Houston County Board of Education

1 – SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONS

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Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**School District – School Board Legal Status and Authority**	**1.100**	**7/08/13**
		Rescinds: **AA**	Issued:

The legal basis for education in Tennessee is expressed in the state Constitution and state statutes, as interpreted by the courts. Boards are instruments of the state, and members of the Board are state officers representing local citizens and the state in the management of the public schools.[1]

The governing body shall be the Board of Education, serving residents within the boundaries of the school system and non-residents under conditions specified by state law and the Board.[2]

All powers of the Board lie in its action as a group; therefore, individual board members exercise their authority over school system affairs only as they vote to take action at an official meeting of the Board.

In other instances, an individual board member, including the chairman, shall have power only when specified by state law or when the Board, by vote, has delegated authority to him/her.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-1-101; TCA 49-1-102©; TCA 49-1-103
2. TCA 49-6-3104

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Role of the Board of Education**	**1.101**	**09/23/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/09/95; 07/08/13**

The Board will oversee the operation of the school district in compliance with state and federal laws.[1]

The Board will function only when in session. The Board's required functions include, but are not limited, to the following:

GENERAL

1. To develop and adopt a strategic plan in consultation with the Director of Schools;[2]
2. To adopt all policies required by state or federal law;[3]
3. To approve school zones;[4]
4. To approve the district calendar;[5]
5. To adopt district safety plans;[6]
6. To approve the closure of facilities, if needed;[1]
7. To approve an insurance provider;[1] and
8. To approve/modify the agenda at the beginning of the board meeting.[1]

FISCAL

1. To approve and adopt the budget;[1]
2. To approve purchases outside the budget on a case-by-case basis in accordance with board policy;[1]
3. To approve budget transfers;[7]
4. To adopt the district salary schedule;[8]
5. To approve a differentiated pay plan;[9]
6. To approve funding for the district maintenance plan and capital requests;[1]

7. To approve the location and scope of new building projects;[1] and

8. To approve bids.[1]

INSTRUCTION AND STUDENTS

1. To adopt the curriculum;[1]

2. To adopt textbooks;[10]

3. To review student disciplinary issues appealed to the Board and make a final determination;[11]

4. To authorize or prohibit the use of corporal punishment;[12]

5. To approve or deny admission of students expelled from other school districts;[13] and

PERSONNEL

1. To employ and evaluate the Director of Schools;[1]

2. To grant tenure to eligible teachers;[14] and

3. To dismiss tenured teachers.[15]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-203
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(14); State Board of Education Policy 2.101; TCA 49-1-613
3. TCA 49-2-207
4. TCA 49-6-403(c)
5. TCA 49-6-3004
6. TCA 49-6-804(a)
7. OP Tenn. Atty. Gen. 83-464 (Oct 26, 1983)
8. TCA 49-3-306(a)
9. TCA 49-3-306(h)
10. TCA 49-6-2207(a)(1)
11. TCA 49-6-3401(c)(4)(C)
12. TCA 49-6-4104
13. TCA 49-6-3401(f)
14. TCA 49-5-504(b); TCA 49-2-203(a)(1)
15. TCA 49-5-511

Cross References

Duties of Board Members 1.202
Policy Development & Adoption 1.600
Administrative Procedures 1.601
School District Goals 1.700
School District Planning 1.701
Annual Operating Budget 2.200

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Board Members**	**1.102**	**08/14/23**
		Rescinds: **ABC**	Issued: **01/09/95; 07/08/13;03/14/22; 09/01/22**

The legal status of board members shall be as follows:

NUMBER OF MEMBERS[1]

The Board is composed of seven (7) members.

QUALIFICATIONS

Members of the Board shall be residents elected from districts of substantially equal population, and shall be citizens of recognized integrity, intelligence, and ability to administer the duties of the office.[1,2] To qualify as a candidate, an individual must show proof of:

1. Graduation from high school or receipt of a high school equivalency credential approved by the State Board of Education;[2] and

2. Being a qualified voter and resident in the county for one (1) year prior to the qualifying deadline for Running as a candidate.[1]

Members of the county legislative body and other county governmental official shall not be eligible for election as a member of the county Board of Education.[3]

TERMS OF OFFICE

Members of the Board shall serve four (4) year terms.[1]

VACANCIES

Vacancies shall be declared to exist on account of death, resignation, removal, or through due process proceedings.[4]

When a vacancy occurs, the unexpired term shall be filled at the next regular or special meeting of the local legislative body.[5] Such appointment shall continue until the next regular election.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-201(a)(1)
2. TCA 49-2-202(a)(4); Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 114
3. TCA 49-2-202(a)(2)
4. TCA 8-47-101; TCA 49-1-611; TCA 49-2-202(e)(2); Tenn. Att'y Gen. Op. No. 21-14 (September 1, 2021)
5. TCA 49-2-202(e)(1)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Memberships**	**1.104**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BG**	Issued:

The Board shall maintain membership in the Tennessee School Boards Association,[1] and through its membership in TSBA shall be an affiliate member of the Southern Region School Boards Association and the National School Boards Association.

Dues for membership in the Tennessee School Boards Association shall be included in each annual budget in accordance with state statute.

The Board may also maintain institutional membership in other educational organizations which the Board finds to be of benefit to members and school system personnel.

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Legal Reference:

1 TCA 49-2-2001

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**School Board Legislative Involvement**	**1.105**	**3/11/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The Board shall work for the passage of new laws designed to improve public education in Tennessee. Likewise, the Board shall work for the repeal or modification of existing laws and for the defeat of proposed laws that impede this cause.

To accomplish this:

1. The Board shall stay informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to their elected representatives at both the state and national level;

2. The Board shall work with other school boards in the state, other local officials, and community groups in creating public awareness and support for legislative priorities;

3. The Board shall annually select one (1) of its members to serve as its legislative liaison;

4. The Board shall work with its legislative liaison, TSBA, and other concerned groups in developing an annual legislative program; and

5. The Board shall include in its budget appropriate resources to cover costs, including travel expenses, necessary to ensure active participation in the legislative process.

Cross References

Board Member Development Opportunities 1.204

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**Code of Ethics**	**1.106**	**08/14/23**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 05/08/23**

General[1]

Board members and school district employees may not accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, money, gratuity, consideration, or favor that a reasonable person would understand was intended to influence the vote, official action, or judgement of the board member or employee in executing decisions affecting the school district. It is also prohibited for a board member's or an employees' spouse or child living in the same household to accept such items.

It shall not be considered a violation of this policy for an Board member or employee to receive entertainment, food, refreshments, meals, health screenings, amenities, food, or beverages that are provided in connection with a conference sponsored by an established or recognized statewide association of school board officials or by an umbrella or affiliate organization of such statewide association of school board officials.

ETHICS COMPLAINTS

The school district may create a School District Ethics Committee consisting of three (3) members who will be appointed to one-year terms by the Board Chair with confirmation by the Board. At least two (2) members of the committee shall be members of the Board. The Ethics Committee shall convene as soon as practicable after its appointment and elect a Chair and Secretary. The records of the Ethics Committee shall be maintained by the Secretary and shall be filed in the office of the Director of Schools, where they shall be open to public inspection.

Questions and complaints regarding violations of this Code of Ethics shall be directed to the Chair of the Ethics Committee. Complaints shall be in writing, signed by the person making the complaint, and include details as to the facts surrounding the complaint.

The Ethics Committee may investigate any ethical complaint received against a Board member or employee to cease any activity that, in the Committee's judgment, constitutes a violation of this Code of Ethics. If a member of the Ethics Committee is the subject of a complaint, the member shall recuse himself or herself from all proceedings involving the complaint.

The Ethics Committee may:

1. Refer the matter to the Board Attorney for a legal opinion and/or recommendations for action;
2. In the case of a Board Member, refer the matter to the Board of Education body for possible public censure if the board body finds such action warranted;
3. In the case of an employee, refer the matter to the Director of Schools/designee for possible disciplinary action if warranted; or
4. In a case involving possible violation of state statutes, refer the matter to the district attorney for possible ouster or criminal prosecution;

POINT OF CONTACT[2]

The Board Chair shall serve as the point of contact for the Tennessee Ethics Commission. The Director of Schools shall provide the contact information to the Commission and ensure that any changes are submitted within thirty (30) calendar days.

Legal References

1. TCA 8-17-103
2. Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 37

Cross References

Board Member Conflict of Interest 1.107
Duties of Board Members 1.202

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Board Member Conflict of Interest**	**1.107**	**05/08/23**
		Rescinds: **BHA**	Issued: **07/08/13**

General

State law provides specific instances when direct or indirect conflicts of interest may affect a board member's ability to vote on certain matters.

Direct conflicts of interest may arise if the school district contracts with a board member or with a business in which the board member is a sole proprietor, partner, or person having a controlling interest.[1]

Indirect conflicts of interest may arise if a board member votes on a matter involving a situation that a reasonable person would infer affects his/her personal finances indirectly. If a board member has a direct interest but is the sole supplier of goods or services in the city or county, he/she would be considered indirectly interested in the matter.[2]

DIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST[1]

A board member shall not be directly interested in any contract in which the Board may be interested.

If there is a pre-existing contract that predates the board member's election to the Board, the board member shall refrain from voting or discussing any matter related to that contract since he/she has a direct interest. Upon expiration, the contract shall not be renewed by the Board.[3]

This policy shall not prohibit any board member from voting on the school budget or any budget amendments, unless the vote is on a specific budget amendment in which such board member is directly interested.

INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST[2]

A board member shall not be indirectly interested in any contract in which the Board may be interested unless the board member publicly acknowledges such interest. The disclosure of this interest shall be made at the board meeting in which the Board is taking action on the contract. A board member with an indirect interest is not required to refrain from voting on the contract.

PENALTY FOR UNLAWFUL INTEREST[5]

If a board member becomes directly or unlawfully indirectly interested in any such contract, he/she shall forfeit all compensation he/she shall also be dismissed from the Board and be ineligible to serve in the same or similar position for ten (10) years.

Legal References

1. TCA 12-4-101(a); Op. Tenn. Att'y Gen. No. 10-46
2. TCA 12-4-101(b)
3. Op. Tenn. Att'y Gen. No. 99-209
4. TCA 12-4-101(a)(1)
5. TCA 12-4-102

Cross References

Code of Ethics 1.106
Duties of Board Members 1.202

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Nepotism**	**1.108**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BHB**	Issued:

Whenever a person is considered for initial employment in the system and that person is related to a member of the Board, the director of schools, an administrator in the system, a county commissioner, or any appointed or elected county official, the fact of the relationship shall be publicly made known to the Board prior to the employment of such person.

For purposes of this policy, the term "related to" includes the following relationships: father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister in-law, wife and husband.[1]

Legal Reference:

1. OP Tenn. Atty. Gen 95-080 (August 4, 1995)

Cross Reference:

Assignment/Transfer of Personnel 5.115

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Method of Election of Officers**	**1.200**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBAA**	Issued:

At the first regular meeting in September each year, the Board shall organize by electing a chairman[1] and a vice chairman to serve one-year terms or until a successor is named. In the event that an officer's seat on the board is vacated, the Board shall elect a successor to serve the remainder of the officer's term. Each board officer shall be eligible for re-election.

If no officer of the Board is serving at the time of the organizational meeting, any member shall call the meeting to order and preside until a chairman is elected as the first order of business.

If the office of chairman is vacated prior to the expiration of the annual term, the vice chairman shall assume all responsibilities of the chairman until a new chairman is elected.

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Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-2-202(c)(2)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Duties of Officers**	**1.201**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBAB**	Issued:

CHAIRMAN

The chairman of the Board shall have the following duties:

1. To assist the director of schools in preparing meeting agendas;
2. To preside at all meetings of the Board; [1]
3. To appoint committees authorized by the Board;[1]
4. To function as chairman of the executive committee;[1]
5. To countersign all warrants authorized by the Board and issued by the director of schools for all expenditures of the school system; [1]
6.. To conduct Board hearings;[2]
7. To prepare the school budget with the director of schools;[3]
8. To authorize the use of mechanical check-writing equipment;[4]
9. To certify the value of surplus property valued less than $250;[5] and
10. To carry out other such duties as may be assigned by the Board.

VICE CHAIRMAN

The vice chairman shall assume the duties of the chairman in his/her absence or function as the chairman until a new chairman can be elected in the event the chairman is incapacitated or the office becomes vacant.

SECRETARY

The director of schools, as the executive officer of the Board, shall serve as secretary to the Board. He/ she shall conduct all correspondence of the Board, keep and preserve all of its records, receive all reports acquired by the Board, and see that such reports are in proper form. He/she has the right to advise on any question under consideration but has no vote.

The Board may assign the keeping of the minutes to a clerk; however, the responsibility resides with the director of schools.

CHAIRMAN PRO TEM

A chairman pro tem shall be elected to preside during a meeting when neither the chairman nor the vice chairman is present.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-205
2. TCA 49-5-512(c)
3. TCA 49-2-203(10)(1)(i)
4. TCA 49-2-113
5. TCA 49-6-2007

Cross References:

Role of the Board 1.101
Duties of Board Members 1.202

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Duties of Board Members**	**1.202**	**09/23/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

The duties of an individual board member are as follows:

1. To take the oath to discharge faithfully the duties of the office;[1]

2. To participate in State-mandated board training;[2]

3. To recognize that the Board is required to comply with the Open Meetings Law[3] and that the Board only has authority to make decisions at official board meetings;

4. To understand that board members will receive information that is confidential per state or federal law and cannot be shared;

5. To adhere to the Boardsmanship Code of Conduct; and

6. To adhere to the Houston County Board of Education Code of Ethics. [4]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-202(b)
2. TCA 49-2-202(a)(6); TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.11
3. TCA 8-44-102 *et seq.*
4. TCA 8-17-103

Cross References

Role of the Board of Education 1.101
Boardsmanship Code of Conduct 1.1021
Code of Ethics 1.106

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**New Member Orientation**	**1.203**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBBB**	Issued:

The Board considers board member development to be an ongoing process for all board members and a vital responsibility for effective board membership.

It shall be the responsibility of the director of schools to provide to each new board member:

1. A copy of the Board's Policy Manual;

2. Applicable portions of the Tennessee Code Annotated outlining the duties and responsibilities of the Board and the director of schools;

3. Minutes of the board meetings for the previous year; and

4. Other appropriate materials which will acquaint the new member with the operation of the school system and board service.

An orientation for new board members shall be conducted no later than thirty (30) days after new board members take office. The chairman of the Board and the director of schools shall arrange and plan for such an orientation.

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Board Member Development Opportunities**	**1.204**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBBC**	Issued:

The Board shall participate in activities designed to assist board members in improving their skills as members of a policy-making body.

In order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Board establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. A calendar of school board conferences, conventions and workshops shall be maintained by the board secretary and provided to each board member. At least annually the Board will identify which meetings should be attended and the benefits which would be derived from participation in such meetings;

2. Funds for participation at such meetings shall be budgeted on an annual basis. The Board as a whole shall retain the authority to approve or disapprove the participation of members in planned activities;

3. Reimbursement to board members for their travel expenses shall be in accord with the travel expense policy for staff members; and[1]

4. When a conference, convention or workshop is not attended by the full Board, those participating will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting;

The Board regards the following as the kinds of activities and services appropriate for implementing this policy:

1. Participation in school board conferences, workshops and conventions held by the State and National School Boards Associations;[1]
2. Local and district-sponsored training sessions for board members; and
3. Subscriptions to publications addressing the concerns of board members.

Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-2-2001(c)

Cross References:

Memberships 1.104
School District Goals 1.700
School Calendar 1.800
Expenses and Reimbursements 2.804

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Board-Director Relations**	**1.205**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **CF**	Issued:

The Board shall be responsible for specifying its requirements and expectations of the director of schools and then holding the director accountable by evaluating how well those requirements and expectations have been met. In turn, the director shall be responsible for specifying requirements and expectations for all administrators who report to him/her and then holding each accountable by evaluating how well requirements and expectations have been met.

The Board will authorize all expenditures, employ and dismiss all tenured teachers,[1] approve the annual budget,[2] and determine policy. [3] The decisions of the Board concerning these matters will guide the actions of the director of schools and his/her staff.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-203(1)(3)(6)
2. TCA 49-2-203(a)(10)(A)(i)
3. TCA 49-2-207

Cross References:

Role of the Board of Education 1.101
Evaluation of the Director of Schools 5.803

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Board Committees**	**1.300**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBC**	Issued:

The Board shall operate without standing committees, except for the Executive Committee; however, special committees composed of board members may be appointed by the chairman at the direction of the Board and as the needs of the Board shall require.[1] Such committees shall be discharged when the work is finished or earlier by a majority vote of the entire Board. All reports by special committees shall be made directly to the Board.

1. A special committee serving in an advisory capacity shall ordinarily consist of less than a quorum of board members;

2. The committee will be advisory only;

3. Issues to be discussed by the committee must be approved in advance by the entire Board;

4. A committee shall serve no longer than the annual organization meeting of the Board unless reappointed to finish a designated task; and

5. Committee meetings shall be held in accordance with the Open Meetings law.[2]

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-205(2)
2. TCA 8-44-102(b)

Cross References:

School Board Meetings 1.400
Public Hearings 1.401

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Executive Committee**	**1.301**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBCA**	Issued:

The chairman of the Board and the director of schools shall constitute the executive committee of the Board, with the chairman of the Board serving as the chairman of the executive committee.[1] The duties shall be:

1. To prepare an agenda for each meeting of the Board;

2. To prepare the annual budget on forms furnished by the Commissioner of Education, to be submitted to the Board for its approval;[2]

3. To meet at the office of the director of schools as often as necessary to perform the duties required;

4. To advertise for bids and let contracts authorized by the Board;

5. To serve as the purchasing agent for the Board;

6. To examine all accounts authorized by the Board and ensure that the approved budget is not exceeded;

7. To submit for approval at each regular meeting of the Board a full report of all business transacted since the last regular meeting; and

8 To transact any other business assigned to the committee by the Board.[1]

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-206; TCA 49-2-205(3)
2. TCA 49-2-203(10)(A)

Cross References:

Duties of Officers 1.201
Annual Operating Budget 2.200
Purchasing 2.805
Bids and Quotations 2.806
Qualifications/Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Staff Board Attorney**	**1.302**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBE**	Issued:

The Board shall employ an attorney to represent the Board in legal matters which arise concerning the school system[1] and may at its discretion employ additional counsel.

Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-2-203(b)(5)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**School Board Meetings**	**1.400**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds: **1.400**	Issued: **06/12/23; 12/14/20; 07/08/13; 09/28/09**

The Board will transact all business at official meetings that may be either regular or special.

Every meeting of the Board shall be open to the public, except for those meetings in which the law allows closed sessions.[1] Open meetings will be physically accessible to all students, employees, and interested citizens.[2]

The Board may restrict the recording of board meetings via camera, camcorder, or other photographic equipment when such recording creates a threat to public safety and welfare or impedes the conducting of efficient and orderly public meetings.[3]

REGULAR MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on the first Monday of each month.

In instances when any regular meeting date falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be rescheduled by the Chair with approval by a majority vote of the school board members.

The School Board Chair has the discretion to change a School Board meeting date with the approval of a majority vote of School Board members.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Board shall hold such special meetings as necessary to transact the business of the Board. Such meetings shall be called by the Chair whenever, in the Chair's judgment, the interests of the schools require it or when requested to do so by a majority of the Board.[4]

Only business related to the call of the meeting and details related to agenda items shall be discussed or transacted by the Board at a special meeting.

ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE[5]

Absent board members may attend a regular or special meeting by electronic means for certain qualifying reasons subject to the following requirements:

1. A quorum of the Board shall be physically present at the meeting in order for any board member to attend electronically, except in the case of inclement weather or natural disasters (permitted for a maximum of three times per year);

2. Any board member wishing to participate electronically shall do so using technology that allows the Chair to visually identify the board member; and

3. The responsibility for the connection lies with the board member wishing to participate electronically. No more than three (3) attempts to connect shall be made unless the Board chooses to make additional attempts.

Work-Related Absence

A board member may attend a meeting by electronic means if out of the county due to work; however, he/she may only participate electronically two (2) times per year for this reason. The board member shall give the Chair and Director of Schools at least five (5) days' notice prior to the meeting of the board member's intention to participate electronically.

Sickness or Period of Convalescence

A board member may attend a meeting by electronic means if sick or in a period of convalescence on the advice of a healthcare professional; however, he/she may only participate electronically three (3) times per year for this reason.

Inclement Weather or Natural Disaster

A board member may attend a meeting by electronic means due to inclement weather or natural disaster if the schools in the school district are closed; however, he/she may only participate electronically three (3) times per year for this reason.

Family Emergency

A board member may attend a meeting by electronic means if there is a family emergency that prevents him/her from attending in person. The absence shall be due to the hospitalization of the board member or the death or hospitalization of the member's spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepson, stepdaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law. The board member may only participate electronically two (2) times per year for this reason.

Military Service

A board member may attend a meeting by electronic means if out of the county due to military service. The board member may participate electronically as often as he/she is able to do so.

Legal References

1. TCA 8-44-102; TCA 49-6-804(b)
2. 28 CFR § 36.201(a); 28 CFR § 36.202
3. Tenn. Att'y Gen. Op. No. 95-126 (December 28, 1995)
4. TCA 49-2-202(c)(1)
5. TCA 49-2-203(c); Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 350

Cross References

School Board Legal Status and Authority 1.100
Board Committees 1.300
Notification of Meetings 1.402
Appearances Before the Board 1.404
Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Public Hearings**	**1.401**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BCAE**	Issued: **01/09/95**

The Board may hold public hearings in the following circumstances:

1. When a licensed employee is dismissed during a contract period. Any licensed employee of the Board is entitled to a hearing, upon written request, and shall be advised of the same in the event of a dismissal;[1]

2. When a student has been suspended for more than 10 days and an appeal has been requested;[2]

3. When a parent or legal guardian shall contest the school assignment of the student;[3] and/or

4. When the Board deems it to be in the public interest.

Any individual(s) requesting a hearing before the Board will make such request in writing stating the purpose of the hearing, the action desired, and, in the case of contesting a school assignment, the specific reasons for requesting the transfer. All requests for hearings must be received by the Board or director of schools within the time limit prescribed by law for that category of hearing.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-203(a)(6);TCA 49-2-301 (GG)(i); TCA 49-5-512
2. TCA 49-6-3401(b)(4)(A); TCA 49-6-3401(b)(5)-(6)
3. TCA 49-6-3201

Cross Reference:

Appeals To and Appearances Before the Board 1.404
Suspension/Dismissal of Non-tenured Teachers 5.200
Suspension/Dismissal of Tenured Teachers 5.201

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**Notification of Meetings**	**1.402**	**06/12/23**
		Rescinds: **BCBB**	Issued: **07/08/13**

The Board shall ensure adequate public notice[1] of all regular meetings by publishing a complete schedule for the entire school year. This schedule shall be posted in the central office, each school, and on the school system's website and sent to local news media and the president of the local education association.[2]

In the event of a special board meeting, notice shall be provided at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting and shall be posted in the same locations and in the same manner as regular board meetings. All notices of special board meetings shall state the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, defined for this policy as "a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action." In such exceptions, notice shall be given to all appropriate parties as is practical.

Notice of all meetings with actionable items on the agenda, with the exception of teacher disciplinary hearings, shall include information on how community members can participate in the public comment portion of the board meeting.[3]

Legal References

1. TCA 8-44-103
2. TCA 49-2-202(c)(1)
3. Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 300

Cross References

School Board Meetings 1.400

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**Agendas**	**1.403**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

The Executive Committee of the Board shall be responsible for developing an agenda for each board meeting. Any board member may place items on the agenda for discussion. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

For a regular board meeting, a draft agenda (which shall include the consent agenda), together with supporting materials, shall be distributed to board members at least two (2) days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. The draft agenda shall be available for public inspection and/or distribution when it is distributed to the board members. The final agenda shall be published on the school district website no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the regular board meeting.

At the beginning of each meeting, the Board shall, by a majority vote, approve the agenda for the meeting, which may involve the addition to or deletion of items previously included on the agenda. The Board, however, shall not revise board policies or adopt new ones, unless such action has been scheduled.

Staff members or citizens of the district may suggest items for the agenda. For items to be considered on the agenda, they must be received in the director of schools' office two (2) days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. The person(s) requesting an item on the agenda shall forward any background information to the Director of Schools' office so that the material will be included in the delivery to the board members prior to the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

While developing the agenda, the chairman and director of schools shall identify routine or noncontroversial items to be placed on the consent agenda, which shall become a part of the regular agenda. If any member objects to including an item on the consent agenda, that item shall be moved to the regular agenda as an action item requiring discussion. The remaining consent items shall be adopted in a single vote without discussion.

TIMED AGENDA

The executive committee shall assign a sufficient amount of time for each item on the agenda.

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 699

Cross References

Duties of Officers 1.201
Executive Committee 1.301
Appearances Before the Board 1.404

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**Appeals to and Appearances Before the Board**	**1.404**	**04/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 06/13/22; 06/12/23**

APPEALS TO THE BOARD

Any matter relating to the operation of the school system may be appealed to the Board. However, the parties shall attempt to settle all matters at the lowest level of responsibility, and the Board shall not hear complaints or concerns which have not advanced through the proper administrative procedure. If all steps of the administrative procedure have been pursued and there is still a desire to appeal to the Board, the matter shall be referred in writing to the office of the Director of Schools, and the Board shall determine whether to hear the appeal.

APPEARING BEFORE THE BOARD

Individuals desiring to appear before the Board may request placement on the agenda in writing by submitting a Request to Address the Board of Education form to the office of the Director of Schools two (2) business days before the meeting date. They will be recognized and given time to speak when their topic of interest is addressed on the agenda. Sufficient background material will be provided by the speaker. The Chair may recognize individuals not on the agenda for remarks to the Board if he/she determines that such is in the public interest. A majority vote of the members present can overrule the decision of the chairman. Delegations must select only one individual to speak on their behalf unless otherwise determined by the Board. Recognition of individuals who are not citizens of the school system is to be determined by majority vote of the Board.

Individuals speaking to the Board shall address remarks to the Chair and may direct questions to individual board members or staff members only upon approval of the Chair. Each person speaking shall state his/her name and subject of presentation. Remarks will be limited to three (3) minutes unless time is extended by a majority vote of the Board. The Chair shall have the authority to terminate the remarks of any individual who violates state law or does not adhere to board rules.[1]

Public Comment Period[2]

There shall be a public comment period for each meeting with actionable items on the agenda, with the exception of teacher disciplinary hearings. Comments shall be limited to topics listed on the agenda and matters that are germane to the school board's jurisdiction. The total public comment period shall be for no more than fifteen (15) minutes. If an individual wishes to address the Board, he/she shall sign up on the form provided before the beginning of the board meeting to request time to speak. Up to five (5) speakers shall be given no more than three (3) minutes each to speak. Delegations shall select only one (1) individual to speak on their behalf unless otherwise determined by the Board.

Legal References

1. TCA 39-17-306
2. TCA 8-44-112

Cross References

School Board Meetings 1.400
Public Hearings 1.401
Agendas 1.403
Discrimination/Harassment of Employees 5.500
Complaints and Grievances 5.501
Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation 6.304
Student Concerns 6.305

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**Rules of Order**	**1.405**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds: **BCBF/BCBG**	Issued: **07/08/13**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall govern the Board in all cases to which they are applicable, except as otherwise provided by any statutes applicable to the Board or by policies of this Board including the following exceptions.

VOTING METHOD

When a formal vote is taken on any question brought before the Board, the decision shall be made on the basis of a majority of the membership of the Board.[1]

Roll call votes will be used at the discretion of the Chair or upon the request of any board member. Each member's vote shall be recorded in the minutes on a roll call vote. Upon request, any member's individual vote may be recorded in the minutes. No secret votes shall be used.[2]

CHAIR'S PARTICIPATION

The person chairing a meeting may participate in discussion, make motions, and vote on all issues as any other member without relinquishing the chair.[3]

SUSPENSION OF RULES

Rules of order may be suspended by a majority vote of the membership at any regular or special meeting.

CHALLENGES

Procedural challenges to the rules of order shall be made in a timely manner and not later than the next successive meeting.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-202(g); Tenn. Att'y Gen. Op. No. 14-102 (Dec. 2, 2014)
2. TCA 8-44-104(b)
3. *Reeder v. Trotter*, 142 Tennessee 37 (1919)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**Minutes**	**1.406**	**07/15/19**
		Rescinds: **BCBH**	Issued: **01/09/95; 07/08/13**

The Director of Schools shall keep, or cause to be kept, complete and accurate minutes of all meetings of the Board.[1] A draft of the minutes of the previous meeting shall be sent to all board members with the agenda for the upcoming meeting. Following their approval by the Board, the minutes shall be signed by the Chair and Director of Schools. The minutes shall become permanent records of the Board and shall be made available to interested citizens and the news media upon request.[2,3] A copy shall be provided to all board members, the president of the local education association, and each of the schools no more than thirty (30) days after approval by the Board.[4]

The minutes shall include the following:

1. The nature of the meeting (regular or special), time, place, date, board members present or absent, and the approval of the minutes of the preceding meeting;[2]

2. A record of all motions, proposals, and resolutions passed or denied by the Board, together with the names of the members making and seconding the motions, and a record of the members voting "aye" and "nay" in the event of a roll call vote;[2]

3. Names of persons addressing the Board and the purpose of their remarks; and

4. A brief account of those items discussed and whether or not any motions were made regarding those items.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(C)-(D)
2. TCA 8-44-104(a)
3. TCA 10-7-503(a)(1)(B), (a)(2)(B)
4. TCA 49-2-203(a)(11); Public Acts of 2019, Chapter No. 248

Cross References

Duties of Officers 1.201

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**School District Records**	**1.407**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/08/09; 11/13/17; 07/18/24**

General

The Director of Schools/designee shall maintain all school district records required by law, regulation, and board policy. Any citizen of Tennessee shall be permitted during business hours to inspect public records maintained by the school district unless otherwise prohibited by law. Any citizen of Tennessee may request in writing and receive copies of open public records subject to the payment of reasonable cost.[1,2,3,4]

No records pertaining to individual students will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons. In addition, information, records, and plans related to security and safety will not be released for public inspection.[5]

All requests to inspect or receive copies of records shall be submitted to the Assistant Director of Schools, the district's public records request coordinator and records custodian.[6]

Prior to producing any record, the records custodian shall ensure confidential information is redacted. Original documents remain intact, and confidential information in copies produced for a requestor shall be redacted. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop a procedure to redact confidential information.

REQUESTS FOR INSPECTION[2]

Citizens requesting to inspect public records shall submit their request and a government issued photo identification card with the citizen's address to the district's public records request coordinator during normal business hours. Requests may be made in person or by telephone, electronic transmission, or mail. The coordinator shall submit the information to the appropriate records custodian. The records custodian will contact the citizen and indicate when the records will be available to inspect.

If the records cannot be made available within seven (7) business days, the records custodian shall provide a records production letter indicating the time needed to complete the request.

If the request to inspect is denied, the records custodian shall provide the citizen with a records request denial letter indicating the basis for the denial.

REQUESTS FOR COPIES[2]

Citizens requesting copies of public records shall complete and submit the Records Request Form and a government issued photo identification card with the citizen's address to the district's public records request coordinator during normal business hours. The coordinator shall submit the Records Request Form to the appropriate records custodian.

The records custodian shall provide an estimate of the reasonable costs to produce the requested records. The Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, Office of Open Records Counsel Schedule of Reasonable Charges shall be used to determine the reasonable cost. The records custodian will provide the citizen with an invoice detailing the charges. The citizen shall pay the estimated reasonable costs by cash or check prior to the district producing the copies.

If the records cannot be made available within seven (7) business days, the records custodian shall provide a records production letter indicating the time needed to complete the request.

If the request for copies is denied, the records custodian shall provide the citizen with a records request denial letter detailing the basis for the denial.

FREQUENT AND MULTIPLE REQUESTS

When the total number of requests for copies made by a requestor within a calendar month exceeds four (4), the requestor may be charged a fee for any and all labor that is reasonably necessary to produce copies of the requested records. Prior to charging a reasonable fee, the requestor shall be notified of this policy and provided with a Notice of Aggregation of Multiple Requests/Requestors form. The Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, Office of Open Records Counsel Schedule of Reasonable Charges shall be used to determine the reasonable cost. Further, the names of persons inspecting records and the date of inspection shall be recorded.

DENYING REQUESTS FOR NONCOMPLIANCE[7]

Requests to Inspect a Public Record

The district shall deny a request to inspect a public record from any citizen that has:

a. Made two (2) or more requests to view a public record within a six-month period; and

b. For each request failed to view the record within fifteen (15) business days of receiving notification that the record was available.

Requests from this citizen shall be denied for up to six (6) months from the date of the second records request. The district's public records request coordinator may waive this denial if he/she determines that failure to view the record was for good cause.

Requests for Copies of Public Records

The district shall deny a request for copies of a public record from any citizen that has:

a. Been provided with an estimate of the reasonable cost to produce the requested records;
b. Agrees to pay such estimated reasonable cost prior to production of the records; and
c. Fails to pay the actual cost after the records have been produced.

Additional requests from this citizen shall be denied until the original cost is paid.

RECORDS RETENTION

The Director of Schools/designee shall retain and dispose of school district records in accordance with the following guidelines:[8]

1. The Director of Schools/designee will determine if a particular record is of permanent or temporary value in accordance with state law,[9,10]

2. Temporary value records which have been kept beyond the required time may be recommended to the Public Records Commission for destruction;[11,12]

3. The records that the State Librarian and Archivist desire to preserve in their facilities will be transferred to the State Library and Archives. The temporary value records rejected by the State Library and Archives may be transferred to another institution or destroyed;[11,12,13]

4. Permanent records will be kept in some usable form (digital, printed, microfilm, etc.). If the Director of Schools/designee desires to destroy the original permanent record, these records must be reproduced by microfilming or some other permanent reproduction method. Permission to destroy any original permanent record after microfilming follows the same procedure noted above for temporary records;[10,12] and

5. The Director of Schools/designee shall establish procedures to safeguard against the unlawful destruction, removal, or loss of records.[14]

DISTRICT PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST COORDINATOR[15]

Assistant Director of Schools
Phone: (931) 289-4148
https://www.houston.k12.tn.us/

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(Z)
2. TCA 10-7-503
3. TCA 10-7-506(a)
4. TCA 49-2-104
5. TCA 10-7-504(p)
6. *Policy Related to Reasonable Charges a Records Custodian May Charge for Frequent and Multiple Requests for Public Records*, Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, *available at* https://www.comptroller.tn.gov/content/dam/cot/orc/documents/oorc/policies-and-guidelines/ScheduleofReasonableCharges.pdf; TCA 10-7-503(a)(1)(B),(C)
7. TCA 10-7-503(a)(7)(A)(vii)
8. TCA 10-7-503(h)(6)
9. TCA 10-7-401
10. TCA 10-7-406; TCA 10-7-301(5),(13)
11. TCA 10-7-404
12. TCA 10-7-413
13. TCA 10-7-414
14. TCA 39-16-504
15. TCA 10-7-503(g)(1)(D)

Cross References

Financial Reports and Records 2.701
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Board-Community Relations**	**1.500**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBD**	Issued:

In order to promote school-community interaction relating to the policy and operation of the schools, the Board will:

1. Strive to keep citizens of the school system regularly informed about all policies, problems and planning through channels of communication, its own efforts, and the office of the director of schools;

2. Direct all school employees, including teachers, administrators and support service personnel to participate in good school-community interaction by:

   a. Transmitting pertinent and correct information to citizens upon request or upon initiative of school employees;
   b. Seeking ways to improve school-community relations; and

3. Recognize the right of news media to inquire, research and report to the public information about local schools.

The principal of each school shall be responsible for the development of a public relations program and shall promote programs which involve parents and the community with the school.

The director of schools shall be responsible for leadership in school-community relations. Through the use of his staff, he/she will promote a program to best coordinate the involvement of the schools and community.

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Cross References:

Visitors to the Schools 1.501
Advertising & Distribution of Materials in Schools 1.806
Community Use of School Facilities 3.206
Staff Community Relations 5.606

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Visitors to the Schools**	**1.501**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/09/21; 01/13/20; 12/12/16**

General

Except on occasions such as school programs, athletic events, open house, and similar public events, all visitors will report to the school office when entering the school and will sign-in. Authorization to visit elsewhere in the building or on the school campus will be determined by the principal/designee. Guest passes shall be issued for all persons other than students and employees of the school.[1]
In order to maintain the conditions and atmosphere suitable for learning, no other person shall enter onto the grounds or into the school buildings during the hours of student instruction except students assigned to that school, the staff of the school, parents of students, and other persons with lawful and valid business on the school premises.[2]

Houston County Schools has established the following procedures for parentally-requested outside service providers, defined as non-school employed therapists or practitioners, to observe and/or provide services to students:

1. A signed agency agreement, along with verification of the required background check(s), must be on file with the Board of Education.
2. Written parental and service provider requests, liability statements, and confidentiality statements must be on file in the school prior to the provider accessing the school building.
3. The observations/services must be educationally based or medically necessary and cannot result in a disruption to the educational process.
4. Any provider requesting access to a building/student must make the request at least five (5) days prior to the planned observation and follow the above requirements (unless outside provider is required for daily student services and has prior established agreement).

Each principal is responsible for setting guidelines for building access, check-in procedures, and school rules for outside service providers. A service provider may be denied access to a school at any time at principal discretion if any rules or procedures are not followed.

VISITOR CONDUCT

Persons who come onto school property shall be under the jurisdiction of the site administrator/designee. Individuals who come onto school property or who contact employees on school or district business are expected to behave accordingly. The Director of Schools shall develop a visitor code of conduct to be presented to the board attorney, and then, approved by the Board.[3] This code shall prohibit the following:

1. Cursing and use of obscenities;
2. Disrupting or threatening to disrupt school or office operations;
3. Acting in an unsafe manner that could threaten the health or safety of others;
4. Verbal or written statements or gestures indicating intent to harm an individual or property; and
5. Physical attacks intended to harm an individual or substantially damage property.

The visitor code of conduct shall be posted on the district's website as well as the school's website, and copies of the code shall be provided to all teachers, counselors, administrative staff, and other school employees. In addition, each school entrance shall have the visitor code of conduct posted prominently along with the phone number of someone in the school's administration who can answer questions about the code.

Annually, parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided with a printed copy of the code of conduct, along with the phone number of someone in the school's administration who can answer questions about the code. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understood the code of conduct.

CONSEQUENCES FOR CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION

The principal/designee has the authority to exclude from the school premises any persons disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, or on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act.[2]

The principal shall contact law enforcement officials when he/she believes the situation warrants such measures.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-303(b)(4)
2. TCA 49-6-2008; TCA 39-14-406
3. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 810

Cross References

Board-Community Relations 1.500
Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
Vendor Relations 2.809
Safety 3.201
Security 3.205
School Volunteers 4.501
Care of School Property 6.311

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Board-Media Relations**	**1.502**	**06/10/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

BOARD MEETING NEWS COVERAGE

A copy of the agenda shall be sent in advance to members of the news media who request it.

The Chair of the Board and/or the Director of Schools shall be available to members of the news media after each meeting to answer questions and to clarify points of discussion and action, as schedules permit.

NEWS RELEASES AND NEWS CONFERENCES

The release of official news from the school district shall be coordinated as follows:

1. The Chair shall be the official spokesperson for the Board; and

2. News releases which are of a system wide nature, pertain to established system policy, or pertain to the schools or school organizations are the responsibility of the Director of Schools/designee.

INTERVIEWS

When individual board members or the Director of Schools express their views on any issue which is in opposition to a view expressed in board policy, they have the duty to make clear that the view expressed is not the official view of the Board or school system.

Cross References

Board-Community Relations 1.500
Crisis Management 3.203
Qualifications and Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802
Student Suicide Prevention 6.415

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**News Releases, News Conferences, And Interviews**	**1.503**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BCBJA**	Issued:

The release of official news from the system and schools shall be coordinated as follows:

1. The Director of Schools will be the official spokesman for the Board, except as this duty is delegated to others;

2. News releases which are of a system-wide nature or pertain to established system policy are the responsibility of the director of schools or a designated member of the administrative staff;

3. News releases which are of concern to only one school or to an organization of one school are the responsibility of the principal of that particular school; and

4. News media requests for access to school facilities will be referred to the director of schools for approval.

When individual board members or the director of schools express their views on any issue which is in opposition to a view expressed in board policy, they have the duty to make clear that the view expressed is not the official view of the Board or school system.

Cross References:

Board-Community Relations 1.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Policy Development and Adoption**	**1.600**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/22/04**

A proposed policy or policy change shall be submitted to the Board as part of the agenda. The Board may approve the proposal or return it for study and/or further revision.

Adoption shall require an affirmative vote by a majority of the Board.

Policies adopted by the Board shall be made a part of the minutes and shall be placed in the policy manual. Policies shall be effective immediately upon adoption unless a specific effective date is provided and shall supersede any previous board action on the subject.

POLICY MAINTENANCE

The Director of Schools/Designee shall be responsible for drafting policy proposals and maintaining the Board policy manual. At least biennially, the Board shall review its policy manual for the purpose of passing, revising, or deleting policies mandated by changing conditions.[1] To ensure that the policy manual remains current, the Board may contract annually for TSBA's policy maintenance service.

Policies shall be accessible to all employees of the school system, members of the Board, and citizens of the community.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

Any board policy or part thereof may be suspended by an affirmative vote by a majority of the Board.

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

In cases where the Board has provided no guidelines for administrative action, the Director of Schools/Designee shall have the power to act. Any such actions shall be reported to the Board at the next meeting.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-207(a)

Cross References

Role of the Board of Education 1.101
Agendas 1.403
Administrative Procedures 1.601

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Administrative Procedures**	**1.601**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **CMA**	Issued: **01/09/95**

The director of schools is responsible for implementing board policies and for interpreting them to staff, students and the public.'

The director of schools, in consultation with principals, staff members, and other persons and groups as appropriate to the topic, will develop administrative procedures as necessary to implement board policies or for the items deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the schools.[2]

Within the policies and regulations of the Board and the director of schools, the principals are authorized to establish rules and procedures for the staff and students of their schools.

DISSEMINATION

The director of schools is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible to all employees the administrative procedures.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(A)
2. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(A); TCA 49-2-203(a)(2)

Cross Reference:

Qualifications/Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Administrative Committees**	**1.602**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **CL**	Issued:

The director of schools may establish such committees as he/she finds necessary for proper administration of board policies and for the improvement of the total educational program.

All administrative committees created by the director of schools shall be for the purpose of obtaining the advice and counsel of administrative and supervisory personnel of the system and to aid in communication.

Authority for establishing policy remains with the Board and authority for implementing policy remains with the director of schools.

The membership, composition, and responsibilities of committees will be defined by the director of schools and may be changed at his/her discretion.

