them appropriately, responsibly, and professionally.
3. All personal electronic devices shall be turned off, not used, and kept out of sight while employees are performing his/her employment responsibilities, e.g., teaching, supervising, attending meetings, etc. When applicable and acceptable, cellular phones may remain on but must be placed on the silence mode.
4. Employees may use personal cellular phones and other such electronic devices for school emergency situations and between class times, during lunch break, other scheduled breaks, and/or recess periods if it does not interfere with their employment responsibilities and instructional time of students.
5. Except in an emergency, employees may not use cellular telephones or other communication devices while operating a District vehicle or operating any vehicle while transporting students.
6. Employees are expected to use technology in an appropriate, professional manner. Employees should not make any inappropriate contact with students, parents or colleagues using any form of communication (written, verbal, or electronic). This includes participating in social networking sites, texting, emailing, tweeting, etc.
7. Employees who misuse their personal cell phone or other electronic devices shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with State Law and District Policy, e.g. verbal warning, written reprimand, or electronic devices at school, and/or referred to the Superintendent for further disciplinary action.
8. For extenuating personal emergency situations, the principal or immediate supervisor may make a temporary exception to this Policy if other accommodations cannot be arranged.

Employee Dress Code

All Kosciusko School District employees, substitutes, and volunteers are expected to dress professionally and appropriately each day. As representatives of the district and role models for students, our appearance should reflect a standard of excellence that promotes respect, pride, and professionalism throughout our schools and community.

Clothing must be neat, clean, in good repair, and suitable for the work environment. Attire should not be distracting, offensive, or disruptive to the educational setting. Employees should avoid wearing any accessories or items that do not support a professional image.

This expectation applies to all district employees at all locations, on all workdays, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor. By maintaining high standards of professional appearance, we reinforce our shared commitment to student success and a positive school culture.

Appropriate dress for staff:

- Dresses and skirts cannot be shorter than three inches above the knee.
- Slacks, casual dress pants, and Capri pants may be worn in an appropriate manner.
- Jeans are allowed on designated days set forth by the school administration; otherwise, they are considered unacceptable.
- Low cut blouses, see-through clothing, off the shoulder, halter style, tank tops, or clothing, which reveals the midriff, are not allowed. Sleeveless clothing must cover undergarments.
- Earrings are the *only* visible piercing allowed.
- Hats are not to be worn inside.
- Tattoos that are considered offensive, racist, vulgar, show scenes of violence, drug-related, contain strong sexual imagery, gang-related, or contain obscene phrases may not be visible.
- Flip-flops are *not* allowed.
- Facial hair must be kept neat and clean.
- Hair length should not impair vision.

By enacting this dress code policy, the Kosciusko School District recognizes that there are occasions when individuals may need to wear specific clothing due to medical reasons. When such is the case, the employee must provide the proper medical documentation that gives rise to the need for deviation from this dress code policy.

Drug-Free and Smoke-Free Workplace

The Kosciusko School District enforces a drug and alcohol policy for all employees to provide a safe, drug-free environment for all students and employees. It is a violation for any employee to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use unlawfully on or in the workplace, alcohol, or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance. The Kosciusko School District mandates that all employees report to work without any alcohol or illegal or mind-altering substance in their systems. All employees are subject to a request for screening if reasonable suspicion exists to support such a request. Off-the-job use of drugs, alcohol, or any other prohibited substance which results in impaired work performance, including, but not limited to, absenteeism, tardiness, poor work product, or harm to the school system's image or relationship with the government is prohibited. Employees should realize that these regulations prohibit all illicit drug use on and off duty. Smoking and the use of any tobacco products are strictly prohibited inside any facility owned by the Kosciusko School District.

Mandated Reporter Requirement

All school employees in the state of Mississippi are legally considered mandated reporters. Any employee who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected is required by law to immediately report the information to the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services. Failure to report suspected abuse may result in legal consequences and disciplinary action.

Staff Complaints and Grievances

The KSD Board of Trustees believes it is most important to settle all complaints of discrimination based on sex, disability or other differences that may arise among employees, between employees and administrators, and between the public and teachers as promptly and equitably as possible. Resolution of problems should take place at the lowest possible administrative level and in a manner which will assure employees that review of complaints and grievances will be handled without fear of reprisals. The Kosciusko School District - Board or Trustees, therefore, directs the superintendent to prepare a personnel grievance procedure as may be required to fit the state or federal law.