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Cross References:

Qualifications/Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Administrative Reports**	**1.603**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **CO**	Issued:

The director of schools shall make annual reports concerning conditions of efficiency and needs of the schools.[1]

All reports prepared by the director of schools' office for transmittal to the legislative body, the State Department of Education, or any Federal agency will be available upon request for inspection by members of the Board.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)

Cross Reference:

Qualifications/Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**School District Goals**	**1.700**	**07/14/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 04/26/21**

The Board shall determine the educational goals of the school district. In discharging that responsibility, the Board has adopted the following goals:

INSTRUCTION

1. To promote a plan for the organized improvement of school curriculum, including the transition between elementary and secondary schools;

2. To offer a wide range of career and service opportunities;

3. To promote an integration of academic, physical, social, and emotional growth experiences for each student; and

4. To promote the recognition of achievement in all endeavors (i.e., academic, athletic).

STUDENTS

1. To structure the instructional program to provide necessary alternatives to meet a variety of individual needs and aspirations;

2. To ensure that each student's interests, capacities, and objectives are considered in his/her learning program; and

3. To help students gain understanding of themselves as well as skills and techniques in living and working with others and being responsible citizens.

PERSONNEL

1. To promote high quality performance by the staff, including both professional and support personnel;

2. To establish acceptable performance standards for all personnel;

3. To provide in-service training and professional growth experiences for teachers and administrators; and

4. To maintain an evaluation system for the improvement of the instructional system.

OPERATIONS

1. To make every effort to secure adequate funding for the educational program in support of the stated goals;

2. To maintain an adequate system of fiscal and business management;

3. To develop plans for the efficient use of school facilities; and

4. To ensure appropriate communication between the Director of Schools and the Board.

The Board shall annually review these goals and revise them as necessary.

The Director of Schools is responsible for developing procedures and strategies to implement the goals of the Board.

Cross References

Role of the Board of Education 1.101
Board Member Development Opportunities 1.204
Fiscal Management Goals 2.100
Instructional Program 4.100
Evaluations of Instructional Programs 4.702
Personnel Goals 5.100
Instructional Goals 6.100

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**School District Planning**	**1.701**	**3/11/24**
		Rescinds: **ACAA**	Issued: **02/11/19 07/08/13**

The Board shall develop and implement a written five (5) year strategic plan that addresses identified priority needs and provides for continuous student growth and improvement. The plan shall be updated every two (2) years and shall align with requirements of the State Board of Education.[1] The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop any necessary measures to implement this policy.

BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR THE DISTRICT[1]

The Board shall develop annual plans with specific goals for improving student performance and that operationalize the district's five (5) year strategic plan. This will be incorporated into the TISA accountability report that must be approved by the Board and filed with the Department of Education each November 1st.[2]

The Board may plan an annual retreat with the Director of Schools and appropriate staff. The purpose of the retreat shall be to:

1. Review progress on the implementation of priorities, initiatives, and long-range plans;
2. Determine which goals have been achieved and whether any new efforts are needed;
3. Review major issues that may affect the school system in the future; and
4. Create an annual plan for district improvement.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN[1]

The principal of each school shall work with the Director of Schools/Designee to develop and implement a school improvement plan that is student focused and in support of the board improvement plan. The plan shall be updated annually and address the long-range strategic plan of the school district.[1]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-1-613; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.31(8); State Board of Education Policy 2.101
2. TCA 49-3-112

Cross References

Role of the Board of Education 1.101
In-Service and Professional Learning Opportunities 5.113
Qualifications and Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**School Attendance Areas**	**1.703**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **AD**	Issued:

The Board shall establish school attendance areas and periodically review boundary adjustments. The director of schools shall enforce these areas as established by the Board.'

The primary considerations governing the establishment of a school attendance area are:

1. The educational opportunity afforded students;
2. The capacity of each school; and
3. The geographic location of each school in relationship to the surrounding student population.

Students who use the school bus service must attend the school in the zone in which they reside. Students who use transportation other than the school bus service may be permitted to attend any school which is appropriate for their level provided all policies regarding out-of-zone attendance are complied with

Legal Reference:	Cross References:
1. TCA 49-6-403(c)	Student Assignment 6. 205

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**School Day**	**1.801**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **AF**	Issued:

The minimum length of the school day shall be six and one-half (6 ½) hours total for all grades.[1]

All teachers shall be on duty at least seven (7)hours and such additional time as the administrative organization requires.[2]

Legal References:

1. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.02(1)(a)
2. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(1)

Cross References:

Staff Time Schedules 5.602
Staff Meetings 5.603

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures**	**1.802**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBDD**	Issued: **01/09/95**

The Board is committed to maintaining equitable employment/educational practices, services, programs and activities that are accessible and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities.

DEFINITION

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides that : No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States…shall solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.[1]

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 provides that : No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall be discriminated against in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.[2]

COORDINATOR[3]

The Board shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504, including any investigation of any complaint alleging non-compliance with the Acts or alleging any actions that would be prohibited by the Acts.

NOTICE[4]

The Board shall make available the name, office address and telephone number of the ADA/Section 504 coordinator.

Methods of initial and continuing notification may include the posting of notices, publication in newspapers and student and employee handbooks and distribution of memoranda or other written communications.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES[5]

The coordinator will hear ADA/Section 504 complaints. Complaints shall be submitted orally or in writing to the coordinator who will endeavor to accomplish prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by the ADA/Section 504. The coordinator will respond to all complaints within twenty (20) days with a written response as well as information on further grievance procedures that may be followed if the complaining party is not satisfied with the coordinator's proposed resolution.

DUE PROCESS HEARING REQUEST

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides the right to an impartial due process hearing if a parent wishes to contest any action of the school system with regard to a child's identification, evaluation, and placement under Section 504.[6] If a parent/guardian requests a Section 504 hearing, the parent/guardian has the right to personally participate and to be represented at the hearing by an attorney or advocate at the parent's expense. Contested actions or omissions that are appropriate for a Section 504 hearing should involve identification, evaluation, or placement issues involving a child who has or is believed to have a disability.

Written Request for Hearing

A parent/guardian who wishes to challenge an action or omission with regard to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a student who has or is believed to have a disability as defined by Section 504, shall make a written request for a due process hearing to the section 504 coordinator. The written request must be made on a form provided through the central office.

Impartial Hearing Officer

The director of schools or his/her designee shall appoint an impartial hearing officer to preside over the hearing and issue a decision. Such appointment will be made within fifteen (15) working days of the date of receipt of a request for a due process hearing. The hearing officer will be hired as an independent contractor at no expense to the parent. The hearing officer that is appointed shall not be a current employee of the school system and shall note be related to any member of the Board of Education. The hearing officer need not be an attorney but shall be familiar with the requirements of Section504 and the hearing procedures under Section 504. The choice of an impartial hearing officer is final and may not be presented as an issue at the due process hearing since such an issue would not relate to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a disabled child under Section 504. If a parent/guardian disputes the impartiality of the appointed hearing officer, he/she may raise such issue in a review of the hearing officer's opinion by a court of competent jurisdiction or in a complaint to the Office of Civil Rights.

Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
61 Forsyth St. S.W. Suite 19T10
Atlanta, GA 30303-8927
Telephone: 404-974-9406: TDD: 877-521-2172

Scheduling of a Hearing

The appointed hearing officer shall set a date of the hearing within fifteen (15) days of his/her appointment and provide this information in writing to the parent/guardian and the Section 504 coordinator. The hearing shall take place at a mutually agreeable time and place.

Continuances

Upon a showing of good cause, the hearing officer, at his/her discretion may grant a continuance of the hearing date and set a new hearing date.

Legal Representative at Hearing

If a parent/guardian is represented by a licensed attorney at the due process hearing, he/she must inform the Section 504 coordinator and the appointed hearing officer of that fact, in writing, at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the hearing date, or the hearing can be continued upon the coordinator's request. The school system shall not have a legal representation at the hearing unless the parent provides notice that he/she will have legal representation.

Pre-Hearing Conference

The hearing officer may order a Pre-Hearing Conference during which the parent/guardian or his/her representative will state and clarify the issues to be addressed at the hearing. The Pre-Hearing Conference will also serve to resolve preliminary matters, clarify jurisdictional issues. And answer the parties' questions regarding the hearing process. The Pre-Hearing Conference can be held via telephone or in person depending on the hearing officer's decision based on convenience of both parties.

Dismissal

If, after the Pre-Hearing Conference, the hearing officer finds the parent, as a matter of law, alleges and/or raises no factual claims or legal issues that come within his/her jurisdiction as a Section 504 hearing officer, he/she may dismiss the hearing and issue an order to that effect explaining the basis for such finding.

Hearing

The hearing shall be conducted in an informal, non-adversarial manner. The hearing shall be closed to the public unless the parent/guardian requests an open hearing. The hearing officer may reasonably limit testimony and introduction of exhibits for reasons or relevance.

Recording

Instead of a formal written transcript produced by a court reporter, the entire due process hearing will be video recorded. The school system shall provide a copy of the recording to the parent/guardian upon request. In order for an accurate recording to be made, the parties and witnesses shall introduce themselves at the beginning of their presentations. If a parent/guardian appeals the decision of the hearing officer to a court of competent jurisdiction, the school system shall prepare a written transcript of the hearing to be offered to the court as an exhibit.

Witnesses

Witnesses will present their information in narrative form, without the traditional question and answer format of legal proceedings. Cross-examination of witnesses will not be allowed, but a party may request that the hearing officer, at his/her discretion, ask a witness a certain question.

Format of Presentation

Each side will have an equal amount of time to present their positions as determined by the hearing officer. The parent/guardian will present his/her case first by making an opening statement outlining the issues, calling witnesses, and making a closing argument. The school system will present its side next. At the end of the school system's presentation, the parent/guardian may offer a short response. Each side may present personally or through their representatives.

Submission of Exhibits

As part of their presentations and at the discretion of the hearing officer, the parties may submit any reports, evaluations, correspondence, notes, or any other documents that may support their positions. Exhibits submitted to the hearing officer by either party must be marked. The hearing officer may, in the exercise of his/her discretion, reasonably limit the number of documents to be submitted for his/her review, as well as the number of witnesses and the length and/or scope of their presentations or statements.

Closing Arguments

The hearing officer may allow or request written closing arguments summarizing and characterizing the information presented at the hearing.

Decision

The hearing officer may make an oral ruling at the conclusion of the hearing or take the case under advisement and issue a written opinion. Such decision shall address all of the issues raised by the parent/guardian as well as any corrective actions, if any, the school system must take. Any issue or claim raised by the parent/guardian that is left unaddressed by the hearing officer in his/her decision will be deemed to have been denied. The decision must be issued within forty-five (45) days after the date the request for a Due Process Hearing is received by the district. The hearing officer may not award attorneys' fees as part of the relief granted to a parent or the school district.

Review Procedure/Appeal

If the parent/guardian is not satisfied by the decision of the hearing officer, he/she may seek review of the decision in a court of competent jurisdiction.

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Legal Reference:

1. 34 CFR § 104.4(a)
2. 42 USCA §12112(a)
3. 28 CFR § 35.107
4. 28 CFR § 35.106; 34 CFR § 104.8
5. 28 CFR § 35.170;172
6. 34 CFR §104.36

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Tobacco-Free Schools**	**1.803**	**03/11/19**
		Rescinds: **JCBC**	Issued: **07/08/13**

All uses of tobacco, tobacco products (including smokeless tobacco), electronic/battery operated devices, vapor products, and all other associated paraphernalia are prohibited in all of the school district's buildings and in all vehicles that are owned, leased, or operated by the district.[1] Smoking and vaping shall be prohibited in any public seating areas including, but not limited to, bleachers used for sporting events or public restrooms.[2]

Employees and students in the school district will not be permitted to use these products while they are participants in any class or activity in which they represent the school district.

Any student who possesses these products shall be issued a citation by the school principal/resource officer.[3] The director of schools, in cooperation with the juvenile court and the local (police/sheriff's department), is responsible for developing procedures for issuance of the citations which shall include the form and content of citations and methods of handling completed citations.

Signs will be posted throughout the district's facilities to notify students, employees, and all other persons visiting the school that the use of these products is forbidden. The following notice shall be prominently posted (including at each ticket booth) for elementary or secondary school sporting events: *Smoking is prohibited by law in seating areas and in restrooms*.[4]

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 6083; TCA 39-17-1604(6); TCA 39-17-1503(9), (10)
2. TCA 39-17-1604(10)
3. TCA 39-17-1505
4. TCA 39-17-1605

Cross References

Community Use of School Facilities 3.206

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Alcohol & Drugs in the Workplace**	**1.804**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds: **GAN**	Issued: **07/08/13; 07/15/19**

General

Any employee who violates the terms of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension, dismissal, and/or referral for prosecution.[1]

The Director of Schools/Designee shall be responsible for providing a copy of this policy to all school district employees.

DEFINITIONS

"Workplace" shall include any school building or any school premise; any school-owned or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; and off-school property during any school-sponsored or school approved activity, event, or function.

"Illegal drugs" shall include any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance as defined by federal law.[2]

"Unauthorized drugs" shall include, but are not limited to, inhalants; any designer, synthetic, derivative, analogous, or "look-alike" substances that are manufactured, designed, or intended to resemble and/or mimic the effects of illegal drugs; any legally prescribed drugs being used in a manner for which they were not intended or prescribed including, but not limited to, the use of prescription drugs prescribed for another individual; and any lawful substances that could result in impairment of physical or mental capacity that is threatening to the health or safety of the employee or others.[3]

"Alcohol" shall include, but is not limited to, spirits, liquor, wine, beer, and any liquid containing alcohol as defined by state and federal law.[4]

ALCOHOL & DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

No employee while on or in the workplace shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any illegal or unauthorized drugs[1] or any alcohol.[5]

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION/SCREENING BASED UPON REASONABLE SUSPICION

Whenever the Director, or his/her authorized designee, reasonably suspects that an employee's work performance or on-the-job behavior may have been affected in any way by illegal drugs or alcohol or that an employee has otherwise violated this policy, 1.804 Alcohol & Drugs in the Workplace, the employee may be required to submit a breath and/or urine sample for drug and alcohol testing as detailed in Policy 5.403 Drug & Alcohol Testing for Employees.

Legal References

1. Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, 41 USCA § 8103; 34 CFR §§ 84.205 – 84.215
2. 21 USCA § 812
3. TCA 49-5-1003(b)(16), (17), (18)
4. TCA 57-4-102; 26 USCA § 5002
5. TCA 39-17-715

Cross References

Supervision 5.108
Drug & Alcohol Testing for Employees 5.403
Drug-Free Schools 6.307

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Use of Electronic Mail (e-mail)**	**1.805**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BCBK**	Issued:

Electronic mail capability among board members and district staff exists for the purpose of enhancing communication to better perform tasks associated with their positions and assignments. Therefore all staff and board members who have access to the district network shall adhere to the following guidelines when sending or receiving messages via system-wide-electronic mail (e-mail):

1. Because all computer hardware and software belong to the Board, all data including e-mail communications stored or transmitted on school system computers shall be monitored. Employees/board members have no right to privacy with regard to such data. Confidentiality of e-mail communication cannot be assured. E-mail correspondence may be a public record under the public records law and may be subject to public inspection.[1]

2. Messages shall pertain to legitimate board/district business; e-mail shall not be used to circumvent requirements of the Open Meetings Act.[2]

3. Staff/board members will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement containing terms and conditions for use of the internet. Staff/board members shall not reveal their passwords to others in the network or to anyone outside of it. If anyone has reason to believe that a password has been lost or stolen or that e-mail has been accessed by someone without authorization, s/he shall contact the technology coordinator immediately.

4. It is the responsibility of the sender not to violate copyright laws.

5. Messages shall not be sent that contain material that may be defined by a reasonable person as obscene or that are racist, sexist or promote illegal or unethical activity.

Any usage contrary to the above shall be reported immediately to the director of schools and may result in the suspension and/or revocation of system access or if deemed necessary, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.

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Legal Reference:

1. TCA 10-7-512
2. TCA 8-44-102

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Advertising and Distribution of Materials in the Schools**	**1.806**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **BBDB**	Issued:

No part of the school system, including the facilities, the name, the staff, and the students, shall be used for advertising or promoting the interests of any commercial, political or other non-school agency or organization except that:

1. The school may cooperate in furthering the work of any non-profit, community-wide social service agency, provided that such cooperation does not restrict or impair the educational programs of the schools;

2. The school may participate in radio or television programs under acceptable commercial sponsorship when such programs are educationally beneficial;

3. Community, educational, charitable, recreational and other similar civic groups may advertise events pertinent to students' interests or involvement. Such advertisement, including the distribution of materials, shall be subject to any procedures related to time, place and manner established by the principal;

4. The principal shall screen all materials prior to distribution to ensure their appropriateness. The principal may prohibit materials that:

   a. are likely to cause substantial disruption of the operation of the school;
   b. violate the rights of others;
   c. are inappropriate for the maturity level of students of the school;
   d. are obscene, lewd or sexually explicit; or
   e. students would reasonably believe to be sponsored or endorsed by the school.

5. The school may, upon approval of the director of schools, cooperate with any governmental agency in promoting activities which advance the education or other best interests of the students;

6. Political literature shall not be distributed through the school to students, nor sent home to parents, nor placed in teachers' mail boxes, lounges, or on school premises;

7. Political signs for people who are running for public office shall not be allowed on school property except those being held by poll workers on election day; and

8. School publications may accept and publish paid advertising under procedures established by the director of schools.

Cross References:

Board-Community Relations 1.500
Vendor Relations 2.809
Staff-Community Relations 5.608
Student Publications 6.704

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Use of School Name**	**1.807**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **EBHAA**	Issued:

No school or community organization, employee, student or other person may use the school name in any promotional manner or for personal benefit without prior approval of the Board.

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Cross Reference:

Board-Community Relations 1.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Registered Sex Offenders**	**1.808**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **1.808**	Issued: **01/12/09**

Individuals registered as sex offenders in Tennessee or any other state are prohibited from the premises of any school in this district, except for the limited circumstances stated in this policy.[1]

EMPLOYMENT

An individual listed by the state of Tennessee or any other state as a registered sex offender is ineligible for employment within the school district.

PRESENCE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

No registered sex offender, other than a student enrolled in the school in question, shall come on, about, or within 1,000 feet of a local school's property line, except as provided below.[2] If any employee of the school district becomes aware of any registered sex offender's presence on school property, he/she shall immediately inform the principal, who shall direct the individual to leave the premises immediately. The principal shall request assistance from local law enforcement authorities if offender resists the principal's directives. If the registered sex offender repeats this restriction of coming on to school property, the principal may confer with legal counsel to take appropriate legal action.

Neither this policy nor state law impose any duty upon a principal or any other employee of the local school district to review the sex offender registry for individuals who may come upon the property.

PARENTS WHO ARE REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

A parent or legal guardian of a child who is enrolled in the school may attend a conference with school officials with the written permission of the school's principal.

An offender may come within the 1,000 feet limit provided that the individual is dropping off or picking up a child or children enrolled in the school.

Principals shall speak with the parent upon learning of their status as a sex offender to communicate the restrictions of this policy and to establish open dialogue with the parent, as much as is possible or reasonable. The principal shall take all appropriate measures to protect the privacy of the sex offender's child.

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Legal References:

1. TCA 40-39-201, et seq.
2. TCA 40-39-211

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Charter School Authorizing Principles**	**1.900**	**12/11/23**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/14/22**

The Houston County Board of Education shall ensure that only high-quality charter schools are authorized to operate within the district, and adhere to the State Board of Education's quality charter authorizing standards.[1] To accomplish this, the Board shall adopt the following authorizing principles that require charter schools to maintain high standards, while upholding school autonomy and protecting student and public interests.[1]

MAINTAINING HIGH STANDARDS

Charter schools shall be held accountable for meeting the performance standards and targets set forth in their charter agreement. The Board shall maintain high standards for the charter school(s) it oversees and close any charter school that fails to meet the standards and targets established in the charter agreement or set by state law.[2]

UPHOLDING SCHOOL AUTONOMY

Charter school governing boards shall be independent of the Board and have the authority to make instructional programming, financial, personnel, school culture, and scheduling decisions. The Board shall assume responsibility not for the success or failure of individual schools but for holding schools accountable for their performance.

The Board shall only impose requirements on charter schools in its portfolio when there is a legal basis or compelling reason to do so.

PROTECTING STUDENT AND PUBLIC INTERESTS

The Board shall ensure clarity, consistency, and public transparency in authorizing policies, practices, and decisions of any charter school. The Board shall hold charter school governing boards accountable for being fiscally responsible and transparent.

Charter schools are part of the public education program and shall adhere to non-selective, nondiscriminatory practices and ensure the fair treatment of all students. They shall provide appropriate services to all enrolled students in accordance with state and federal laws.[3] Charter school governing boards shall ensure fiscal responsibility and transparency.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-13-108(f); State Board of Education Policy 6.111; TRR/MS 0520-14-01-.01
2. TCA 49-13-111, TCA 49-13-120, TCA 49-13-122
3. TCA 49-13-105(a

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Charter School Applications**	**1.901**	**01/12/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/03/13; 12/11/17; 11/14/22; 12/11/23; 07/14/25**

General

This policy shall apply to sponsors and potential sponsors of charter schools. It shall not apply to charter schools converting from existing public schools. Proposals from existing charter school operators or replicators and applicants proposing to contract with educational service providers shall be in accordance with state law.[1]

APPLICATION PROCESS

A prospective charter school sponsor shall send notice to the Director of Schools/designee of its intent sixty (60) calendar days prior to February 1st of the year preceding the year in which the proposed charter school plans to begin operation as a charter school. The Director of Schools/designee shall confirm receipt of the letter and provide the sponsor with current state and federal per pupil funding estimates within five (5) business days.[2]

A sponsor seeking board approval of an initial charter school application shall complete the forms developed by the State Board of Education in coordination with the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission ("the Commission"). The application shall provide all the information required by state law. The sponsor shall demonstrate that the proposed charter school meets the purpose prescribed by state law for the formation of a charter school, and the proposed charter school will be able to implement a viable program of quality education for its students.

Electronic copies of applications shall be submitted to the Board and the Commission on or before 11:59 p.m. Central Time on February 1st of the year preceding the year in which the proposed charter school plans to begin operation as a charter school. If the 1st of February falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday on which the school district offices are closed, applications will be accepted on the next business day on or before 11:59 p.m. Late applications will not be accepted, without exception. The sponsor shall pay an application fee of $2,500.00. The Director of Schools/designee shall report each completed initial application received to the Commission no later than ten (10) calendar days after receipt.[3]

REVIEW TEAM[1]

If necessary, the Director of Schools/designee shall appoint a review team to assist in reviewing and evaluating charter school applications. The team shall be comprised of members of the administrative staff for the district and community members with relevant educational, organizational, financial, and

legal experience. At the board meeting in December of each year, the Director of Schools/designee shall make a recommendation to the Board on which members of his/her administrative staff should be appointed to the team. The Board shall name the members of the team at its meeting in January of each year. The Board shall designate a Chair of the review team as the contact person for answering questions about the application process and receiving applications. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop an orientation for the team to ensure consistent evaluation standards and the elimination of real or perceived conflicts of interest.

The Board shall require the Director of Schools/designee to develop a procedure for receiving, reviewing, and ruling on applications for the establishment of charter schools by the review team. The procedure shall include a timeline for the application and review process. A copy of the procedure, including the review criteria, shall be available on the district's website.

The review team shall:

1. Evaluate all charter school applications based on the review criteria established by state law; and

2. Recommend one of the following options to the Board for each application: approve or reject. [4]

APPROVAL/DENIAL OF APPLICATION[5]

The Board shall rule by resolution on the approval or denial of an initial charter school application within ninety (90) calendar days of receipt of the completed application, or the application shall be deemed approved by state law. The Director of Schools/designee shall report the action taken by the Board to the Department of Education and the Commission no later than ten (10) calendar days after approval or denial. If an application is denied, the report shall also include the reasons for denial.

Approval

The sponsor of a charter school that is approved by the Board shall enter into a written agreement with the Board which shall be binding on the charter school's governing body. The charter school agreement shall be in writing and signed by the sponsor and the Board.

The Board will receive an annual authorizer fee of three percent (3%) of the annual per student state and local allocations or thirty-five thousand dollars ($35,000), whichever is less.[6]

Charter schools approved by the Board are expected to implement the application as submitted and approved. Material variations in operations from the approved application require amendment pursuant to state law and the charter school agreement.[7]

The Board shall not provide services to charter schools that are not requested during the application process except for those services that are required under state or federal law. Services agreed to be provided to the charter school by the Board shall be provided at the Board's actual cost. The Board and charter school shall execute a service contract for any additional services.

New charter school agreements are approved for a ten (10) year period.[8] The Board may revoke or deny renewal of a charter school agreement for any of the reasons enumerated in state law.[9]

Denial

If the initial charter school application is denied, the Board shall notify the sponsor in writing within ten (10) calendar days, specifying the objective reasons for the denial and the deadline by which the sponsor may submit an amended application. Upon written receipt of the grounds for denial, the sponsor shall have thirty (30) calendar days within which to submit an amended application to correct the deficiencies. The Board shall have sixty (60) calendar days either to deny or to approve the amended application, or the application shall be deemed approved by state law.[5]

If the amended charter school application is denied, the Board shall notify the sponsor in writing within five (5) calendar days, specifying the objective reasons for denial and the sponsor's right to an appeal. Within ten (10) calendar days of final denial, an appeal may be filed with the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission.[10]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-13-106; State Board of Education Policy 6.111
2. TCA 49-13-107; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275; TCA 1-3-102; TCA 49-13-108; TRR/MS 0520-14-01-.01(1)(b),(e)
3. TRR/MS 0520-14-01-.01(1)(d), (e)
4. TRR/MS 0520-14-01
5. TCA 49-13-108; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275; TRR/MSS 0520-14-01
6. TCA 49-13-128
7. TCA 49-13-110(d); TRR/MSS 0520-14-01-.01
8. TCA 49-13-110(c)
9. TCA 49-13-122
10. TCA 49-13-108(b)(5)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Charter School Agreements**	**1.902**	**12/11/23**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/14/22**

GENERAL

Charter agreements shall articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcomes, measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. These agreements shall be separate from the application and contain terms and performance standards under which the school shall operate.[1]

All charter agreements shall:[1]

1. Clearly state the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer;
2. Define the material terms of the agreement as being those relevant to renewal;
3. Allow amendments subject to the approval of both parties;
4. State and respect the autonomies to which schools are entitled (e.g. programming, staffing, budgeting, and scheduling);
5. Define performance standards, criteria, and conditions for renewal, intervention, revocation, and non-renewal;
6. State the amount of the authorizer fee and when it will be collected;
7. Establish the consequences for meeting or not meeting standards as outlined by the Board;
8. State the statutory, regulatory, and procedural terms and conditions for the school's operation;
9. State reasonable pre-opening requirements or conditions for new schools to ensure that they meet all health, safety, and other legal requirements prior to opening;
10. State the responsibility and commitment of the school to adhere to essential public education obligations, including admitting and serving all eligible students so long as space is available, and not expelling or counseling out students except pursuant to a legal discipline policy approved by the Board; and
11. State the responsibilities of the school and the authorizer in the event of school closures.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Charter agreements shall include clear academic, financial, and organizational performance standards. Sources for obtaining this information shall be outlined in the agreement. At a minimum, these agreements shall include the following:

1. Academic performance standards that set expectations for student achievement and growth, incorporate state and federal accountability systems, and set expectations for postsecondary readiness (for high schools);

2. Financial performance standards that enable the Board to evaluate the charter's financial stability; and

3. Organizational performance standards that define the vital components of the educational program, the financial management standards, state and federal legal requirements, and school environment expectations for which the Board shall hold the charter accountable.

The performance standards included in the charter agreement shall establish specific expectations using objective measures of student achievement. This shall be the primary measure of school quality.

FEE-BASED SERVICES

Any fee-based services shall be outlined in a separate agreement. The provision of any such fee-based services shall not be a condition of charter approval, continuation, or renewal.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-13-110; State Board of Education Policy 6.111
2. State Board of Education Policy 6.111

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Charter School Oversight**	**1.903**	**07/14/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/14/22; 12/11/23**

GENERAL

The Board shall oversee and annually evaluate charter schools to ensure they meet the performance standards and targets set forth in the charter school agreement.[1] The Board shall create a comprehensive performance, accountability, and compliance monitoring system based on the charter school agreement and communicate the results to each charter school. At a minimum, the monitoring system shall address academic, financial, and organizational performance standards as outlined in the charter school agreement and required by the State Board of Education.[1] The Board shall utilize the results when making renewal, revocation, and intervention decisions. Reports on charter school oversight shall be compiled by and published on the district's webpage at least annually.

The Board shall communicate with the charter schools in its portfolio as needed, including both the charter school leader and governing board, and provide timely notice of any material charter school agreement violations and performance deficiencies.

The Board shall articulate and enforce stated consequences for failing to meet performance expectations or compliance requirements.

MONITORING SYSTEM

The Director of Schools/designee shall implement a performance and compliance monitoring system per the terms of the charter agreement. This information will be provided to the Board on an ongoing basis through reports that will form the basis of renewal, revocation, and intervention decisions. To aid in this, the Director of Schools/designee shall develop a reporting calendar that outlines when information required by state law shall be provided by the charter school.

SITE VISITS

A site visit to each charter school shall be conducted annually. The purpose shall be to collect data and other qualitative information that cannot be obtained otherwise. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop a site visit procedure that outlines the expectations of charter schools prior to, during, and after the site visit, including review of the documents and data, classroom observations, and interviews. These visits shall minimize administrative burdens and avoid operational interference.

The Board shall provide the charter school with a report that summarizes the outcome of the visit. The report shall provide an analysis of relevant data and include general recommendations, if applicable.[2]

CHARTER SCHOOL REPORTING

Charter schools shall provide the information required by the charter school agreement and state law to the Board. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop a reporting calendar that defines and communicates the process, methods, and timing of gathering and reporting data to the Board.[2]

By September 1st, the governing body of an approved charter school shall make a written report to the Board.[3] The annual report shall include:

1. A report on the progress of the charter school in achieving the goals outlined in the charter school agreement;

2. A financial statement disclosing the financial health of the charter school, including the costs of the administration, instruction, and other spending categories of the charter school; and

3. A detailed accounting, including the amounts and sources, of all funds received by the charter school, other than the funds received per state law.[4]

This reporting requirement shall begin in the year after the year in which the charter school begins operation.

Multiple charter schools overseen by a single governing board shall report their performance as separate, individual charter schools. Each charter school shall be independently accountable for its performance.

Each charter school governing body shall submit an annual audit of all accounts and records, to include internal school activity and cafeteria funds, to the Board as soon as practical after June 30th.[5]

AUTHORIZER REPORTING AND REVIEW

By December 1st, the Board shall report to the State Board of Education detailing the authorizer fees collected in the previous school year and the authorizing obligations fulfilled using the fee.[6] By January 1st, the Board shall submit an annual authorizer report to the State Board of Education and make the report available on the district website.[7] The Director of Schools/designee shall prepare the reports and provide the information to the Board prior to submission.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-13-111(d); State Board of Education Policy 6.111
2. TCA 49-13-120
3. TCA 49-13-120(a)-(b)
4. TCA 49-13-112(a), (f)
5. TCA 49-13-127
6. TCA 49-13-128(f); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275
7. TCA 49-13-120(c); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Charter School Intervention**	**1.904**	**12/11/23**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/14/22**

GENERAL[1]

The Board shall develop a clear plan for monitoring charter schools that shall be set forth in the charter agreement. If the Board identifies a deficiency in the academics, finances, or operations of the charter school, the Director of Schools/designee shall communicate the problem to the charter school. Any intervention shall be proportionate to the identified problem and adhere to the provisions of the charter agreement, and intervention strategies shall preserve the school autonomy and responsibility while clearly stating consequences for noncompliance.[1]

The Director of Schools/designee shall give the charter school timely notice of any charter agreement violations or performance deficiencies requiring intervention. Notices shall state the:

1. Deficiency;

2. Applicable regulatory, performance, or contractual provision(s) not achieved;

3. Expected remedy; and

4. Timeframe by which the Board expects the deficiency to be remedied or a corrective action plan to be submitted.

The Director of Schools shall provide charter schools with reasonable time and opportunity to remedy the deficiency or to submit a corrective action plan.

PROGRESSIVE INTERVENTIONS[2]

The Board shall assign a level of intervention for the charter school as defined by the charter agreement if deficiencies are identified. Depending on the severity of the deficiency, the Board reserves the right to revoke the charter agreement in accordance with state law.

Tier I – Notice of Deficiency

The Board shall provide the charter school with notice of the specific deficiency with supporting documentation as well as information on possible consequences.

Possible Deficiency: including, but not limited to, failure to comply with the terms of the charter agreement, violation of state law, etc.

Possible Consequence: including, but not limited to, a letter to the charter's governing board, sending terms of a corrective action plan, etc.

Tier II – Notice of Probationary Status

Tier II shall be implemented if the interventions in Tier I are unsuccessful. These interventions shall consist of options including, but not limited to, letter to the charter's governing board as notice of probationary status, outlining the terms of the probation and the timeline for correction, etc.

Tier III – Review of Status

Tier III shall be implemented if the interventions in Tier II are unsuccessful. These interventions shall consist of options including, but not limited to, recommendation to revoke the charter contract or other sanctions, etc.

REMEDIES[1]

Charter schools shall be responsible for notifying the Board:

1. When a deficiency has been remedied;

2. If the charter school requires an extension of time to remedy a deficiency; or

3. If the charter school requests a modification to its corrective action plan.

Legal References

1. State Board of Education Policy 6.111
2. TCA 49-13-122; Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 206

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Charter School Renewal**	**1.905**	**07/14/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/14/22; 12/11/23**

INTERIM REVIEW

The Director of Schools/designee shall conduct an interim review of a charter school in the fifth year of a charter term in accordance with guidelines developed by the State Board of Education. As part of this process, the charter school shall submit a report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals and objectives set forth in the charter agreement.[1]

CUMULATIVE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Three (3) months prior to the date on which a charter school is required to submit a renewal application, the Director of Schools/designee shall submit a performance report to the charter school that summarizes the school's performance record over the charter term and states the summative findings concerning the school's performance and prospects for renewal.[2]

APPLICATION AND EVALUATION

No later than April 1st of the year prior to the year in which the charter school agreement expires, the governing body of a charter school shall submit a renewal application to the Board.[3] The Director of Schools/designee shall report each renewal application received to the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission ("the Commission") within ten (10) days of receipt.[3]

The Director of Schools/designee shall conduct a renewal evaluation site visit to each charter school that submits a charter school renewal application.

The Board will make renewal decisions by February 1st in the year the charter school agreement expires.

RENEWAL CRITERIA[4]

The Board shall define and communicate with schools the criteria for renewal that is consistent with the charter agreement. The Board shall make its renewal decision based on the renewal application, annual progress reports, and renewal performance report.

Within ten (10) days of the Board voting by resolution on a renewal application, the Director of Schools/designee shall promptly notify a school of its renewal recommendation and decision,

including the reasons for the decision and any rights to an appeal. The Director of Schools/designee shall promptly communicate renewal decisions to the school community and public as well as the Department of Education and the Commission.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-13-121(k); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275
2. State Board of Education Policy 6.111
3. TCA 49-13-121(a); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275
4. TCA 49-13-121; State Board of Education Policy 6.111; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Charter School Revocation**	**1.906**	**07/14/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/14/22; 12/11/23**

GENERAL

The Board shall revoke a charter school agreement if the charter school:[1]

1. Failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward the performance expectations set forth in the charter school agreement;

2. Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter school agreement;

3. Failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or

4. Performed any of the acts that are conditions for non-approval of charter schools under state law.

NOTICE

The Director of Schools/designee shall notify the charter school of the Board's intent to revoke the charter school agreement in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the revocation.[2]

Within ten (10) days of the Board voting to renew, not renew, or revoke a charter school agreement, the Director of Schools/designee shall report the Board's decision to the Department of Education and Tennessee Public Charter School Commission. The Director of Schools/designee shall also provide the charter school a copy of the Board's resolution setting forth the decision and the reasons for the decisions, and an explanation of the right to appeal.[3]

REVOCATION DUE TO PRIORITY STATUS

The Board may revoke a charter school agreement if the charter school is identified as a priority school under state law. Revocation shall take effect immediately following the close of the school year in which the charter school is identified as a priority school.[4]

The Board shall revoke a charter school agreement if the charter school is identified as a priority school for two consecutive cycles. Revocation shall occur immediately after the close of the school year in which the charter school is identified as a priority school for the second consecutive cycle.

PROCEDURES FOR CLOSURE

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop administrative procedures regarding charter school closures prior to the Board denying renewal or revoking a charter school agreement.[5] These procedures shall outline a detailed protocol that will ensure timely notification to parents, orderly transition of students and student records, and disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with state law.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-13-122(b); State Board of Education Policy 6.111
2. TCA 49-13-122(e)
3. State Board of Education Policy 6.111; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 275
4. TCA 49-13-122(a)
5. TCA 49-13-130

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in July	**Student Board Member**	**1.1021**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

The Board authorizes the participation of a student representative to the Board.[1] If the Board chooses to appoint a student board member, the student board member shall serve in an advisory, nonvoting role. The student board member's term shall begin August 1st and end on May 31st and they shall serve without compensation.

SELECTION

The student board member shall be presented to the full board for approval upon recommendation by the high school principal/designee. The nominee shall be presented based upon the following process:

1. Completion of a locally-developed application submitted with a minimum of three (3) teacher recommendations
2. Review of all applicants' packets by a high school staff committee to identify no more than six (6) candidates
3. Six (6) candidates voted on by entire high school student body
4. Top vote-receiving applicant submitted to the full Board for approval

ATTENDANCE AT BOARD MEETINGS

The student board member is expected to attend board meetings. Students will fully contribute their unique perspective and opinions.

Student board members shall not participate in the following:

1. Student discipline hearing appeals;
2. Teacher disciplinary matters;
3. Meetings with legal counsel; or
4. Confidential school safety plan meetings

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 359

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Boardmanship Code of Conduct**	**1.2021**	**09/23/19**
		Rescinds: **1.1061**	Issued: **04/15/14**

The Board adopts these standards as recommended by the Tennessee School Boards Association as a guide to its members as they provide educational leadership for the youth of our state.

MY RELATIONS TO THE CHILDREN

1. I will at all times think in terms of "children first," always determining how my actions and decisions will affect the education and training of children.

2. I will seek to provide equal educational opportunities for all children.

MY RELATIONS TO MY COMMUNITY

1. I will endeavor to appraise fairly both the present and future educational needs of the community and to support improvements as finances permit.

2. I will represent at all times the entire school community and refuse to represent special interests or partisan politics.

3. I will endeavor to keep the community informed about the progress and needs of the schools.
4. I will represent the Board and the school district to the public in such a way as to promote both interest and support.

5. I will refer to other board members, staff, students, and the public with respect when using social media.

MY RELATIONS TO TEACHERS AND PERSONNEL

1. I will support the employment of those best qualified to serve as employees and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff.

2. I will support and protect personnel in performance of their duties.

3. I will not criticize employees publicly but will express any relevant concerns to the Director of Schools for investigation and action if necessary.

MY RELATIONS WITH OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

1. I will understand that the Board makes decisions as a team and that individual board members may not commit the Board to any action.

2. I will accept the will of the majority vote in all cases and give support to the resulting action.

3. I will work harmoniously with other board members without trying to dominate the Board or neglect my share of the work.

4. I will refuse to make promises as to how I will vote on a matter that will come before the Board.

5. I will make decisions only after a complete discussion of items at a board meeting.

MY RELATIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

1. I will support the full administrative authority as well as responsibility for the Director of Schools to properly discharge all professional duties.

2. I will hold the Director of Schools accountable for working with staff and requiring them to work within the framework of policies set up by the Board.

3. I will understand that the Board sets the standards for the school district through policy and that board members do no manage the district on a day-to-day basis.

4. I will refer all complaints and concerns to the Director of Schools and abstain from individual counsel and action in regard to staff members.

MY RELATIONS TO MYSELF

1. I will uphold the integrity and independence of the position.

2. I will become familiar with federal and state education laws and school board policies.

3. I will educate myself about my duties and responsibilities and current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information.

4. I will continually advocate for the goals of the school district.

5. I will vote and act impartially for the good of the school district.

6. I will avoid conflicts of interest, and I will refrain from using my position on the Board for personal or partisan gain.

7. I will attend all board meetings and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings.

8. I will model civility to students, employees, and all elements of the community by encouraging the free expression of opinion by all board members and engaging in respectful dialogue with fellow board members on matters being considered by the Board.

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in August	**Emergency Closings**	**1.8011**	**08/09/21**
		Rescinds: **1.8011**	Issued: **04/27/20**

General

The Board authorizes the Director of Schools to close schools in the event of hazardous weather, a public health emergency, or any other emergency which presents a threat to the safety of students, staff members, or school property.[1]

As soon as the decision to close schools is made, the Director of Schools will notify the public media and request that an announcement be made.

If school is not in session or is dismissed early due to snow or inclement weather, the Director of Schools in consultation with the principal(s) of the impacted school(s) shall determine if all scheduled activities in which students are involved shall be postponed or cancelled.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

In the event of an emergency that requires closure of a school building, group of schools, or the entire district, the Director of Schools is authorized to continue to pay employees who are not able to physically report for duty as a result. These employees shall receive their regular wages. Such payments shall not exceed the number of days budgeted for each employee.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3004(e)(1); TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.02(1)(b)

Cross References

Emergency Preparedness Plan 3.202
Telework During Emergencies 5.1151

Houston County Board of Education

2 – FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Descriptor Code	Policy Title	Issued Date
2.100	Fiscal Management Goals	09/09/24
2.200	Annual Operating Budget	09/09/24
2.201	Line Item Transfer Authority	09/09/24
2.300	Comparability of Services	09/09/24
Revenue		
2.400	Revenues	05/11/26
2.401	Gifts and Bequests	09/09/24
2.402	Investment Earnings	07/08/13
2.403	Surplus Property Sales	06/09/25
2.404	School Support Organizations	07/08/13
2.500	Deposit of Funds	09/09/24
2.600	Bonded Employees	07/08/13
2.601	Fundraising Activities	05/13/24
Accounting		
2.700	Accounting System	09/09/24
2.701	Financial Reports and Records	09/09/24
2.702	Inventories	09/09/24
2.703	Audits	12/11/17
Expenditures and Purchasing		
2.800	Expenditure of Funds	08/10/15
2.801	Petty Cash Accounts	07/08/13
2.802	Payroll	09/09/24
2.804	Expenses and Reimbursements	01/12/26
2.805	Purchasing	09/09/24
2.8051	Credit Cards/Credit Lines	03/11/24
2.806	Bids and Quotations	07/18/24
2.807	Requisitions	07/08/13
2.808	Purchase Orders and Contracts	09/09/24
2.809	Vendor Relations	07/08/13
2.810	Payment Procedures	07/08/13
2.900	Student Activity Funds Management	09/09/24

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Fiscal Management Goals**	**2.100**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds: **DA**	Issued: **07/08/13**

The Board shall practice sound fiscal management which guarantees maximum use of all resources provided. The Board assumes responsibility, within its financial capabilities, for providing at public expense all items of equipment, supplies, and services that may be required in the interest of education in the schools under its jurisdiction.[1]

In fiscal management, the Board shall achieve the following goals:

1. Engage in advance planning with the Director of Schools/designee and community involvement;

2. Establish levels of funding which will provide quality education for the district's students; and

3. Require the Director of Schools/ designee to develop procedures for accounting, reporting, purchasing and delivery, payroll, payment of vendors and contractors, and all other areas of fiscal management.

Legal References

1. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 3-1

Cross References

School District Goals 1.700

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Annual Operating Budget**	**2.200**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

General

All school district budgets are the operational plans stated in financial terms for the fiscal year beginning July 1st ending June 30th the following year.[1]

BUDGET PREPARATION

Budget planning shall include an analysis of previous staffing, curriculum and facilities, and projections requiring additional staffing, curriculum modifications, and additional facilities.

The budget proposal shall be balanced, consistent with board policy and contract conditions, and in accordance with the revenue estimates and revenue determinations made by the County Commission and include provisions for:

1. Programs to meet the needs of the entire student body;

2. Staffing arrangements adequate for proposed programs;

3. Maintenance of the district's equipment and facilities; and

4. Efficiency and economy.

Budget preparation shall be the responsibility of the Director of Schools/Designee.[2] The Director of Schools/Designee will establish procedures for the involvement of staff, including requests from department heads and principals, all of whom shall seek advice and suggestions from other staff and faculty members.

The Director of Schools and the Board Chair shall develop a budget preparation calendar no later than January 1st. The calendar shall be used as a guide for coordinating the budgetary activities of individuals and groups, collecting budget data, reviewing budget problems, and making budget decisions.

HEARING AND REVIEWS

The proposed budget will be available for inspection by various interested citizens or groups in the office of the Director of Schools.

FINAL ADOPTION PROCEDURE

The Board shall submit a proposed budget in accordance with the budget timeline established by the Board and County Commission.[3] If a budget timeline is not agreed upon, the Board shall submit a

proposed budget to the County Commission no later than May 1st.[4] If the proposed budget is rejected, the Board shall submit a revised budget proposal within ten (10) business days after receiving notice of the rejection.[5]

Within ten (10) days of adoption of the final budget, the Director of Schools shall file a copy with the Commissioner of Education.[6]

Legal References

1. *Internal School Funds Manual,* Section 4-40
2. TCA 49-2-203(a)(9)
3. TCA 5-9-402(c)
4. TCA 5-9-402(d)(4)
5. TCA 5-9-402(d)(5)(C)
6. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(X); TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.13(2)(a)

Cross References

Role of the Board of Education 1.101
Executive Committee 1.301

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Line Item Transfer Authority**	**2.201**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

Line item transfers within major categories shall be made upon the recommendation of the Director of Schools/Designee and approval of the Board.

Transfer between major budget categories shall be made with the approval of the Board and County Commission (if applicable).[1]

Legal References

1. Tenn. Att'y Gen. Op. No. 83-464 (Oct 26, 1983)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Comparability of Services**	**2.300**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

In order to ensure comparability of services[1] from local and state funds in all of its schools, the Board shall ensure that:

1. A system wide salary schedule is adopted annually;
2. Teachers, principals, and support personnel are assigned to schools on an equivalent basis according to grade levels and need; and
3. Curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided to schools on an equivalent basis according to grade levels and need.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures to ensure compliance with this policy and state and federal requirements regarding the comparability of services.

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 6321

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Revenues**	**2.400**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **10/11/99; 07/08/13; 03/11/24; 09/09/24**

General

Any money collected by any school shall be documented with a receipt.

The schools may receive funds collected from activities and for events held at or in connection with the school, including contracts with other schools for interschool events. To be included in this accounting are all monies collected from lunch rooms, athletics, entertainments, school clubs, fees, concessions, and all fundraising activities. Each principal shall determine the reconciliation method to be used for all events which require a ticket.[1]

FEES

School fees are to be kept to a minimum and may be expended only for the purposes for which they were collected. The school shall not require any student to pay a fee to the school for any purpose, except as authorized by the Board. No fees shall be required of any student as a condition to attend the school or use its equipment.[2] School fees shall be waived for students who receive free or reduced-price lunches.[3] No student will be penalized for nonpayment of any school fee.

EXTENDED SCHOOL PROGRAM

Extended school funds shall be collected at the individual schools and receipted and deposited in the school bank account. The principal shall report the collections and pay the Board by school check.[4]

FINES

A student will be held responsible for the cost of replacing any materials or property which the student loses or damages,[5] including textbooks, library books, equipment, and buildings. All money collected as fines shall be placed in the system-wide school fund.

TUITION INCOME

Tuition collected from nonresident students shall be placed in the system-wide school fund.

RENTAL INCOME

The principal will collect and remit to the central office all money received for use of a particular school facility or other school property.

GRANTS

Grants for educational purposes made available by the state and/or federal government may be sought by the school district but only when the conditions of their availability are in harmony with the purposes and policies of the Board and the laws of the state and county. Principals may apply for and receive grants, but funds shall be recorded in a separate restricted fund account.[4]

COLLECTION OF FUNDS THROUGH ONLINE PAYMENT[6]

Approved district staff may utilize a vendor for electronic transactions. The Director of Schools/designee shall determine when this type of transaction may be utilized on a case-by-case basis. At the individual school level, the principal shall oversee the collection of funds and submit a plan that includes the following:

1. Adequate supporting documentation for the electronic collection method including a plan to provide a total daily receipt summary;

2. Methods of providing receipts to payers;

3. Information on maintaining and inspecting any voided receipts; and

4. How daily electronic collections shall be reconciled with the total daily receipt summary and who will be assigned to complete this task.

Processing fees for these transactions may be charged.

The Director of School/designee shall establish adequate internal controls to ensure compliance with the *Tennessee Internal School Funds Manual*.

ROUNDING IN CASH TRANSACTIONS

Due to the discontinuance of the penny, rounding procedures shall be utilized in cash transactions. This applies to collections of all cash funds received by the district.

Cash transactions shall be rounded to the nearest $0.05. The following rounding method shall be utilized:

- Amounts ending in $0.01 or $0.02 shall be rounded down
- Amounts ending in $0.03 or $0.04 shall be rounded up
- Amounts ending in $0.06 or $0.07 shall be rounded down
- Amounts ending in $0.08 or $0.09 shall be rounded up

The Director of Schools/designee shall monitor implementation to ensure compliance with accounting standards and state law.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-110(a); *Internal School Funds Manual,* Section 5-4
2. TCA 49-6-3001(a); TCA 49-2-110(c)
3. TCA 49-2-114
4. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 4-32, 4-33
5. TCA 37-10-101, 102
6. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 5-8

Cross References

Fundraising Activities 2.601
Student Activity Funds Management 2.900
Food Service Management 3.500
Textbooks and Instructional Materials 4.400
Compensation Guides & Contracts 5.110
Attendance of Non-Resident Students 6.204
Student Fees and Fines 6.709

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Gifts and Bequests**	**2.401**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

The Director of Schools is authorized to accept gifts to the school district and may designate others to accept gifts for particular schools on behalf of the Board.[1] The Board will officially express appreciation to the donor, and all major gifts shall be reported to the Board and publicly announced.

In instances where the Director of Schools/designee doubts the appropriateness or usefulness of an offered gift, the gift may be declined, or the matter referred to the Board.

In accepting gifts and donations, the following shall apply:

1. Unless otherwise expressly specified in writing, all property contributed, given, or otherwise placed on school premises shall, for all intents and purposes, be a gift and shall become school district property subject to the same controls and regulations that govern the use of other school-owned property.

2. Contributions of equipment or services that may involve major costs for installation, maintenance, or initial or continuing financial commitments from school funds shall be presented by the Director of Schools for board consideration and approval.

3. Individuals or organizations wanting to contribute supplies or equipment shall consult with school officials about the feasibility of accepting such contributions.

4. A list of durable equipment which has been contributed shall be reported to the Board by the Director of Schools/Designee annually.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2006(a)

Cross References

Staff Conflicts of Interest 5.601
Staff Gifts and Solicitations 5.605

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Investment Earnings**	**2.402**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **DFL**	Issued:

The building principal, with consent of the director of schools, is authorized to invest excess funds of the school in savings accounts.[1] Interest earned on general fund accounts shall be credited to general fund revenue. Interest earned on restricted fund accounts shall be credited to revenue in each restricted account.

School food service funds shall be kept separate from other school funds and interest earned on food service fund deposits shall be credited to food service revenue.

All funds shall be deposited into accounts fully protected by sufficient collateral. Reports of the investments shall be made to the Board semi-annually.

Legal References:

1. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*; Section 6-1

Cross References:

Deposit of Funds 2.500
Food Service Management 3.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Surplus Property Sales**	**2.403**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **10/11/99; 08/10/15; 07/18/24**

The Director of Schools/Designee shall prepare a list of unusable items for board approval.[1] The list shall contain the following information: name of item, date of purchase, and reason for disposal.

All unusable items shall be sold to the highest bidder after advertising in a newspaper of general circulation at least seven (7) days prior to the sale.[2] Notice shall also be published on a news and information website in accordance with state law.[3]

Surplus property which has no value or has a value of less than five hundred dollars ($500) may be disposed of without the necessity of bids. In order for such disposal without bids, the Director of Schools and the Board Chair shall agree in written form that the property is of no value or is of less value than five hundred dollars ($500).[4]

If reasonable attempts to dispose of surplus properties fail to produce monetary return to the district, the Board shall approve other methods of disposal.[5]

Surplus equipment will be auctioned off by the district at the end of the school year. The Board shall approve all surplus equipment prior to the materials being disposed of at the end of the school year.

DISPOSITION OF EQUIPMENT PURCHASED WITH FEDERAL DOLLARS[6]

When equipment that was purchased with federal dollars is no longer needed for the original project or program or for other activities currently or previously supported by a federal agency, disposition of the equipment shall be made as follows:

1. Items of equipment with a current per-unit fair market value of $10,000 or less may be retained, sold, or otherwise disposed of with no further obligation to the awarding agency; or

2. Items of equipment with a current per unit fair market value in excess of $10,000 may be retained or sold, and the awarding agency shall have a right to an amount calculated by multiplying the current market value or proceeds from sale by the awarding agency's share of the equipment.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2006(b)(3); TCA 49-6-2208
2. TCA 49-6-2007(b)
3. TCA 1-3-120; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 105
4. TCA 49-6-2007(d)
5. TCA 12-2-403(a)
6. 2 CFR § 200.313(e)

Cross References

Duties of Officers 1.201
Inventories 2.702
Textbooks and Instructional Materials 4.400

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**School Support Organizations**	**2.404**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **2.404**	Issued: **02/11/08**

INTRODUCTION

Only a group or organization that has entered into a written cooperative agreement with the Board may use the name, mascot or logo of a school or the school district to solicit or raise money, materials, property, securities, services, or other things of value.

A civic organization operating concessions or parking at school-sponsored events is not a school support organization subject to this policy.

REPORTING AND RECORDS

The director or the director's designee shall annually post a list of organizations that are recognized as school support organizations on the school district's web site.

Any forms, annual reports, or financial statements submitted shall be open to public inspection as a public record.

PROCEDURES

The director shall create procedures to oversee the relationship between the Board and any school support organization. These procedures shall include, at a minimum, the following:

1. Any agreement between the Board and a school support organization shall be in writing and signed by the director or the director's designee and an authorized agent of the school support organization seeking authorization. This agreement shall contain, at a minimum, the following provisions:

    a. An agreement to abide by any policies and procedures regarding school support organizations; and,

    b. An agreement to indemnify the Board, the director and all other agents of the local education agency for the actions of the school support organization.

2. Prior to entering into any agreement, a school support organization shall submit the following to the director or the director's designee:

    a. Documentation confirming the school support organization's status as a nonprofit organization, foundation, or a chartered member of a nonprofit organization or foundation;

    b. A written statement of the goals and objectives of the group or organization;

c. The principal contact telephone and address, as well as the telephone number, address, and position of each officer of the group or organization; and,

d. A copy of the school support organization's written policy specifying reasonable procedures for accounting, controlling, and safeguarding any money, materials, property, securities, services, or other things of value collected or disbursed by it.

3. The director shall designate a date prior to the beginning of the regular school year for the school support organization to submit a form to the director or the director's designee which verifies the information previously provided by the school support organization is correct or, if the information is no longer correct, that date shall be the deadline for any corrections.

4. The school support organization shall abide by all applicable Federal, State and local laws, ordinances and regulations in its activities.

5. The school support organization shall maintain a copy of its charter, bylaws, minutes, and documentation of its recognition as a nonprofit organization.

6. The school support organization shall maintain financial records for a period of at least four (4) years.

7. The school support organization shall operate within the applicable standards and guidelines set by a related state association, if applicable, and shall not promote, encourage or acquiesce in any violation of student or team eligibility requirements, conduct codes or sportsmanship standards.

8. The school support organization's officers shall ensure that school support organization funds are safeguarded and are spent only for purposes related to the stated goals and objectives of the organization.

9. The school support organization shall obtain the approval of the director or the director's designee before undertaking any fundraising activity. The director or the director's designee shall consider, at a minimum, the following when approving or denying a request by a school support organization to engage in a fundraising activity:

   a. Whether the fundraising activity, as scheduled, conflicts with the fundraising activity of the school district or an individual school within that district; and,

   b. Whether the fundraising activity is consistent with the goals and mission of the school or school district.

10. The school support organization shall provide access to all books, records, and bank account information for the school support organization to officials of the local school board, local school principal, or auditors of the office of the comptroller of the treasury upon request.

11. School board members or school system employees may not act as a treasurer or bookkeeper for a school support organization, or be a signatory on the checks for a school support organization. A majority of the voting members of any school support organization board should not be composed of School board members or school system employees.

The director may enact procedures to suspend or revoke the authorization of any school support organization for a failure to abide by the policies and procedures regarding school support organizations.

OPERATION OF A SCHOOL BOOKSTORE

The principal of a school may enter into an agreement with a recognized school support organization for the operation of a bookstore located on school grounds, which makes direct sales to students and faculty, pursuant to procedures promulgated by the director. These procedures shall provide, at a minimum, the following:

1. One hundred percent (100%) of the profits of the operation of the bookstore are used for support of the school; and

2. The school support organization provides the school with the relevant collection documentation that would have been required pursuant to the provisions of the manual produced under § 49-2-110 for student activity funds.

The director may provide such other procedures and forms as he or she deems necessary.

CONCESSIONS AND PARKING

The principal of a school may agree to allow an authorized school support organization to operate and collect money for a concession stand or parking at a related school academic, arts, athletic, or social event on school property without the prior approval of the director or director's designee. Any money payable to the school pursuant to the agreement with the principal will be considered school support group funds and not student activity funds if the school support organization provides the school with the relevant collection documentation required by the student activity funds manual produced by the State.

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Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-2-601, et seq.

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Deposit of Funds**	**2.500**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/07/13**

Central Office

All income payable to the Board will be deposited with the county trustee who will credit it to the appropriate account (if applicable).[1]

Individual Schools

All money collected at the building level shall be cleared through the principal's office.

The principal/designee shall deposit funds daily, if possible, but no later than three (3) days after being received.[2] Deposit slips shall be completed in duplicate. All checks shall be listed individually on the deposit slip or an attached list, itemizing the name of the payer and the amount. The receipt numbers comprising the deposit shall be written on the deposit slip. The validated duplicate deposit slip or the duplicate deposit slip with deposit receipt attached shall be given to the bookkeeper. Deposit slips will be filed along with other permanent financial records.

Any money collected at the building level shall be deposited to one (1) of three (3) bank accounts:[3]

1. General School Fund;
2. Restricted School Fund; or
3. School Nutrition Fund.

Legal References

1. TCA 8-11-104
2. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Sections 4-20, 6-1, 6-2
3. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Sections 4-2, 4-3, 6-1, 6-2

Cross References

Investment Earnings 2.402
Student Activity Funds Management 2.900
Food Service Management 3.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Bonded Employees**	**2.600**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **DH**	Issued:

General

The director of schools and all other employees who handle school monies shall be bonded in order to indemnify the school system against the loss of any funds.[1]

The Board shall determine the amount of the bond, giving consideration to the total amount of money and/or property that is handled in each school.[2]

Legal References:

1. TCA 8-19-101 through 103, TCA 49-2-110(a)(1)
2. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*; Section 4-16

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Fundraising Activities**	**2.601**	**05/13/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **02/08/21; 12/12/16; 07/08/13; 10/11/99**

General

The following guidelines shall be followed:[1]

1. Fundraising activities shall be authorized by the Board or the Director of Schools/Designee and shall be for the purpose of supplementing funds for established school programs and not for replacing funds which are the responsibility of the Board.

2. Fundraising companies and other salespersons shall obtain permission in writing from the Director of Schools' office in order to visit the schools.

3. Any commission payable by companies shall be paid in the form of reduced prices to the students or paid into the activity fund of the school for use by the school. No school employee shall personally benefit from any fundraising activity.

4. The principal shall obtain written approval from the Director of Schools/designee for all fundraising activities, including online fundraising activities, that involve the participation of the general student population in the marketing process of the fundraising effort. All other fundraising activities, including online fundraising activities, shall have written approval from the principal and comply with all administrative procedures issued by the Director of Schools. The authorization request shall contain the following information:[2]

    a. A list of the proposed fundraising activities;

    b. Purpose of the fundraising activity;

    c. Proposed uses of funds raised;

    d. Expected student involvement in fundraising activity (school-wide, individual class, or club); and

    e. Margin of profit and how it is to be paid to the school.

5. The Director of Schools shall determine whether or not the activity will benefit the school, contribute to the welfare of the student body, and supplement, not replace, funds necessary to fulfill the Board's required contributions.

6. Students shall not be excused from a regular class to participate in a fundraising activity. No grade in a subject or course shall be affected by a student's participation in a fundraising activity.

7. No quotas shall be imposed on students involved, and their efforts shall be voluntary. Students who do not participate in fundraising activities shall not be punished or discriminated against in any way.

This policy shall not be construed as preventing a teacher from using instructional or informational materials even though the materials might include reference to a brand, a product, or a service.

LOTTERIES

No fundraising activity shall be conducted which distributes prizes or makes awards to winners from among purchasers of chances by means of tickets through a random selection process.[3]

ONLINE FUNDRAISING[1]

The school district is authorized to utilize online fundraising (e.g., crowdfunding). The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that adequate internal controls are established and will determine, on a case-by-case basis, when using online fundraising is appropriate.

An employee shall not engage in online fundraising for educational purposes in his/her official capacity as a district employee or make any reference to non-school sponsored fundraisers, online or otherwise, that would lead another to believe such activity is an approved school fundraiser. Online fundraising shall not be used on behalf and for the benefit of an outside party.

Individual Schools

Individual schools may establish school-wide online fundraising accounts. The accounts shall meet all fundraising requirements established by the Board and the *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual.* The principal/designee of each school shall have access to the established fundraising account to ensure all funds are properly accounted for, and the information is recorded in the school's accounting records by the designated personnel.

FUNDRAISING FOR NONEDUCATIONAL PURPOSES[4]

On approval of the principal, an employee may be authorized to raise and use funds for the following noneducational purposes:

1. Bereavement support;

2. Award recognition;

3. Employee morale;

4. Banquets; or

5. Other situations at the principal's discretion.

These funds shall be derived from vending machine revenue, donations, or other sources approved by the administration.

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures regarding the receipt, disbursement, accounting, and auditing of these noneducational funds. The Director of Schools shall ensure that the procedures are consistent with board policy and state law and disseminate them to all employees.

RECORDKEEPING[1]

The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that the appropriate records are maintained for each fundraising activity and shall be responsible for collecting and maintaining the appropriate documents that show the approving, tracking, and monitoring of each fundraising activity from beginning to end.

Legal References

1. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*, Section 4-30, 4-31
2. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*, Section 4-28
3. Tenn. Att'y Gen. Op. No. 03-049 (Apr. 22, 2003)
4. TCA 49-2-134

Cross References

Revenues 2.400
School Support Organization 2.404
Audits 2.703
Vendor Relations 2.809
Student Activity Funds Management 2.900
Staff Gifts and Solicitations 5.605
Gifts 6.710

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Accounting System**	**2.700**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds: **DIA**	Issued: **08/10/15; 10/11/99**

Central Office

The Director of Schools/Designee shall maintain a system of accounting arranged according to the regulations prescribed by the Commissioner of Education that provides a detailed and accurate account of all receipts and disbursements of the schools.[1]

Individual Schools

The principal/designee of each school shall be responsible for the management of all internal accounts under his/ her jurisdiction in accordance with the *Internal School Funds Manual*.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(D); TCA 49-3-316(a)(1)
2. TCA 49-2-110(d)

Cross References

Petty Cash Accounts 2.801
Student Activity Funds Management 2.900

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Financial Reports and Records**	**2.701**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds: **DIB**	Issued: **08/10/15; 10/11/99**

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Central Office

The executive committee shall submit to the Board at each regular board meeting a report of all business transacted since the last regular meeting.[1]

The Director of Schools/Designee shall deliver a quarterly report indicating all receipts and expenditures to the County Commission[2] Each report shall show the amount of the annual appropriation, the amount expended by account to date, the amount encumbered, and the free balance in each account.

Individual Schools

Each principal/designee shall submit to the Director of Schools/Designee at the end of each calendar month the receipts, expenditures, and cash balance of all accounts under his jurisdiction.[3] These reports shall be made available to the Board at its request.

FINANCIAL RECORDS

The Director of Schools/Designee shall maintain all financial records as required by applicable state and federal law. The Board, from time to time, may determine to extend the retention time for certain records.[4]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-206(b)(5)
2. **TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(Q)**
3. ***Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 3-5**
4. ***Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 4-24**

Cross References

School District Records 1.407
Food Service Management 3.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Inventories**	**2.702**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/10/15; 01/13/11**

General

The Director of Schools/Designee shall establish an accurate inventory procedure for all real and personal (e.g., material and equipment) school property, and this system shall be implemented at each school and system facility. Administrative personnel shall ensure that a physical count of all such property is taken at the end of each fiscal year, and this inventory shall be properly entered on the appropriate records for accounting purposes.[1]

Each school shall maintain a complete inventory with a duplicate maintained in the central office.

EQUIPMENT PROCURED WITH FEDERAL DOLLARS[2]

Property records of equipment purchased with federal dollars shall be maintained that include:

1. A description of the property;
2. A serial number or other identification number;
3. The source of the property;
4. Who holds the title;
5. The acquisition date;
6. The cost of the property;
7. The percentage of federal participation in the cost of the property;
8. The location, use, and condition of the property; and
9. Any ultimate disposition data including the date of disposal and sale price of the property.

A physical inventory of the property shall be taken and the results reconciled with the records at least once every two (2) years.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall establish procedures that meet all federal requirements, including guidelines for the purchasing, inventorying, security, and disposition of all equipment purchased with federal funds.

Legal References

1. Internal School Funds Manual, Section 4-21 - Section 4-23
2. 2 CFR § 200.313

Cross References

Surplus Property Sales 2.403
Security 3.205
Equipment & Supplies Management 3.300

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Audits**	**2.703**	**12/11/17**
		Rescinds: **DID**	Issued: **08/10/15**

An audit of all fiscal accounts, including accounts and records of all school student activity funds, shall be made by a certified public accountant following the end of each fiscal year.[1]

The director of schools shall furnish or make copies of the audit available to the proper authorities as prescribed by law.[2]

When an administrative change occurs during the fiscal year and the position is responsible for the expenditure of funds, a special audit of accounts involved shall be conducted.

The special audit shall be as extensive as the Board may determine.

AUDIT FINDINGS[3]

A corrective action plan shall be developed to address any findings on the annual audit. The plan shall include the following:

1. Name(s) of the individual responsible for implementing the plan;
2. The correct action taken or planned; and
3. Anticipated completion date.

The plan shall be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury.

Legal References
1. TCA 49-2-112(a)(1), (c)(1); TCA 49-2-110(a)
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.13(3)(d)
3. Public Acts of 2017, Pub. Chp. 383

Cross References
Fundraising Activities 2.601
Student Activity Funds Management 2.900

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Expenditure of Funds**	**2.800**	**08/10/15**
		Rescinds: **DJ**	Issued:

Central Office

All expenditures shall be approved by the Board or the director of schools when authorized. No expenditures shall be made except on an approved purchase order or contract. No expenditure may be authorized or made which exceeds the appropriation for any fund of the budget as adopted or amended. Employees of this system will not create or authorize creation of a deficit in any fund. Expenditures or encumbrances will not be authorized, made or incurred in excess of any fund balance. The Director of Schools shall develop federal grant expenditure and cash management procedures to ensure that federal funds are lawfully expended. [1]

Individual Schools

Internal activity funds shall not be expended without written approval by the membership of the group. All such expenses shall be in accordance with the *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*. Restricted account expenditures require the account sponsor's approval prior to expense. No checks will be written to employees from the internal school activity fund account. Any supplemental compensation owed to the Board for extracurricular activities must be processed through the director of schools' office in the same manner as salary and other payroll payments. The Board will invoice the school for reimbursement. Substitute teacher's salaries related to restricted class and club accounts will be paid by the Board and shall be reimbursed by the school from the appropriate class or club account.[2]

Employees who authorize or contract for any obligation in violation of this policy shall assume personal responsibility for the payment of the obligation, shall be subject to dismissal from employment and shall be subject to applicable civil and criminal proceedings. Any obligation, authorization for expenditure or expenditure made in violation of the law and this policy shall be illegal and void.[3]

Legal Reference:

1. 2 CFR Part 200
2. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*, Section 5-22
3. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*, Section 5-17

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Petty Cash Accounts**	**2.801**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **DJB**	Issued:

General

In order to facilitate refunds and minor purchases, the central office and the individual schools in the system may maintain petty cash funds.[1] These funds will be used for the payment of permissible and properly itemized bills for materials, supplies, or services under conditions calling for immediate payments. The Board shall determine the maximum amount to be available in any fund.

The director of schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for disbursing and accounting for money from the central office fund. The principal in each school shall have the same responsibility regarding individual school funds.

Expenditures against these funds must be itemized and will be charged to the applicable budget code. After a budget item is exhausted, no expenditures against the item may be made from petty cash.

Itemized expenditures from the individual school funds shall be maintained and kept on file at each school. Expenditures made from the central office fund shall be itemized and kept on file in the director of schools' office.

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Legal Reference:

1. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*; Section 5-18 &19

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Payroll**	**2.802**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/11/15; 10/11/99**

PAYROLL GUIDELINES

1. All employees shall be paid in twelve (12) installments on or before the 20th of each month.

2. No advance payments of salary shall be made.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Specific approval by the Board is required for payroll deductions, except as otherwise provided by law.[1]

An employee may terminate any salary deduction upon written notification to the Director of Schools/designee.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 50-1-308
2. TCA 8-50-702(b)(3); TCA 49-5-608

Cross References

Insurance Management 3.600
Compensation Guides and Contracts 5.110

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Expenses and Reimbursements**	**2.804**	**01/12/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 09/12/22; 09/09/24**

Central Office[1]

The Board shall review expense allowances and reimbursement guidelines on an annual basis. Travel reimbursement shall be set at the U.S. General Services Administration approved travel rate.

Requests for reimbursements shall be submitted to the Director of Schools' office within three (3) business days of the date of the completion of such travel.

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop procedures and forms to ensure consistency and transparency with the implementation of this policy.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

School personnel who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties will be reimbursed upon submission of an approved travel expense claim and supporting receipts.

Expenses for travel will be reimbursed when the travel has the advance authorization of the Director of Schools. The Director of Schools may grant this authorization without prior board action when the travel expense has been anticipated and incorporated into the operational budget of the particular program involved.

The Board shall be responsible for all expenses pertaining to staff development. Student activity funds shall not be used for this purpose.[1]

BOARD MEMBERS

The members of the Board shall be reimbursed for transportation, lodging, meals, and other pertinent expenses when traveling on business for the Board. Attendance at conventions or other educational meetings or travel for other school district purposes shall be authorized in advance by the Board.[2]

Expenses shall be submitted to the Director of Schools' office within three (3) business days of the date of completion of such travel. The rate of payment shall be the same as the rate for members of the professional staff.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR SALES TAX[3]

Reimbursement for sales tax is permissible in limited circumstances when sales tax is charged on small purchases and proper documentation is submitted.

The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure compliance with state law and guidance from the Comptroller of the Treasury.

Legal References

1. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 5-17
2. TCA 49-2-2001(c)
3. *Internal School Funds Manual*, *Frequently Asked Questions*, no. 10

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Purchasing**	**2.805**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 10/11/99**

General

The school district will purchase competitively and seek maximum educational value for every dollar expended. Authorization to purchase shall be provided by the Board. The Director of Schools shall serve as purchasing agent for system-wide purchasing.[1] Principals shall serve as purchasing agents for individual schools.

Purchases made by anyone not authorized by the appropriate officials shall become the personal responsibility of the persons making the purchase agreement. The Board will not, under any circumstances, be responsible for payment for any materials, supplies, or services purchased by unauthorized individuals or in an unprescribed manner.

No school shall be obligated to pay for any expenditure made by a student, a teacher, or any other employee unless he/she first receives a written purchase order from the proper office or unless prior written permission or arrangements are made with the principal.

The Board shall purchase locally whenever the conditions are comparable or when it is most practical under the circumstances.

Individual Schools

The Director of Schools/Designee shall approve the following purchases:

1. A single piece of equipment costing more than five thousand dollars ($5,000.00);
2. One that is to be attached to or one that requires alteration of the building; or

3. One that will become a permanent fixture.

Central Office[2]

ROUTINE PURCHASES

Routine purchases shall include expenditures for supplies, salaries, and routine expenditures required for the operation of the school district. These expenditures shall be anticipated and provided for in the budget and will normally be authorized by the Board at the beginning of the fiscal year. The Director of Schools/designee shall make all routine purchases without further board authorization; however, the Board shall be promptly informed if any substantial variation from budgeted estimates occurs or becomes necessary.

SPECIAL PURCHASES

Special purchases are those which are not routine and which may or may not be specifically identified by line item in the budget. Examples of special purchases are all capital expenditures such as for vehicles, buildings, major contracts, purchases of major equipment, items for long-term use, and supplies of an unusual quantity or nature. All purchases in this category shall require specific prior board approval on an item-by-item basis. In its approval, the Board may place constraints on the Director of Schools requiring board evaluation and/or approval at various steps in the procurement process. This will be determined by the Board on an individual basis depending on the nature of the procurement action.

EMERGENCY PURCHASES

Emergency purchases are those which are necessary to avert hazards which threaten health or safety, to protect property from damage, or to avoid major disruption of educational activities. If within budgetary limits and deemed essential, emergency purchases may be made by the Director of Schools. However, if the purchase is of such significant magnitude as to impact the integrity of the budget, the Chair shall call a meeting of the Board to deal with the matter. In any event, the Board shall be advised promptly of all emergency purchases.

PURCHASING OF SURPLUS PROPERTY

The Director of Schools and other employees designated by the Board shall be authorized to act for the Board in acquiring federal surplus property through the Tennessee General Services Department and in entering into agreements, certifications, and covenants of compliance concerning the use of federal surplus property.

Further, the Director of Schools is authorized to purchase any needed items through suppliers approved on the state bid list.

COOPERATIVE PURCHASING[3]

The Board may join in cooperative purchasing to take advantage of lower prices for bulk purchasing and to reduce the cost involved in bidding whenever such buying appears to be to the benefit of the district.

ONLINE PURCHASING

The Board recognizes that online purchasing may provide opportunities for savings, but extra precaution shall be used to ensure that accounting procedures are followed. Online purchasing shall be permitted with the following requirements:

1. Prior authorization shall be obtained from the Director of Schools before setting up new online accounts, and schools shall maintain a list of accounts;

2. Online purchases shall be for school purposes and made in accordance with established policies and procedures. School employees are prohibited from making personal purchases even with

the intent of reimbursing the school district. School employees are prohibited from using a school's tax exempt status for personal purchases of any kind;[4]

3. The availability of money for the fund/account in question shall be determined before purchase orders are approved;

4. All purchase orders shall be properly filled out and approved prior to a purchase; and

5. Price quotes shall be obtained where possible and/or practical and retained with other purchase documentation.

PURCHASING WITH FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS

Before grant funds are obligated or expended, the Director of Schools/designee shall review the cost of a proposed expenditure and determine if it is an allowable use of federal grant funds.[5] The Director of Schools will minimize the time that elapses between the transfer and disbursement of funds once an expenditure is approved.

No person officially connected with or employed by the school district may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award if he/she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. A real or apparent conflict of interest arises when the employee, officer or agent, any member of his/her immediate family, his/her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. Upon discovery of any potential conflict, the Director of Schools shall disclose the potential conflict to the federal awarding agency in writing.[6]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-206(b)(3); TCA 6-36-115
2. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 4-8
3. TCA 12-3-1205
4. TCA 49-2-608
5. 2 CFR § 200.403
6. 2 CFR § 200.112

Cross References

Executive Committee 1.301
Credit Cards/Credit Lines 2.8051
Purchase Orders and Contracts 2.808
Conflict of Interest 5.601

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Credit Cards and Credit Lines**	**2.8051**	**03/11/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/14/19**

General

District credit cards shall be maintained by the Director of Schools/designee through procedures developed and maintained in the district office for the purchase of appropriate goods and services for district or school related purposes only.[1] The credit cards will be kept in a secure location, and account numbers will remain confidential. Principals shall be the only employees authorized to apply for a credit card on a school's behalf.

The Director of Schools/designee shall review and approve card transactions. Purchases which are not approved by the Director of Schools or the Director of Finance will be reimbursed to the district within ten (10) days of notification.

AUTHORIZED USE

Credit cards may be used for transactions in which the use of a standard purchase order is either impossible or would result in a delay of the delivery of goods or services during an emergency. Credit cards may also be used to facilitate out-of-town travel for official school business.

Card users shall be held accountable for appropriate use of credit cards. Unauthorized use of a credit card or credit line shall be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Cash advances using district credit cards are prohibited.

Any district or school employee who purchases items with the credit card or any approved credit line shall follow the guidelines outlined below:

1. Original receipts for each purchase shall be turned into the bookkeeper within three (3) working days of purchase;

2. If the credit card is used to pay for a conference or training, a completed and signed *Prior Approval Request* form shall be turned in prior to use and a copy of the registration form shall be turned in with the *Reimbursement Request* form;

3. The bookkeeper or a separate employee shall check off on purchases and the physical inventory that is purchased;

4. All purchases shall be district or school related purchases;

5. If there is any incurred finance or late charges, the responsibility will belong to the person or program associated with said charges; and

6. Under no circumstances will the credit card or credit line be used to make personal purchases.

Legal References

1. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Procedure Manual*, Section 4-8; Section 4-11 through 4-13

Cross References

Executive Committee 1.301
Purchasing 2.805
Purchase Orders and Contracts 2.808

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Bids and Quotations**	**2.806**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **10/11/99; 07/08/13; 10/24/22**

All purchases of supplies, materials, equipment, and contractual services in excess of $25,000, including those of individual schools, shall be based on competitive bids.[1] These bids shall be solicited by advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation within the school district and by publication on a news and information website in accordance with state law.[2] The purchasing agent shall advertise for bids and receive quotations. The advertisement may be waived by the purchasing agent in an emergency.[3]

All purchases of $25,000 or less, including those of individual schools, may be made in the open market without newspaper notice but shall, whenever possible, be based on at least three (3) competitive bids.[3]

The lowest and/or best bid shall be accepted, provided the purchaser reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part of any bid, and if applicable, to accept the bid which is best as evidenced by reasons relative to the purpose of the purchase.[4] Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of bids. Any bid received after the time and date specified shall not be considered.

The bidder to whom the award is made may be required to enter into a written contract.

The practice of splitting an order or dividing items to be purchased in order to avoid the use of bidding or other purchasing procedures is strictly prohibited.

EXEMPTIONS FROM COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Contracts for legal services, educational consultants, services from an insurance producer, and similar services by professional persons or groups of high ethical standards shall not be based upon competitive bids but shall be awarded on the basis of recognized competence and integrity.[5]

Purchases of fuel in bulk amounts that would exceed the bid limits may be made in the open market without public advertisement or competitive bidding. Whenever possible, however, at least three (3) documented quotes shall be obtained.[6]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-203(a)(3); TCA 12-3-1212; Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 513
2. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 793
3. TCA 49-2-203(a)(3)(A)-(B); TCA 49-2-206(b)(2); TCA 12-3-1212; Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 513
4. TCA 49-2-203(a)(3)(D)(i)(c)
5. TCA 12-3-1209; TCA 12-4-107; TCA 29-20-407
6. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 661

Cross References

Executive Committee 1.301
Consultants 1.303
Conflict of Interest 5.601

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Requisitions**	**2.807**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **DJEF**	Issued:

General

The Board shall designate personnel to be responsible for making requisitions.

All approved requisitions will be submitted to the purchasing agent (director of schools or principal) on forms provided by the purchasing agent.

The number of each purchase order shall be recorded on the requisition.

After processing, the original copy of the requisition will be filed in the appropriate purchasing office.

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Cross Reference:

Purchase Orders 2.808

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Purchase Orders and Contracts**	**2.808**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/10/15; 10/11/99**

All purchases made by the school district shall be by purchase order or formal contract, and no purchase shall be made or payment approved unless covered by an approved purchase order. The appropriate Federal Program Supervisor shall first approve any purchases or contracts that expend Federal Funds.

Purchase orders will include the following essentials:

1. A specification which adequately describes to the supplier the characteristics and the quality standards of the item required;

2. A firm, quoted, net delivered price, whenever possible; and

3. The signature of the purchasing agent.

Contracts shall be made only with responsible suppliers with the following considerations:

1. The supplier has the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement;

2. A system for contract administration shall be maintained to assure supplier conformance with terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract or purchase order and to assure adequate and timely follow-up of all purchases;

3. Contracts shall contain such provisions or conditions which will allow for administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where suppliers violate or breach contract terms and provide for such sanctions and penalties as may be appropriate; and

4. All contracts, including those of individual schools, will meet all requirements of state and federal law.[1]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-203(a)(3); *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 5-10; TCA 49-2-206(b)(3)

Cross References

Consultants 1.303
Purchasing 2.805
Requisitions 2.807
Credit Cards/Credit Lines 2.8051
Conflict of Interest 5.601

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Vendor Relations**	**2.809**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **DJEI**	Issued:

General

Each order will be placed on the basis of quality, price, and delivery. Past service will be a factor if all other considerations are equal.

No person officially connected with or employed by the school system will be an agent for, or have any financial compensation or reward of any kind from any vendor for the sale of supplies, materials, equipment or service.[1]

Individual Schools

Schools shall execute a written agreement with vendors for all fund-raisers. The agreement shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

1. The division of profits that result from the activity;
2. Payment of sales tax;
3. Delivery date(s);
4. Package prices or other charges; and
5. Scheduled dates of service.

Vendors visiting separate schools shall contact and secure the permission of each principal's office prior to visiting professional staff members. Vendors' visitations to schools shall not be permitted to interfere with the normal instructional and learning process.

Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-6-2003
2. *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*; Section 4-27

Cross References:

Visitors to the Schools 1.501
Advertising & Distribution of Materials in Schools 1.806
Student Solicitations/Fund-Raising 6.701

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Payment Procedures**	**2.810**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **2.810**	Issued: **10/11/99**

Central Office

The director of schools shall approve all claims for payment prior to their submission to the Board.[1]
As operating procedure, the director of schools shall present to the Board each month a list of paid bills. The list will be supported by invoices and vouchers.

Individual Schools

Schools may obligate themselves for the purchase of equipment, supplies, or services, provided payments are completed by June 30 of the current school year or a plan for future payments has been made by the principal and approved by the Board.

Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-2-206(b)(3)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Student Activity Funds Management**	**2.900**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds: **DJ/JO**	Issued: **07/08/13; 04/15/99**

The activity funds of each school shall include athletic and student organization funds and any other funds belonging to any student group, class, or activity.

Whatever the source, all student activity funds shall be under the jurisdiction of the Board and under the specific control of the principal. Contracts with fundraising agencies shall comply with board policy and be approved in writing by the Director of Schools/Designee.

Principals and/or sponsors who knowingly authorize/allow unapproved fundraising activities shall be subject to disciplinary action.[1]

Student activity funds shall be deposited in respective school activity accounts. Proper records of receipts and disbursements shall be maintained in accordance with the *Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy Manual*.[2]

Revenue raised for specific purposes shall be expended for that purpose unless otherwise authorized in writing by both the activity group sponsor and the principal.[3]

An annual audit of the account and records of all student activity funds shall be conducted as a part of the audit of all other district funds.[4]

Any unencumbered class or activity funds automatically revert to the general activity fund of the school when a class graduates or an activity is discontinued.

Funds derived from activities sponsored by parent-teacher associations, parent-teacher organizations, or other support organizations are not subject to this policy unless such funds are in sole custody of the school.[5] Such organizations shall comply with the provisions of state law.[6]

Legal References

1. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Sections 4-28 through 4-29
2. TCA 49-2-110(d); *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 5-2 through 5-9
3. *Internal School Funds Manual*, Section 4-1 through 4-3
4. TCA 49-2-112(a)
5. TCA 49-2-110(f)
6. TCA 49-2-601

Cross References

Revenues 2.400
School Support Organizations 2.404
Deposit of Funds 2.500
Fundraising Activities 2.601
Accounting System 2.700
Audits 2.703
Gifts 6.710

Houston County Board of Education

3 – SUPPORT SERVICES

Descriptor Code	Policy Title	Issued Date
3.100	Business Management Goals	8/11/25
Facilities Management		
3.200	Buildings and Grounds Management	07/08/13
3.201	Safety	01/14/19
3.202	Emergency Preparedness Plan	06/09/25
3.203	Crisis Management	06/10/24
3.204	Threat Assessment Team	06/09/25
3.205	Security	07/18/24
3.206	Community Use of School Facilities	12/09/24
3.208	Facilities Planning	01/14/19
3.210	Naming Facilities	12/09/24
3.211	New Project Planning	12/09/24
3.212	District Water Testing	11/12/18
3.218	Service Animals in District Facilities	12/12/16
3.219	Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones)	09/12/22
Equipment and Supplies Management		
3.300	Equipment and Supplies Management	07/08/13
3.301	Equipment and Supplies Leasing and Renting	07/08/13
Transportation Management		
3.400	Student Transportation Management	07/18/24
3.401	Scheduling and Routing	07/08/13
3.402	Special Use of School Vehicles	07/08/13
3.403	Traffic and Parking Controls	07/08/13
3.404	Private Vehicles	07/08/13
Food Service Management		
3.500	Food Service Management	06/09/25
Insurance Management		
3.600	Insurance Management	08/13/18
3.601	Student Insurance Program	07/08/13
3.602	Workers' Compensation	07/08/13

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Business Management Goals**	**3.100**	**08/11/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The Board establishes these general goals for its facilities management program:

1. To develop a plan for the management of buildings and grounds which provides a safe, secure, comfortable, and clean environment for instruction and administration;

2. To provide a building maintenance program which protects the taxpayer's investment in facilities and ensures their continued use;

3. To provide sufficient supplies and equipment for effective teaching and learning;

4. To provide a student transportation system which meets state requirements;

5. To design and implement a program of food services which emphasizes the nutritional needs of children;

6. To collect and maintain data pertinent to educational planning; and

7. To provide a sound program of insurance protection for system employees, students, and property.

Cross References

School District Goals 1.700

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Buildings and Grounds Management**	**3.200**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **EB**	Issued:

All school properties shall be maintained in good physical condition: safe, clean, sanitary, and as comfortable and convenient as the facilities will permit or the use requires.