Definitions

1. *Personnel Appraisal* – refers to the system of annual performance evaluation of all licensed staff as mandated by state law.
2. *Grievance* - a complaint by an individual employee based upon an alleged violation of a person's rights under state or federal law or Board Policy.
3. *Grievant* - the person making the complaint.
4. *Days* - working school days and shall exclude weekends and holidays. If school is not in session, "days" shall apply to those days that would have been school days if school had been in session.

Procedure for Processing Grievances

Level One

1. All grievances, as defined in Number 1 above, must be presented orally to the principal or immediate supervisor of the grievant within five (5) days of the act or omission complained of, and the principal or immediate supervisor and the grievant will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
2. If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given by his principal or immediate supervisor, the grievant shall, within five (5) days after meeting with his principal or immediate supervisor, file a written statement with his principal or immediate supervisor, setting forth in detail how the grievant claims to have been discriminated against. This written statement shall contain, in addition to the above, the time, place, and nature of the alleged act or omission and the state or federal law or Board policy allegedly violated. The statement must be signed by the grievant.
3. In the event the grievant does not submit to his principal or immediate supervisor a written statement as required, his failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by his principal or immediate supervisor.
4. After receipt of the written statement setting forth how the grievant was allegedly discriminated against, the principal or immediate supervisor shall hold a hearing and render a decision in writing to the grievant within five (5) days.
5. The written decision of the principal or immediate supervisor shall be deemed to be accepted by the grievant unless the grievant notifies the Office of the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator in writing within five (5) days of the date of the written decision of the grievant's intention to appeal the written decision of the principal or immediate supervisor.

Level Two

1. Upon receipt by the Office of the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator, of the written notice that the grievant intends to appeal the decision of his principal or immediate supervisor, the Office of the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator, shall notify the grievant in writing within five (5) days and shall advise the grievant of the date and time upon which the matter will be considered by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall schedule a hearing on the matter no later than ten (10) days from the date of receipt of the grievant's written notice of intention to appeal the written decision of his principal or immediate supervisor.
2. The written statement submitted by the grievant to his principal or immediate supervisor in Level One shall form the basis of the grievance before the Superintendent. The grievant shall submit all additional information on his behalf which he desires to the Superintendent in writing no later than five (5) days prior to the date upon which the matter is scheduled for hearing by the Superintendent.
3. In the event the grievant does not personally attend the hearing scheduled by the Superintendent, his failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the written decision rendered by his principal or immediate supervisor at Level One.
4. The Superintendent shall render a written decision to the grievant within five (5) days of the date upon which the matter was heard.

Level Three

1. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at step two, or if the Superintendent does not render a decision within five (5) days, the grievant may file the grievance with the secretary of the Board.
2. If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the Board within five (5) days of the hearing at Level Two, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
3. Within five (5) days after receipt of the grievance, the Board secretary, in concert with the president and Superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the Board on the grievances.
4. The Board shall render its decision within seven (7) days of the hear

Copying of Materials

It is the policy of the Kosciusko School District to limit the paperwork required of teachers and staff to only those items that are directly related to the instructional program and contribute to its effectiveness. Teachers may still be required to complete reports mandated by state or federal authorities. All other reporting and paperwork requirements will be reviewed regularly, and steps will be taken to eliminate or reduce nonessential tasks. The district administration and Board will continue to pursue improvements in electronic systems to better manage instructional and fiscal requirements and reduce paperwork where possible.

Extracurricular Activities and Duty Schedules

Extracurricular activities are defined as those that enhance or support student experiences beyond the regular classroom. No activity involving students may be scheduled or distributed without prior approval from the principal. All activities must align with the school's mission. At the beginning of the school year, teachers will receive a roster of assigned sponsors and a duty schedule for supervising areas such as the auditorium, hallways, school grounds, and cafeteria. These duty assignments are considered an essential part of teacher responsibilities and are to be fulfilled accordingly.