The director of schools shall develop and implement a continuing program of maintenance of all district-owned buildings and grounds which shall provide for the following:

Adequate custodial programs for all schools;

Improvement and maintenance of school buildings and grounds;

Repairs, including repairs of equipment, and painting; and

Determination of obsolete equipment.

The following are responsibilities of building principals:

1. To oversee the operation of the school plant and require that personnel assigned to the building keep it in a clean, healthful, and pleasant condition;

2. To make continuing checks for hazardous conditions, including safety and operation of equipment, and prevention of hazardous situations caused by carelessness; and

3. To request, on a timely basis, appropriate maintenance and repairs through appropriate channels.

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Safety**	**3.201**	**01/14/19**
		Rescinds: **EBB**	Issued: **07/08/13**

In accordance with board policy, the principal of each school shall develop procedures for keeping school facilities safe and free from hazards.[1]

All employees shall report current and potential hazards to their immediate supervisor(s).
Each principal is responsible for seeing that safety is a part of the instructional program of the school as required by law.[1]

The safety program shall include:

- Fire prevention;
- Accident prevention;
- Warning systems;
- Emergency drills;
- Traffic safety;
- Safety inspections;
- First aid; and
- Disaster preparation.

Only students assigned to the school, the staff of the school, parents of students, and other persons with lawful and valid business shall enter onto the grounds or into the buildings of a school during the hours of student instruction. All staff members shall report all persons appearing to be improperly on school premises to the principal.[2]

The principal shall secure assistance from law enforcement officials when he/she deems it necessary in order to maintain order or security. In addition, the Director of Schools or his/her designee shall provide the local law enforcement agency with all safety and security plans.[3]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-804; TCA 49-6-1003
2. TCA 49-6-2008(a), (b)
3. TCA 49-6-804(c)

Cross References

Visitors to the School 1.501
Emergency Preparedness Plan 3.202
Care of School Property 6.311

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Emergency Preparedness Plan**	**3.202**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **12/13/99; 11/13/17; 08/12/99; 09/12/22; 08/14/23; 07/18/24**

General

The Director of Schools shall be responsible for developing, maintaining, and acquiring board approval of the district Emergency Preparedness Plan[1] which shall include procedures for bomb threats, civil disturbances, armed intruders, earthquakes, fires, tornadoes or other severe weather, and medical emergencies.

The principal of each school shall develop and implement emergency preparedness drills which shall be approved by the Director of Schools. When appropriate, such drills shall be held in conjunction with emergency response agencies.

FIRE AND SAFETY DRILLS

The principal shall ensure that one (1) fire drill requiring full evacuation is given every thirty (30) school days, with no more than two (2) fire drills occurring during the first thirty (30) full days of the school year. Additionally, he/she shall ensure that four (4) fire safety educational announcements are conducted throughout the year.[2]

The principal shall ensure that three (3) additional safety drills are given during the school year.[3] These drills may cover inclement weather, earthquakes, armed intruders, or other emergency drills that do not require full evacuation. A record of all fire or safety drills, including the time and date, shall be kept in each school's office.[3]

The principal shall regularly check the quantity, locations, and conditions of fire extinguishers and shall give all school personnel instructions on how to properly use fire extinguishers.

The district shall work with local law enforcement and the local fire department to develop a procedure for identifying the cause of fire alarm activation. This procedure must be in place by January 1, 2025 and shall be reviewed and updated annually thereafter.[4]

ANNUAL DRILLS[5]

The principal shall ensure that the school safety team conducts each of the following type of drills annually:

1. An armed intruder drill in coordination with local law enforcement;

2. An incident command drill; and

3. An emergency safety bus drill.

AED DRILLS[6]

All schools shall conduct a CPR and AED drill to ensure awareness of the steps that shall be taken in the event of a medical emergency. The principal shall ensure that the drill occurs.

The Director of Schools shall develop the necessary administrative procedures on AED and CPR training, planning, notification, and maintenance to comply with state law.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES/PANDEMIC FLU[7]

In the event of medical emergencies such as a pandemic flu outbreak, school officials shall cooperate and consult with the local and state health departments and other local emergency or healthcare providers in protecting students and the community from further infection. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures for health emergencies in accordance with state law.

REMOTE LEARNING DRILLS[8]

At least once each school year, a remote learning drill shall be conducted. The drill shall accurately reflect how students will transition to remote learning in the event of a disruption to school operations. Students shall not be asked or required to transition to remote learning at any time during the drill.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.30(2); TCA 49-6-804; TCA 49-6-805(8)
2. TCA 68-102-137(b); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 315
3. TCA 68-102-137(f)
4. TCA 49-6-807(e)
5. TCA 49-6-807
6. TCA 49-2-122; TCA 49-6-1208
7. TCA 49-6-3004(a), (e); TCA 49-5-404
8. TCA 49-2-139

Cross References

Emergency Closings 1.8011
Safety 3.201
Community Use of School Facilities 3.206

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Crisis Management**	**3.203**	**06/10/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The principal shall develop a crisis management plan for use in times of crisis, including suicides, shootings, and the death of a student or staff member.[1] Within the development of such plan, the principal shall appoint a crisis team which shall deal with specific situations, make decisions, and disseminate information in the event of a crisis. Members of the team shall consist of the principal, school counselor, and at least two (2) other staff members designated by the principal.

In the event of a crisis, the principal shall notify the crisis team and the Director of Schools/designee. If necessary, the principal shall contact the appropriate emergency services (police, fire, ambulance, etc.).

All media attention shall be directed to the Director of Schools' office.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-804(a); TCA 49-6-805(1)

Cross References

Board-Community Relations 1.500
Board-Media Relations 1.502
Student Suicide Prevention 6.415

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in September	**Threat Assessment Team**	**3.204**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued**:** **03/14/22; 08/14/23**

General[1]

A threat assessment team shall be created within the school district to develop intervention-based approaches to prevent violence, manage reports of potential threats, and create a system that fosters a safe, supportive, and effective school environment. The Director of Schools/Designee shall appoint the members of the threat assessment team.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop administrative procedures regarding the training and operations of the team to comply with state law and State Board of Education rules and regulations.

TEAM MEETINGS

All threat assessment team meetings shall be closed to the public.[2]

RECORDKEEPING[3]

The team shall document all behaviors and incidents deemed to pose a risk to school safety or that resulted in intervention and shall provide the information to the Director of Schools/Designee.

A report of the activities of the threat assessment team will be compiled and shared with the Board before each regular meeting.

Documents produced or obtained regarding these assessment activities will not be open for public inspection.

REPORTING[4]

The Director of Schools shall develop a process for providing parent(s)/guardian(s) information on credible threats of violence or significantly disruptive behavior directed toward or occurring on the grounds of the school their student attends. Such reports shall include incidents that are reported to a state or local law enforcement agency. These reports must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the district's report to law enforcement.

At least once per quarter, the Director of Schools/Designee shall provide the Board with a report listing the total number of incidents reported to state and local law enforcement agency requiring notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) for the respective quarter as well as total for the year to date.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2701
2. TCA 49-6-2701(f)
3. TCA 49-6-2702
   Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 215

Cross References

School District Records 1.407
Safety 3.201
Security 3.205
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Security**	**3.205**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 09/27/21; 08/14/23**

General[1]

The Director of Schools/designee shall establish procedures to protect schools which shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Closing and securing teacher work areas when left unattended or at the end of the day;
2. Denying students permission to use the classrooms, laboratories, gymnasiums, or other school facilities or equipment without appropriate supervision;
3. Controlling the issuance of keys;
4. Developing programs that contribute to the proper care and use of school facilities and equipment; and
5. Ensuring that equipment purchased with federal funds is managed as directed by federal law.[2]

All exterior doors leading into a school building shall be locked at all times and access to school buildings is limited to the school's primary entrance during the school day as well as when students are present outside of regular school hours.[3]

The principal shall immediately call law enforcement officials and the Director of Schools/designee in cases involving illegal entry, assault and battery resulting in serious personal injury or involving the use of a weapon, building damage, theft, vandalism endangering life health, or safety, or valid threats of mass violence.[4] The Director of Schools/designee is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and press charges. The Director of Schools/designee shall report all signing of such complaints to the Board.

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

If, outside of regular school hours, there is a need to unlock the doors during a school activity, a school district employee shall be stationed by the door to ensure access is limited to authorized persons.[3]

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES[1]

The Board may enter into collaborative partnerships with appropriate law enforcement agencies. Partnerships may include, but not be limited to, education and recreational programs, delinquency prevention, and mentoring initiatives.

The Board may enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the chief of a law enforcement agency to provide school policing. The MOU shall address, at a minimum, the following issues:

1. Any school resource officer (SRO) assigned under the MOU shall be in compliance with all laws, regulations, and rules of the Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission at the time of assignment and remain compliant throughout his/her assignment.

2. As a condition of assignment, any SRO shall participate in forty (40) hours of basic training in school policing within twelve (12) months of assignment. Every year thereafter, the SRO shall participate in a minimum of sixteen (16) hours of training specific to school policing. All training programs shall be approved by the Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission.[5]

3. Any SRO assigned under the MOU remains an employee of the law enforcement agency and is subject to that agency's direction, control, supervision, and discipline.

4. No SRO shall be assigned to a school, or continue in such an assignment, without the consent of the Director of Schools.

5. In the event that more than one (1) SRO is assigned to a school district, the law enforcement agency shall designate one (1) of the SROs as the senior SRO. The duties of the senior SRO shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

    a. Representing and carrying out the policies of the law enforcement agency assigning the SROs;
    b. Supervising the SROs in the performance of their duties;
    c. Consulting with the Director of Schools regarding the best use of the available resources for school policing; and
    d. Resolving disputes between the SROs and students or staff members.

6. The MOU may be effective for any length of time, continuing until terminated by the parties, and may contain any reasonable notice requirement for the termination of the MOU. However, the MOU shall contain a provision allowing the Director of Schools/designee to suspend the active participation of any SROs in the event that the Director of Schools/designee believes that such suspension is best for the health, safety, or wellbeing of the students or staff members.

CYBERSECURITY[6]

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop an administrative procedure regarding the district's cybersecurity plan to identify cybersecurity risks, implement mitigation planning, and protect cyberinfrastructure against cyberattacks and other cybersecurity threats and incidents.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-805(3)
2. 2 CFR § 200.313
3. TCA 49-6-817
4. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 882
5. TCA 49-6-4217
6. TCA 49-6-805(9)

Cross References

Visitors to the Schools 1.501
Inventories 2.702
Care of School Property 6.311

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Community Use of School Facilities**	**3.206**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/14/02; 07/08/13**

When not in use for school purposes, school buildings and grounds may be used for public, governmental, charitable, civic, recreational, cultural, and other purposes as approved by the Board[1] as follows:

1. Requests for the use of a school's facilities shall be made in writing and shall be submitted for approval at the office of the principal prior to the date of use;

2. Student clubs and activities, parent-teacher associations, and other organizations affiliated with the school shall be permitted use of school facilities without charge;

3. School facilities may not be used for private profit, except that unused facilities may be leased for private day-care centers which provide educational and child care services to the community;[2]

4. All activities shall be under adult supervision and approved by the principal. If deemed necessary, the principal may assign a school employee to be present. The group using the facilities will be responsible for any damage to the building or equipment;

5. Groups receiving written permission for building use are restricted to the building area and facilities indicated as well as the dates and hours approved unless requested changes are approved by the principal;

6. Groups receiving permission for building use are responsible for the observance of all fire and safety regulations at all times;

7. The use of alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco, profane language, or gambling in any form is not permitted in school buildings;

8. During emergencies or disasters, the Board will cooperate with recognized agencies such as the Red Cross, National Guard, and Civil Defense to make suitable facilities available without charge;

9. When school kitchens are used, at least one (1) member of the cafeteria staff shall be present to supervise the use of the equipment;

10. The Board will approve and periodically review a fee schedule for the use of school facilities by community or civic organizations and other non-profit groups; and

11. The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures and forms to effectively implement the use of school facilities by the community.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-50-201; TCA 49-2-203(b)(4); TCA 49-2-405
2. TCA 49-2-203(b)(4)(B)

Cross References

Board-Community Relations 1.500
Tobacco-Free Schools 1.803
Emergency Preparedness Plan 3.202
Tutoring for Pay 5.608
Care of School Property 6.311

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Facilities Planning**	**3.208**	**01/14/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/14/19**

The Director of Schools shall work with each principal and individual school to establish facility needs. Each principal shall annually assess his/her school with input from staff, parents, and community leaders. Funds, design, and all major purchases must be approved by the Board. Additionally, all changes shall meet or exceed existing school standards.

The individual school needs assessment should include the following information:

1. Building, site, and utility deficiencies;
2. Maintenance issues;
3. Number of classrooms with class sizes;
4. Population and enrollment projections;
5. Community needs; and
6. Other information as directed.

ASBESTOS[1]

The Director of Schools shall maintain an Asbestos Management Plan for all buildings leased, owned, or otherwise used as school buildings and update the plan to keep it current with ongoing operations and maintenance, periodic surveillance, inspection, re-inspection, and response action activities.
The Director of Schools shall:

1. Annually publish a notification on the Asbestos Management Plan availability and the status of asbestos activities;
2. Educate and train maintenance and custodial staff about asbestos and how to deal with it in accordance with state and federal statutes;
3. Notify short-term or temporary workers on the locations of the building materials containing asbestos;
4. Post warning labels in routine maintenance areas where asbestos was previously identified or assumed;
5. Follow set plans and procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of building materials containing asbestos; and
6. Survey the condition of these materials every six (6) months to assure that they remain in good condition.

The Director of Schools shall designate an Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Manager as the designated Asbestos Program Coordinator. All inquiries regarding the asbestos plan and asbestos related issues should be directed to the AHERA Manager.

Legal References

1. 40 CFR § 763.91-93;
   15 USCA § 2641-2656

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Naming Facilities**	**3.210**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Facilities of the school district shall be named through board action based upon the following criteria:

1. Schools shall not be named for living persons, except for those who have rendered exemplary service to public education as recognized and attested by a vote of the Board.

2. Two (2) schools in the district shall not be given the same name, and care shall be taken to avoid similar names.

3. Schools shall be named for:

    a. The area or community in which the school is located;
    b. The street on which the school is located or a street bordering the school site, if that street is well known in the community; or
    c. Presidents, governors, or recognized national, state, or local leaders who have made an outstanding contribution to public education.

4. A single building on a campus with multiple buildings or a specific area on the campus may be named for a living person, provided he/she has made an outstanding contribution to that school. The naming of such building or specific area shall not replace the facility's name.

5. Facilities other than the school shall be given names which describe the facility or the geographic location in the city.

If the Board decides an existing school or facility should be renamed, the same criteria shall apply.

When a school or facility is to be named, the Director of Schools/Designee shall submit recommendations to the Board after seeking input from school personnel and the public.

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**New Project Planning**	**3.211**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

SELECTION OF ARCHITECT[1]

The Board shall approve a registered architect and/or architectural firm for new projects of construction, expansion, and/or maintenance as required by law. The Board shall execute a contract with such architect for each project.

SELECTION OF ENGINEER[1]

Following the execution of a contract for architectural services, the architect or architectural firm shall select a registered engineer for each project.

SITE SELECTION

The Board shall have sole discretion with choosing sites for construction.[2] When determining where to begin new projects, the Board shall consider the current and future populations of the area, transportation routes, and accessibility to utilities.

BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY[3]

The construction, remodeling, renovation, expansion, or modification of a school building shall comply with state and federal requirements regarding building accessibility.

Legal References

1. TCA 62-2-107; TRR/MS 0520-01-04-.01(2)
2. TCA 49-2-203(a)(3); *Rutherford Cnty. Bd. of Educ. v. Rutherford Cnty. Comm'n, No. M199900288COAR3CV, 2000 WL 1559979 (Tenn. Ct. App. Oct. 20, 2000)*
3. 28 CFR § 36.201; TRR/MS 0520-01-04-.01(1)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**District Water Testing**	**3.212**	**11/12/18**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/12/18**

General

All district facilities built before January 1, 1998 shall be tested for lead in drinking water every two (2) years.[1]

The Director of Schools shall develop appropriate administrative procedures to facilitate this testing and address any necessary corrective action.

RESPONSE TO TESTING RESULTS[1]

If test results show that lead levels exceed fifteen parts per billion (15 ppb) but are below twenty parts per billion (20 ppb), that school shall conduct lead level tests on an annual basis. This shall continue until tests show that the lead levels are under fifteen parts per billion (15 ppb).

If test results show that lead levels equal or exceed twenty parts per billion (20 ppb), the school shall immediately remove the drinking water source from service. The drinking water source shall not be available for use until retesting confirms the water lead level does not exceed twenty parts per billion (20 ppb). If corrective action is taken, retesting shall occur within ninety (90) days.

The Director of Schools/designee shall notify the appropriate authorities within twenty-four (24) hours of a test result showing that lead levels equal or exceed twenty parts per billion (20 ppb). Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified within five (5) business days of such test result.

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2018, Chapter No. 977

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Service Animals in District Facilities**	**3.218**	**12/12/16**
		Rescinds: **3.207**	Issued: **12/12/16**

In accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, service dogs and trained miniature horses[1] (hereinafter referred to as service animals) are permitted for use by individuals with disabilities on district property and in district facilities provided the individuals and their animals meet the requirements and responsibilities covered in this policy.

When an individual with a disability seeks to bring a service animal into a district facility, the district is entitled to ask the individual if the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform.[2] The district is not entitled to ask for documentation that the animal has been properly trained, but the individual bringing the animal into a district facility will be held accountable for the animal's behavior.

Any service animal brought into a district facility by an individual with a disability must have been trained to do work or perform tasks for the individual. The work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this policy.

Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by their service animals in all areas of a public entity's facilities where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.

A service animal shall be under the control of its handler. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control by means of voice control, signals, or other effective means.

District staff may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if:

1. The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it; or
2. The animal is not housebroken;
3. The animal's presence would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.[3]

If the district excludes a service animal due to the reasons listed above, the district shall give the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises.

The district and its staff are not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal brought onto district property or into district facilities by an individual with a disability.

The district shall not ask or require an individual with a disability to pay a surcharge, even if people accompanied by pets are required to pay fees, or to comply with other requirements generally not applicable to people without pets.

Legal References:

1. 28 CFR § 35.104
2. 28 CFR § 35.136
3. 28 CFR § 35.130

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones)**	**3.219**	**09/12/22**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

An unmanned aircraft system ("drone") is a powered, aerial vehicle that:

1. Does not carry a human operator and is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft;

2. Uses aerodynamic forces to provide vehicle lift;

3. Can fly autonomously or be piloted remotely; and

4. Can be expendable or recoverable.[1]

APPROPRIATE USE

Visitors and unsupervised students are prohibited from operating drones on district property.
Staff members, students, coaches, sponsors, or parent(s)/guardian(s) representing the district or any of its affiliated clubs shall operate any and all district drones in accordance with all applicable Federal Aviation laws and regulations.[2] This includes any additional certifications or authorizations that may be required from the Federal Aviation Administration (https://www.faa.gov/uas) based on the drone's intended use.[3]
The following guidelines shall be adhered to when flying a drone on district property:

1. All drones operating on district property shall weigh no more than fifty-five (55) pounds;

2. Operators shall not operate a drone within five (5) miles of any airport without prior notification and confirmation from airport authorities;

3. Operators shall not operate a drone above an altitude of four-hundred (400) feet above ground level and remain clear of surrounding obstacles;

4. Operators shall maintain safe control and line of sight with the drone during all stages of operation;

5. Operators shall maintain a safe operating distance from crowds and ensure drone operations do not interfere with manned aircraft operations;

6. Data collected by a drone can only be used for hobby (educational) purposes and may not be sold for profit;

7. If there is a plan to fly drones over property that is not owned by the district, the Director of Schools shall first obtain written permission from the owner of the property. Staff members operating drones on property not owned by the district shall adhere to all guidelines as required when flying on district property;[3] and

8. Operators assume all risk of damage to property and bodily injuries that may occur due to unsafe operation of drones.

INAPPROPRIATE USE

Inappropriate use of drones includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Violating any local ordinances or state or federal law;[4]

2. Taking pictures of property or persons without consent;[5]

3. Violating safe operating protocols as defined in the drone user manual and classroom guidelines;

4. Failing to follow board policy while using any drone; and

5. Harassing, interfering with another's work, insulting, or attacking others.

VIOLATIONS

Staff members shall monitor for inappropriate use of any drones. Violators may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, suspension and/or expulsion for students or suspension and/or termination for employees.

Legal References

1. TCA 39-13-609(b)
2. FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, 49 USCA § 40101 *et seq.*; 49 USCA § 44801 *et seq.*
3. FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, 49 USCA § 40101 *et seq.*; 14 CFR § 21.1 *et seq.*
4. TCA 39-13-903; TCA 39-14-405
5. TCA 39-13-903(a)(3)

Houston County Board of Education

Review, Annually in October	Descriptor Term: **Equipment and Supplies Management**	Descriptor Code: **3.300**	Issued Date: **07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **3.300**	Issued: **10/11/99**

All equipment and materials placed in school buildings by any group or organization become the property of the Board. The Board reserves the right to transfer property to other schools if the school in which it was originally placed is discontinued or if there is no longer any need for the equipment or materials where originally placed.

The director of schools shall develop procedures promoting the useful life of equipment and supplies by establishing a thorough, effective and economical operations and maintenance program and providing adequate insurance coverage. Equipment management shall be in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines.

Each employee of the system shall be responsible for the materials, equipment and supplies assigned to him/her. In addition, he/she is responsible for the preservation and protection of materials, equipment and supplies not under his/her direct control when such are endangered and when the system employee having direct control is not present or is otherwise unable to act.

_____

Cross Reference:

Inventories 2.702

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Equipment and Supplies Leasing and Renting**	**3.301**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **ECE**	Issued:

Equipment and/or supplies shall be lent or rented only with the prior permission of the principal. Parties in whose name the equipment is lent or rented will be responsible for any damage to the equipment.

Staff members may borrow school equipment and materials at no cost when such use is related to their employment.

Students may borrow school equipment and materials at no cost when used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities.

Staff members borrowing school equipment for personal use will be subject to the same regulations, including fees, as for non-school usage.

School machinery, vehicles, all vocational-type equipment (e.g., typewriters, sewing machines and shop tools), and cleaning and maintenance equipment are not for personal use by anyone.

The principal shall establish proper controls to assure the return of all borrowed and rented equipment

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Student Transportation Management**	**3.400**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/09/95; 12/11/17**

General

School buses shall be maintained and operated in accordance with state law and in accordance with the specifications developed by the Department of Education and approved by the Department of Safety.[1]

Each bus shall be equipped with the phone number for reporting safety complaints. This number shall appear on the rear bumper.[2] Buses shall also include notice in a conspicuous place that only authorized persons shall enter the bus. This notice shall include appropriate contact information in case of an issue on the bus.[3]

To avoid the financial burden of replacing an aging bus fleet at any one time, the Board shall attempt to replace a certain number of buses each year on a rotating basis.

All accidents, regardless of the damage involved, shall be reported to the Transportation Supervisor, including incidents in which any part of the bus contacts any other object or vehicle.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures to ensure compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements for the transportation program.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

Each school bus driver shall receive a certificate from the Board prior to operating a school bus for the school district. The issuance of a certificate to a school bus driver shall be based on the qualifications of school bus drivers as determined by the Director of Schools.[4]

Annually, the Board shall require each school bus driver to have a physical and mental examination. The Board shall revoke the certificate of any school bus driver found to be physically, mentally, or morally unfit to operate a school bus. Additionally, a certificate shall be revoked if the school bus driver is convicted of driving under the influence, vehicular assault, vehicular homicide, aggravated vehicular homicide, or the manufacture, delivery, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or analogue.[5]

TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISOR[6]

The Director of Schools shall appoint a Transportation Supervisor for the district. He/she shall be responsible for the monitoring and oversight of the transportation services for the district.

The Transportation Supervisor shall complete a student transportation management training program upon appointment. Every year, the Transportation Supervisor shall complete a minimum of four (4) hours of training annually.

The Director of Schools shall ensure that training is completed and provide the Department of Education with appropriate documentation.

COMPLAINT PROCESS[7]

The following procedure will govern how students, teachers, staff, and community members shall submit bus safety complaints:

1. All complaints shall be submitted to the Transportation Supervisor; and

2. Forms may be submitted in person, via phone, mail, or email.
    a. Written complaints shall be submitted on forms located on the district's website. In the case of a complaint received via phone, the person receiving the phone call shall be responsible for filling out the form and submitting it to the Transportation Supervisor.

The Transportation Supervisor shall begin an investigation of all bus safety complaints within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt.

Within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the initial complaint, the Transportation Supervisor shall submit a preliminary report to the Director of Schools. This report shall include:

1. The time and date the complaint was received;

2. The name of the bus driver;

3. A copy or summary of the complaint; and

4. Any prior complaints or disciplinary actions taken against the driver.

Within sixty (60) school days of receiving the initial complaint, the Transportation Supervisor shall submit a final written report to the Director of Schools that details the investigation's findings as well as the action taken in response to the complaint.

An annual notice of this complaint process shall be provided to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students. This information shall be made available in the student handbook.

RECORDKEEPING[8]

The Transportation Supervisor shall be responsible for the collection and maintenance of the following records:

1. Bus maintenance and inspections forms;

2. Bus driver credentials, including required background checks, health records, and performance reviews;

3. Driver training records; and

4. Complaints received and any records related to the investigation and complaints.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2109; TRR/MS 0520-01-05; Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 122
2. TCA 49-6-2116(d)(3)
3. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 548
4. TCA 49-6-2107
5. TCA 49-6-2107(e)(1); Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 122
6. TCA 49-6-2116(a)-(c)
7. TCA 49-6-2116(d)(1)-(2)
8. TCA 49-6-2116(d)(5)

Cross References

Bus Safety and Conduct 6.308
Homeless Students 6.503

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Scheduling and Routing**	**3.401**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **3.401**	Issued: **01/09/95**

All school bus routes shall be arranged in such a way as to travel the shortest possible distance from the time the first student is picked up until the trip is complete.

The transportation supervisor will be responsible for surveying all bus routes and scheduling bus transportation, including the determination of bus stops and the assignment of students. Deleting or establishing new bus routes is the responsibility of the Board.[1]

Appeals of transportation decisions shall be made to the director of schools.

Students shall not be in transit to and from school more than one and one-half hours each way.[2] Under no circumstances shall students be transported past their assigned school.

Bus routes shall not overlap unless necessary to reach some other portion of each respective route or unless overlapping results from the necessity to travel the main highway to school centers. When more than one bus travels a main highway and each bus picks up some students along such routes, each bus shall be assigned a certain portion of the route and all students within this section shall ride the bus to which assigned

Every bus driver, at the beginning of the school year or, in the event that the driver is hired during the school year, at the time of hire, shall be informed of all the policies and procedures in place regarding the transportation of students.

Once the official route is begun, stops shall only be made to take on, discharge or transfer students. Buses are not to stop at stores (or make any other nondesignated stops except for emergencies) when transporting students.

No student may exit the bus at a destination other than that student's designated bus slop. The Director may adopt, with the approval of the Board, procedures that would allow a student to exit the school bus at an alternative location. lf the Director adopts procedures, such procedures shall include, at a minimum, the following:[3]

1. No school bus driver shall require or permit a student to exit the bus in violation of the School System's policies and procedures. The Director shall immediately review the fitness to drive of a driver who permits or requires a student to exit a bus in violation of the School System's policies and procedures.

2. No student shall be allowed to exit the bus at a stop other than the student's regular bus stop unless the student provides the driver with a signed note from the parent or guardian informing the driver of the change in the student's bus stop for the day. The driver shall turn the note over to the principal as soon as practical after the completion of the route.

3. ln the event that the driver finds it necessary for a student to exit the bus at a stop other than the student's designated stop in order to preserve the safety of other student passengers or the driver, the driver may remove the offending student from the bus provided that the driver secures the safety of the student for the uncompleted trip.

4. A driver shall report to school authorities as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the route, any student refusing to obey the driver or exiting the bus without the driver's permission at a point other than the student's destination for that trip.

Where practical, transfers may be made from one bus to another. Both buses shall be present while the transfer is in process, unless the transfer point is a school campus. Leaving students at a home or place of business for transfer shall be permitted only after approval has been obtained from the principal.
.
Students who ride school buses shall attend the school designated unless the Board designates an alternate school. If a parent chooses to send his/her child to another school in the system, the parent must provide transportation to and from that school.

Current bus route maps will be available in school offices.

Bus routes will not be altered for children living less than .3 of a mile from their route.

Legal References:

1 TCA 49-6-2102
2. TCA 49-6-2105
3. TCA 49-6-2118

Cross Reference:

Bus Conduct 6.308

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Special Use of School Vehicles**	**3.402**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **3.402**	Issued: **01/09/95**

All standard rules of student and driver conduct shall apply to all extracurricular trips.

System-owned vehicles may be used by athletic teams and other school groups, provided such trips are recommended by the principal.

The principal will make all transportation arrangements with the director of transportation.

The Board shall be reimbursed by the individual school for the use of vehicles for extracurricular activities. However, the Board may establish special rates for extended trips or in special cases. Forms for reporting extra use of vehicles will be furnished to each school principal.

Only qualified vehicle drivers duly employed by the director may drive school vehicles for extracurricular activity trips during the regular school year.

School vehicles may be used only for authorized school business. No other individual or group may utilize school vehicles without written request to the director of schools' office.

Legal Reference:

1. Internal Revenue Code § 61;
   ¶ H-2230 Methods for Valuing the Use of Employer-Provided Vehicles

Cross References:

Extracurricular Activities 4.300
interscholastic .Athletics 4.30 I
Field Trips and Excursions 4.302

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Traffic and Parking Controls**	**3.403**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **EBBE**	Issued:

The principal of each school shall develop and implement a plan to ensure maximum vehicular and pedestrian safety for his/her campus.

Students who ride bicycles or drive motor vehicles to school must leave the vehicles parked in designated areas until the end of the school day, unless permission to use the vehicle is obtained from the principal.

Students will not be allowed to sit in cars which are parked on the campus at any time.

The principal is authorized to formulate reasonable rules governing student operated vehicles on school premises or in transporting students.

The principal is authorized to take whatever action necessary to control traffic on school property

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Private Vehicles**	**3.404**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **3.404**	Issued: **02/14/05**

The Board recognizes that certain employees may need to use their private vehicles for school purposes. With the use of private vehicles, the following policy shall be observed:

1. To use a private vehicle for school purposes, the employee must have the written permission of the director of schools or his designee and proof of vehicle liability insurance coverage in the following forms:

a. A copy of the insurance certificate issued to the insured indicating liability limits in accordance with State law, and

b. A specific permit for each trip involving students, including field trips.

2. The school system shall assume no responsibility for liability in case of accident, un less the employee has the proper authorization described above.

3. The Board specifically forbids any employee to transpo11 students for school purposes without prior authorization by the director of schools or his/her designee.

4. Privately-owned school buses and drivers of such shall meet all requirements of state law and state Board Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards.[2]

5. No student shall be sent on errands, personal or school-related in a vehicle owned by the student, an employee, or the school system.

6. No employee may ask for or give permission to students to transport other students to and from any school or school-related activity without written parental permission and proof of student insurance.

The Board recognizes that volunteer parent drivers are often needed to use their private vehicles for school purposes. The volunteer parent drivers who use a private vehicle must provide proof of vehicle liability insurance coverage in the form of an insurance certificate issued to the insured indicating limits in accordance with State law.[1]

_____

Legal Reference:

1. OP Tenn. Atty. Gen 04-136 (August 24, 2004)
2. TRR/MS 0520-l-5-.01 - .04

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Food Service Management**	**3.500**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/13/03 12/11/17**

The School Nutrition Program shall be operated on a nonprofit basis and shall comply with state law and State Board of Education rules and regulations pertaining to nutrition, health, sanitation, internal accounting procedures, and service of foods and will meet all state, federal, and local requirements necessary for participation.[1]

The district's Food Service Supervisor will oversee the program. All products and services necessary for the operation of the school nutrition department shall be procured using a procurement plan which shall comply with federal and state purchasing procedures.

School Nutrition may include the following programs: National School Lunch Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, School Breakfast Program, Seamless Summer Option, and Afterschool Snack Program. Meals and snacks that are offered shall meet the federal requirements for reimbursement as defined by federal regulations.[2]

As required for participation in the School Nutrition Program, the Board agrees to the following:

1. Meals shall be made available to all students in attendance; and

2. Free and reduced-price meals/snacks shall be made available to students who are determined eligible for these benefits.

Students who participate in no-cost or reduced-cost meals will not be distinguished in any way from other students during food service.

Students will be permitted to bring their lunches from home and to purchase allowable beverages and a la carte items at school.

Procedures for implementing guidelines established by the State Department of Education School Nutrition Program shall be on file in the district food service procedures manual.

STUDENTS REQUESTING MODIFIED MEALS

The School Nutrition Program shall make reasonable modifications to accommodate children with disabilities. These modifications will be made on a case-by-case basis when supported by a written statement from a licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write prescriptions under state law.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures for notifying parent(s)/guardian(s) of the process for requesting meal modifications and arrange for an impartial hearing process to resolve grievances related to requests for modifications based on a disability.

COMPETITIVE FOODS

The sale of competitive foods shall comply with all local guidelines, but at a minimum, shall be as stringent as the current federal regulations concerning competitive foods.[3]

CHARGING MEALS

In the event a student does not have adequate funds to purchase a meal, he/she will be allowed to charge the meal.

The Director of Schools shall ensure that this policy is provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households that transfer to the school during the school year.

COLLECTION OF UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

The district shall make reasonable efforts to collect debts resulting from unpaid meal charges prior to the end of the school year. Uncollected charges from the previous fiscal year shall be considered delinquent debt. The Director of Schools shall establish reasonable methods and a timeframe for collection of delinquent debt. Any use of third parties to collect delinquent debt shall be approved by the Board. Upon recommendation of the Director of Schools, the Board may classify delinquent debt as bad debt, which shall be considered uncollectable and categorized as an operating loss.[4]

Legal References	Cross References
1. TCA 49-6-2302, 2303; TRR/MS 0520-01-06	Revenues 2.400
2. 7 CFR § 210.10-.13	Investment Earnings 2.402
3. 7 CFR § 210.11	Deposit of Funds 2.500
4. 2 CFR § 200.426	Financial Reports and Records 2.701

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Insurance Management**	**3.600**	**08/13/18**
		Rescinds: **EGA**	Issued: **05/11/15**

General

The insurance program will provide coverages in a minimum of the following broad categories:

1. Property: Buildings and contents against fire, extended coverage, vandalism and malicious 11mischief, boiler and machinery explosion; and vehicles;

2. Liability: Board members, Director of Schools and employees resulting from discharging their duties, and students participating in work-based learning.[1]

3. Worker's compensation; and

4. Fidelity: Blanket bond and fiscal agent's bond as required by statute.

The Director of Schools will continually review the insurance program to ensure that adequate protection is being provided at a reasonable price.

GROUP HEALTH

The Board may provide group health insurance for all full-time employees.[2] The Director of Schools, after consultation with personnel, shall recommend carriers of insurance for programs in which the Board makes partial or full payments. The Board shall approve all insurance carriers.

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop procedures to ensure the privacy of HIPAA protected information.[3]

ANNUITIES[4]

Board-approved companies for tax-sheltered annuities shall include all companies presently having contracts with employees.

The addition of a company to the list of Board-approved companies shall be considered on written request of agents of the company.

Written request for a change in annuity deductions shall be reported to the payroll office on or before the first day of the month in which such change is to be effective.

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2018, Chapter No. 991
2. TCA 49-2-209
3. 45 CFR § 164.306, 164.316
4. TCA 49-2-208

Cross References

Payroll Procedures 2.802
Work-Based Learning 4.211

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Student Insurance Program**	**3.601**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **JGA**	Issued:

Student accident insurance will be made available for purchase on an optional basis. The policy shall be reviewed annually and approved by the Board upon recommendation of the director of schools. Applications and information brochures will be sent home with the students during the first week of school.

Files will be maintained in the principal's office listing students subscribing to the plan.

The principal shall ensure that each student, before participating in interscholastic athletics, either purchases the insurance policy offered or presents a statement signed by the parent(s) which assures the school that the parent(s) has persona1 insurance or is willing to accept all financial responsibilities related to participation and travel. Forms for such permission and agreements will be furnished by the principal and will be kept on file in the principal's office

Cross References:

Interscholastic Athletics 4.301

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in October	**Workers' Compensation**	**3.602**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **DA**	Issued:

The Board shall maintain adequate workers' compensation coverage according to state statutes and shall post and maintain in a conspicuous place on the business premises a printed notice regarding worker's compensation as prescribed by the commissioner of labor and workforce development.[1]

The Board shall establish a medical panel consisting of at least three (3) or more reputable physicians or surgeons, not associated together in practice, if available. The names of the physicians or surgeons shall be posted in conspicuous places throughout the maintenance, transportation, clerical, and professional area of participating schools. Any claimant may select an operating surgeon or attending physician listed on the medical panel for treatment of on-the-job injuries. Any specialized treatment of injuries must be administered by practitioners or specialists upon referral by the medical panel.[2]

Legal References:

1. TCA 50-6-407
2. TCA 50-6-204(4)(A)(B)

Cross References:

Risk Management 3.204
Sick Leave 5.302
Physical Assault Leave 5.307

Houston County Board of Education

4 – INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Descriptor Code	Policy Title	Issued Date
4.100	Instructional Goals	06/09/25
4.101	Instructional Standards	08/08/22
Curriculum Development and Programs		
4.200	Curriculum Development	01/13/20
4.201	Class Size Ratios	07/18/24
4.202	Special Education	12/14/20
4.204	Summer Instructional Programs	01/08/24
4.205	Enrollment in Advanced Courses	08/12/24
4.206	Special Programs	03/14/22
4.207	English Learners	12/12/16
4.208	Adult High School	11/08/21
4.209	Alternative Credit Options	05/13/19
4.210	Credit Recovery	09/12/22
4.211	Work-Based Learning Program	02/11/19
4.212	Virtual Education Program	08/11/25
4.213	Family Life Education	07/13/26
4.214	Use of Artificial Intelligence Programs	07/18/24
4.215	Instructional Use of Digital Devices	07/13/26
Extracurricular Programs		
4.300	Extracurricular Activities	09/09/24
4.301	Interscholastic Athletics	08/10/26
4.302	Field Trips and Excursions	12/09/24
Instructional Materials and Services		
4.400	Textbooks and Instructional Materials	12/14/20
4.402	Reconsideration of Instructional Materials and Textbooks	08/08/22
4.403	Library Materials	06/09/25
4.404	Use of Copyrighted Materials	12/09/24
4.406	Use of the Internet	06/09/25
4.407	School and System Websites	12/09/24
4.408	Use of Multimedia	07/08/13
4.409	Website Accessibility	12/09/24
Community Instructional Resources		
4.500	Community Instructional Resource	12/09/24
4.501	School Volunteers	12/09/24
4.502	Parent/Family Engagement	01/14/19

Academic Achievement

4.600	Grading System	07/13/26
4.601	Reporting Student Progress	06/09/25
4.602	Honor Roll, Awards, & Class Ranking	08/12/24
4.603	Promotion and Retention	01/13/25
4.604	Credit for Prior Courses	08/12/24
4.605	Graduation Requirements	08/10/26
4.606	Graduation Activities	03/09/20
4.607	Waivers of Rules and Regulations	01/13/20
4.608	Transcript Alterations	08/13/18

Testing and Evaluation

4.700	Testing Programs	08/12/24
4.701	Maintaining Test Security	12/10/18
4.702	Evaluation of Instructional Program	12/09/24

Controversial Issues and Materials

4.800	Controversial Issues	07/11/16
4.801	Controversial Materials	07/08/13
4.802	Student Equal Access (Limited Public Forum)	05/11/26
4.803	Recognition of Religious Beliefs, Customs & Holidays	12/09/24
4.804	Religious Content of Courses	01/14/19
4.805	Prayer and Period of Silence	07/08/13

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Instructional Program**	**4.100**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds: **IB 4.100**	Issued: **07/08/13; 01/13/20**

General

The Board shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability in its instructional program or activities.[1] Discrimination shall include antisemitism, defined as a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews including, but not limited to, rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.[2]

GOALS

The Board approves the following instructional goals for students:

1. To acquire the knowledge and attitude necessary to achieve and maintain good physical and mental health;
2. To develop the skills necessary to function as a self-directed person;
3. To develop the capacity to cope with change through an understanding of the arts, humanities and scientific processes;
4. To know the principles involved in making moral and ethical choices;
5. To develop the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, speaking, and problem solving;
6. To develop a positive attitude toward the lifelong endeavor of learning;
7. To learn to identify personal talents and interests, make appropriate career choices, and develop career skills;
8. To acquire knowledge and to develop skills in the management of personal and public resources necessary for meeting obligations to self, family, and society;
9. To learn to act in a responsible manner;
10. To learn of the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the community, state, nation, and world; and

11. To learn to understand, respect, and interact with people of different cultures, generations, and races.

Legal References

1. 42 USCA § 2000d *et seq.*
2. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 293

Cross References

School District Goals 1.700
Student Goals 6.100
Student Concerns 6.305

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Instructional Standards**	**4.101**	**08/08/22**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

The Board is charged with selection of the curriculum. No subjects or topics prohibited by state or federal law shall be taught.[1] The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.

STATE STANDARDS[2]

Only Tennessee state standards shall be taught within the school district. The following are prohibited:

1. Instructional materials, textbooks, or supplemental materials created to align exclusively with Common Core; or

2. Instructional materials, textbooks, or supplemental materials that are marketed or otherwise identified as Common Core textbooks or instructional materials.

Any complaints regarding the above shall be submitted per board policy 4.402.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING

All curriculum and instructional programming implemented in the school district shall adhere to state and federal laws. District employees shall not include or promote any concepts that would violate state law when providing instruction, using instructional or supplemental materials, or when implementing the instructional program and curriculum.[1]

The Director shall develop procedures to ensure that the district's instructional program complies with state law.

Complaints regarding teaching prohibited concepts in violation of state law shall be submitted per the regulation developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.[3]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2202; TCA 49-6-1304; TCA 49-6-2206; TCA 49-6-1019
2. TCA 49-1-302(a)(8); TCA 49-1-314; Public Acts of 2022, Chapter No. 1085
3. TRR/MS 0520-12-04

Cross References

Reconsideration of Textbooks and Instructional Materials 4.402
Controversial Issues 4.800
Controversial Materials 4.801

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: **Annually, in November**	**Curriculum Development**	**4.200**	**01/13/2020**
		Rescinds: **IC** **4.200**	Issued: **07/08/13**

General

Under the leadership and direction of the Supervisor of Instruction, a unified curriculum shall be developed for the school system in each subject area for grades K-12 and presented to the Board for adoption.[1]

The curriculum shall include those subjects and topics required by state and federal laws and regulations.[2] It shall foster respect and appreciation of the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a pluralistic society.

Teachers in each school shall participate in the system-wide development of the curriculum in their appropriate subject areas. Assignments for curriculum development in the elementary grades will be made by the principal. The curriculum will be revised and updated regularly through in-service programs and curriculum planning sessions with changes subject to approval by the Board.

At least one copy of the complete curriculum shall be placed in each school. Teachers shall be given a personal copy of the portion which pertains to their area of teaching. New teachers shall be given an appropriate copy and briefed on its content in relation to the total curriculum.

Experimentation with newer concepts of curriculum design, scheduling, and instructional techniques is encouraged but must have prior approval of the principal. An experimental program requires the approval of the Director of Schools, the Board, the Commissioner of Education, and the State Board of Education.[1]

IMPLEMENTATION

The primary responsibility for ensuring the effective operation of the curricular programs and activities shall be delegated to the Director of Schools.

The school principals shall be responsible for administering the established instructional programs of their respective schools.

A syllabus for all grade six (6) through twelve (12) social studies, science, math, and English language arts courses shall be available to the public. [3]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-1-302(a)(1)-(3), (8); TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.05(1)(a); TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.05(2)
2. TCA 49-6-1001, *et seq*.; TCA 49-6-1201, *et seq*.; TCA 49-6-1301-1302
3. TCA 49-6-1005(c)(1)(2)(3)

Cross References

Evaluations of Instructional Programs 4.702
In-Service & Staff Development Opportunities 5.113
Staff Rights & Responsibilities 5.600
Staff Time Schedules 5.602

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Class Size Ratios**	**4.201**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/08/99; 07/11/16; 01/13/20**

General[1]

Pupil-teacher ratios shall not exceed the averages outlined in state law. Further, class sizes shall not exceed the maximum allowed by state law.

WAIVERS

The Director of Schools/designee may seek a waiver from the Commissioner of Education to extend the career and technical education (CTE) classes in grades six through twelve (6-12) as long as these class sizes do not exceed the maximum class size set for CTE. For grades six through eight (6-8), the class size may be extended, but the class size and average must not exceed those for general education classes in grades seven through twelve (7-12). [2]

If a natural disaster results in the enrollment of displaced students, the Commissioner of Education may grant a waiver from the maximum class sizes.

The Director of Schools shall apply for additional waivers as needed in compliance with state law.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-1-104; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.31(4)
2. TCA 49-1-104(g); Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 712

Cross References

Graduation Requirements 4.605
Waivers of Statute, Rules, and Regulations 4.607
Religious Content of Courses 4.804
Student Goals 6.100
Student Concerns 6.305

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Special Education**	**4.202**	**12/14/20**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The Board shall provide access to a free appropriate public education to all children with disabilities ages 3-21, inclusive, residing within the jurisdiction of the school system. The plan for implementation of appropriate instruction and special education services shall be in accordance with the current Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards of the State Board of Education[1] and state[2] and federal[3] law.

The Board shall develop and periodically update a local plan for providing special education services for students with disabilities. Specifically, the Board shall ensure the following:

1. All children with disabilities living within the school system receive a free and appropriate public education and the services to meet their unique needs; and

2. The rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected.

The plan shall seek to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To carry out a comprehensive screening and assessment plan emphasizing the early identification and evaluation of students with disabilities;

2. To use the Individual Education Program Team (IEP-Team) for assessment review, program formulation, and placement decisions for every student with disabilities, including review of proposed suspensions when appropriate, in accordance with the State Board of Education Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards;

3. To ensure that placements are made to educate children with disabilities with age-appropriate, children without disabilities to the extent appropriate;

4. To provide each child with a disability with an individual educational program (IEP) specifically designed to meet his/her unique needs;

5. To provide continuing evaluation of the progress of each student with a disability, including at least an annual review of each IEP and a complete re-evaluation at least every three (3) years;

6. To ensure that procedural safeguards required by state and federal laws are adhered to; and

7. To involve parents of children with disabilities in a meaningful dialogue with school personnel, which will begin with an initial referral and continue throughout the student's educational career.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-09
2. TCA 49-10-101 *et seq.*
3. 20 USCA §§ 1400-1485; 29 USCA § 794; 34 CFR § 300.504

Cross References

Compulsory Attendance Ages 6.201
Alternative Education 6.319
Student Communicable Diseases 6.403
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome 6.404
Special Education Students 6.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Summer Instructional Programs**	**4.204**	**01/08/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

The following programs will be made available to students:[1,2]

1. Learning loss bridge camps;
2. After-school learning mini camps; and
3. Summer learning camps.

These programs shall be organized and operated in accordance with state law as well as guidelines provided by the Tennessee Department of Education. Funding for all programming shall be provided for in the annual budget and take into account any available grants.

SUMMER PROGRAMMING[2]

The Director of Schools/Designee shall present a recommended summer programming plan to the Board each year, no later than June, outlining the following:

1. Courses offered;
2. Transportation;
3. Class size ratios;
4. Budget, including staff compensation;
5. School nutrition needs;
6. Staffing;
7. Enrollment criteria; and
8. Any additional necessary information.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS[2]

Priority students, as defined by state law, may be required to attend summer programs.

Students who are required to attend summer programming shall attend with a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate. If more days are missed, students may make up a total of two (2) days prior to the beginning of the following school year in order to satisfy attendance requirements. Missed days will be documented, and options for make-up days will be provided by the summer school site administrator. Parents/guardians shall be provided information on the summer program attendance policy in writing prior to their child's participation in the program.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall be responsible for developing administrative procedures regarding the attendance requirements of other non-required students in each program.

THIRD GRADE PROMOTION/RETENTION LAW & MAKE UP DAYS

Students who are required to attend summer programming in order to be promoted to fourth grade shall attend with a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate. If more days are missed, students may make up a total of two (2) days prior to the beginning of the following school year in order to satisfy attendance requirements. Missed days will be documented, and options for make-up days will be provided by the summer school site administrator. Parents/guardians shall be provided information on the summer program attendance policy in writing prior to their child's participation in the program.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop administrative procedures regarding the documentation of student attendance including make-up days and the administration of the post-test for students who participate in summer programming.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(9); Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 144
2. TCA 49-6-1504
3. TCA 49-6-3003
4. State Board of Education Policy 3.300

Cross References

Extended Contracts 5.112

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Enrollment in Advanced Courses**	**4.205**	**08/12/24**
		Rescinds: **IDCH**	Issued: **08/09/21; 08/10/20; 07/08/13**

General

Students in grades seven through twelve (7-12) may enroll in available advanced courses including, but not limited to, advanced English language arts, mathematics, or science courses.[1]

To enroll in these courses, students shall meet the following standards:

1. Honors, Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, or Dual Enrollment Courses:
    a. B- average (2.75 GPA) in the previous/prerequisite class (if applicable)
    b. Overall GPA of 2.75
    c. Tennessee Comprehensive Test Program (TCAP) performance of "On Track or Mastered"

The principal shall have the authority to require additional criteria for the enrollment in advanced courses to fit the needs of the students within the school. Students failing to meet one or more of the above criterion may be enrolled in the course upon the recommendation of the school counselor and building administrator.

NOTIFICATION[1]

Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written notification of a student's eligibility to enroll in advanced courses. The notification shall state that a student will remain enrolled in the course unless the parent/guardian timely submits a written request for removal. The Director of Schools shall determine the deadline to submit the request for removal.

Students may also be removed from an advanced course if the student's teacher determines that the student should be removed based on performance after thirty (30) days of instruction and the principal approves the request to remove the student.

COLLEGE LEVEL COURSES[2]

Students may earn credit by enrolling in a postsecondary institution and taking college level courses. Students who take and pass dual enrollment courses at a postsecondary institution shall have their postsecondary credits accepted for high school credit as a substitution for an aligned graduation requirement course.

These courses may be offered at the high school, postsecondary institution, or online. If not offered on the high school campus, the Board shall not be responsible for transportation. Any tuition or fees due to enrollment in college level courses are the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Grades earned in such college level courses shall be used to determine class rank, grade point average, and class valedictorian or salutatorian.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-1012; State Board of Education Policy 3.301
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(8)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Special Programs**	**4.206**	**03/14/22**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 03/12/18; 12/10/18**

RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION (RTI^2)

Houston County Schools will implement a tiered RTI^2 approach in grades K-12. RTI^2 is a process where schools use data to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions, and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness. RTI^2 in Houston County Schools will be used to address individual student needs and will serve to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Improve academic achievement by ensuring all students have access to high-quality instruction responsive to their needs,
2. Early identification of struggling students through the use of data so that schools can provide early interventions tailored to individual student need, and
3. Determine whether a student has a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The homebound instruction program is for students who due to a medical condition or an IEP team decision, are unable to attend the regular instructional program.[1] The homebound instruction program shall consist of a minimum of three (3) hours of instruction per week while school is in session for a period of time determined, on a case-by-case basis, by the District.

To qualify for this program, a student shall have a medical condition that will require the student to be absent for a minimum of ten (10) consecutive instructional days~~,~~ (or for an aggregate of at least ten (10) instructional days for a student who has a chronic medical condition) or educational needs such that an IEP team has determined the home setting to be the child's least restrictive environment (LRE). The student shall be certified by ~~a~~ his/her treating physician as having a medical condition that prevents him/her from attending regular classes or have a signed IEP document reflecting the homebound placement as the student's LRE. The services provided to the homebound student shall reflect the student's capabilities and be determined by the homebound instructor, after consultation with appropriate professional staff of the student's assigned school.

Recertification shall be obtained after the expiration of each period of homebound instruction if the student's physician certifies, in writing, that the student has a medical condition that prevents him/her from returning to the regular instructional program.

HOMEBOUND PROGRAM FOR PREGNANT STUDENTS[1,2]

The homebound instruction program for pregnant students shall consist of three (3) hours of instruction per week for a period of six (6) weeks.

The student's physician shall recommend, in writing, the six (6) week period for which the student shall be eligible for homebound instruction.

A homebound instruction program for longer than the six (6) week period shall only be provided to a student who is certified in writing by her physician as having health complications arising from the pregnancy that prevent her from returning to regular classes.

Legal References

1. TN Department of Education, *Student Membership and Attendance Procedures Manual* (2017)
2. TCA 49-10-1101; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.10
3. TCA 49-10-1102

Cross References

Student Communicable Diseases 6.403
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome 6.404

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**English Learners**	**4.207**	**12/12/16**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

If the inability to speak and understand the English language excludes a student from effective participation in the educational programs offered by the district, the district shall take reasonable actions to provide the student equal access to its programs. Students who are English learners ("EL") shall be identified, assessed, and provided appropriate services. No child shall be admitted to or excluded from any program or extra-curricular activity based on the student's surname or EL status.[1]

The director of schools shall evaluate the effectiveness of the district's language assistance programs to ensure EL students will acquire English proficiency and the ability to participate in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The board directs the administration to develop and implement language instruction programs that:[2]

1. Appropriately identify EL students in a timely, valid, and reliable manner.

2. Determine the appropriate instructional environment for EL students.

3. Provide EL students with a language assistance program that is educationally sound and proven successful.

4. Annually assess the English proficiency of EL students and monitor the progress of students in order to determine their readiness for standard instructional program.

5. Monitor the progress of students that have exited the EL program.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION[3]

Parents of EL students shall be given notice of, and information regarding, the instructional program within the first thirty (30) days of the school year, or within the first two weeks of a student being placed in a language instruction educational program (LIEP). At a minimum, the notice will include the following:[3]

1. The reason for identifying the child as an EL student;

2. The child's level of English language proficiency, including how the level was assessed, and the status of the child's academic achievement;

3. Methods of instruction used in the program, methods of instruction in other available programs, and how they differ;

4. How the program meets the educational strengths and needs of the student, and how the program will help the student reach English language proficiency and meet academic standards;

5. Program exit requirements, rate of transition to a standard instructional program classroom, and expected rate of high school graduation;

6. How the program meets the goals of an EL student with an IEP; and

7. Information on the parents' right to withdraw the student from the program or choose another program or method of instruction if available.

Parental involvement will be encouraged and parents will be regularly apprised of their child's progress.[4]

Legal References

1. Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 1112(e)(3)(D)
2. Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 3113(b)(3)(B)
3. Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 1112(e)(3)(A)
4. Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 1112(e)(3)(C)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Adult High School**	**4.208**	**11/08/21**
		Rescinds: **IDCI**	Issued: **07/08/13**

Houston County Adult High School operates to enable students and out-of-school youth who are eighteen (18) years of age and over to meet high school graduation requirements and receive a high school diploma.[1] When applying for enrollment, students must not be under current suspension, expulsion, or remandment by a previous school system, either in Tennessee or from another state. Deviations from this enrollment rule are only permitted for extenuating circumstances as approved by the Director of Schools

The Director of Schools shall appoint a member of the staff to coordinate, plan, and develop the program.

The adult high school shall meet the standards of an approved school and shall provide without fee all services, such as free textbooks, to which any student of grades nine through twelve (9-12) is entitled under rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, state and federal statutes, and policies of local boards of education. Students must demonstrate mastery of the course content prior to receiving credit for the course. Methods may include learning programs such as independent study under the guidance of a teacher at the adult high school, computer-assisted learning programs, on-line or distance learning programs, and work experience, if appropriate, for a particular course, as permitted by local and state policy.

While in attendance at the adult high school, students may earn all or a portion of the required credits necessary for graduation consistent with the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education as well as current state and federal statutes.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-409; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.05; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.06

Cross References

Compulsory Attendance Ages 6.201

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Alternative Credit Options**	**4.209**	**05/13/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

ONLINE COURSES

High school students may earn credit to be applied toward graduation requirements by completing online courses offered through agencies or institutions approved by the Board. Credit from these online courses may be earned only in the following circumstances:

1. The course is not offered at the high school, or although the course is offered at the high school, the student has an unavoidable scheduling conflict;
2. The course will serve as a supplement to homebound instruction;
3. The student has been expelled from a regular school setting, but educational services are to be continued; or
4. The principal, with agreement from the student's teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s), determines the student requires a differentiated or accelerated learning environment.

The express approval of the principal/designee shall be obtained ***before*** a student enrolls in an online course. The school shall receive an official record of the final grade before credit toward graduation will be recognized.

Through a supervision plan, the school shall be responsible for providing appropriate supervision and monitoring of students taking online courses.

COURSE ACCESS PROGRAM

Students in grades seven through twelve (7-12) may participate in the statewide course access program. To become eligible to participate, students shall:

1. Meet all prerequisite requirements for the course access course; and

2. Be unable to enroll in a comparable course at the student's school because:
    a. A comparable course is not offered; or
    b. A legitimate situation exists that prevents the student from enrolling in a comparable course.[1]

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures to ensure that students and parent(s)/guardian(s) are given written notice of their right to appeal any denial of a course access course enrollment in a timely manner.[2] All appeals shall be submitted in writing to the Board within five (5) days of a denial.

After a timely appeal is made, the Board will provide written notification to the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) of the time, place, and date of the hearing. The hearing shall be held no later than ten (10) days after the appeal is submitted. At the hearing, the Board shall determine whether there was an error in denying the student the ability to participate in the course access program.[3]

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-14-.03(1)
2. TRR/M 0520-01-14-.03(7)
3. TRR/MS 0520-01-14-.03(6)

Cross References

Homebound Instruction 4.206
Grading System 4.600
Graduation Requirements 4.605

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Credit Recovery**	**4.210**	**09/12/22**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/13/17; 06/13/22**

GENERAL[1]

The director of schools shall ensure that credit recovery facilitators receive training regarding course organization, online instruction management, and related technology.

Credit recovery teachers shall comply with all State Board of Education certification requirements.[1]

ADMISSION AND REMOVAL[2]

No student shall be admitted to or otherwise enrolled in credit recovery courses unless:

1. The student's parent/guardian gives written consent for the student to enroll in the proposed credit recovery course. Parents/guardians should be informed that not all postsecondary institutions will accept credit recovery courses for credit and that the NCAA Clearinghouse will not accept credit recovery courses for credit.

2. The student has previously taken an initial, non-credit recovery section of the proposed course. Credit recovery is designed to be a remediation option for students, and a credit recovery course shall not be the first time a student is exposed to the course content; and

3. The student has previously taken an initial, non-credit recovery section of the proposed course and received a grade of at least fifty percent (50%). Students who receive a grade of below fifty percent (50%) in the non-credit recovery section of the course must re-take the course.

If a student is seeking to recover credit for the first semester of a two-semester course, the student may not receive the full credit for the course until he/she has enrolled in and passed the second semester of the course and taken any applicable End of Course examinations.

The board shall track students enrolled in credit recovery courses as directed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

INSTRUCTION AND CONTENT[2]

Credit recovery teachers shall work closely with credit recovery facilitators to correlate class content and instruction.

The director of schools shall ensure that all credit recovery courses:

1. Align with Tennessee's current academic standards for the relevant course content area, as approved by the State Board of Education; and

2. Differentiate instruction to address individual student growth needs based on diagnostic assessment or End of Course data.

Students in credit recovery programs shall:

1. Complete a course skill-specific diagnostic to determine skill-specific goals;

2. Meet individual skill-specific goals in a flexible time frame as established by identified student need; and

3. Master all individualized skill-specific goals as established by the diagnostic process in order to earn credit.

GRADES[2]

Until the 2022-23 school year, students passing credit recovery shall receive a grade of seventy percent (70%) under the state uniform grading system. For grades issued in the 2022-23 school year and thereafter, students passing credit recovery courses shall receive a grade of sixty percent (60%) under the state uniform grading system. If the district utilizes a locally-adopted grading scale that differs from the uniform grading scale, a student passing credit recovery shall receive a D.[3]

Legal References

1. State Board of Education Policy 2.103; TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(13)
2. State Board of Education Policy 2.103
3. State Board of Education Policy 3.301

Cross References

Grading System 4.600
Promotion and Retention 4.603

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Work-Based Learning Program**	**4.211**	**02/11/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **02/11/19**

Students shall have access to a system of structured work-based learning (WBL) experiences that allow them to apply classroom theories to practical problems as well as explore career options.

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures to govern the efficient administration of the WBL program. Such procedures shall include, among other things, a process for evaluation and assessment of the program to ensure that it is of high quality and meets the needs of students.[1]

Legal References

1. State Board of Education Policy 2.103(5)

Cross References

Insurance Management 3.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Virtual Education Program**	**4.212**	**08/11/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **10/24/22**

General

The Houston County School District virtual education program is a course or series of courses offered by thre school district to provide students a broader range of educational opportunities through the use of technology. Utilizing this program is temporary and shall not replace a student's regular instructional program.[1]

Class size ratios for the virtual education program shall comply with the requirements as outlined in state law.[2]

Virtual education programs[3] may be made available to students for the following purposes:

1. Academic remediation, enrichment, or providing students access to a wider range of courses;
2. Continuity of educational service for students who are homebound;[4]
3. Continuity of educational service for students who are quarantining;[5]
4. Continuity of educational service for students enrolled in an alternative school;[6]
5. Continuity of educational service when the district utilizes remote instruction due to dangerous or extreme weather conditions, a serious outbreak of illness affecting or endangering students or staff, or during the administration of end of course examinations or other examinations as allowed per state law; or[7]
6. Continuity of educational service when the district utilizes hybrid instruction due to dangerous or extreme weather conditions, or an emergency, as determined by the Director of Schools.[8]

ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Students shall be eligible to utilize a virtual education program if participating in one of the above educational opportunities. The following factors shall also be taken into consideration when determining eligibility:

1. Attendance;
2. Grades;
3. Technology survey; and
4. Approval from the appropriate program administrator.

ATTENDANCE

Student attendance in the virtual education program shall adhere to the general requirements of Board Policy 6.200 and any relevant administrative procedures.

Methods of confirming student attendance shall include two or more of the following:

1. Students participating in a phone call with a teacher, with parent/guardian support as appropriate for the age of the student;
2. Students participating in synchronous virtual instruction;
3. Students completing work in a learning management system;
4. Students submitting work via hard-copy or virtual formats; or
5. Other methods the school deems appropriate.

REMOVAL FROM VIRTUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

A student may be removed from the virtual education program or denied future enrollment in a virtual education program based on discontinued homebound or alterative school placement, disciplinary issues, attendance issues, or poor academic performance.

Before a student is removed based on poor academic performance, the following interventions shall occur:

1. Notification of parent/guardian;
2. One-on-one assessment conducted by the principal/designee regarding any learning needs and academic performance; and
3. Other supportive measures deemed appropriate.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.05(2)
2. TCA 49-1-104(h); State Board of Education Policy 3.206
3. TCA 49-16-101; TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.05(2)(a)
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.10; TRR/MS 0520-01-09-.07
5. TRR/MS 0520-01-13-.01(1)(c)
6. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09; TCA 49-6-3402(i)
7. TCA 49-6-3004(i)
8. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 484

Cross References

Emergency Closings 1.8011
Homebound Instruction 4.206
Credit Recovery 4.210
Alternative Education 6.319

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Family Life Education**	**4.213**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/18/24; 08/09/21**

General

A family life education program shall be implemented within the school district in compliance with state law.[1]

A parent/guardian who chooses not to have a student participate in the family life education program shall submit such request in writing to the principal. A student who is excused from the program shall be assigned alternative health activities and shall not be penalized academically.

FAMILY LIFE INSTRUCTION

The curriculum for the family life education program shall, in a manner that is age-appropriate and factually and medically accurate, include the following:[2]

1. Teach the skills needed to make healthy decisions in all aspects of marriage and family life;

2. Encourage sexual health by helping students understand how the whole person is affected by sexual activity as well as other risk behaviors;

3. Provide information about human reproduction, including conception, birth, and prenatal care, as well as the process of adoption and its benefits;

4. Provide information on the family unit and the responsibilities and consequences related to sexual activity, including the challenges of single teen parenting;

5. Promote only sexual risk avoidance through abstinence and the positive results of avoiding sexual activity;

6. Provide instruction on the detection, intervention, prevention, and treatment of child sexual abuse, including such abuse that may occur in the home, and internet crimes against children;

7. Provide instruction on the prevention of dating violence;

8. Encourage communication between parent(s)/guardian(s) and students;

9. Address the legal aspects of sexual activity with emphasis on the rights of the student; and

10. Include the presentation of a high-quality, computer-generated animation or high-definition ultrasound of a least three (3) minutes in duration that shows the development of the brain, heart, and other vital organs in early fetal development per state academic standards.[3]

Instruction in topics related to sexual activity are not age-appropriate for students in grades kindergarten through five (K-5) and shall not be taught as part of the family life curriculum. This does not prohibit instruction on detection, intervention, prevention, and treatment of child sexual abuse.[4]

The family life education program shall be reviewed annually to ensure that the prohibited items of instruction, as provided for in state law,[5] are not included in the curriculum.

TRAINING ON INSTRUCTION

Personnel providing family life instruction shall receive training prior to presenting such instruction. Personnel shall conduct such instruction with maturity and discretion.

CHILD TRAFFICKING PREVENTION EDUCATION

Instruction on child trafficking prevention and awareness shall be provided for all students in grades K-12 in a manner that is age-appropriate, grade-appropriate, and advances each year through developmentally appropriate instruction and skill building.[6]

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop a plan to implement child trafficking prevention education into the district's health education instruction and present it to the Board for approval.

REPORTING[2]

At the beginning of each school year, the Director of Schools shall provide the contact information to the Department of Children's Services of each employee or trained professional providing instruction on family life curriculum related to child sex abuse, human trafficking, and internet crimes. The Director shall also report on the curriculum selected by the Board of Education.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-1302
2. TCA 49-6-1304(a); TCA 49-6-1601(g)(2)
3. TCA 49-6-1304(c)
4. TCA 49-6-1304(d)
5. TCA 49-6-1304(b)
6. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 744

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Use of Artificial Intelligence Programs**	**4.214**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs as defined by state law may be used by staff and students in the district.[1]

Only approved AI programs may be utilized in student instruction or in completing student work. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop a procedure for staff to submit additional programs for approval.

District technology staff are tasked with overseeing the implementation of AI programs. These staff members will review artificial intelligence programs to ensure compliance with district policies as well as state and federal student data privacy laws and present recommendations to the Director of Schools/designee for approval. Any approved programs shall be accessible to all students.

Employees shall not place personally identifiable information, financial information, intellectual property, or other confidential information into an AI system.

The Director of Schools/designee shall incorporate training programs on AI into professional development for district staff. This training shall focus on responsible use of AI and best practices for use in school settings and include instruction regarding personally identifiable information and the need to comply with state and federal data privacy laws. Emphasis shall be placed on the importance of securing and properly storing any data that is collected by the district in compliance with state and federal law.

STAFF USE

Staff may use AI in the completion of their own work. This may include, but not be limited to, drafting communications, notes, images, and the development of content for instructional or administrative purposes, as well as analyzing data and information. The following requirements shall be adhered to when using AI in the completion of work:

1. Employees shall disclose their use of a generative AI tool if failure to do so would:
    a. Violate the terms of the use of the AI tool;
    b. Would mislead a supervisor or others as to the nature of the work; or
    c. Would be inconsistent with the teacher code of ethics;.[2]

2. Employees shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the security of private student data when utilizing AI programs;

3. Outputs from AI programs shall be verified by reliable sources and reviewed prior to use in order to reduce the risk of errors and inaccuracies;

4. Outputs shall not be incorporated into proprietary content or works; and

STUDENT USE

Teachers may allow students to use approved AI programs for instructional purposes. Any such use shall align with approved instructional standards and curriculum. Prior to using AI, teachers shall ensure students are provided with appropriate instruction on the responsible use of AI.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students shall be instructed on responsible use standards including but not limited to the following:

1. Effective use of generative AI;

2. When it is appropriate to use AI in assignments;

3. How to determine whether AI responses are accurate;

4. Users assume responsibility for incorporating AI content responsibly; and

5. The difference between cheating and seeking support.

NOTICE TO PARENTS

The Director of Schools/designee shall provide notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) about the use of AI programs in the district. An approved list of AI programs will be provided by posting on the district website.

REPORTING

The Director of Schools shall submit a report to the Board of Education each June on how this policy will be enforced in the upcoming school year. The Board shall approve the report and the Director shall submit it to the Department of Education by July 1st.

Legal References	Cross References
1. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 550 2. TCA 49-5-1001	Use of the Internet 4.406

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Instructional Use of Digital Devices**	**4.215**	**7/13/2026**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General[1]

In-person, teacher-led instruction shall be the primary mode of instruction for students in grades kindergarten through five (K-5).

Digital devices shall be utilized in these grades only when there is a clear educational benefit, including use for remediation purposes. Further, electronic assessments and instructional tools shall be developmentally appropriate and aligned with state academic standards.

The Director of Schools shall provide guidance to staff on appropriate use of technology for these grades. The Director of Schools/Designee shall create a process for ensuring that digital instruction complies with this framework and state law.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Students in grades kindergarten through five (K-5) are prohibited from accessing social media platforms using district provided internet during the school day.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

At the beginning of each school year, the Director shall ensure that principals provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with information on digital device use in the classroom. This shall include the types of devices used and the instructional purposes for such use.

Legal References	**Cross References**
1. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 808	Use of the Internet 4.406

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Extracurricular Activities**	**4.300**	**09/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/14/23; 07/08/13; 01/09/95;**

General

The following shall be adhered to:

1. The Board shall initially approve extracurricular activities at the district-level to ensure proper support and supervision.

2. Each student activity shall be under the guidance and direction of a staff member.

3. All extracurricular activities at the school level shall have the approval of the principal.

4. Student activities occurring before or after regularly scheduled school hours must be under the supervision of the principal/designee.

5. Secret organizations shall not be operated in any school.

6. A student shall not be required to attend an extracurricular activity that is scheduled at a time which conflicts with his/her religious practices.[1]

7. Extracurricular activities during vacation periods shall be restricted to regularly scheduled athletic programs and major events which cannot be scheduled otherwise.

8. Student groups shall not participate in state or national activities which are not listed as approved activities by a regional accrediting association or the state and national principals' associations without the approval of the Director of Schools/Designee.

9. A student on out-of-school suspension shall not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities.

10. Activities which restrict participation because of race, color, religion, sex, disabilities, or national origin are strictly forbidden.[2]

STUDENT CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS[3]
All students under the age of eighteen (18) shall present a signed and dated statement from their parent/guardian before joining any club or organization or participating in activities of a club or organization. The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures outlining this recordkeeping process.

National Conferences

When available, the Board will support sending a student/students to a national conference by making a contribution of $500.00 to help defray the cost. The contribution will be made to the school organization under the following guidelines:

• A student must EARN the right to attend a national conference (by competing at the state level or by earning a national award), not by invitation. It is understood that some contests allow more entrants per state than others; and in some cases you do not have to place at the state level to enter at the national level.

This policy is ONLY for those who will be representing the state as their contestants (not local contestant just because you can — this would constitute an invitational).

• The student/students must be in good standing in his/her organization, must have at least passing grades in all classes, and must have good attendance practices.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-1002(c)
2. 34 CFR § 106.41
3. TCA 49-6-1031(b)

Cross References

Special Use of School Vehicles 3.402
Interscholastic Athletics 4.301
Field Trips/Excursions/Competitions 4.302
Attendance 6.200

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Interscholastic Athletics**	**4.301**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/14/25; 07/18/24; 08/09/21; 11/13/17; 01/12/09**

General

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person, or otherwise be discriminated against in any athletic program of the school. Equal athletic opportunities shall be provided for members of both sexes.[1]

Sex shall be defined as the "immutable characteristics of the person's reproductive system that identify the person as male or female, as determined by anatomy and genetics existing at the time of birth".[2] Student athletes shall only be allowed to participate in athletic activities or events that align with the student's sex indicated on his/her original birth certificate.[3] The Director of Schools/designee shall require the parent/guardian to provide the student's original birth certificate prior to participation in any interscholastic athletics. If the original birth certificate is not available or does not indicate the student's sex at the time of birth, the parent/guardian shall provide medical documentation showing evidence of the student's sex at birth.

Interscholastic athletics shall be administered as a part of the regular school program and shall be the principal's responsibility. Principals shall ensure that school regulations regarding participation in a sport are reasonable. Athletic schedules shall be filed in each principal's office. The principal/designee shall accompany an athletic team on trips. Transportation of teams to athletic games is approved by the Board, provided the team's school reimburses the Board for mileage.

Bylaws of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association shall regulate the operation and control of athletics.[3] The Director of Schools shall develop a code of conduct for all coaches to follow in order to ensure the health and safety of athletes.[4]

INSURANCE & PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

In the event that the school's insurance provider does not extend coverage to an athlete, the athlete shall provide proof of independently secured catastrophic coverage and liability coverage, with the school district as a named insured, of not less than the limits set forth in state law.[5] It shall be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide health and hospitalization insurance for all students participating in interscholastic athletics.

Prior to participation in interscholastic athletics, every student shall complete an annual physical examination.[6] The parent(s)/guardian(s) of each student shall be responsible for covering the cost of the examination, and these records shall be on file in the principal's office.

SCHEDULING CONFLICTS

No principal or teacher shall dismiss his/her school or any group of students for the purpose of attending the practice of any interscholastic sport during the school day without written permission from the Board.[7] This does not prevent regular physical training lessons in the daily school program.

Students shall not be required to attend a school athletic event, or event related to participation on a school athletic team, if the event is on an official school holiday, observed day of worship, or religious holiday. The student's parent/guardian shall notify the coach in writing three (3) full school days prior to the event.[8]

SEVERE WEATHER[4]

Severe weather is any type of weather that could impede the safety of any athlete by compromising the playing conditions of the interscholastic sport. Severe weather includes, but is not limited to, thunder, lightning, and extreme temperatures. When severe weather is forecasted, suspension of play shall be discussed with all players, coaches, and officials, if applicable.

All coaches who oversee or participate in outdoor training, practice, or competition shall annually complete a heat illness prevention course approved by the Tennessee Department of Health as well as receive training on activity modifications based on environmental conditions.

PROHIBITION AGAINST HAZING

Coaches, employees, and volunteers of the school district shall not encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate hazing activities.[9]

HOME SCHOOL STUDENT PARTICIPATION[10]

Home school students shall be permitted to participate in accordance with TSSAA or TMSAA guidelines. If a school is not a member with these organizations, home school students that are zoned for the school shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics to the same extent as other students.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL STUDENT PARTICIPATION[11]

Virtual school students shall be permitted to participate in accordance with TSSAA or TMSAA guidelines. If a school is not a member with these organizations, virtual school students that are zoned for the school shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics to the same extent as other students.

PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENT PARTICIPATION[12]

While students from private schools are permitted to try out for interscholastic athletics teams, this does not guarantee that they will make the team. As with all students, those from other schools shall only be admitted to the team subject to the independent decision of the coach or other relevant school official.

Public Schools with TSSAA or TMSSAA Membership

Private school students shall be permitted to participate in accordance with TSSAA or TMSAA guidelines subject to the following conditions. These students must:

- Attend a private school that is not a member with TSSAA or TMSAA and serves fewer than two-hundred (200) students in grades six through eight (6-8) or fewer than two hundred students in grades nine through twelve (9-12);
- Satisfy the eligibility requirements established by TSSAA or TMSAA; and
- Reside within the geographic boundaries of the district.

These students shall be permitted to participate in athletic programs not offered by the private school, but only in the middle or high school that they are zoned to attend.

Public Schools without TSSAA or TMSSAA Membership

If a school is not a member with these organizations and offers its students the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletic competition, private school students that are zoned for the school shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics to the same extent as other students.

1

Legal References

1. 34 CFR § 106.41; 20 USCA § 1681 *et seq.*
2. TCA 49-6-310(a)
3. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.08(1)
4. TCA 49-6-3601
5. TCA 29-20-403
6. 20 USCA § 1232h(c); TRR/MS 0520-01-13-.01(1)(a)
7. TCA 49-6-1002(a)
8. TCA 49-6-1002(c)
9. TCA 49-2-120
10. TCA 49-6-3050(e)(1)(B)
11. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 173
12. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 893

Cross References

Special Use of School Vehicles 3.402
Student Insurance Program 3.601
Extracurricular Activities 4.300
Attendance 6.200

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Field Trips/Excursions/Competitions**	**4.302**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/13/03; 07/08/13**

General

The Board encourages field trips, excursions, and competitions when the experiences are an integral part of the school curriculum and contribute to the Board's desired educational goals.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures for submitting, reviewing, and approving requests for field trips, excursions, and competitions. Any request that requires students to travel out of state or stay overnight requires prior Board approval.

INDEPENDENTLY PLANNED TRIPS

Trips privately planned by school district employees, acting outside the scope of their employment, are not authorized by the school district.

These trips are not approved by the Board and are not considered a part of the curriculum. Total responsibility for privately planned trips rests with the chaperone(s) as well as with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the students participating in the trip. The following restrictions shall apply:

1. Board funds or resources shall not be used;
2. School district materials shall not be used;
3. The Board shall not assume any liability;
4. Employees are not authorized to act on behalf of the school district;
5. Recruitment efforts made by an employee shall not occur during the instructional school day; and
6. Absences caused by participation in privately planned trips shall be considered unexcused.

Cross References

Advertising and Distribution of Materials in the Schools 1.806
Special Use of School Vehicles 3.402
Extracurricular Activities 4.300
Attendance 6.200

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Textbooks and Instructional Materials**	**4.400**	**12/14/20**
		Rescinds: **IFA, IFAA, 4.401**	Issued: **10/11/99; 07/08/13; 11/09/15**

General

All classrooms shall be equipped with the textbooks and instructional materials needed to provide quality learning experiences for students in accordance with state law.[1] The Board shall provide a wide range of textbooks and instructional materials that cover all levels of difficulty, generate critical thinking, and support the educational programs.

SELECTION[2]

The responsibility to select textbooks and instructional materials, as recommended by the State Textbook Commission, rests with the local textbook selection committees, subject to approval by the Board. Use of textbooks and instructional materials not on the list approved by the State Textbook Commission is permissible if the Board submits a waiver to the State Board of Education and such waiver is approved.

The Director of Schools shall establish a procedure for providing citizens of the community with an opportunity to examine proposed textbooks and instructional materials prior to their final adoption,[3] including public notice of the time and location at which textbooks and instructional materials may be examined. Once approved by the Board, the Director of Schools shall post the list of all approved textbooks and instructional materials on the school district's website and send a copy of the list to the Commissioner of Education.[2]

DISTRIBUTION

The Director of Schools shall designate an employee to be responsible for the purchase and distribution of textbooks and instructional materials in each school. Students shall receive these items at no cost.

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS[4]

Textbooks and instructional materials are property of the Board and shall be returned at the end of the school year, upon completion of the course, or upon withdrawal from a course or school. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are to sign an agreement stating they shall be responsible for the textbooks and instructional materials received and used by their children. The Director of Schools shall be responsible for developing an administrative procedure regarding the replacement of lost or damaged textbooks and instructional materials.

REVIEW OF TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS[3]

A list of textbooks and instructional materials shall be revised annually by principals under the direction of the Director of Schools.

Upon request, parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have the ability to inspect any textbooks and instructional materials including, but not limited to, teaching materials, handouts, and tests that are developed by and graded by their child's teacher.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures for the inspection of materials and distribute these materials to each principal.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2207; TCA 49-2-203(a)(3)
2. TCA 49-6-2207(c), (e), (f); TCA 49-6-2202(d); TRR/MS 0520-01-18-.02
3. 20 USCA § 1232h(a); TCA 49-6-7003
4. TCA 49-3-310(1)(B); TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.16(2)

Cross Reference

Surplus Property Sales 2.403
Reconsideration of Instructional Materials and Textbooks 4.403
Controversial Materials 4.801
Student Fees and Fines 6.709

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Reconsideration of Instructional Materials and Textbooks**	**4.402**	**08/08/22**
		Rescinds: **IFAD; 4.403**	Issued: **07/08/13**

If a complaint is filed by a parent/guardian, employee, or student regarding textbooks or instructional materials, the following process is to be followed:

1. Inform the complainant of the selection procedures and make no commitments.

2. Request the complainant to submit a formal *Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* form.

3. Inform the principal (and other appropriate personnel).

4. Keep challenged materials available for use during the reconsideration process. The materials shall be removed immediately if they:[2]

    a. Were created to align exclusively with Common Core; or

    b. Are marketed or otherwise identified as Common Core textbooks or instructional materials.

5. Upon receipt of the completed form, the principal shall notify the Director of Schools

6. The principal shall request review of the challenged materials by an ad hoc materials review committee within fifteen (15) working days. The review committee is appointed by the principal, and includes representatives from classroom teachers, one or more parents, and may include one or more students. The principal will inform the Director of Schools of the review committee's progress.

7. The review committee shall take the following steps after receiving the challenged materials:

    a. Read, view or listen to the contested material in its entirety;
    b. Check general acceptance of the material by reading recognized and evaluative reviews;
    c. Determine the extent to which the material supports the curriculum;
    d. Complete the appropriate *Checklist for Reconsideration of Textbook and Instructional Materials*, judging material for its strength and value; and
    e. Present recommendation to principal for further action and to the Director of Schools for purposes of information.

8. If the complainant desires further action after receiving the recommendation of the committee and the decision of the principal, an appeal may be made to the Board.

Legal References

1. *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, 102 S. Ct. 2799 (1982)
2. TCA 49-1-302(a)(8); TCA 49-1-314; TCA 49-6-2206; Public Acts of 2022, Chapter No. 1085

Cross References

Instructional Standards 4.101
Textbooks and Instructional Materials 4.400
School and System Websites 4.407
Controversial Materials 4.801

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Library Materials**	**4.403**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/08/22; 01/08/24; 08/12/24**

General

The school media specialist shall be responsible for library collection development. He/she shall post the list of library materials online. Library materials shall be reviewed to ensure the content aligns with state law. Prior to the purchase of new materials, librarians shall review the age and maturity level along with the reading level of the selected items for suitability. [1] A list of new materials shall be reviewed by the Principal/Designee.

The Principal/Designee shall be responsible for periodically reviewing the district's library collection in line with the standards established below. Any materials found to be out of alignment with the standards shall be removed, and this action shall be documented in writing and presented to the Director of Schools/Designee and the Board.

STANDARDS[2]

The library collection shall adhere to the following criteria:

1. Materials shall be suitable for and consistent with the educational mission of the school;

2. Materials shall be appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who may access them. The determining factor will be based on an assessment of any mature themes or content (i.e., violence, sexual content, vulgar language, substance abuse);

3. Materials shall contain literary, historical, scientific, and/or artistic value and merit;

4. The collection as a whole shall offer a variety of viewpoints; and

5. Materials shall not be removed on the sole grounds that the item is religious.

Any materials that meet the following criteria shall be removed and excluded from the district's library collection:

1. Contains nudity, descriptions or depictions of sexual excitement, sexual conduct, excess violence, or sadomasochistic abuse as defined in state law[3];

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2. Are patently offensive as defined in state law; or

3. Appeal to the prurient interest as defined in state law.

The Board shall be notified when any library materials are challenged or removed pursuant to this policy.

COMPLAINTS[4]

If a complaint is made by an employee, student, or parent/guardian, the person receiving the complaint shall:

1. Inform the complainant of the selection procedures and make no commitments.

2. Request the complainant to submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form.

3. Inform the principal (and other appropriate personnel).

4. Keep challenged materials available for use during the reconsideration process.

Upon receipt of the completed form, the Principal/Designee shall notify the Director of Schools/Designee. The Principal/Designee may request review of the challenged materials by an ad hoc materials review committee within thirty (30) school days. If the Principal/Designee appoints a review committee, it should include certified library media personnel, representatives from classroom teachers, and one or more parents.

After receiving the challenged materials, the following steps should occur:

1. Read, view, or listen to the contested material in its entirety;

2. Check general acceptance of the material by reading recognized and evaluative reviews;

3. Determine the extent to which the material is appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who have access to the materials and whether the material is suitable for, and consistent with, the educational mission of the school; and

4. Complete the appropriate Checklist for Reconsideration of Library Materials, judging the material for its strength and value.

The Principal/Designee shall present a recommendation to the Director of Schools. The Director of Schools/Designee shall assess the findings along with the recommendation of the Principal/Designee and present a recommendation to the Board.

The Board shall evaluate the recommendations of the Principal/Designee and the Director of Schools/Designee along with the material to determine whether it is appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who have access to the materials and whether the material is suitable for, and consistent with, the educational mission of the school. The Board shall review the findings and affirm, overturn, or modify the decision within sixty (60) days from which the feedback was received.

REMOVAL OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

If it is determined that the material is not appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who have access to them or is not suitable for, and consistent with, the educational mission of the school, the material shall be removed from the library collection.

Legal References

1. *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, 102 S. Ct. 2799 (1982); TCA 49-6-3803
2. TCA 49-6-3803(a),(b); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 270
3. TCA 39-17-901
4. TCA 49-6-3803(e), (f)

Cross References

Textbooks and Instructional Materials 4.400
School and System Websites 4.407
Controversial Materials 4.801

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Use of Copyrighted Materials**	**4.404**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds: **IFAE**	Issued: **07/08/13**

To define the fair and reasonable use of copyrighted work for educational purposes without the permission of the copyright owner and reduce the risk of copyright infringement the following guidelines are in effect:

1. All employees shall adhere to the provisions of the United States Code regarding the copying and/or the use of copyrighted materials;[1]

2. In the case of computer software, the ethical and practical problems caused by computer software piracy shall be taught in all computer courses;

3. The Director of Schools/Designee shall establish specific procedures regarding the copying, distribution, and use of copyrighted materials for instructional purposes;[1] and

4. The principal of each school shall establish practices which will enforce this policy at the school level.

Legal References

1. 17 USCA §§ 106, 107, 110

Cross References

School and System Websites 4.407
Use of Multimedia 4.408
Student Publications 6.704

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Use of the Internet**	**4.406**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/11/02; 07/08/13; 08/08/22**

The Board supports the right of staff and students to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes that it is incumbent upon staff and students to use this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner.