Faculty Meetings

All teachers are required to attend meetings called by the principal or superintendent. Absences must be approved in advance by the person calling the meeting. Faculty meetings are official and essential. Failure to attend may result in the deduction of one personal or sick leave day. Teachers who are excused are still responsible for all information and procedures shared during the meeting.

Instructional Support Services

Instructional support services include guidance and counseling services, psychometric services, educational and occupational planning, and referral services. These services are intended to support teachers and promote the educational development of all students through cooperative efforts.

Janitorial Services

All requests for maintenance, repairs, or installations must be submitted through the principal's office. Teachers should not contact janitors directly. In emergencies, contact the principal. Teachers are expected to maintain clean and orderly classrooms, including arranging desks neatly, removing paper and debris from desks and floors, and adjusting shades and closing windows.

Lounge

Faculty lounges are for the exclusive use of employees only. A soft drink machine is available for faculty use. Students are not allowed in lounge areas.

Mailboxes and Bulletin Boards

Each teacher will have an assigned mailbox for private and professional correspondence. Students are not permitted in mail areas and may not access materials from teacher mailboxes. Notices of professional or personal interest may be posted on the faculty bulletin board but should be removed in a timely manner.

Classroom bulletin boards should be kept current, colorful, and instructionally relevant.

Planning

Teachers will have designated time for instructional planning. This time should be used for lesson planning, grading papers, conducting parent conferences, and other tasks related to instructional preparation.

Salesmen, Solicitors, and Visitors

All visitors must check in with and be cleared through the principal's office. Unauthorized visitors are not permitted on campus.

School Year

Teachers will be notified by the superintendent regarding the required start date for professional development. The district calendar, approved by the Board of Trustees, will be distributed to all teachers. Teachers are required to remain on campus until all records and check-out procedures are completed at the end of the school year.

Student Performance Standards

Each school is responsible for assessing student performance and achievement. Performance standards define essential subject matter for each course. Students must demonstrate mastery of these essential standards to be promoted. If a student fails to master a standard, state regulations require that remediation be provided and documented.

Reimbursable Travel Expenses

All travel reimbursement requests must be submitted with original, itemized receipts and an expense report within the designated timeframe upon return. Claims that do not follow state or district policy may be denied.

Discipline of Students

Discipline exists to protect both the educational program and the students who come to school ready to learn. Any misbehavior or actions that disrupt the educational environment or infringe on the rights of others shall be addressed using the most appropriate corrective measures. Teachers are expected to manage routine discipline problems within their classroom authority. Severe or chronic disciplinary cases should be referred to the administration. Any misconduct that affects the operation or efficiency of the school is within the jurisdiction of the Kosciusko Board of Trustees, which supports both teachers and administrators in maintaining proper student conduct. The Board authorizes school principals to implement reasonable disciplinary or punitive measures necessary to ensure the school operates in a safe, orderly, and effective manner.

Corporal Punishment

The Kosciusko School District permits the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary option only for students whose parents or legal guardians have provided written consent opting in to this form of discipline. When authorized, corporal punishment must be administered in accordance with district procedures that ensure it is conducted safely, respectfully, and appropriately. In accordance with federal law, students identified with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are not eligible for corporal punishment, regardless of parental consent. All disciplinary actions for students with disabilities must comply with applicable federal and state laws, including the provisions outlined in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans.

Dismissal of Students from Campus

All school campuses operate as closed campuses during the school day. Under no circumstances should a teacher give permission for a student to leave campus unless the principal is consulted, and explicit permission is granted. Visitors are permitted at the discretion of the principal. Any unauthorized person on campus, or anyone who disrupts normal school operations, should be reported immediately. Trespassers will be prosecuted.

Illness of Pupils

Students who report feeling ill should be sent to the principal's office. They should not be permitted to disrupt instructional time. All medications must be turned in to the principal's office at the beginning of the school day and will be dispensed according to prescribed instructions.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

Electronic information resources, including access to the Internet and other network files or accounts, are available to qualifying staff in the Kosciusko School District. These resources are intended to promote educational excellence through resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The district also emphasizes education on appropriate online behavior, including safe interaction on social networking sites and chat rooms and awareness and prevention of cyberbullying.