EMPLOYEES

Before any employee is allowed use of the district's internet or intranet access, the employee shall sign a written agreement, developed by the Director of Schools/Designee that sets out the terms and conditions of such use. Any employee who accesses the district's computer system for any purpose agrees to be bound by the terms of that agreement, even if no signed written agreement is on file.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop and implement procedures for appropriate internet use which shall address the following:

1. Development of the Network and Internet Use Agreement;

2. General rules and ethics of internet access;

3. Guidelines regarding appropriate instruction and oversight of student internet use;

4. A uniform signature block for use by all district employees; and

5. Prohibited and illegal activities including, but not limited to, the following:[1]
    - Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures;
    - Using obscene language;
    - Harassing, insulting, defaming, or attacking others;
    - Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks;
    - Hacking or attempting unauthorized access to any computer;
    - Violation of copyright laws;
    - Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files;
    - Intentional misuse of resources;
    - Using another's password or other identifier (impersonation);
    - Using the network for commercial purposes; and
    - Buying or selling on the internet.

STUDENTS

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop and implement procedures for appropriate internet use by students. Procedures shall address the following:

1. General rules and ethics of internet use; and

2. Prohibited or illegal activities including, but not limited to:[1]
    - Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures;
    - Using obscene language;
    - Harassing, insulting, defaming, or attacking others;
    - Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks;
    - Hacking or attempting unauthorized access;
    - Violation of copyright laws;
    - Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files;
    - Intentional misuse of resources;
    - Using another's password or other identifier (impersonation);
    - Using the network for commercial purposes; and
    - Buying or selling on the internet.

INTERNET SAFETY MEASURES[2]

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

1. Limiting the content accessible by students using the internet access provided by the district to content that is age-appropriate;

2. Protecting the safety and security of students when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications using internet access provided by the district;

3. Preventing unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by students online;

4. Restricting students' access to materials harmful to them; and

5. Preventing students from using internet access provided by the district to access websites, web applications, or software that does not protect students against the disclosure, use, or dissemination of their personal information.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall establish a process to ensure the district's education technology is not used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The process shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Utilizing technology that filters, blocks, or otherwise prevents internet access (for both students and adults) to material that is obscene or pornographic;[3]

2. Prohibiting and preventing a user from sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading materials that are deemed to be harmful to minors;[4]

3. Maintaining and securing a usage log; and

4. Monitoring online activities of students.[2]

The Board shall provide reasonable public notice of and at least one (1) public hearing or meeting to address and communicate its internet safety measures.[2]

A written parental consent shall be required prior to the student being granted access to electronic media involving district technological resources. The required permission/agreement form, which shall specify acceptable uses, rules of online behavior, access privileges, and penalties for policy/procedural violations, must be signed by the parent/guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be executed each year and shall be valid only in the school year in which it was signed unless parent(s)/guardian(s) provide written notice that consent is withdrawn. In order to rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the Director of Schools/Designee with a written request.

Complaints alleging a violation of the internet safety measures shall be submitted the Director of Technology. All complaints shall be reviewed to determine how to appropriately respond.

EMAIL

Users with network access shall not utilize district resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system. All data including email communications stored or transmitted on school district computers shall be monitored. Employees/students have no expectation of privacy with regard to such data. Email correspondence may be a public record under the public records law and may be subject to public inspection.[5]

INTERNET SAFETY INSTRUCTION[6]

Students will be given appropriate instruction in internet safety as a part of any instruction utilizing computer resources. The Director of Schools/Designee shall provide adequate in-service instruction on internet safety. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students will be provided with material to raise awareness of the dangers posed by the internet and ways in which the internet may be used safely.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

1. Students are prohibited from accessing social media platforms using district internet except when expressly authorized by a teacher for educational purposes.[7]

2. District staff who have a presence on social networking websites are prohibited from posting data, documents, photographs, or inappropriate information that is likely to create a material and substantial disruption of classroom activity.

3. District staff are prohibited from accessing personal social networking sites on school computers or during school hours except for legitimate instructional purposes.

4. The Board discourages district staff from socializing with students on social networking websites. The same relationship, exchange, interaction, information, or behavior that would be unacceptable in a non-technological medium is unacceptable when done through the use of technology.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy or a corresponding administrative procedure shall be handled in accordance with the existing disciplinary procedures of the district.

VENDOR CONTRACTS[8]

Prior to entering into any contract for the provision of digital or online materials created or marketed for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12), the district shall obtain an assurance that the vendor shall adhere to state law. This determination includes ensuring that the vendor filters, blocks, or otherwise prevents access to pornography or obscenity and verifying that the technology prevents a user from sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading materials that are harmful to minors.

Legal References

1. TCA 39-14-602
2. 47 USCA § 254 (h)(5)(A) – (C), 254(l); 47 CFR § 54.520(c)(1)(i); 20 USCA § 7131; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 195
3. TCA 49-1-221(a)(1)(C)(i)
4. TCA 39-17-901; TCA 49-1-221(a)(1)(C)(ii)
5. TCA 10-7-512
6. TCA 49-1-221(a)(1)(E)
7. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 195
8. TCA 49-1-221(c)

Cross References

Use of Email 1.805
Use of Artificial Intelligence Programs 4.214
School and System Websites 4.407
Controversial Materials 4.801
Student Publications 6.704

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**School and System Websites**	**4.407**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

CONTENT STANDARDS

The Board authorizes the creation of school and/or district web pages on the internet. Only those web pages maintained in accordance with board policy and established procedures shall be recognized as official representations of the district or individual schools. All information on a school or district web page must accurately reflect the mission, goals, policies, program, and activities of the school and district. The web page must have a purpose that falls within at least one (1) of three (3) categories:

1. Support of curriculum and instruction - intended to provide links to internet resources for students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff in the district;

2. Public information - intended to communicate information about the schools and district to students, staff, parent(s)/guardian(s), community, and the world at large; and

3. District technology support - intended to provide and respond to instructional and administrative technology needs of students and staff.

All material on a school website shall be either original to the school, in the public domain, or posted with the express permission of its rightful owner. This includes, but is not limited to, text, graphics, pictures, video, sounds, music, characters, logos, and trademarks. Web page publications shall follow all applicable copyright laws and guidelines.

Websites developed under contract for the school district or within the scope of employment by district employees are the property of the school district.

PRIVACY STANDARDS[1]

1. Because internet publications are available to the entire world, special care shall be taken to protect the privacy of students and staff. Web pages may not include personal identifying information regarding a student[1] such as: telephone numbers, addresses, names of other family members, names of friends, email addresses, specific location of a student at any given time, grades, or any other academic information. No confidential information shall be published on or linked to the web site.

2. Student work may be published on web pages only with written consent of the student's parent(s)/ guardian(s) or the eligible student before each incident of publication. The authoring student shall also sign a copyright consent form.

3. Links to student email accounts are prohibited.

4. Pictures of students may be included only under the following conditions:

    a. Individual student pictures may be published on the web site only with written consent of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student.

    b. Pictures of groups of students involved in a school-related activity may be published without consent; however, the students shall only be identified by the group name.

    c. Students shall not be individually identified in pictures unless there is a special reason for doing so, such as recognition for receiving an award. In such cases, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student must give written consent.

ADVERTISING/SPONSORSHIPS

Any use of advertising or sponsorships that appears on a school web site must be approved by the school web administrator, the principal, or the Director of Schools/designee. Guidelines for approval shall be established by the Director of Schools/designee and must be consistent with the Board's policies and guidelines used in other school and district publications.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures for development of web pages including content, quality, and consistency standards and shall designate an individual(s) to be responsible for maintaining the official district web page and monitoring all district web page activity. A building principal shall make such designation for an individual school. Schools or departments who wish to publish a web page must identify the webmaster's name, email address, and phone number on the web page.

CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS

The building principal or Director of Schools, respectively, is ultimately responsible for accuracy and appropriateness of the information made available on the web site. Concern about the content of any page(s) created by students or staff should be directed to the building principal or the Director of Schools' office when related to the district website. If the concern is not resolved, persons who wish to file a formal complaint shall submit a written request for reconsideration of instructional material.

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 1232g (a)(5)(A)-(B); *Elementary & Secondary Education* (20 USCA § 7908) Sec. 9528

Cross References

Use of Copyrighted Materials 4.404
Use of the Internet 4.406
Controversial Materials 4.801
Student Publications 6.704

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Use of Multimedia**	**4.408**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

All multimedia used in the classroom must either be provided by the school or have the prior approval of the principal.

Movies, songs or other multimedia may be rented or purchased for use in the classroom for education purposes only. No movie, song or other multimedia will be used for entertainment purposes.

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Cross Reference:

Use of Copyrighted Materials 4.404

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Website Accessibility**	**4.409**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

All web content produced and maintained by the district or provided by a third-party vendor shall conform to the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative's (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA and the Web Accessibility Initiative-Accessible Rich Internet Applications Suite (WAI-ARIA) 1.0 techniques, or the updated equivalents of these guidelines, to ensure accessibility for all individuals with disabilities.[1]

The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that all employees who are responsible for producing and maintaining web content receive website accessibility training.

Annually, all web content produced and maintained by the district or provided by a third-party vendor shall be reviewed and evaluated for its accessibility, and any non-conforming content shall be corrected in a timely manner.

Legal References

1. 34 CFR § 104.4(a); 42 USCA §12112(a)

Cross References

Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
School and System Websites 4.407

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Community Instructional Resources**	**4.500**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS

The Board recognizes the value of community resource persons in the educational program and authorizes the use of such persons with approval of the principal and the Director of Schools/Designee.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDES

An inventory of community resource people, agencies, and establishments which have potential to enhance teaching and learning shall be maintained for each school to assist in instructional planning.

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**School Volunteers**	**4.501**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds: **IFCD**	Issued: **07/08/13**

All volunteers must be approved by the principal and shall serve under the supervision and direction of the professional personnel of the school to which they are assigned. Volunteers shall assist professional personnel. They may not teach, but they may reinforce skills taught by the professional staff.

The principal shall identify appropriate tasks for volunteers and shall be responsible for planning and conducting orientation programs and regular in-service training sessions.

Volunteers shall serve without compensation but shall be insured by the Board against loss or damage in the performance of their duties.[1]

The principal shall ensure that appropriate recognition of volunteer services is made annually.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures to require the appropriate background checks for volunteers.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 29-20-310(e)
2. TCA 49-5-413(g)

Cross References

Visitors to the School 1.501
Safety 3.201
Background Investigations 5.118

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Parent/Family Engagement**	**4.502**	**01/14/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **09/12/05; 07/08/13**

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENT ENGAGEMENT

The Board is committed to increasing and ensuring the involvement of parents and other family members in the education of students.

The Board shall implement the following as required by federal or state laws or regulations:[1]

1. The school district shall annually work with parents in evaluating and potentially revising the provisions of this policy in improving the quality of schools. Such an evaluation shall strive to identify any barriers to greater participation by parents (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background).

2. The school district shall provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other necessary support to assist individual schools with planning and implementing parental involvement activities.

3. The school district shall involve parents with the development of required educational or improvement plans.

4. The school district shall coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies with those associated with other federal or state programs.

5. The school district shall put into operation activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools.[2] Those programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents.

6. The school district shall ensure that activities and strategies are implemented to support this policy and included in the district plan.

7. The district improvement plan shall include strategies for parental participation in the district's schools which are designed to improve parent and teacher cooperation in such areas as homework, attendance, discipline, and higher education opportunities for students.

8. The district plan shall include procedures to enable parents to learn about the course of study of their children and have access to all learning materials.

9. The district plan shall identify opportunities for parents to participate in and support classroom instruction in the school. Such opportunities include, but are not limited to, organizing fundraising activities, volunteering as a field trip chaperone, assisting in the library, computer lab or on the playground, offering after-school clubs, and recycling clothes.

10. If the school district's plan is not satisfactory to parents, the school district shall submit parental comments regarding the plan to the State Department of Education as required.

11. The school district shall ensure Title I schools are in compliance with the *Every Student Succeeds Act*.

The Director of Schools shall develop and implement any procedures necessary to accomplish the goals of this policy.

SCHOOL LEVEL POLICY
Each school shall submit to the Director of Schools and the Board, for review and comment, its Title I school parent involvement policy which must meet state and federal requirements, including a school-parent compact. This school level policy shall be developed jointly with and distributed to parents of participating students. A copy of these documents shall be retained in the district office and made available on the school's (if applicable) and school system's website.

SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM
If the Title I allocation is $500,000 or more to the school system, then at least one percent (1%) of that allocation shall be reserved for the purpose of promoting parent involvement. Parents of students participating in the Title I programs shall be consulted on the use of these funds.

FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS[1]
Families and community members shall be engaged in the education of students based on the following standards:

1. Families are welcomed into the school community;

2. Families and school staff should engage in regular and meaningful communication about student learning;

3. Families and school staff should work together to support student learning and development;

4. Families are informed and encouraged to be advocates for students;

5. Families are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families; and

6. Community, civic, and business resources are made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.

Legal References

1. Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub.L. 114-95, Dec. 10, 2015, 129 Stat. 1802; State Board of Education Policy 4.207; TCA 49-2-305; 20 USCA § 6318
2. TCA 49-6-7001

Cross References

English Learners 4.207
Homeless Students 6.503

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Grading System**	**4.600**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/18/24; 01/09/06; 11/13/17; 06/13/22**

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop an administrative procedure to establish a system of grading and assessment for evaluating and recording student progress and to measure student performance in conjunction with board-adopted content standards for grades K-8. The grading/assessment system shall follow all applicable statutes and rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. The grading/assessment system shall be uniform, district-wide, at comparable grade levels, except that the Director of Schools/designee shall have the authority to establish and operate ungraded and/or unstructured classes in grades K-3 according to state rules and regulations.[1]

The Director of Schools/designee shall submit a copy of the grading and assessment systems to the Board before the system is implemented. These guidelines shall be communicated annually to students and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Conduct grades are based on behavior and shall not be reflected in scholastic grades.

GRADING SYSTEM[2]

Schools teaching grades nine (9) through twelve (12) shall use the uniform grading system established by the State Board of Education. This shall also apply to students enrolled in eighth grade for the grades achieved on high school courses. Using the uniform grading system, students' grades shall be reported for the purposes of application for post-secondary financial assistance administered by the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation.

Subject-area grades shall be expressed by the following letters with their corresponding percentage range:

- A (90-100)
- B (80-89)
- C (70-79)
- D (60-69)
- F (0-59)

Grading floors with a minimum above zero are not permitted.[3] This grading system shall be uniform throughout the school district for each grade.

Advanced coursework grades shall be weighted with additional percentage points to calculate the semester average. Depending on the course taken, the following percentage points shall be assigned:

- Honors Courses – three (3) percentage points;

- Local and Statewide Dual Credit, Capstone Industry Certification Aligned- four (4) percentage points; and
- Advanced Placement, Cambridge International, College Level Exam Program (CLEP), and International Baccalaureate Courses– five (5) percentage points.

LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIPS[4]

Each school counselor shall provide incoming freshmen with information on college core courses required for lottery scholarships as well as necessary criteria (grade point average, ACT and SAT score, etc.) that must be met in order to receive a scholarship.

Seniors may apply for the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is available at the guidance office or online. Students shall be made aware of all applicable FAFSA deadlines and encouraged to submit applications in a timely manner.

Elementary school counselors shall explain the HOPE Scholarship and its requirements to their students and impress upon them the benefits of making good grades.

LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP DAY

Each school year, prior to scheduling courses for the following school year, schools teaching students in grades 8-11 shall conduct a lottery scholarship day for students and their parent.[5]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-203(b)(16); TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(H); Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 901
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.02; State Board of Education Policy 3.301; TCA 49-6-407
3. TCA 49-6-407(c)(2)
4. TCA 49-4-904, 905, 907
5. TCA 49-4-932(f)

Cross References

Alternative Credit Options 4.209
Credit Recovery 4.210
Reporting Student Progress 4.601
Honor Roll, Awards, & Class Ranking 4.602
Promotion and Retention 4.603
Transcript Alterations 4.608

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Reporting Student Progress**	**4.601**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/09/95; 07/08/13; 12/09/24**

REPORT CARDS

Student progress reports shall be provided at least once every nine (9) weeks during the school year. The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop a reporting procedure that includes how parents can access this information online.[1]

Student progress reports shall indicate the students' conduct and include information on attendance, academic progress, and other information necessary to communicate effectively with the parent(s)/guardian(s). For students in grades kindergarten through eight (K-8), the student's score on the most recently administered universal reading screener shall also be included along with the results of a dyslexia screener, if applicable.[2]

In addition to the regular progress reports, principals and teachers are encouraged to confer with parent(s)/guardian(s) on the educational progress of their children. Teachers shall consult with parent(s)/guardian(s) of students who are working at an unsatisfactory level or whose performance shows a sudden deterioration. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified by the teacher as early in the school year as possible if the retention of a student is being considered.

PARENT CONFERENCES

At least two (2) times during the school year, conferences shall be scheduled in which parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers may discuss any pertinent problems or other matters of concern regarding the development and education of each student. These scheduled conferences shall not use any portion of the one hundred eighty (180) days of classroom instruction.[2] The Director of Schools/Designee shall be responsible for scheduling and coordinating system wide conferences.

Conferences shall be physically accessible to all students and parent(s)/guardian(s).[4]

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(5); TCA 49-6-901
2. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 330
3. TCA 49-6-7002
4. 28 CFR § 36.201

Cross References

School Calendar 1.800
Section 504 & ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
Grading System 4.600
Promotion and Retention 4.603
In-Service and Professional Learning Opportunities 5.113
Attendance 6.200
Withdrawals 6.207

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Honor Roll, Awards, & Class Ranking**	**4.602**	**08/12/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/13/22; 06/10/19; 07/08/13; 04/13/09**

HONOR ROLL

Honor roll students shall be determined by standards recommended by the Director of Schools/Designee and approved by the Board. Unless a student or the parent/guardian of a student objects, the names of honor roll students may be released to the news media.

AWARDS AND CONTESTS

Prior to a school department or club presenting honors or awards or conducting contests, the school's principal shall approve such honor, award, or contest. Following approval, the principal shall keep on file the name of the honor, award, or contest; the basis for selection of the award or honor; the method of participation; and the reason for the contest.

CLASS RANKING

All grades earned in grades 9- 12 shall be counted toward the grade point average and the rank in class. Ranking is established after a completed semester. A ranking report is not run again until the next completed semester concludes.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian selection is not based solely on class ranking. Students who wish to be considered for Valedictorian/Salutatorian must earn credits in specific courses. The principal and school counselor shall keep on file, annually review, and approve the required courses for Valedictorian/Salutatorian consideration. A list of these courses will be provided to students and parents each year.

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian must:

- have earned the highest numerical average.
- have met the requirements to receive recognition for State Honors as designated by meeting the ACT readiness benchmarks or SAT equivalent scores.
- have taken and earned credit in the designated honors, state dual credit, advanced placement, or dual enrollment classes in English, Mathematics, and Science, and must have earned at least four credits in each subject area.

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- have taken and earned two (2) credits in the same foreign language and one (1) credit in a fine art.
- met all of the graduation requirements set forth by the Tennessee State Board of Education, including completing the focused program of study.
- have been enrolled at and earned credits from courses at Houston County High School in all four semesters of their 11th- and 12th-grade years. Enrollment must occur within the first fifteen (15) school days of the 11th-grade year.

Students who transfer to the high school after the first semester of their 9th-grade year shall not be barred from selection as Valedictorian/Salutatorian on the basis of the type of classes taken while enrolled in another school or program though grade point average from those classes will factor in the selection.

If two or more students with the highest numerical grade point average, calculated to the 1,000-place decimal, have met the above criteria, then these students shall share the honor of being co-valedictorians.

The salutatorian of the graduating class will be the student that has the second highest numerical average and has met the above criteria. If two or more students with the highest numerical grade point average, calculated to the 1,000-place decimal, have met the above criteria, then these students shall share the honor of being co-salutatorians.

Cross References

Grading System 4.600

Graduation Requirements 4.605

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Promotion and Retention**	**4.603**	**01/13/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **03/10/08; 05/14/18; 03/11/19; 02/13/23; 01/04/24; 07/18/24**

General

All promotion and retention decisions shall be made on a case-by-case basis and comply with state and federal law. All decisions shall be made in consultation with a student's IEP and/or 504 team, if applicable.[1]

Students who have difficulty in achieving the requirements for promotion may be considered for retention. Schools shall identify these students by February 1st. Factors used to identify students for retention shall include:[2]

1. Ability to perform at the current grade level;
2. Results of local assessments, screening, or monitoring tools;
3. State assessments, as applicable;
4. Home Literacy Reports;[3]
5. Overall academic achievement of the student;
6. Likelihood of success with more difficult material if promoted to the next grade;
7. Attendance record; and
8. The student's maturity.

Students may be identified for retention after the February 1st deadline if the delay in identifying a student is due to:[4]

1. Date of enrollment;
2. Additional information acquired after results of local assessment, screening, or monitoring are released; or
3. Other circumstances identified and documented by school administration.

VOLUNTARY RETENTION[5]

A parent/guardian of a student enrolled in kindergarten through second grade may choose to retain his/her student in the current grade level if:

1. The student has a documented academic or behavioral delay; and

2. The parent/guardian believes that retention may benefit the student.

This information shall be submitted in writing within thirty (30) days of the end of the school year. The district shall send written notice to the parent/guardian confirming whether the student is eligible for retention under state law.

PROMOTION PLANS[6]

When a student is identified for retention, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified within fifteen (15) calendar days, and an individualized promotion plan shall be developed to help the student avoid retention. The plan shall be developed in coordination with the student's teachers, IEP or 504 team, if applicable, and may also include input from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), school counselor, or other appropriate school personnel.

Promotion plans shall incorporate evidence-based strategies, including expectations and measurements that will verify whether a student has made sufficient progress to be promoted to the next grade level, and be tailored to the student's learning needs. Promotion plans for students in third and fourth grade will include additional requirements for promoting students in these grades. A copy of the plan will be provided to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and the school shall offer the opportunity for a parent-teacher conference to discuss the plan. If a student is not making progress on the promotion plan, then the strategies shall be modified. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided with any changes to the promotion plan.

A student who demonstrates sufficient academic progress according to his/her promotion plan shall be promoted to the next grade level unless retention is required per additional requirements for students in third and fourth grade.[7]

If a student has not demonstrated sufficient academic progress according to his/her promotion plan by the end of the school year, the student shall be eligible to enroll in a summer reading or learning program, if available. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of a decision for retention at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the start of the next school year if the student was enrolled in a summer program. However, if the student wasn't enrolled in a summer program, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of a decision for retention at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the start of the next school year.[8]

RETENTION[7]

A student may be retained when such retention is in the best interests of the student or when retention is required per additional requirements for students in third and fourth grade.

Decision of Retention – General[9]

If a student is retained, the Director of Schools/designee shall develop an individualized academic remediation plan within thirty (30) calendar days after the beginning of the next school year. A copy of the plan shall be provided to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) within ten (10) calendar days of its development. The plan shall include at least one of the following strategies:

1. Adjustment to the current instructional strategies or materials;

2. Additional instructional time;

3. Individual tutoring;

4. Modification to the student's classroom assignment to ensure the student receives instruction from a teacher with a level of overall effectiveness of above expectations (level 4) or significantly above expectations (level 5); or

5. Attendance or truancy interventions.

A student shall not be retained more than once in any grade. The progress of students who are retained shall be closely monitored and reported to parent(s)/guardian(s) at least three (3) times during the school year in which the student is retained. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures to ensure appropriate recordkeeping of students who are retained.

Decision of Retention – Third Grade[10]

Third grade students shall not be promoted to the next grade unless they are determined to be proficient (i.e., receive a performance level rating of "on track" or "mastered") in English language arts (ELA) based on the student's most recent TCAP test.

Students who are not proficient in ELA may still be promoted if the following conditions are met:

1. A student in third grade receiving a performance level rating of "approaching" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test may be promoted if:

    a. The student is an English language learner and has received less than two (2) full years of ELA instruction;
    b. The student was previously retained in grades K-3;
    c. The student is retested before the next school year and scores proficient in ELA;
    d. The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the next school year, maintains a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate, and demonstrates adequate growth on the post-test at the end of the camp;
    e. The student receives tutoring for the entirety of the next school year in accordance with state law; or
    f. Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, the student demonstrates proficiency in ELA standards by scoring within the fiftieth percentile on the most recently administered state-provided benchmark assessment and the district provides tutoring

services to the student during the entire fourth grade school year and notifies the student's parent/guardian, in writing, of the benefits of enrolling the student in summer programming.

2. A student in third grade receiving a performance level rating of "below" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test may be promoted if:

    a. The student is an English language learner and has received less than two (2) full years of ELA instruction;
    b. The student was previously retained in grades K-3;
    c. The student is retested before the next school year and scores proficient in ELA; or
    d. The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the next school year, maintains a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate, and receives tutoring for the entirety of the next school year in accordance with state law.

Decision of Retention – Fourth Grade[10]

Students in the following categories may be promoted to fifth grade if they demonstrate adequate growth on the fourth-grade ELA portion of the TCAP test:

1. A student who was promoted to fourth grade due to receiving tutoring for the entirety of the fourth-grade school year; and

2. A student who was promoted to fourth grade due to attending a learning loss bridge camp while maintaining a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate and receiving tutoring for the entirety of the fourth grade school year.

If a student that was promoted to fourth grade under one of the provisions above does not demonstrate adequate growth on the fourth-grade ELA portion of the TCAP test, then the following shall occur:

1. The student's principal shall convene a conference consisting of the following parties: the student's parent(s)/legal guardian, the student's ELA teacher, and the student's principal.

2. The conference shall review the student's fourth grade ELA performance to determine if the student should be promoted to fifth grade.

3. At the conclusion of the conference, a majority of the parties shall agree to one of the following:
    a. The student will be promoted to fifth grade and be assigned a tutor for the entirety of the student's fifth-grade year; or
    b. The student will be retained in fourth grade. A student shall not be retained more than once in fourth grade.

Decision of Retention – Students with Disabilities[11]

Retention and promotion decisions shall be made on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with the student's IEP and/or 504 team to determine whether the student's performance on the ELA portion of

TCAP was due to the student's disability. The school district shall not retain a student with a disability or a suspected disability that impacts their ability to read.

APPEALS[8,12]

When a student is identified for retention, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified about the decision to retain the student and provided with information on the right to appeal the decision. Appeals shall be made to a committee appointed by the principal within ten (10) business days. The student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee shall conduct a hearing within five (5) business days to determine if the student will be promoted and issue such decision within three (3) three business days. Upon notification of the committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Director of Schools/designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s). The notification shall advise parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within five (5) business days to the Director of Schools/designee.

The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) business days after the request for appeal is received. A decision shall be issued within five (5) business days.

Within five (5) business days of the Director of Schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record. Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools/designee. The action of the Board shall be final.

For students where retention is required per the additional requirements for students in third and fourth grade, parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal this decision in accordance with state law.[13]

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 1400 *et seq*.; 29 U.S.C. § 794 (Section 504); TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16; TCA 49-6-3115
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(5)
3. TCA 49-1-905(e)
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(4)
5. TCA 49-6-314; TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(6)
6. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(6)
7. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(6)(f)
8. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(6)(e)
9. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(6)(g)
10. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(7)
11. 29 U.S.C. § 794 (Section 504); 20 USCA § 1400 *et seq*.; TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(7)(e); Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 989
12. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(3); TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.17(7); TCA 49-6-3102(e)(1)
13. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.16(7)(f)

Cross References

Credit Recovery 4.210
Grading System 4.600
Reporting Student Progress 4.601
Attendance 6.200
Student Assignments 6.205
Homeless Students 6.503
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring: **Review: Annually, in December**	**Credit for Prior Courses**	Descriptor Code: **4.604**	Issued Date: **08/12/24**
		Rescinds: **IHEB**	Issued: **07/08/13**

Students enrolled in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) who have taken the equivalent of a high school level course in middle school may earn high school credit for graduation, except in American History, under the following guidelines:[1]

1. Students shall be given the same comprehensive examination for the course as required for students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) who earn credit for graduation;

2. The examination shall provide evidence that a student has mastered all of the terminal objectives in the applicable curriculum framework adopted by the State Board of Education and shall be scored and graded on the same scale as for students who are enrolled in the course;

3. Students must have earned a grade of "B" or better in the course in order to qualify to take the examination; and

4. Students must score a "B" or better on the examination in order to receive credit toward high school graduation.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures for:

1. Making application for credit;

2. Administering and scoring the examination; and

3. Recordkeeping to ensure that proper credit is given.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-1202; State Board of Education Policy 2.102

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Graduation Requirements**	**4.605**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **09/08/25; 08/09/21 ; 06/08/20; 08/12/19; 03/12/18; 07/08/13; 04/07/03**

General

The program of studies shall include areas required by the State Board of Education.

Before high school graduation, every student shall:[1]

1. Achieve the specified twenty-two (22) units of credit;

2. Take the required end-of-course exams;

3. Have satisfactory records of attendance and conduct;

4. Take the ACT or SAT prior to graduation;[2] and

5. Pass a United States civics test.[3]

6. In addition to the state-mandated units of credit, students attending Houston County High School must complete at least six (6) additional electives (for a total of 28 credits) to meet local graduation requirements. The Director of Schools may waive one or more of the six (6) additional electives on a case-by-case basis based on student hardship or need.

If a middle school student successfully completes any of the State Board-required high school credits, as evidence by a passing grade in the course prior to grade nine (9), the student shall receive graduation credit for that coursework.[4]

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS[5]

Special education students who earn the prescribed twenty-two (22) credit minimum shall be awarded a regular high school diploma.

Students who have received the below diplomas shall continue to make progress toward a regular high school diploma until the end of the school year in which they turn twenty-two (22) years old.

Special Education Diploma

A special education diploma shall be awarded to students who have not met the requirements for a regular high school diploma but have:[6]

1. Completed four (4) years of high school;

2. Made satisfactory progress on their IEP; and

3. Maintained satisfactory records of attendance and conduct.

Occupational Diploma

Special education students who do not meet the requirements for a regular high school diploma may be awarded an occupational diploma if the student has:[1,4]

1. Completed at least four (4) years of high school;

2. Made satisfactory progress on their IEP;

3. Maintained satisfactory records of attendance and conduct;

4. Completed the occupational diploma Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Mastery Assessment (SKEMA); and

5. Has two (2) years of paid or non-paid work experience.

The decision to attain an occupational diploma shall be made at the conclusion of the student's 10th grade year or two (2) academic years prior to the expected graduation date.

Alternate Academic Diploma

Special education students who do not meet the requirements for a regular high school diploma may be awarded an alternate academic diploma if the student has:[5]

1. Completed at least four (4) years of high school;

2. Participated in the high school alternate assessment;

3. Earned the prescribed twenty-two (22) credit minimum;

4. Made satisfactory progress on their IEP;

5. Maintained satisfactory records of attendance and conduct; and

6. Completed a transition assessment that measures postsecondary education and training, employment, independent living, and community involvement.

STUDENT LOAD

All full-time students in grades 9-12 shall be enrolled each semester in subjects that produce a minimum of five (5) units of credit for graduation per year. Students with hardships and gifted students may appeal this requirement to the Director of Schools and then to the Board.[7]

EARLY GRADUATION[8]

High school students shall be permitted to complete an early graduation program. Students intending to graduate early shall inform the school principal of this intent prior to the beginning of 9th grade or as soon thereafter as the intent is known.

In order to graduate early, students shall meet the following requirements:

1. Earn the required seventeen (17) credits;
2. Achieve a benchmark score for each required end-of-course exam;
3. Attain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.2 on a 4.0 scale;
4. Meet the minimum ACT, SAT, or Classic Learning Test (CLT) benchmark score;
5. Obtain a qualifying benchmark score on a world language proficiency assessment; and
6. Complete at least two (2) types of the following courses:
    a. AP (Advanced Placement);
    b. IB (International Baccalaureate);
    c. Dual enrollment; or
    d. Dual credit.

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop administrative procedures to ensure that the early graduation program is conducted in accordance with state law, including reporting the total number of requests to graduate early to the TN Department of Education[9].

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-6001; State Board of Education Policy 2.103; TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.06
2. TCA 49-6-6001(b); State Board of Education Policy 2.103
3. TCA 49-6-408; State Board of Education Policy 2.103
4. State Board of Education Policy 2.102
5. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.06; State Board of Education Policy 2.103
6. TCA 49-6-6005; State Board of Education Policy 2.103
7. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.06(19)
8. TCA 49-6-8103; State Board of Education Policy 2.103; Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 912
9. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 1040

Cross References

Class Size Ratios 4.201
Alternative Credit Options 4.209
Honor Roll, Awards, & Class Ranking 4.602

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Graduation Activities**	**4.606**	**03/09/2020**
		Rescinds: **4.606**	Issued: **01/09/1995; 05/14/2018**

Students who have met graduation requirements are expected to participate in graduation activities. Students who are within two (2) or fewer credits of meeting all requirements[1] and can complete the requirements during the summer may participate in graduation activities. If extenuating circumstances exist at any school, the matter shall be presented to the Board prior to graduation activities.

Students are expected to participate in all graduation activities. Graduation apparel shall be determined by the administration of each school and shall be the personal expense of each student. Any fees required for graduation shall be waived for students who are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, and in such cases, the school shall assume responsibility for payment of fees.[2]

Students who do not wish to participate in graduation activities shall notify the school principal in writing at least five (5) days prior to the day of graduation. Non-participating students shall receive their diplomas or certificates from the principal's office within one (1) week of the day of graduation.

Graduation ceremonies shall be physically accessible to all students, their parent(s)/guardian(s), and other interested citizens.[3]

Graduation activities organized by district employees shall not be religious in nature.[4] The content of any students' speeches shall not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the school, employees, or Board.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures to ensure that students are recognized at graduation for the following achievements:[5]

- Honors;
- State Honors;
- State Distinction;
- District Distinction;
- Tri-Star Scholar;
- Students receiving a TN Seal of Biliteracy;
- Students voluntarily completing at least ten (10) hours of community service each semester the student is in attendance at a public high school;
- Students receiving a gold or platinum medal on National Career Readiness Certificate; and
- Students graduating with a district-developed work ethic distinction.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-405(b)(2)
2. TCA 49-2-114
3. 28 CFR § 36.201
4. *Lee v. Weisman,* 505 U.S. 577(1992), 112 S. Ct. 2649, 120 L. Ed. 2d 467 (1992)
5. State Board of Education Policy 2.103; TCA 49-6-6010

Cross References

Section 504 & ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
Student Fees and Fines 6.709

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Waivers of Rules and Regulations**	**4.607**	**01/13/2020**
		Rescinds: **4.607**	Issued: **07/08/13**

If the Board determines that it is in the best interest of the school district, application may be made to the commissioner of education for a waiver of any state board rule or regulation that inhibits or hinders the Board's ability to implement programs designed to improve student achievement.[1] However, the Board will not seek a waiver from those rules and regulations that are specifically excluded by state law.

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Legal References:

1. TCA 49-1-201(d)(1)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring: **Review: Annually, in December**	Descriptor Term: **Transcript Alterations**	Descriptor Code: **4.608**	Issued Date: **08/13/18**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/13/18**

Any student transcript alteration shall be supported by documentation.[1] This documentation shall include the reason for the transcript alteration and evidence that the student earned the grade reflected in the altered transcript.

Houston County Schools shall not retaliate against an employee who brings unauthorized transcript alterations to the attention of school officials.[1]

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures to implement this policy.

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2018, Chapter No. 557

Cross References

Grading System 4.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Testing Programs**	**4.700**	**08/12/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/14/22; 08/09/21; 08/12/19; 08/13/18; 05/14/18; 03/12/18; 07/22/04**

General

The Board shall provide for a system-wide testing program which shall be periodically reviewed and evaluated. The purposes of the program shall be to:

1. Assist in promoting accountability;
2. Determine the progress of students;
3. Assess the effectiveness of the instructional program and student learning;
4. Aid in counseling and guiding students in planning future education and other endeavors;
5. Analyze the improvements needed in each instructional area;
6. Assist in the screening of students with learning difficulties;[1]
7. Assist in placing students in remedial programs;
8. Provide information for college entrance and placement; and
9. Assist in educational research by providing data.[2]

The Director of Schools/Designee shall be responsible for planning and implementing the program which includes:

1. Determining specific purposes for each test;
2. Selecting the appropriate test to be given;
3. Establishing procedures for administering the tests;
4. Making provisions for interpreting and disseminating the results;
5. Maintaining testing information in a consistent and confidential manner; and
6. Ensuring that results are obtained as quickly as possible, especially when placement in a special learning program might be necessary.

State-mandated student testing programs shall be undertaken in accordance with guidelines published by the State Department of Education.[3]

WEIGHTING TCAP SCORES

TNReady[4] and EOC[5] scores shall be included in students' final grades as follows:

1. Grades 4-5 -TNReady Exam scores for grades four through five (4-5) shall count 5% of a student's final grade in the spring semester.
2. Grades 6-8 -TNReady Exam scores for grades six through eight (6-8) shall count 10% of a student's final grade in the spring semester.

3. Grades 9-12 – End of Course Exam scores for grades nine through twelve (9-12) shall count 15% of a student's final grade in the second semester of a yearlong course or of the last nine weeks' average in a semester long block class.

The Houston County School System shall use the following methodology for calculating all scores: cubed root methodology.

The Director of Schools may exclude these scores from students' final grades if results are not received by the district at least five (5) instructional days before the end of the course.[4,5]

INTEREST INVENTORIES AND CAREER ASSESSMENTS[6]

Interest inventories shall be made available to middle schoolers (7th graders). These will include assessments such as the Kuder assessment, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the ASVAB, the College Board Career Finder or other appropriate interest or career inventories.

Career aptitude assessments shall be administered to 8th graders in order to inform the student's high school plan of study. Upon receiving the results from these assessments, the school shall provide students with information on any available career and technical education opportunities in which the student is eligible to participate in.

TESTING INFORMATION AND PARENTAL CONSENT

Any test directly concerned with measuring student ability or achievement through individual or group psychological or socio-metric tests shall not be administered by or with the knowledge of any employee of the district without first obtaining written consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s).[2]

Results of all group tests shall be recorded on students' permanent records and shall be made available to appropriate personnel in accordance with established board policies.[7]

No later than July 31st of each year, the Board shall publish on its website information related to state and board mandated tests that will be administered during the school year. The information shall include:[8]

1. The name of the test;
2. The purpose and use of the test;
3. The grade or class in which the test will be administered;
4. The tentative date or dates that the test will be administered;
5. The time and manner in which parent(s)/guardian(s) and students will be notified of the results of the test;
6. How parent(s)/guardian(s) can access the questions and answers on their student's state-required tests; and
7. If a board mandated test, how the test complements and enhances student instruction and learning and how it serves a purpose distinct from state-required tests.

Testing information shall also be placed in student handbooks or other school publications that are provided to parent(s)/guardian(s) on an annual basis.

TESTING TRANSFER STUDENTS FOR GRADE PLACEMENT OR AWARDING CREDIT[9]

Students transferring from a Category IV church-related school, Category V private school, or home school shall be awarded credit upon completion of a written exam. These exams shall be approved, administered, and graded by the school's principal/designee. Upon request from a parent/guardian, student scores from a nationally standardized achievement test in the relevant subject shall be accepted as a substitute for these exams.

For students in grades one through eight (1-8), the exam shall only cover the last grade completed. For students in grades nine through twelve (9-12), the exam shall only cover the last course completed by the student (for example, if a student has completed English I, II, and III, the examination shall only cover English III).

The Director of Schools shall provide notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) of these exams.

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT EXAM FOR ELIGIBLE COURSES[10]

LEAs in the state of Tennessee are authorized to create credit exams for eligible courses outlined and approved by the State Board of Education, for which students in high school may earn credit if they achieve a qualifying score. Houston County Schools does not create nor offer credit exams for its high school students.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-10-108
2. 20 USCA § 1232g
3. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(10)
4. TCA 49-1-617; State Board of Education Policy 2.102
5. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(10); State Board of Education Policy 2.103; TCA 49-1-617
6. TCA 49-6-412
7. TCA 10-7-504(a)(4)(A)
8. TCA 49-6-6007; State Board of Education Policy 2.102; State Board of Education Policy 2.103
9. TRR/MS 0520-07-01-.03(3)
10. TCA 49-6-6017 ; State Board of Education Policy 2.103

Cross References

Student Surveys, Analyses, and Evaluations 6.4001
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Maintaining Test and Data Security**	**4.701**	**12/10/18**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

General

Security procedures shall adhere to guidelines issued by the State Department of Education.[1]

TESTING SECURITY

Annually, the Board shall designate a system testing coordinator who shall be responsible for administering, monitoring, and maintaining security of all tests to be administered within the school district. The principal of each school shall serve as or designate a building testing coordinator who shall be responsible for the administrating, monitoring, and maintaining security of all tests given in his/her school.

Any employee found to have not followed security guidelines shall be placed on immediate suspension, and such actions shall be grounds for dismissal. Such actions shall be grounds for revocation of state license.[2] The Director of Schools shall report a breach of security to the State Department of Education's Office of Accountability and any testing irregularity to the Division of State Testing within twenty-four (24) hours of such events. In any class, grade, and/or school where a security breach is strongly suspected or verified, central office staff shall be present during subsequent tests for a period of two (2) years.

DATA SECURITY

Embargoed data may be shared with personnel as determined by the Director of Schools as set forth in procedure. Personnel shall not share embargoed data with external parties.[3]

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.03(7)(b)
2. TCA 49-1-607
3. State Board of Education Policy 2.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Evaluations of Instructional Programs**	**4.702**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

Supervisors of the various instructional programs shall annually evaluate the instructional components of their respective programs and submit such findings to the Director of Schools/designee for presentation to the Board.

The purposes of these evaluations of instruction shall be:

1. To indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses;
2. To obtain information needed for future planning;
3. To gather data for public information; and
4. To link the instructional program to the school district's goals.

Cross References

School District Goals 1.700
Curriculum Development 4.200
Evaluation 5.109

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Controversial Issues/Inclusion of Religion in Curriculum**	**4.800**	**07/11/16**
		Rescinds: **IKB**	Issued:

The discussion of issues in the classroom which are politically, philosophically or socially controversial shall be relevant to the subject matter being taught, related to educational objectives, appropriate for the age and maturity of students, and shall not materially or substantially disrupt or threaten to disrupt the discipline of the school.