Scope

Internet access in the district is part of a broader national and state network system. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires schools receiving certain federal funds to implement Internet safety policies. As part of CIPA compliance, the district uses filtering and monitoring systems to restrict access to inappropriate content. While no system is perfect, the district makes a good faith effort to meet CIPA requirements. The Deleting Online Predators Act of 2006 (DOPA) requires schools to protect minors from harmful online environments such as chat rooms and social networking sites. It acknowledges that sexual predators use online tools to exploit minors and that schools must play an active role in monitoring and protecting students and staff. These policies are intended to help students, staff, and parents understand the responsibilities associated with technology use. Misuse may result in account termination, disciplinary action, suspension, or expulsion.

Terms and Conditions

Failure to follow district guidelines may result in paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, or expulsion, and/or legal action under state or federal law. Electronic activity is traceable, and users should be aware that digital footprints are left with every action. Use of the district's technology resources is a privilege, not a right. All users must sign the Acceptable Use Agreement, indicating understanding and acceptance of these terms.

Network Etiquette

All users must follow generally accepted rules of digital conduct, including:

- Be polite and respectful; do not send abusive messages
- Use appropriate language; remember that written content can be widely viewed
- Do not send unsolicited advertisements or sales material
- Understand that email is not private and may be accessed by others
- Report messages related to illegal or inappropriate activities to a teacher, principal, or systems administrator

Unacceptable Network Use

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Accessing or transmitting inappropriate content or illegal material
- Violating copyright or intellectual property laws
- Engaging in hate speech, sexting, sexual harassment, or the use of offensive or discriminatory language
- Using the network to disrupt others (e.g., gaming, illegal downloads)
- Accessing pornographic or gambling content
- Engaging in any activities that violate school policy or district regulations
- Distributing network/program passwords to unauthorized individuals

Cyberbullying

Under Mississippi S.B. 2015, cyberbullying includes any pattern of threats, verbal or written communication, or physical acts that take place on school property, at school-sponsored events, or on school buses. Cyberstalking is a felony in Mississippi. Using technology to threaten, harass, or repeatedly contact someone with harmful intent may result in a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or up to two years in prison. If your child is a victim of cyberbullying: encourage them not to respond, save and document messages or images as evidence, and contact the Cyber Crime Unit of the Attorney General's Office at 601-359-3880 or msago5@ago.state.ms.us and notify school officials.

Security and Privacy

System security is essential due to multiple users. Staff members may not use another individual's account, log in as a systems administrator, and/or share or misuse passwords. All security concerns must be reported immediately to a teacher, principal, or systems administrator. Staff members are responsible for all activity under their account. Staff members should not share personal information, such as home addresses, phone numbers, passwords, and/or credit card or social security numbers. This also applies to others' private information.

Service Disclaimer

Kosciusko School District makes no guarantees regarding the Internet services provided. The district is not responsible for loss of data, service interruptions, misuse or user error, and/or inaccuracies in online content. Use of district-provided resources is at the user's own risk.

Adoption

This Internet Acceptable Use Policy was adopted by the Kosciusko School District Board at a public meeting on February 13, 2012, and supersedes the previous policy adopted on November 8, 2004.

KOSCIUSKO SCHOOL DISTRICT
Internet Acceptable Use Policy Acknowledgment

I have read and agree to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in the Kosciusko School District Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that any violation of this policy may be considered unethical and/or a violation of state or federal law. I further understand that violations may result in the revocation of access privileges, disciplinary action by the district, and/or legal consequences.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

KOSCIUSKO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Personnel Handbook Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that the Kosciusko School District (KSD) Personnel Handbook is available online and may be accessed at any time through the district website at www.kosciuskoschools.com.

I understand that the handbook contains district policies, procedures, expectations, and the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics. I agree to read and abide by the policies and procedures established by the Kosciusko School Board and outlined in the KSD Personnel Handbook.

I understand that the handbook is not a contract of employment and may be revised, amended, or updated by the district at any time, with or without notice.

I further understand that failure to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the KSD Personnel Handbook may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

KOSCIUSKO SCHOOL DISTRICT
Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics Acknowledgment

I understand that the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics is available online and is a state-required document intended to protect the health, safety, welfare, discipline, and morals of students, educators, and colleagues.

I agree to abide by the standards and expectations established in the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics. I understand that violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or reporting to the appropriate state licensure agency.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____