To ensure that controversial issues are presented and discussed fairly and objectively and with instruction as their goal, the following guidelines shall be observed:

1. ALL personnel will seek to create an atmosphere in which differences of opinion can be voiced without fear and hostility and with mutual respect for all viewpoints;

2. Teachers will encourage students to withhold judgment and to avoid making of conclusions until all relevant and significant facts have been assembled, critically examined, and checked for accuracy;

3. Teachers will seek to develop in students a sense of responsibility for their beliefs, opinions, attitudes and actions;

4. Teachers shall place major emphasis upon "why" and "how" to think rather than "what" to think; and

5. If the subject matter being taught involves conflicting opinions, theories, or schools of thought, the teacher will ensure that differing sides of an issue are explored in order to help students develop their own critical faculties.[1]

CURRICULUM

Curriculum content which consists of or addresses religious themes shall be for education purposes only and shall not be used to proselytize, establish, foster, or demean any particular religion, religious tenets, or religious beliefs.[2] Educational content with religious themes shall be taught factually and objectively

The social studies syllabi for all grades six (6) through twelve (12) shall be available to the public.[2]

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-6-1030
2. TCA 49-6-10 (Public Chapter 660)

Cross Reference:

Staff Rights and Responsibilities 5.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Controversial Materials**	**4.801**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **IKBB**	Issued:

Parent(s) may request that a student not be required to read a book, use certain materials, or participate in an activity.[1] If the request to the teacher is denied then a written request may be submitted on the appropriate form to the principal.

No student who is granted such a request shall be penalized academically for his/her failure to participate in an activity, read a book or use certain materials. The student may be given an alternative assignment/ activity.

The final decision concerning the use of controversial materials shall rest with the Board.

Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-6-1001

Cross References:

Textbook Selection, Distribution and Care 4.401
Selection of Instructional Materials 4.402
Reconsideration of Instructional Materials 4.403
Use of the Internet 4.406

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Student Equal Access (Limited Public Forum)**	**4.802**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds: **EBHA**	Issued: **07/08/13; 01/13/20;**

STUDENT MEETINGS

Schools may allow students to form clubs or groups that meet before, during, and/or after the school day. Requests to form such clubs or groups shall not be denied based upon the religious nature or beliefs of proposed club or group. If permitted, school administrators shall ensure that all clubs and groups have the same abilities to access facilities and advertise their meetings.[1]

No funds shall be expended by the school for any such meeting beyond the incidental costs associated with providing meeting space. Groups meeting under this policy may be required to pay a reasonable fee for compensating school personnel in the supervision of the activity.

No student may be compelled to attend or participate in a meeting under this policy.

A student or a group of students who wish to conduct a meeting under this policy shall submit a request with the principal at least three (3) days prior to the proposed date.

The principal shall approve the meeting if he/she determines that:[1]

1. The meeting is voluntary and student-initiated;

2. There is no sponsorship of the meeting or its content by the school or its employees, or the Board;

3. The meeting shall not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of the school's educational activities or conflict with other previously scheduled meetings;

4. Employees of the district are to be present in a non-participatory monitoring capacity; however, no employee shall be required to attend in this capacity if the content of the meeting is contrary to the beliefs of the employee;

5. Employees of the district may also participate in student-initiated, voluntary religious activities on school grounds that occur before or after the instructional day as long as participation does not conflict with the responsibilities or assignments of employees; and

6. Non-school persons shall not direct, control, or regularly attend.

A student shall be permitted to voluntarily:[2]

1. Pray in school, vocally or silently, alone, or with other students to the same extent and under the same circumstances as a student is permitted to vocally or silently reflect, meditate, or speak on non-religious matters alone or with other students in such school;

2. Express religious viewpoints in school to the same extent and under the same circumstances as a student is permitted to express viewpoints on non-religious topics or subjects in such school;

3. Speak to and attempt to share religious viewpoints with other students in school to the same extent and under the same circumstances as a student is permitted to speak to and attempt to share non-religious viewpoints with other students; and

4. Possess or distribute religious literature in school, subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, to the same extent and under the same circumstances as a student is permitted to possess or distribute literature on non-religious topics or subjects in such school.

SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS[3]

If the Board or a school principal authorizes an event at which a student is to speak, a limited public forum shall be established for such student speaker. The appropriate administrators shall ensure that:

1. The forum is provided in a manner that does not discriminate against a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject;

2. There is an appropriate method of selecting student speakers which is based on neutral criteria; and

3. Student speakers do not engage in speech that is obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, indecent, or promotes illegal drug use.

To the extent possible and practical and prior to events in which students will speak, notice shall be provided orally and/or in writing that the student's speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the Board or the school district and its employees.

Notice of this policy shall be provided in student handbooks and staff handbooks.

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 4071; *Bd. Of Educ. v. Mergens ex rel. Mergens,* 496 U.S. 226 (1990); TCA 49-6-1805
2. TCA 49-6-2904(b)
3. TCA 49-6-1803

Cross References

Recognition of Religious Beliefs 4.803
Prayer and Period of Silence 4.805

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Recognition of Religious Beliefs, Customs, & Holidays**	**4.803**	**12/09/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

No religious belief or nonbelief shall be promoted or belittled by the school system or its employees. All students and staff members shall be tolerant of the views of others and not discriminate against anyone for a religious viewpoint or lack of a religious viewpoint. Students and staff members shall be excused from participating in practices which are contrary to their religious beliefs.[1]

STUDENTS' EXPRESSIONS OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS

A student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject shall be treated in the same manner as a student's voluntary expression of a secular viewpoint.

Students may express religious beliefs in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. These assignments shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate academic concerns. A student shall not be penalized or rewarded on account of the religious content of the student's work.[2]

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Recognition of religious holidays shall be as follows:[3]

1. The holidays throughout the year which have both a religious and a secular basis may be observed;[4]

2. The historical and contemporary values and the origin of religious holidays may be explained in an unbiased and objective manner without sectarian indoctrination;

3. Music, art, literature, and drama having religious themes or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs if presented in a prudent and objective manner and as a traditional part of the cultural and religious heritage of the particular holiday;

4. The use of religious symbols that are part of a religious holiday are permitted as a teaching aid or resource, provided such symbols are displayed as an example of the cultural and religious heritage of the holiday and are temporary in nature; and

5. The school district's calendar shall be prepared so as to attempt to minimize conflicts with religious holidays of all faiths.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2901
2. TCA 49-6-1804
3. *Florey v. Sioux Falls Sch. Dist.*, 619 F. 2d 1311 (8th Cir. 1980)
4. TCA 49-6-3016

Cross References

Student Equal Access 4.802
Attendance 6.200

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in December	**Religious Content in Courses**	**4.804**	**01/14/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/14/19**

Educational content which consists of religious themes shall be presented in a factual, objective, and respectful manner in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Religious themes may be a part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs, provided it is essential to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively;

2. The inclusion of religion shall be for educational purposes only;[1]

3. The emphasis on religious themes shall be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of the curriculum. Such studies shall never be used to proselytize, establish, foster, or demean any particular religion, religious tenets, or beliefs;[1] and

4. Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-1005(a)

Cross References

Basic Curriculum Program 4.201
Staff Rights & Responsibilities 5.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Prayer and Period of Silence**	**4.805**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **IKDA**	Issued: **04/13/09**

There shall be no school-sponsored or school-directed public prayer at any school-sponsored or school-directed activity,[1] but a period of silence [2] shall be observed.

The teacher of the first class of each day shall call the students to order and announce that a moment of silence is to be observed. No other action shall be taken by a teacher other than to maintain silence for the full time.

Legal References:

1. *Lee v. Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992)
2. TCA 49-6-1004

Cross Reference:

Student Equal Access 4.802

Houston County Board of Education

5 – PERSONNEL

Descriptor Code	Policy Title	Issued Date
5.100	Personnel Goals	06/09/25
5.102	Classifications and Qualifications	03/03/25
5.103	Job Descriptions	03/03/25
5.104	Equal Opportunity Employment	06/10/19
5.105	Recruitment of Employees	05/13/24
5.106	Application & Employment	07/13/26
5.108	Supervision	03/03/25
5.109	Evaluation	06/09/25
5.110	Compensation Guides and Contracts	08/10/26
5.1101	Differentiated Pay Plan	03/03/25
5.113	In-Service and Professional Learning Opportunities	03/03/25
5.114	Personnel Records	05/11/26
5.1141	Teacher Effect Data	05/12/25
5.115	Assignment/Transfer	03/03/25
5.1151	Telework	04/27/20
5.116	Staff Positions	03/03/25
5.117	Teacher Tenure	06/13/22
5.118	Background Investigations	01/13/25
5.119	Employment of Retirees	06/09/25
5.200	Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers	08/10/26
5.201	Separation Practices for Non-Tenured Teachers	08/10/26
5.202	Separation Practices for Non-Certified Employees	03/03/25
5.203	Recommendations and File Transfers	11/12/18
5.301	Emergency and Legal Leave	06/10/19
5.302	Sick Leave	08/10/26
5.303	Personal and Professional Leave	08/10/26
5.304	Long-Term Leaves of Absence for Professional Personnel	06/10/19
5.305	Family and Medical Leave	06/09/25
5.306	Military Leave	06/10/19
5.307	Physical Assault Leave	07/18/24
5.308	Sabbatical Leave	01/13/25
5.309	Legislative Leave	01/13/25
5.310	Vacations and Holidays	07/14/25
5.400	Personnel Health Exams/Communicable Diseases	06/10/24
5.401	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)	07/08/13
5.402	Hepatitis B (HBV)	07/08/13
5.403	Drug and Alcohol Testing of Employees	05/11/26

5.500	Discrimination/Harassment of Employees (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious)	06/09/25
5.5001	Prevention of Abusive Workplace Conduct	03/03/25
5.501	Complaints and Grievances	07/18/24
5.600	Staff Rights and Responsibilities	07/13/26
5.601	Conflict of Interest	06/10/24
5.602	Staff Time Schedules	03/03/25
5.603	Staff Meetings	03/03/25
5.605	Staff Gifts and Solicitations	05/13/24
5.606	Political Activities	05/11/26
5.607	Non-School Employment	05/13/24
5.608	Tutoring for Pay	05/11/26
5.610	Staff-Student Relations	05/13/24
5.611	Ethics	05/13/24
5.700	Interim Employees	09/27/21
5.701	Substitute Teachers	06/09/25
5.702	Student Teachers/Interns	03/03/25
5.800	Director of Schools	05/11/26
5.801	Dir of Schools Recruitment/Selection	11/08/21
5.802	Qualifications/Duties Dir. of Schools	07/18/24
5.803	Evaluation of the Dir. of Schools	07/08/13

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Personnel Goals**	**5.100**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/09/95; 07/08/13; 06/13/22**

The Board's personnel goals are as follows:

1. To ensure that the Director of Schools/Designee recruits and employs the best qualified individuals to staff the school district;

2. To provide compensation, benefits, and working environments sufficient to attract and retain qualified employees;

3. To provide an in-service training program for all employees to improve their performance; and

4. To conduct an evaluation program that will contribute to the continuous improvement of staff performance.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-1-302(g); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 494

Cross References

School District Goals 1.700

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Classification and Qualifications**	**5.102**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/08/11; 07/08/13**

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL

To be considered for certificated, administrative, or supervisory positions, the applicant shall show the following qualifications:[1]

1. Professional teaching certification; and

2. Administrative or supervisory certification and experience in accordance with state law and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education in the appropriate area based on the minimum of a master's degree.

Non-certified administrative and supervisory personnel shall possess sufficient training and experience to perform the services required and such additional qualifications as the Board and the Director of Schools shall determine.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL[2]

The professional staff members are the personnel whose employment status requires certification in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

SUPPORT PERSONNEL[3]

The support staff members are personnel whose regular employment does not require certification in accordance with rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-101; TRR/MS 0520-02-03-.10; TRR/MS 0520-02-06-.01
2. TRR/MS 0520-02-03; TRR/MS 0520-02-06
3. TRR/MS 0520-02-06-.04

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Job Descriptions**	**5.103**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The Board shall approve the broad purpose and function of each position in accordance with state law and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, approve a statement of duties as recommended by the Director of Schools/designee, and require the Director of Schools/designee to draft a job description for each position.

A copy of each job description shall be provided to the employee and the immediate supervisor and included in the employee's personnel record. Copies of all job descriptions shall be maintained in the Director of Schools' office and shall be used as guides in annual employee evaluations.

Cross References

Supervision 5.108
Evaluation 5.109
Assignment/Transfer 5.115
Qualifications and Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Equal Opportunity Employment**	**5.104**	**06/10/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/10/19**

Opportunity for employment, as well as continuation and advancement in employment, shall be afforded equally to members of all races, creeds, colors, sex, religions, ages, national origins, and individuals with disabilities or veteran status with regard only for qualifications for the positions involved.[1]

Legal References

1. U.S. Constitution, Amendment XIV; Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972; Age Discrimination Act of 1967; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; 42 USCA § 12101-12213

Cross References

Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
Discrimination/Harassment of Employees 5.500
Complaints and Grievances 5.501

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Recruitment of Employees**	**5.105**	**05/13/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The authorization of all school district positions rests with the Board while personnel decisions shall be within the discretion of the Director of Schools.[1]

The Director of Schools is responsible for the development of a program for the recruitment of licensed personnel.

Identification of personnel needs shall be the responsibility of the Director of Schools, supervisors, and principals.

Vacancies shall be advertised locally and through other appropriate means such regional universities, online recruiting websites, etc. A deadline for receiving applications shall be established and disseminated with the vacancy notice.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(CC); TCA 49-2-203(a)(1)

Cross References

Equal Opportunity Employment 5.104
Assignment/Transfer 5.115
Staff Positions 5.116

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Application and Employment**	**5.106**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/14/23; 09/27/21; 06/10/19**

APPLICATION

An individual desiring a position shall make application to the Director of Schools on forms developed by his/her office. To ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff, the district shall require criminal history background checks and fingerprinting of applicants for teaching positions and any other positions that require proximity to children.[1] If applying for a teaching position, the Director of Schools shall also check the applicant's license status in the State Board of Education's database to determine if there is a hold on that applicant's license, and if so, the reasoning behind the hold.[2]

Knowingly falsifying information shall be sufficient grounds for termination of employment and shall also constitute a Class A misdemeanor which shall be reported to the District Attorney General for prosecution.[3]

Any costs incurred to perform these background checks and fingerprinting shall be paid by the applicant. The Board shall reimburse the applicant if a position is offered and accepted.[4]

Professional Employees

The application shall include a transcript of credits earned at the colleges or universities attended along with references from persons such as previous employers, college professors, and supervisors of student teachers. Other information shall include whether such applicant has been dismissed for cause from a school district.[5] If previously employed by a local board of education, the applicant shall provide evidence of acceptable resignation.

No person shall be employed:

1. Who does not hold a valid license to teach or a temporary permit to teach from the State Board of Education;[6]
2. Who has been identified by the Department of Children's Services, or on a similar registry in another jurisdiction, as a perpetrator of child abuse, severe child abuse, child sexual abuse, or child neglect or who poses an immediate threat to the health, safety, or welfare of children;[7]
3. Who is listed on the state's abuse of vulnerable persons registry maintained by the Department of Health, or on a similar registry in another jurisdiction;[7]
4. Who does not present a physician's certificate showing a satisfactory health record or has any contagious or communicable disease in such form that might endanger the health of school children;[8]
5. Who refuses to take and subscribe to an oath to support the Constitution of the State of Tennessee and of the United States of America;[9]
6. Who has not had their information verified using E-Verify;[10]

7. Who fails to make a full disclosure of any prior criminal record and any prior dismissals from employment for cause; or
8. Who does not receive a satisfactory background check.[10]

Support Employees

No person shall be employed:

1. Who has any contagious or communicable disease in such form that might endanger the health of school children;[8]
2. Who has been identified by the Department of Children's Services as a perpetrator of child abuse, severe child abuse, child sexual abuse, or child neglect or who poses an immediate threat to the health, safety, or welfare of children;[7]
3. Who is listed on the state's abuse of vulnerable persons registry maintained by the Department of Health;[7]
4. Who has not had their information verified using E-Verify;[10]
5. Who fails to make a full disclosure of any prior criminal record and any prior dismissals from employment for cause; or
6. Who does not receive a satisfactory background check.[11]

EMPLOYMENT

After checking references and receiving written recommendations, the Director of Schools shall hire and assign qualified applicants.

Initial Employment for Professional Employees

The Director of Schools shall notify such person, in writing, of the offer and conditions of employment. Upon receipt of employment notification, such person shall respond within the timeline established by state law.[12] From the date of the written acceptance, such person is considered to be under employment with the district and is subject to all rights, privileges, and duties.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-406; TCA 49-5-413
2. State Board of Education Policy 5.501
3. TCA 49-5-406(a)(2)(A)
4. TCA 49-5-413(c)
5. TCA 49-2-131
6. TCA 49-5-403; TCA 49-5-101; TCA 49-5-106
7. TCA 49-5-413(e)
8. TCA 49-5-404
9. TCA 49-5-405
10. Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-603, 100 Stat. 3359, 8 USCA § 1101 *et seq.*; Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 772
11. TCA 49-5-413(a), (f)
12. TCA 49-5-406(b)

Cross References

Orientation and Probation 5.107
Compensation Guides & Contracts 5.110
Background Investigations 5.118
Recommendations and File Transfers 5.203
Interim Employees 5.700
Qualifications and Duties of the Director of Schools 5.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Supervision**	**5.108**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Supervision of administrative and supervisory personnel shall be provided by the Director of Schools/designee.

Apprentice teachers shall be assisted by supervising teachers in the development of competencies required by the Board.[1]

Support personnel shall be supervised by the person designated on the approved job description.

The immediate supervisor has the responsibility of assigning specific duties and for giving guidance to the employee for the satisfactory performance of those duties.

All employees shall report being charged with any criminal offense to their immediate supervisor within seventy-two (72) hours of the offense.[2] The supervisor shall report the offense to the Director of Schools/designee immediately, and the Director of Schools/designee shall report the offense to the Board Chair as soon as practical.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3004(c)(2)
2. 34 CFR §§ 84.205, .210, .215

Cross References

Nepotism 1.108
Alcohol & Drugs in the Workplace 1.804
Job Descriptions 5.103
Staff Positions 5.116

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Evaluation**	**5.109**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

The evaluation of performance and its effectiveness shall be a cooperative and shared endeavor on the part of the Director of Schools and administrative and supervisory personnel. The Board shall use a state-approved model for evaluating administrative and supervisory personnel. The Director of Schools is responsible for ensuring that all administrative and supervisory personnel are evaluated annually.

LICENSED TEACHING PERSONNEL

The Board adopts the State-approved evaluation model for certified personnel. Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures to ensure that the model is implemented throughout the school district. Additionally, the Director of Schools/Designee shall provide information to all licensed teaching personnel regarding the nature of the evaluation and the grievance procedures prescribed by the State Board of Education.[1]

Local Level Grievance Procedure

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures, consistent with state law, for processing evaluation grievances.[2]

NON-LICENSED PERSONNEL

Newly hired, non-licensed personnel shall be evaluated at least once a year.

Evaluations shall be used as an aid in improving an employee's performance and as a basis for continuing employment. Evaluation reports shall be discussed with the evaluated employee. Each employee shall be given a copy of the evaluation and shall sign the supervisor's copy as evidence it has been discussed.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-02-01-.01; TRR/MS 0520-02-01-.02
2. TRR/MS 0520-02-01-.18; State Board of Education Policy 5.201

Cross References

Evaluations of Instructional Programs 4.702
Job Descriptions 5.103
Orientation and Probation 5.107

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Compensation Guides & Contracts**	**5.110**	**8/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **5/13/24**

General

Certified personnel shall make a written contract at a fixed annual salary before initially entering upon their duties.[1]

The Director of Schools shall establish the salary rating of all personnel and shall recommend the salary schedule to the Board for its approval.[2]

Contracts for full-time certified personnel shall provide the following:[3]

1. A minimum of one hundred and eighty (180) working days;

2. A minimum of five (5) days for in-service education;

3. Ten (10) holidays; and

4. Five (5) days as designated by the Board (teachers shall use one (1) day for parent-teacher conferences).

The school calendar adopted by the Board each year shall become part of all certified personnel contracts.

Salaries and supplements may be paid from revenue derived from sources other than taxes, provided the revenue is deposited with and salaries paid through the Board. This includes donations or contributions from individual, civic, or other non-school related sources of funds from individual school activity funds, such as gate receipts and concessions.[1,4]

ACCRUED LEAVE & BENEFICIARIES[5]

A deceased employee's estate or designated beneficiary shall be paid the value of any unused accumulated leave. Unless an employee designates differently, the beneficiary shall be the same as the beneficiary designed for receipt of retirement benefits with the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-203(a)(1); TCA 49-5-408
2. TCA 49-5-402
3. TCA 49-6-3004
4. TCA 49-6-2006(a)

Cross References

School Calendar 1.800
Revenues 2.400
Payroll 2.802
Application and Employment 5.106

5. TCA 49-5-717; Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 909

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Differentiated Pay Plan**	**5.1101**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Annually, the Director of Schools/Designee shall recommend a differentiated pay plan to the Board for approval.[1] The plan shall follow the guidelines established by the State Board of Education and will reflect the needs of the district.

Once approved by the Board, the differentiated pay plan shall be submitted to the Tennessee Department of Education for review and approval.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-3-306(h); TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.02; State Board of Education Policy 5.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**In-Service and Professional Learning Opportunities**	**5.113**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

In-service education[1] is a program of planned activities designed to increase the competencies needed by all personnel in the performance of their responsibilities. Competencies are defined as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enable personnel to perform their tasks with maximum effectiveness to increase student achievement.

Administrative and Supervisory Employees

Administrative and supervisory employees shall show evidence of continual professional growth by attendance at in-service programs and institutes, studying professional literature, meeting with other professionals for discussion, and otherwise keeping abreast of research in methodology, curriculum, and student growth and development.

Each principal and administrator shall be required to attend the principal-administrator academy for instruction at least once every five (5) years.[2]

Professional Employees

A system-wide in-service committee, composed of membership from a cross-section of other personnel, shall assess system-wide needs, establish priorities, develop objectives, design activities, and evaluate the in-service program.[1]

In-service credit shall not be given while performing duties which are required as part of regular teaching assignments.

Support Personnel

The immediate supervisors of support personnel shall be responsible for providing in-service trainings. Absences to attend meetings relating to the employee's job description may be granted by the Director of Schools without loss of pay to the employee.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM

Professional learning programs and activities shall reflect the Standards for Professional Learning[3] as listed below and shall reflect the needs identified in school improvement plans.

The Director of Schools shall involve central office personnel and other employees as needed in developing the system-wide professional learning program and shall recommend it to the Board for approval.

Standards for Professional Learning

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students are based on the following standards:

1. Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment;

2. Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning;

3. Prioritizes, monitors, and coordinates resources for educator learning;

4. Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning;

5. Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes;

6. Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long term change; and

7. Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-1-214(b); TCA 49-6-3004(c)(1); TCA 49-5-1007; TCA 49-6-1901; TCA 49-5-414; TCA 49-6-4213(h)
2. TCA 49-5-5703(a)
3. State Board of Education Policy 5.200

Cross References

School District Planning 1.701
School Calendar 1.800
Curriculum Development 4.200
Reporting Student Progress 4.601
Staff Time Schedules 5.602
Staff Meetings 5.603
Student Suicide Prevention 6.415
Drug-Free Schools 6.307

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Personnel Records**	**5.114**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/13/25**

The Director of Schools/designee(s) shall be authorized to maintain personnel records and to permit inspection of the same, except for matters deemed confidential by law. The following personnel records shall be maintained for all employees as appropriate:

1. Employee applications and contracts;

2. Professional certificates and other documents required by state and federal laws and regulations;[1]

3. Evaluations;

4. Cumulative information files;

5. INS Form I-9[2]; and

6. Disciplinary action, as appropriate and any response from the employee.

The following guidelines shall be followed:

1. Information contained in personnel records shall be limited to job-related matters;

2. The Director of Schools shall be responsible for notifying all employees of the types of records kept and uses made of such records;

3. Employees shall be granted an opportunity to respond in writing to material placed in records;

4. Employee records are public records, except for matters deemed confidential by law, and shall be open for inspection during regular business hours;[3]

5. In accordance with federal law, the district shall release information regarding the professional qualifications and degrees of teachers and the qualifications of paraprofessionals to parent(s)/guardian(s) upon request for any teacher or paraprofessional who is employed by a school receiving Title I funds and who provides instruction to their child at that school;[4]

6. Members of the public may not obtain the home telephone number, personal cell phone number, bank account information, social security number, residential street address, driver license information (except where driving or operating a vehicle is considered to be a part of the employee's duties), or the results of individual teacher evaluations of an employee or of the immediate family members or household members of an employee, unless release of this

information is expressly authorized by the employee;[5]

7. A record of the person inspecting and the date of inspection shall be recorded; and
8. Copies of records may be made under rules determined by the Director of Schools.[6]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(M)
2. Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-603, 100 Stat. 3359
3. TCA 10-7-503, 504
4. 20 USCA § 6312(e)(1)
5. TCA 10-7-504(f)(1); TCA 10-7-504(a)(23)
6. TCA 10-7-506; TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(AA)

Cross References

Teacher Effect Data 5.1141

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Teacher Effect Data**	**5.1141**	**05/12/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The estimates of specific teacher effects on the educational progress of students shall not be a public record and shall be made available only to the specific teacher, school board members, and the teacher's appropriate administrators, as designated by the Board, for the fulfillment of lawful functions.[1]

The guidelines for distribution and security of the teacher effect data shall be kept on file in the central office and shall be given to the teacher, the assigned administrator, and all school board members and shall become an administrative procedure to be updated as needed by the Director of Schools.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-1-606(b); TCA 10-7-504(a)(23)

Cross References

Personnel Records 5.114

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Assignment/Transfer**	**5.115**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

ASSIGNMENT

The Director of Schools/designee shall assign personnel to the various schools or departments by June 15th preceding the school year for which such persons are employed while allowing each principal or immediate supervisor to assign more specific responsibilities within each school.[1]

Assignment of employees shall be made by the Director of Schools/designee based on the recommendation of the principal. The assignment shall be determined by the applicant's training, experience, and ability to perform the duties of the position and in the best interest of the schools.

Extra assignments for which supplements are provided and upon which initial employment was based may not be relinquished in part by the employee without the approval of the person making the assignment. Other assignments for which supplemental salary is provided shall be made on an annual contract basis.

TRANSFER

Transfer is the process in which an employee moves from one school or administrative unit to another. The Director of Schools/designee shall transfer employees as necessary for the efficient operation of the schools.[2] Transfers shall be non-discriminatory and shall not be arbitrary or capricious.

The Board shall be notified of transfers at its next regular scheduled meeting.

REASSIGNMENT

Reassignment is the process in which an employee moves to another assignment within the same school or administrative unit. Reassignments shall be non-discriminatory and shall not be arbitrary or capricious. Employees shall be reassigned as necessary for the efficient operation of the schools.

Reassignments shall be made by the employee's immediate supervisor with approval by the Director of Schools/designee.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(L); TCA 49-5-401; TCA 49-2-303(b)(3)
2. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(CC); TCA 49-5-510

Cross References

Nepotism 1.108
Job Descriptions 5.103
Recruitment of Employees 5.105

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Telework During Emergencies**	**5.1151**	**04/27/20**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

Teleworking is a work arrangement where designated employees are allowed to perform their normal duties and responsibilities through the use of hardware and software at an alternate location from their normal work site.

The Director of Schools may require an employee to telework if the duties and responsibilities of the position are required during times of emergency. An employee's participation in the program will be determined by the length and duration of the emergency and will be both initiated and ended at the discretion of the supervisor and/or the Director of Schools.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Employees approved for telework shall maintain a dedicated and safe work environment.

An employee who teleworks shall not allow anyone other than district employees to utilize district provided services or equipment. Employees shall keep remote work and information confidential, in accordance with district policies, procedures, and applicable privacy laws.

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Cross References

Emergency Closings 1.8011

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Staff Positions**	**5.116**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

CREATION OF POSITION

All staff positions shall be approved through the budget process in accordance with an organizational plan submitted by the Director of Schools/designee.[1] Before an additional position is established, the Director of Schools/designee shall present to the Board a job description, qualifications, performance responsibilities, and the method by which the performance of these responsibilities will be evaluated.

The Director of Schools/designee may revise the organizational plan as long as budgetary amounts are not exceeded and board policy is not violated. In the event of reorganization, the Director of Schools/designee shall adhere to all applicable reduction in force guidelines and shall inform, in a timely manner, the Board of the change and include the change in the Director's report at the next board meeting. If changes in personnel create additional encumbrances on a future budget, prior approval of the Board is required.

REDUCTION IN FORCE

When it becomes necessary to reduce the number of positions in the district because of a decrease in enrollment or for other good reasons, the Board shall abolish the positions. The Board or the Director of Schools/designee, as appropriate, shall dismiss such employees as may be necessary.[2]

Licensed Personnel

Reductions in staff shall be made in an attempt to have the least detrimental effect on students. Reductions shall be made in accordance with the following:

1. Retains the most effective teachers;

2. Avoids undue increases in class size; and

3. Provides consideration for the exceptional teacher without exclusive emphasis on seniority.

The elimination of a position does not necessarily mean the person occupying the position will be dismissed. When an employee is released, the Director of Schools/designee shall make the decision based upon a composite of the following criteria:

1. Effectiveness in teaching and in related professional responsibilities evidenced by teacher evaluation;

2. Adaptability to other assignments (academic and extracurricular);

3. Evidence of professional growth as well as specialized or advanced training;

4. Previous history of grade levels and subject areas taught; and

5. Type, length, and quality of service made to the teaching profession and the school district.

When an employee is released because of reduction in staff, the teacher shall be given written notice of the release explaining the circumstances or conditions making dismissal necessary.

Non-Licensed Personnel

When a non-licensed employee is released because of a reduction in the number of support positions, the Director of Schools/designee shall give the employee written notice of dismissal explaining the circumstances or conditions making termination of employment necessary.[3]

RECALL

The Director of Schools/designee shall maintain a preferred re-employment list for tenured teachers whose positions are abolished. The fitness of any teacher for re-employment shall be determined on the basis of the teacher's competence, compatibility, and suitability to properly discharge the duties required by the position with consideration for the best interests of the students in the school where the vacancy exists.[3]

It shall be the responsibility of the separated teacher to notify the Director of Schools/designee in writing of his/her availability and current address. A professional employee who is placed on the preferred re-employment list and subsequently refuses four (4) offers of a comparable position shall be removed from the preferred list.[4]

Employees returning from a lay-off shall have all previously accrued sick leave and years of service re-instated, but they shall not receive benefits for the period of the layoff.

Legal References

1. Tenn. Att'y Gen. Op. No. 93-66 (November 29, 1993)
2. TCA 49-5-409(c); TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(CC); TCA 49-5-511(b)(1)
3. TCA 49-5-511(b)(1)—(4)
4. TCA 49-5-511(b)(4)

Cross References

Recruitment of Employees 5.105
Supervision 5.108

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Teacher Tenure**	**5.117**	**06/13/22**
		Rescinds: **5.116**	Issued: **11/13/17; 09/27/21**

General

To attain tenure status,[1] a teacher shall: (1) meet tenure eligibility requirements; (2) be renewed and recommended by the Director of Schools; and (3) receive a majority vote of the Board.

All tenure decisions will be voted on by the Board in May of each year.

TENURE ELIGIBILITY[2]

A teacher that meets the following requirements is eligible for tenure:

1. Has a degree from an approved four-year college or any career and technical teacher who has the equivalent amount of training established and is licensed by the State Board of Education;

2. Holds a valid teacher license issued by the State Board of Education, based on training covering the subjects or grades taught;

3. Has completed a probationary period of five (5) school years or not less than forty-five (45) months within the last seven-year period with the last two (2) years being employed in a regular teaching position rather than an interim teaching position; and

4. Has received evaluations demonstrating an overall performance effectiveness level of "above expectations" or "significantly above expectations" as provided in the evaluation guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education, during the last two (2) years of the probationary period.

If a teacher has met all other requirements for tenure eligibility but has not acquired an official evaluation score during the last one (1) or two (2) years of the probationary period due to allowable circumstances outlined in state law, he/she may utilize the most recent two (2) years of available evaluation scores achieved during the probationary period to become eligible for tenure.[3]

ACQUISITION OF TENURE STATUS

Once a teacher is eligible for tenure, he/she shall be either recommended by the Director of Schools for tenure or nonrenewed. If tenure is denied by the Board, the teacher shall be dismissed.[4]
The following additional guidelines shall apply:

1. The Director of Schools will recommend teachers eligible for tenure at a board meeting in ample time to send notice of non-renewal to each teacher not recommended for tenure within five (5) business days following the last instructional day for the school year.[5]

2. The decision to grant tenure is solely within the discretion of the Board.[6] Only those teachers who receive a majority vote of the membership of the Board will be granted tenure.[7]

3. A teacher who is eligible for tenure, but tenure is denied by the Board, shall not be rehired beyond the current contract year.[4]

TEACHER RETURNING TO EMPLOYMENT

A teacher who has acquired tenure status in the school district and later resigns shall serve a two-year probationary period upon reemployment, unless the probationary period is waived by the Board upon request of the Director of Schools. Upon completion of the two-year period, the teacher shall either be recommended by the Director of Schools for tenure or non-renewed. If tenure is denied by the Board, the teacher shall be dismissed.[8]

TEACHER TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT[9]

A tenured or non-tenured teacher with five (5) or more years of prior service that transfers from another school district to begin employment in the Houston County School District shall serve the regular probationary period. The Board, upon the recommendation of the Director of Schools, may waive the probationary period and grant tenure status or shorten the probationary period.

If a non-tenured teacher with fewer than five (5) years of service transfers from another school district, such teacher shall not be eligible for tenure status until the teacher has served at least five (5) years when service in both school districts is counted.

All tenure decisions made under this section are subject to the requirements concerning overall teacher performance effectiveness levels.

TEACHER RETURNING TO PROBATIONARY STATUS[10]

Any tenured teacher who receives two (2) consecutive years of evaluations demonstrating an overall performance effectiveness level of "below expectations" or "significantly below expectations" shall be returned to probationary status by the Director of Schools until the teacher has received two (2) consecutive years of evaluations demonstrating an overall performance effectiveness level of "above expectations" or "significantly above expectations."

When a teacher who has returned to probationary status has received two (2) consecutive years of evaluations demonstrating an overall performance effectiveness level of "above expectations" or "significantly above expectations," the teacher is again eligible for tenure and shall be either recommended by the Director of Schools for tenure or nonrenewed; provided, however, that the teacher shall be dismissed if tenure is denied by the Board.[4]

This section does not apply to teachers who acquired tenure prior to July 1, 2011.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-501(11)(A)
2. TCA 49-5-503
3. Public Acts of 2021, Special Legislative Session Chapter No. 2
4. TCA 49-5-504(b)
5. TCA 49-5-409(b); Public Acts of 2021, Chapter No. 378
6. TCA 49-2-203(a)(1)
7. TCA 49-2-202(g)
8. TCA 49-5-504(d)
9. TCA 49-5-509
10. TCA 49-5-504(e), (f)

Cross References

Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers 5.200
Separation Practices for Non-Tenured Teachers 5.201

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Background Investigations**	**5.118**	**01/13/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/10/19**

General

Background checks shall be required for applicants, employees, contract workers, and volunteers.[1] Individuals who (1) have been identified by the Department of Children's Services as perpetrators of child abuse, severe child abuse, child sexual abuse, or child neglect or who pose an immediate threat to the health, safety, or welfare of children; or (2) are listed on the state's abuse of vulnerable persons registry maintained by the Department of Health shall not be employed.[2]

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop any necessary corresponding procedures.

Applicants, current employees, contractors, and volunteers shall be entered into the federal RAP back program.[3] Notice of the following shall be provided:

1. Possible fees charged by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation; and

2. Fingerprints will be retained by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for all purposes and uses authorized for fingerprint submission.

Any costs incurred to perform these background checks and fingerprinting shall be paid by applicants. The Board may reimburse applicants if the position is offered and accepted.

USE AND DISSEMINATION

Fingerprints or other approved forms of positive identification shall be submitted with all requests for criminal history record checks for non-criminal justice purposes.[5] The Director of Schools/Designee shall ensure the Originating Agency Identifier number is on file at all times.

Tennessee and FBI Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) obtained by the district shall be solely used to verify criminal violations and shall not be disseminated. Results shall be considered confidential and only accessible to district personnel identified by the Director of Schools/Designee. CHRI shall only be accessed by authorized personnel in the performance of their duties and shall never be released to the public.

All persons directly associated with the accessing, maintaining, processing, dissemination, or destruction of CHRI shall sign an awareness statement and shall indicate that they have been specially trained on the subject. The training shall provide those with access to CHRI with a working knowledge of federal and state regulations and laws governing the security and processing of criminal history information. The Director of Schools/Designee is responsible for ensuring that authorized personnel

receive such training within sixty (60) days of employment or job assignment and every three (3) years.

RETENTION AND SECURITY

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures to ensure CHRI is stored in a secure location. Areas in which CHRI is processed and handled shall be restricted to authorized personnel identified by the Director of Schools. The area shall be out of the view of the public and unauthorized personnel. The Director of Schools/Designee shall maintain a list of all employees who have access to, can process, disseminate, and/or destroy CHRI.

DISPOSAL OF CHRI

When CHRI is no longer needed, it shall be destroyed by burning, shredding, or other methods rendering the information unreadable. Record destruction shall be conducted under the supervision of the Director of Schools/Designee.

MISUSE

Employees who misuse CHRI or violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any employee with knowledge of misuse shall immediately report a violation to the Director of Schools.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-413
2. TCA 49-5-406(a)(1); TCA 49-5-403; TCA 49-5-413(a)(2), (e)
3. TCA 49-5-413(f)
4. TCA 49-5-413(c)
5. 34 USCA § 40316

Cross References

School Volunteers 4.501
Application and Employment 5.106
Substitute Teachers 5.701

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Employment of Retirees**	**5.119**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/08/22; 08/14/23**

General[1]

The Director of Schools may hire a retired individual if certain conditions are met as provided for in state law. Prior to commencement of reemployment, the Director of Schools/Designee shall provide the required employment information to the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS). In order to be eligible for employment after retirement, a TCRS member must comply with the following:

1. The retired member must have a bona fide separation of service which includes a separation of at least sixty (60) calendar days and no previous agreement to return to work after retirement; and

2. The retired member may not accrue additional retirement benefits as a result of the member's reemployment and may not draw disability retirement benefits.

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS FOR UP TO 120 DAYS[2]

Retired members under TCRS may be employed for up to one hundred twenty (120) days per year without loss of retirement benefits. Retired members may substitute teach for additional days.

To continue receiving TCRS benefits, the following conditions must be met in addition to the general standards above:

1. During a twelve-month period, the retiree must not work more than one hundred twenty (120) days; and

2. The retired member's compensation must not exceed 60% of the annual full-time salary received in the year immediately prior to the member's last paid day of covered employment. This amount shall be adjusted by five percent (5%) for each year after that date.

The retired member may work beyond one hundred twenty (120) days as a substitute teacher if the payment does not exceed the rate of compensation for substitute teachers filling similar vacant positions.

HARD TO FILL POSITIONS[3]

The Director of Schools may contract with retired members for hard to fill positions if the following conditions are met in addition to the general standards above:

1. During the reemployment, the retirement benefit payable to the retiree must be reduced to seventy percent (70%) of the retirement allowance the member would have otherwise been entitled to receive; and

2. The retired member's reemployment must not exceed one (1) year, but the retired member may be reemployed for additional one-year periods per state law.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall certify to TCRS that the employee is being rehired in a hard-to-fill position. In order to qualify, one or more of the following conditions must be established:

1. It is difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees for the position;

2. The position requires specialized certification, credentials, or education;

3. The demand for the position exceeds the supply;

4. The position is in high demand in the marketplace;

5. The position is filled by key personnel;

6. The position requires specific skills and experience; or

7. The position has other unique recruitment or retention issues identified and documented by the Director of Schools/Designee.

Once the retired member is hired, the district shall pay TCRS the greater of: (1) a payment equal to the amount the employer would have contributed to the retirement system during the period of reemployment; or (2) an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the retired member's earnable compensation.

Legal References

1. TCA 8-36-805; TCA 8-36-809; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 159
2. TCA 8-36-805; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 159
3. TCA 8-36-809; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 159

Cross References

Application and Employment 5.106
Substitute Teachers 5.701

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers**	**5.200**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds: **5.1012**	Issued: **05/11/26; 08/08/22; 09/27/21; 12/11/17; 07/08/13**

ALLEGATIONS REQUIRING TEMPORARY REMOVAL FROM DUTY

If an investigation of an employee's conduct is required, the Director of Schools shall determine whether to temporarily modify the employee's work status based on concerns for safety or to minimize disruption to the educational environment. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Reassignment to alternate duties;
- Temporary removal from the school setting.

Such action shall not be considered disciplinary in nature but rather a precautionary measure until a determination can be made regarding an appropriate return to duties, or the imposition of disciplinary action, which could include suspension without pay.

SUSPENSION PENDING AN INVESTIGATION[1]

The Director of Schools may suspend a teacher at any time that may seem necessary, pending investigation, or final disposition of a case before the Board or an appeal. If the matter under investigation is not the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation or a Department of Children's Services investigation, and if no charges for dismissal have been made, a suspension pending investigation shall not exceed ninety (90) days in duration. Under no circumstances shall the Director of Schools suspend a teacher with pay. If vindicated or reinstated, the teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension.

SUSPENSION OF THREE DAYS OR LESS[2,3]

The Director of Schools/designee may suspend a teacher for incompetence, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct, and insubordination. Before a teacher is suspended, he/she shall be: (1) provided with written notice, including the reasons for the suspension along with an explanation of the evidence; (2) given an opportunity to respond to the Director of Schools at a conference, if requested within five (5) days; and (3) given a written decision of the suspension within ten (10) days. Both parties may be represented by counsel at the conference, which shall be recorded.

Under no circumstances shall a Director of Schools suspend a tenured teacher with pay. If reinstated, the tenured teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension unless suspension without pay is deemed to be an appropriate penalty.

DISMISSAL OR SUSPENSION GREATER THAN THREE DAYS[4]

When a tenured teacher is charged with offenses that may justify dismissal or a suspension greater than three (3) days, the charges shall be made in writing, specifically stating the offenses that are charged, and shall be signed by the party or parties making the charges.

If, in the opinion of the Board, the charges are of such nature as to warrant the dismissal or a suspension greater than three (3) days of the teacher, the Director of Schools shall give the teacher a written notice of this decision, a copy of the charges against the teacher, and a copy of a form provided by the Commissioner of Education advising the teacher of his/her legal duties, rights, and recourse.

A tenured teacher who has been given notice of charges against him/her may within thirty (30) days after receipt of notice give written notice to the Director of Schools of his/her request for a hearing.

The Director of Schools shall, within five (5) days after receipt of request, assign a hearing officer from the list maintained by the Board.

The Board shall maintain a list of qualified individuals who have indicated a willingness to act as impartial hearing officers as defined under Tennessee law.

The hearing officer shall notify the parties, or their attorney, of the officer's assignment and direct the parties or the attorneys for the parties, or both, to appear before the hearing officer for simplification of issues and the scheduling of the hearing. That hearing shall be set no later than thirty (30) days following receipt of the initial request for a hearing. In the discretion of the hearing officer, all or part of any prehearing conference may be conducted by telephone if each participant has an opportunity to participate, be heard, and to address proof and evidentiary concerns. The hearing officer is empowered to issue appropriate orders and to regulate the conduct of the proceedings.

Either party may appeal to the Board an adverse ruling by giving written notice of appeal within ten (10) working days of the hearing officer's delivery of the hearing officer's written findings and conclusions. The Director of Schools shall prepare a copy of the proceedings, including all transcripts and evidence, documentary or otherwise, and transmit the same to the Board within twenty (20) working days of the receipt of the notice of appeal.

The Board shall hear the appeal on the record, and no new evidence may be submitted by either party. The appealing party may appear before the Board to argue why the adverse ruling should be overturned. In no event should such argument last more than fifteen (15) minutes unless the Board votes to extend additional time. At the conclusion of the hearing, any member of the Board may vote to sustain the decision of the hearing officer, send the record back for additional evidence, revise the penalty, or reverse the decision. The Board shall render its decision within ten (10) working days after the conclusion of the hearing. In the event that the decision of the Board is appealed to the chancery court, the Board shall transmit the entire record prepared by the Director of Schools and reviewed by the Board to the chancery court for its review.

RESIGNATION

A teacher shall give the Director of Schools notice of resignation at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the resignation. A teacher who fails to give such notice, in the absence of justifiable

extenuating circumstances, shall forfeit all tenure status. The Board may waive the thirty (30) days' notice requirement and permit a teacher to resign in good standing.[5]

The conditions under which it is permissible to break a contract with the Board are as follows:[6]

1. The incapacity on the part of the teacher to perform the contract as evidenced by the certified statement of a physician approved by the Board; or

2. The release by the Board of the teacher from the contract that the teacher has entered into with the Board.

Any teacher on leave shall notify the Director of Schools in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of return if the teacher does not intend to return to the position from which he/she has taken leave. Failure to render such notice may be considered a breach of contract.[7]

RETIREMENT

Retirement is a termination of services under conditions that will allow the teacher to draw benefits from retirement plans and/or Social Security benefits. Teachers eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the retirement system.

Central office personnel shall assist teachers in securing retirement benefits; however, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring teacher to provide verification of eligibility in writing from the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) to the central office. It shall be the responsibility of the retiring teacher to file for benefits.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-511(a)(3)
2. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(EE), TCA 49-5-512(d)
3. TCA 49-5-511(a)(2)
4. TCA 49-5-511; 512; 513
5. TCA 49-5-508(a); TCA 49-5-411(b); Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 898
6. TCA 49-5-508(c)
7. TCA 49-5-706

Cross References

Public Hearings 1.401
Teacher Tenure 5.117
Recommendations and File Transfers 5.203

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Separation Practices for Non-Tenured Teachers**	**5.201**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds: **5.1013**	Issued: **05/11/26; 08/08/22; 09/27/21; 12/11/17; 07/08/13**

ALLEGATIONS REQUIRING TEMPORARY REMOVAL FROM DUTY

If an investigation of an employee's conduct is required, the Director of Schools shall determine whether to temporarily modify the employee's work status based on concerns for safety or to minimize disruption to the educational environment. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Reassignment to alternate duties;
- Temporary removal from the school setting.

Such action shall not be considered disciplinary in nature but rather a precautionary measure until a determination can be made regarding an appropriate return to duties, or the imposition of disciplinary action, which could include suspension without pay.

SUSPENSION PENDING AN INVESTIGATION[1]

The Director of Schools may suspend a teacher at any time that may seem necessary, pending investigation, or final disposition of a case before the Board or an appeal. If the matter under investigation is not the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation or a Department of Children's Services investigation, and if no charges for dismissal have been made, a suspension pending investigation shall not exceed ninety (90) days in duration. Under no circumstances shall the Director of Schools suspend a non-tenured teacher with pay if there is a pending investigation. If reinstated, the non-tenured teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension.

SUSPENSION OF THREE DAYS OR LESS[2]

The Director of Schools/designee may suspend a teacher for incompetence, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct, and insubordination. Before a teacher is suspended, he/she shall be: (1) provided with written notice, including the reasons for the suspension along with an explanation of the evidence; (2) given an opportunity to respond to the Director of Schools at a recorded conference, if requested within five (5) days; and (3) given a written decision of the suspension within ten (10) days. Both parties may be represented by counsel at the conference, which shall be recorded.

Under no circumstances shall the Director of Schools suspend a non-tenured teacher with pay. If reinstated, the non-tenured teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension unless suspension without pay is deemed to be an appropriate penalty.

DISMISSAL OR SUSPENSION GREATER THAN THREE DAYS[2]

The Director of Schools may dismiss or suspend for more than three (3) days any non-tenured teacher during the contract year for incompetence, inefficiency, insubordination, improper conduct, or neglect of duty after giving the non-tenured teacher, in writing, due notice of the charges.

The Director of Schools shall give the non-tenured teacher an opportunity for a full and complete hearing before an impartial hearing officer.

The Board will appoint an impartial hearing officer to conduct such hearings. The hearing officer will hear the case, and the teacher shall have the right to:

1. Be represented by counsel;

2. Call and subpoena witnesses;

3. Examine all witnesses; and

4. Require that all testimony be given under oath.

Factual findings and decisions in all dismissal cases shall be reduced to written form and delivered to the affected teacher within ten (10) working days following the close of the hearing. The teacher may appeal the decision to the Board within ten (10) working days of the hearing officer rendering the written decision to the teacher. Written notice of appeal to the Board shall be given to the Director of Schools. Within twenty (20) working days of receipt of notice, the Director of Schools shall prepare a copy of the proceedings, including all transcripts and evidence, documentary or otherwise, and provide a copy to the Board.

The Director of Schools shall also have the right to appeal any adverse ruling by the hearing officer in the same manner as the non-tenured teacher.

The Board shall hear the appeal. No new evidence shall be introduced. The non-tenured teacher may appear in person or be represented by counsel and argue why the decision should be modified or reversed. The Board shall take one of the following actions:

1. Sustain the decision;

2. Send the record back if additional evidence is necessary; or

3. Revise the penalty or reverse the decision.

Before any decision to dismiss is made, a majority of the membership of the Board shall concur in sustaining the charges. The Board shall render a decision on the appeal within ten (10) working days after the conclusion of the hearing.

Within twenty (20) working days after receipt of notice of the decision of the Board, either party may appeal to the chancery court in the county where the school district is located. The Board shall provide the entire record of the hearing to the court.

NONRENEWAL

Non-tenured teachers are subject to the same rules and regulations and are entitled to the privileges of employment enjoyed by tenured teachers except that they have no claim upon continuing employment or tenure protections.

The principal is responsible for discussing deficiencies as part of the evaluation process with the non-tenured teacher and providing assistance for overcoming these deficiencies.

The Director of Schools is under no obligation to re-employ non-tenured teachers at the end of their contract period. If the Director of Schools determines not to renew the contract of a non-tenured teacher, the following action shall be taken:

1. The Board shall be notified at the next regular board meeting; and
2. Written notice of non-renewal shall be sent to the teacher by certified mail, overnight carrier, or by email within five (5) business days following the last instructional day for the school year.[3] If the reason for nonrenewal is due only to a loss of funding for the position, then the notice shall include a statement listing it as the cause for nonrenewal.[4]

RESIGNATION

A teacher shall give the Director of Schools notice of resignation at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the resignation.[5] The Board may waive the thirty (30) days notice requirement and permit a teacher to resign in good standing.

The conditions under which it is permissible to break a contract with the Board are as follows:[6]

1. The incapacity on the part of the teacher to perform the contract as evidenced by the certified statement of a physician approved by the Board; or

2. The release by the Board of the teacher from the contract which the teacher has entered into with the Board.

Any teacher on leave shall notify the Director of Schools in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of return if the teacher does not intend to return to the position from which he/she has taken leave. Failure to render such notice may be considered a breach of contract.[7]

RETIREMENT

Retirement is a termination of services under conditions which will allow the teacher to draw benefits from retirement plans and/or Social Security benefits.

Teachers eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the retirement system. Central office personnel shall assist teachers in securing retirement benefits; however, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring teacher to provide verification of eligibility in writing from the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) to the central office. It shall be the responsibility of the retiring teacher to file for benefits.

(Note: Nonrenewal of non-tenured teachers after the contract year is not suspension or dismissal and does NOT follow the suspension/dismissal guidelines outlined in this policy. Rather, nonrenewal of non-tenured teachers after the contract year follows the nonrenewal guidelines outlined in this policy.)

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-511(a)(3)
2. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(EE); TCA 49-5-512
3. TCA 49-5-409
4. TCA 49-5-409(b)(2)
5. TCA 49-5-508
6. ; TCA 49-5-411(b); Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 898
7. TCA 49-5-411(a)
8. TCA 49-5-706
9. TCA 49-5-411(b)

Cross References

Public Hearings 1.401
Teacher Tenure 5.117
Recommendations and File Transfers 5.203

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Separation Practices for Non-Certified Employees**	**5.202**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **04/14/08; 07/08/13**

SUSPENSION

The Director of Schools/Designee may suspend an employee at any time when deemed necessary.[1]

Under no circumstances shall a Director of Schools/Designee suspend an employee with pay. If reinstated, the employee shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension unless suspension without pay is deemed to be an appropriate penalty.

DISMISSAL

All non-certified employees are employed at the will of the Director of Schools. The Director of Schools may dismiss any non-certified employee during the year for any lawful reason.

RESIGNATION

Support personnel shall give the immediate supervisor written notice of resignation ten (10) working days in advance of the effective date of voluntary termination. The ten (10) working days may be waived by the Director of Schools/Designee for justifiable reason.

The immediate supervisor shall forward copies the day received to the Director of Schools' office. The payroll office will prepare final payment for the next appropriate scheduled pay day.

RETIREMENT

Retirement shall mean a termination of services under conditions which will allow the employee to draw benefits from retirement plans and/or social security benefits. Employees eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the retirement system.

Central office personnel shall assist employees in securing retirement benefits; however, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to obtain verification of eligibility in writing from the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) to the central office. It shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to file for eligible benefits. Employees who retire under TCRS may be employed up to one hundred twenty (120) days per year without loss of retirement benefits.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(b)(1)(EE), (FF)
2. TCA 8-36-805

Cross References

Recommendations and File Transfers 5.203

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Recommendations and File Transfers**	**5.203**	**11/12/18**
		Rescinds: **5.204**	Issued: **12/11/17**

Other than the routine transmission of administrative and personnel files, district employees are prohibited from assisting a school employee, contractor, or agent in obtaining a new job if the individual knows, or has probable cause to believe, that the person seeking a job change engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of the law.

These requirements shall not apply if:

1. The information giving rise to probable cause has been properly reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency; and

2. The matter has been officially closed in one of the following ways:

    a. The prosecutor or police have investigated the allegations and notified school officials that there is insufficient information to establish probable cause;

    b. The employee, contractor, or agent has been charged and either acquitted or exonerated; or

    c. The case remains open, and there have been no charges or indictment filed within four (4) years of the date the information was reported to the law enforcement agency.

Neither the district nor the Board shall enter into, or require a current or former employee to enter into, a non-disclosure agreement during a settlement for any act of sexual misconduct.[1]

The director of schools shall develop administrative procedures to enforce this policy and comply with federal law.

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 7926; Public Acts of 2018, Chapter No. 938

Cross References

Application and Employment 5.106
Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers 5.200
Separation Practices for Non-Tenured Teachers 5.201
Separation Practices for Non-Certified Employees 5.202
Child Abuse and Neglect 6.409

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Emergency and Legal Leave**	**5.301**	**06/10/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/10/19**

EMERGENCY LEAVE

An immediate supervisor may grant a certificated employee emergency leave during the workday for a sudden, unexpected occurrence demanding immediate attention. Leave shall be taken as personal leave,[1] sick leave, or leave without pay. The employee who uses emergency leave shall confirm said leave on appropriate forms the day after returning to work.

Principals or administrative supervisors shall keep a tally of the amount of time individual employees are released under this policy, and when the total time reaches one (1) day, the employee shall be charged with one (1) day of applicable leave.

JURY DUTY

If an employee is summoned for jury duty, he/she shall present written evidence that he/she has been summoned to serve on a jury. The employee shall be entitled to the usual compensation, less the amount paid by the court.[2]

COURT APPEARANCES

If an employee appears in court as a plaintiff, defendant, witness,[3] or voluntarily appears on behalf of family or friends, personal leave or leave without pay shall be granted.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-711(c)
2. TCA 22-4-106(b)
3. TCA 16-15-708; Public Acts of 2018, Chapter No. 747

Cross References

Short Term Leaves of Absence 5.300

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Sick Leave**	**5.302**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/11/26; 06/10/19**

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

Professional personnel shall earn one (1) day of sick leave for each month employed during the school year, and these days shall accumulate for an unlimited number of days.[1]

Sick leave shall be defined as: illness of a teacher from natural causes or accident, quarantine, or illness or death of a member of the immediate family of a teacher, including the teacher's wife or husband, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law.[2]

A signed statement listing the cause of absence shall be provided by the employee on forms furnished by the Director of Schools and shall promptly be given to the immediate supervisor in support of all claims for sick leave pay. A falsified statement shall be grounds for dismissal. An employee absent for three (3) consecutive working days shall submit a doctor's statement verifying illness or injury of the employee or immediate family member.

Frequent use and/or suspected misuse of sick leave by an employee are sufficient grounds for requiring a physician’s certificate stating the reason for absence.

Documentation from a physician may be required in support of any claim for sick leave pay.

The principal shall notify the Director of Schools' office at once if an employee is sick beyond the limit of his/her sick leave accumulation.

Permanent, cumulative sick leave records for each active professional employee shall be kept in the Director of Schools' office.

A teacher, upon employment, may transfer his/her accumulated sick leave from another Tennessee school district, provided that the Director of Schools of the district in which the accumulated leave was held provides notarized verification.[3]

SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Support personnel shall earn one (1) day of sick leave for each month an employee is employed.

At the termination of the employment of any employee, all unused sick leave accumulated by the employee shall be forfeited.

The immediate supervisor may require documentation from a physician stating the reason for absence.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-710(a)(1)
2. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 1022
3. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.04(2)
4. TCA 49-5-710(a)(5)
5. TCA 49-5-811
6. TCA 49-5-803
7. TCA 49-5-804; TCA 49-5-805
8. TCA 49-5-807
9. TCA 49-5-808(j), (m)
10. TCA 49-5-806(d)
11. TCA 49-5-801 *et seq.*

Cross References

Workers' Compensation 3.602
Orientation and Probation 5.107
Short Term Leaves of Absence 5.300
Family and Medical Leave 5.305
Physical Assault Leave 5.307

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Personal and Professional Leave**	**5.303**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/14/25; 07/12/21; 06/10/19**

Professional employees shall earn personal and professional leave at the rate of two (2) days for each half-year employed for a total of four (4) days per year. Any personal and professional leave remaining unused at the end of a year shall be credited to sick leave.[1]

Non-Certified Employees

Non-Certified employees receive two (2) personal leave days a year. A maximum of two (2) unused personal leave days will be credited to the employee's sick leave at the end of each year.

If, at the termination of services, any employee has been absent for more days than leave has been earned, an amount sufficient to cover the excess days used shall be deducted from the employee's final salary payment.[2]

PERSONAL LEAVE

Subject to the following conditions, personal leave may be taken at the discretion of the employee:

1. Except in an emergency, each employee shall give the principal at least three (3) days' notice in writing of intent to take leave;

2. The approval of the principal of the school shall be required:[3]

    a. If more than ten percent (10%) of the teachers in any given school request its use on the same day;

    b. If requested during any prior established student examination period;

    c. If requested on the day immediately preceding or following a holiday or vacation period;

    d. If personal leave is requested for days scheduled for professional development or in-service training, according to a school calendar adopted by the Board prior to the commencement of the school year; or

    e. If personal leave is requested for days scheduled for parent-teacher conferences, according to a school calendar adopted by the Board prior to the commencement of the school year.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

Professional leave is a short, temporary absence for the purpose of attending workshops and other meetings relating to school business or serving on boards and commissions which meet during daytime hours when appointed by a mayor, city council, county executive, or county commission.[4] Requests for professional leave must be submitted five (5) days prior to the date of the leave.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-711(a); Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 1022; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.04(3)
2. TCA 49-5-711(b)
3. TCA 49-5-711(c)(1)
4. TCA 49-5-205

Cross References

Short Term Leaves of Absence 5.300
Legislative Leave 5.309

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Long-Term Leaves of Absence for Professional Personnel**	**5.304**	**06/10/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/10/19**

All personnel holding a position that requires a teacher's license shall be granted leave for military service, legislative service, maternity, adoption, recuperation of health, or visitation of a spouse, child, or parent deployed for military duty out of the country who has been granted rest and recuperation leave. Such personnel may be granted leave for educational improvements or other sufficient reasons as determined by the Director of Schools. If granted, such leave shall not result in the forfeiture of accumulated leave credits, tenure status, or other fringe benefits.[1]

All leaves shall be requested in writing at least thirty (30) days in advance on forms provided by the Director of Schools. The thirty (30)-day notice may be waived or reduced by the Director of Schools upon submission of a certified statement by a physician. The application for leave forms shall require:

1. A description of the type of leave requested;
2. The requested dates for beginning and ending the leave; and
3. A statement of intent to return to the position from which leave is granted.[1]

Each request for leave must be acted upon by the Director of Schools within fifteen (15) days. Each applicant shall be notified in writing of the action of the director and the beginning and ending dates of the leave which is granted.[2]

All leaves, except military leave, shall be from a specific date to a specific date. However, any leave may be extended by the Director of Schools upon written request from the teacher. Military leave shall be granted for whatever period may be required. The procedure and condition for extending a leave are the same as those used when originally requesting and granting the leave.

Leave to visit a spouse, child, or parent deployed for military duty out of the country who has been granted rest and recuperation leave shall be granted for no longer than ten (10) days.[3]

Positions vacated for less than twelve (12) months by teachers on leave shall be filled with an interim teacher while the teacher is on leave. If the teacher returns from leave within twelve (12) months, the interim teacher shall relinquish the position. If the leave exceeds twelve (12) months, the teacher shall be placed in the same or a comparable position upon return.[4]

Part-time leaves may be granted by the Director of Schools upon written request for the same conditions as for full-time leave.

Any teacher on leave shall notify the Director of Schools at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of return if the teacher does not intend to return to the position from which he/she is on leave. Failure to give such notice shall be considered breach of contract.[5]

PAY AND BENEFITS

All leave granted in conformance with this policy shall be without pay except as may be covered by sick leave in the case of maternity and recuperative leaves. Employees shall have the opportunity to continue participation, at their own expense, in group insurance plans subject to restrictions of the insuring carrier.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-702
2. TCA 49-5-703
3. TCA 49-5-704
4. TCA 49-5-705
5. TCA 49-5-706

Cross References

Family and Medical Leave 5.305
Military Leave 5.306
Physical Assault Leave 5.307
Sabbatical Leave 5.308
Legislative Leave 5.309
Interim Employees 5.700

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Family and Medical Leave**	**5.305**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **12/11/17; 11/12/18; 08/14/23**

ELIGIBILITY

Anyone who has been employed for at least twelve (12) months by the school district and anyone who has at least 1,250 hours of service (hours used for leave, even FMLA leave, shall not be credited for service for purposes of FMLA eligibility[1]) during the previous twelve (12) month period shall be eligible to use FMLA leave.[2]

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

An eligible employee shall be granted, upon request, up to twelve (12) weeks unpaid leave during a rolling calendar year (365 day timeframe) for the following reasons:

1. The birth of a child;

2. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;

3. A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his/her job position;

4. The care of a spouse, child, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition; and

5. Any qualifying circumstances arising out of the fact that a spouse, child, or parent of the employee is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty in the Armed Forces.

An employee may substitute accrued paid leave for unpaid time. Use of accrued paid leave shall run concurrently with and be counted toward the employee's total period of FMLA leave.

MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE

1. *Relationship between FMLA leave and Tennessee Maternity Leave Act* – FMLA leave shall run concurrently with leave provided under the Tennessee Maternity Act, which affords eligible employees leave for a period not to exceed four (4) months for the adoption, pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing of a newborn child.[3]

2. *Teachers' Leave* – In accordance with state law, any teacher who goes on maternity or paternity leave shall be allowed to use all or a portion of the teacher's accumulated sick or annual leave

for maternity leave purposes. In order to be eligible to use sick leave, written request of the teacher accompanied by a statement from the teacher's physician verifying pregnancy shall be submitted. Upon verification by a written statement from an adoption agency or other entity handling an adoption, a teacher may also be allowed to use accumulated leave for adoption of a child. If both adoptive parents are teachers employed by the district, however, only one (1) parent is entitled to use such leave.[4]

3. Spouses who are both eligible employees of the school district are limited to a combined total of twelve (12) workweeks of FMLA leave in a single twelve (12) month period if the leave is taken for the birth and care of a newborn child, for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent who has a serious health condition. Under certain circumstances, spouses who share leave for the birth or adoption of a child may be eligible for limited amounts of additional leave for other qualifying FMLA reasons.[5]

4. *Paid Parental Leave* – Under state law, an additional six (6) work weeks of paid leave is available to eligible employees after a birth, stillbirth, or adoption of a newly placed minor child.[6] An eligible employee taking leave under this provision shall not be required to utilize any other type of accrued leave during this period. Eligible employees include teachers, principals, supervisors, or other individuals required by law to hold a valid license of qualification for employment and who meet the following requirements:

    a. Possess a valid license or an emergency credential issued by the Department of Education per TCA 49-5-106, required for the position the employee holds;

    b. Have been employed with the district full time for at least twelve (12) consecutive months in a position for which the employee is required by law to hold the license or an emergency credential referenced above at the time of the qualifying event; and

    c. Have held a valid license or an emergency credential issued by the Department of Education per TCA 49-5-106 for the entire twelve consecutive months of fulltime employment.

    Employees shall provide notice to the school district thirty (30) days prior to the intended use of the leave. If the employee learns about the need for leave less than thirty (30) days in advance, the employee shall give notice as soon as reasonably possible in order to be eligible for the paid leave. This paid leave shall be either: (1) taken consecutively, except in extenuating circumstances, as determined by the Director of Schools; or (2) taken nonconsecutively, but in increments of no less than one (1) week. The paid leave shall be used within twelve (12) months of the qualifying event and shall run concurrently with FMLA leave.[7]

LEAVE FOR A SERIOUS HEALTH CONDITION[8]

Eligible employees, upon request, shall be granted up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave when he/she is unable to work because of a serious health condition or to care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition. Employees shall contact Human Resources to determine if the reason for leave qualifies as FMLA leave. If the leave is foreseeable, the employee shall give thirty

(30) days' notice. If the leave is not foreseeable, the employee shall notify Human Resources as soon as practicable, generally, either the same or next business day.

LEAVE FOR MILITARY FAMILY MEMBERS

1. *Qualifying Exigency Leave*[9] - Eligible employees are entitled to up to twelve (12) workweeks of leave because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee, as defined under the FMLA, is on active duty, or has been notified of an impending call to active duty, or has been notified of an impended call to active duty status in the Armed Forces. Qualifying exigencies may include:

    a. Issues arising from the service member's short notice deployment;
    b. Military events and related activities (e.g., official ceremonies, support programs);
    c. Making or updating financial and legal arrangements;
    d. Attending counseling;
    e. Taking up to fifteen (15) days leave to spend time with a covered service member who is on short-term rest and recuperation leave during deployment; or
    f. Attending post-deployment activities.

2. *Military Caregiver Leave*[10] - An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness is entitled to up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave in a single twelve (12) month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in out-patient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list for a serious injury or illness.

    A covered veteran is an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the period of five (5) years preceding the date of the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy that has a serious injury or illness who is currently receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

    The single twelve (12) month period for military caregiver leave begins on the first day the employee takes leave for this reason and ends twelve (12) months later. An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave to provide care for a covered service member. The maximum of twenty-six (26) workweeks may include no more than twelve (12) workweeks of leave that is taken for the birth and care of a newborn child, for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care, for care of a parent who has a serious health condition, or for the employee's own serious health condition.

INTERMITTENT LEAVE[11]

Eligible employees may take FMLA leave intermittently when medically necessary to care for a seriously ill family member, because of the employee's own serious health condition, or for the care for a newborn, a newly adopted child, or a newly placed foster care child. When an employee requests foreseeable leave for planned medical treatment and the employee would be on leave for greater than twenty percent (20%) of the total number of working days in the period during which the leave would

extend, the school district may require that such employee elect either to take the leave for periods of a particular duration, not to exceed the duration of the planned medical treatment, or to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position offered by the school district for which the employee is qualified and that has equivalent pay and benefits and better accommodates recurring periods of leave.

RESTRICTIONS

1. Notice Requirements

    a. *Employee Notice*[12]- For foreseeable leave, the employee shall provide the Director of Schools with at least thirty (30) days written notice before the beginning of the anticipated leave.

    b. *District Notice* - Once it has been established that the leave requested qualifies for FMLA, the Director of Schools/designee shall notify the employee within three (3) business days (absent extenuating circumstances) that any leave taken pursuant to state leave statutes (paid vacation leave, personal leave, sick leave, or workers' compensation) shall run concurrently with FMLA leave.[13] The notice may be given orally or in writing. If the notice is oral, it shall be confirmed in writing, no later than the following pay day.[14]

2. Certification Requirement[15]

    a. The Director of Schools may require that a request for leave be supported by certification issued by a health care provider with the following information:

        i. The date on which the serious health condition commenced;
        ii. The probable duration of the condition;
        iii. The appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition; and
        iv. A statement that the eligible employee is needed to care for the son, daughter, spouse, or parent and an estimate of the amount of time that such employee is needed.

    b. If there is any reason to doubt the validity of the certification provided, the Director of Schools may require, at the expense of the school district, an opinion of a second health care provider.

3. Period Near the End of an Academic Term (Professional Employees)[16]

    a. If leave is taken more than five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Director of Schools may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave is at least three (3) weeks of duration and the return of employment would occur during the three (3) week period before the end of the term.

    b. If the leave is taken five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Director of Schools may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave

is greater than two (2) weeks duration and the return to employment would occur during the two (2) week period before the end of the term.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE BOARD[17]

1. The employee shall be restored to the same position of employment or an equivalent position with no loss of benefits, pay, or other terms of employment.

2. The employee shall be kept under any group health plan for the duration of the leave.

3. The Board may recover the premium paid under the following conditions:

    a. The employee fails to return from leave after the period of leave has expired; and

    b. The employee fails to return to work for a reason other than the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or other circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

Legal References

1. *Hinson v. Tecumseh Products Co*., 2000 U.S. App. LEXIS 26778, at *1—10 (6th Cir. Oct. 17, 2000)
2. 29 USCA § 2601, 2611—2619
3. TCA 49-5-702; TCA 4-21-408
4. TCA 49-5-710(a)(2); TCA 8-50-802(a)(4)
5. 29 CFR § 825.120(a)(3)
6. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 163
7. TCA 8-50-814; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 235
8. 29 CFR § 825.113
9. 29 CFR § 825.126
10. 29 CFR § 825.124; 29 CFR § 825.127
11. 29 CFR § 825.202
12. 29 CFR § 825.302-825.304
13. 29 CFR § 825.207
14. OP Tenn. Atty Gen 94-006 (Jan 13, 1994); *Plant v, Morton International, Inc*., 212 F. 3d 929, 932 (6th Cir. 2000)
15. 29 CFR § 825.305-825.313
16. 29 CFR § 825.602
17. 29 USCA § 2614

Cross References

Sick Leave 5.302
Long-Term Leaves of Absence 5.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Military Leave**	**5.306**	**06/10/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/10/19**

Employees who are members of any reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States shall be granted leave of absence for all periods of military service during which they are engaged in the performance of duty or training in the service of the state or the United States. Reservists who anticipate military duty during the school year must give written notice to the Director of Schools within thirty (30) days of the beginning of the school year of the dates of the anticipated duty. While performing such duty or training, the employee shall be paid his/her regular salary up to a maximum of twenty (20) working days in any one (1) calendar year, plus such additional days as may result from any call to active state duty.[1]

An employee called to active duty by the governor to enforce the laws of the state shall be paid his/her regular salary for such time as he/she is engaged in the performance of his/her duty, and any time spent in active state duty shall not count against the twenty-day period of leave allowed for military service.[2]

Request for leaves and extension of leaves shall conform to state law and board policy governing all leaves of absence. Failure to comply with applicable laws and policies shall constitute grounds for dismissal.

The employee shall supply a copy of the orders for duty, including the dates of departure and return, to the Director of Schools prior to, or simultaneous with, requesting leave.

Legal References

1. 38 U.S.C.A § 4301 et seq.; TCA 8-33-109; TCA 49-5-702(a); Public Acts of 2018; Chapter No. 886
2. 38 U.S.C.A § 4301 et seq.; TCA 58-1-106(d); TCA 58-1-109

Cross References

Long Term Leaves of Absence for Professional Personnel 5.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Physical Assault Leave**	**5.307**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/19/19; 08/14/23**

General

Employees shall be notified of their right to report a physical assault to the appropriate law enforcement agency.[1]

An employee who is absent from assigned duties as a result of personal injury caused by physical assault or other violent criminal acts committed in the course of the employee's employment duties shall receive his/her full salary and full benefits until the employee is released by his/her physician to return to work or his/her physician determines the employee is permanently unable to return to work. Hourly employees shall receive an amount representing the average number of hours the employee works for the district per pay period along with their full benefits, if available, until the employee is released by his/her physician to return to work or his/her physician determines the employee is permanently unable to return to work. An hourly employee is not eligible to receive the continued pay and benefits if he/she has been employed by the district for less than one (1) full pay period.[2]

If the employee receives workers' compensation or other similar benefits, the Board shall pay the difference between that amount and the employee's full salary or average pay, as applicable.[2] The district shall pay the full salary or average salary, or the difference between the employee's full salary or average pay, as applicable, and the workers' compensation or similar benefits, if any, for up to one (1) year.

PHYSICIAN STATEMENT

A signed statement listing the cause of the absence shall be provided by the employee on forms furnished by the Director of Schools/designee and shall promptly be given to the immediate supervisor in support of all claims. A certificate from the physician on forms furnished by the Director of Schools/designee may also be required to verify the extent of the injury.[3]

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 915
2. TCA 49-5-714(a); Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 839
3. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.04(4)(b)

Cross References

Worker's Compensation 3.602
Sick Leave 5.302
Long Term Leaves of Absence 5.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Sabbatical Leave**	**5.308**	**01/13/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Employees shall be entitled to a leave of absence without pay not exceeding one (1) year to further education on a full-time basis, provided such academic work entails the minimum number of hours considered to be full-time per semester for the degree being sought. No employee shall be eligible for more than one (1) sabbatical leave every seven (7) years of consecutive service with the school district.

Cross References

Long-Term Leaves of Absence for Professional Personnel
5.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Legislative Leave**	**5.309**	**01/13/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Professional employees who have been elected to state or local law-making bodies shall be granted personal leave or leave without pay for the time those law-making bodies are in official session or while attending official meetings outside the session.[1]

In addition, professional employees shall be granted leave to serve on any board or commission of the state when the appointment is made by the governor or General Assembly. Such leave shall not be counted against any other accumulated leave credits. The employee shall notify the principal at least five (5) days prior to leave being taken.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-702(a); TCA 49-5-713
2. TCA 49-5-205

Cross References

Personal and Professional Leave 5.303
Long Term Leaves of Absence for Professional Personnel 5.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in January	**Vacations and Holidays**	**5.310**	**07/14/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/10/20**

HOLIDAYS

Paid holidays are established for all employees of the school district with the adoption of an annual school calendar. Holidays for which the employee will be paid are based upon the length of an employee's contract and will be shared with the employee as part of their annual work schedule.[1]

VACATIONS[2]

Vacation days earned by 11- and 12-month employees shall be communicated via their annual work schedule. Vacation time is not cumulative and the Director of Schools/Designee shall approve the use of a vacation day.

Employees who regularly work less than a full day shall receive vacation or holiday pay equal to the usual daily rate of pay.

Legal References

1. TCA 15-1-101
2. TCA 49-6-3004(b)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Personnel Health Examinations / Communicable Diseases**	**5.400**	**06/10/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

All employees, prior to entering service, shall present a certificate showing a satisfactory health record, when required by the Director of Schools/designee.[1] Employees shall inform the Director of Schools/designee whenever they contract a contagious or communicable disease.

An employee who has a communicable disease shall not perform his/her duties in any location where such might endanger the health of students. The Board shall require an employee to submit to a physical examination by a physician whenever there is reason to believe that the employee has a communicable disease.[2]

The Director of Schools/designee shall reassign or suspend an employee who is suspected of having a communicable disease which might endanger the health of students, pending investigation and final disposition of the case before the Board.

To assist the Board in making final disposition of the case, the Director of Schools/designee may refer the case to the County Health Office or other medical experts.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-404
2. TCA 49-2-203(b)(2); TCA 49-5-710(a)(7)

Cross References

Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)**	**5.401**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **5.201**	Issued: **02/12/07**

LIABILITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

No employee who is diagnosed with HIV infection or AIDS shall be prevented from continuing his/ her employment. No disciplinary action may be taken against an employee solely on the basis of HIV infection or AIDS. Action may be taken against an employee only if s/he is disabled and the disability interferes with his/her ability to perform the activities involved in employment duties. The Board shall make reasonable accommodation to enable the employee to perform employment duties as may be required by state[1] or federal[2] law.

HIV/AIDS TESTING

No school official can require any employee to undergo an HIV antibody test or other HIV-related test. This does not preclude school officials from requiring an employee to undergo an examination when another communicable illness is suspected.[3]

CONFIDENTIALITY

If information is received regarding an employee's HIV status, the director of schools may consult with the school board attorney on the appropriate course of action to pursue, bearing in mind the school system's potential liability for defamation, employment discrimination, and breach of confidentiality requirements.

Information about an employee's HIV status is not to be documented in the employee's personnel file and shall not be faxed.[3]

Information obtained is confidential and may not be released to anyone except:[2]

1. Persons named on an Authorization for Release of Confidential HIV-Related Information Form;
2. Persons listed on a court order, and
3. Persons authorized to receive such information without a release or court order according to TCA 68-10-113.

Under no circumstances shall information identifying an employee with AIDS be released to the public.

INFECTION CONTROL

To prevent and manage exposure in the workplace, all school system employees will receive in-service training and education annually regarding HIV/AIDS and OSHA's Blood-borne Pathogens Standard. The Board shall follow the most current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus, and Other Blood-borne Pathogens in Health Care Settings.[3]

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Annually, the director of schools shall ensure that all employees, including newly hired staff, receive current HIV training. These programs can utilize the educational/training resources of agencies or private institutions with personnel trained in the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention education.[3]

The director of schools shall be responsible for developing, revising and implementing the administrative guidelines and procedures for this policy. The director of schools shall be responsible for enforcing this policy by communicating it to all personnel and by providing necessary instruction to all administrators.

Legal References:

1. TCA 68-10-113
2. 20 USC 1232(g); 29 CFR § 1630.13(b)
3. TRR/MS 0520-01-03-.08

Cross Reference:

Section 504 & ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Hepatitis B (HBV)**	**5.402**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **5.202**	Issued: **01/09/95**

All schools shall provide a sanitary environment and shall establish routines for handling body fluids that are recommended by appropriate health professionals.[1]

All school district personnel shall be advised of routine procedures to follow in handling body fluids. These procedures shall provide simple and effective precautions against transmission of diseases to persons potentially exposed to the blood or body fluids of another. These procedures shall be standard health and safety practices. No distinction shall be made between body fluids from individuals with a known disease and individuals without symptoms or with an undiagnosed disease.

The administration shall develop, in consultation with medical personnel, a regulation to be distributed to all staff. Training and appropriate supplies shall be available to all personnel including those involved in transportation and custodial services.

In addition to insuring that these health and safety practices are carried out on a district-wide basis, special emphasis shall be placed in those areas of school district operation that potentially present a greater need for these precautions.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In all instances, district personnel shall respect the individual's right to privacy and treat any medical diagnosis as confidential information. The director of schools shall initiate procedures to insure that all medical information will be held in strict confidence. Any school staff member who violates confidentiality shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures.

Under no circumstances shall information identifying an employee with HBV be released to the public.

SAFETY

Employees who are at high risk of occupational exposure shall be identified and provided with personal protective equipment, including HBV vaccinations. Employees considered to be at high risk shall include custodians, school nurses, special education teachers and instructional assistants, playground supervisors, coaches and physical education teachers.

When any employee is known to have been exposed to HBV on the job site, the employee will be notified immediately by a supervisor, and the Board shall provide vaccinations.

The principal will ensure that an accident report is filed for all accidents. The report will include the employee's name, date of the accident, an explanation of the accident and the care used in treating the individual. These reports will be kept on file in the principal's office for a minimum of one (1) year.

EDUCATION AND UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

HBV education, including universal precautions on handling blood and other body fluids, will be provided to all school personnel and volunteers and may include members of the Board.

Legal References:

1. 29 CFR Part 1910.1030

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Drug & Alcohol Testing for Employees**	**5.403**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/14/19**

REASONABLE SUSPICION DRUG TESTING

If a supervisor observes or receives a report of conduct suggesting a potential violation of Policy 1.804, Alcohol & Drugs in the Workplace, the supervisor shall promptly inform the Director/designee. Upon reasonable suspicion that an employee's job performance or behavior may be impaired by illegal drugs, including improper use of prescribed drugs, or alcohol, the Director/designee may require the employee to undergo drug or alcohol testing.

An employee who is required to submit to drug or alcohol testing based upon reasonable suspicion and refuses shall be charged with insubordination, and necessary procedures will be taken to terminate the employee in accordance with board policy, and state law, where applicable.

An employee who tests positive on a reasonable suspicion test will be in violation of this policy and subject to termination.

The Director or his/her authorized designee are the only individuals in the district authorized to make the determination that reasonable suspicion or cause exists to order a drug screen and are the only individuals who may order an employee to submit to a drug screen.

Two types of cases for which reasonable suspicion procedures may be invoked are:

1. Chronic Case: Deteriorating job performance or changes in personal traits characteristics where the use of alcohol or drugs may be reasonably suspected as the cause.

2. Acute Case: Appearing in a specific incident or observation to then be under the present influence of alcohol or drugs, or investigation of an accident where the use of alcohol or drugs is reasonably suspected to be a contributing cause.

Circumstances under which substance screening may be considered, in either the chronic or acute cases, include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Observed use, possession, or sale of illegal drugs and/or use, possession, sale, or abuse of alcohol and/or the illegal use or sale of prescription drugs.

2. Apparent physical state of impairment of motor functions.

3. Marked changes in personal behavior not attributable to other factors.

4. Employee involvement in or contribution to an accident where the use of alcohol or drugs is reasonably suspected or employee involvement in a pattern of repetitive accidents, whether or

not they involve actual or potential injury.

5. Violations of criminal drug law statutes involving the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescription drugs and/or violations of drug statutes.

The circumstances, under which substance screening may be considered, as outlined above, are strictly limited in time and place to employee conduct on duty or during work hours, or on or in Board of Education property, or at school system-approved or school-related functions.

Drug and alcohol screening shall be conducted by Board approved, independent, certified laboratories utilizing recognized techniques and procedures. A breath analysis test will be performed by a certified Breath Alcohol Technician.

TESTING FOR CDL EMPLOYEES

All drivers and applicants for driver positions who are required to hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to perform their job function shall adhere to the requirements of this policy and all procedures relating to this policy.[1]

The use, possession, sale, purchase, or transfer of any controlled substances, except medically prescribed drugs on school property, while on school business, or while operating school vehicles and equipment, is prohibited. Drinking alcoholic beverages during working hours, four (4) hours before reporting to work, or having any measurable amount of alcohol in the employee's system during working hours is prohibited, whether on or off school property. Working hours include all breaks. Off-duty use of drugs and alcohol is prohibited to the extent that it affects the driver's attendance or performance and his/her ability to pass required Department of Transportation alcohol and controlled substance tests. Any violation of this policy is grounds for termination and possible legal prosecution.

The use of any prescription drug that could affect the central nervous system or one that would impair reaction time shall be reported to the Director of Schools/designee. Notice shall be given of non-prescription (over-the-counter) drugs being taken on a regular basis. The notice shall include the duration of ingestion and the possible side effects.

Procedures

The execution and enforcement of this policy will follow set procedures to screen bodily fluids, conduct breath testing, and/or search all employees/applicants for alcohol and drug use and those employees suspected of violating this policy who are involved in a reportable accident or who are periodically or randomly selected. The procedures are designed not only to detect violations of this policy but also to ensure fairness to each employee. Disciplinary action will be taken as necessary.

Implementation

The Director of Schools/designee is authorized to implement this policy and procedures for the drug testing program, including a periodic review of the program to address any problems, changes, and/or revisions of it, maintenance of all records required by the federal regulations, and determination upon board approval of how the program will be accomplished, whether in-house, contracted, or by consortium.

Dissemination

The Director of Schools/designee shall be responsible for communicating this policy and the procedures to all employees affected by this policy and shall be accountable for its consistent enforcement.[2] The Director of Schools/designee is designated to answer questions about this policy, procedures, and all other matters involved in alcohol and controlled substance testing of CDL drivers and the reasonable suspicion testing of all other employees.

Legal References

1. Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991, 49 USCA § 5331
2. 49 CFR § 382.601

Cross References

Alcohol & Drugs in the Workplace 1.804

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Discrimination / Harassment of Employees (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious)**	**5.500**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/10/99; 07/08/13; 06/10/19**

Employees shall be provided a work environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment (including the definition of antisemitism found in policy 4.100). It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or any student to discriminate against or harass an employee through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature.

Employee discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated.[1] Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures, or words, either written or spoken, of a sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious nature that:

1. Unreasonably interferes with the individual's work or performance;

2. Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment;

3. Implies that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of employment; or

4. Implies that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed employee.

Alleged victims of sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment shall report these incidents immediately.[2] This report shall be made to the immediate supervisor, except when the immediate supervisor is the offending party. If the immediate supervisor is the offending party, the report may be made to the Federal Rights Coordinator. Allegations of discrimination/harassment shall be fully investigated. An oral complaint may be submitted; however, such complaint shall be reduced to writing to ensure a more complete investigation. The complaint shall include the following information:

1. Identity of the alleged victim and person accused;

2. Location, date, time, and circumstances surrounding the alleged incident;

3. Description of what happened;

4. Identity of witnesses; and

5. Any other evidence available.

The privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses to complaints will be respected. However, because an individual's need for confidentiality shall be balanced with obligations to cooperate with

police investigations or legal proceedings, to provide due process to the accused, to conduct a thorough investigation, or to take necessary action to resolve a complaint, the identity of parties and witnesses may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know.

A substantiated charge against an employee shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including, termination. A substantiated charge against a student may result in corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including, suspension.

There will be no retaliation against any person who reports discrimination/harassment or participates in an investigation. However, any employee who refuses to cooperate or gives false information during the course of any investigation may be subject to disciplinary action. The willful filing of a false report will itself be considered harassment and will be treated as such.

An employee disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision by contacting the Federal Rights Coordinator.

Legal References

1. 29 CFR §1604.11; TCA 5-23-104; Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 293
2. 20 USCA § 1681

Cross References

Instructional Program 4.100
Equal Opportunity Employment 5.104
Complaints and Grievances 5.501
Title IX & Sexual Harassment 6.3041

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Prevention of Abusive Workplace Conduct**	**5.5001**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

All employees within the school district shall treat all other employees with respect and shall not engage in threatening, violent, intimidating, or other abusive conduct or behaviors.[1]

All complaints of inappropriate workplace behaviors shall be taken seriously and followed through to resolution. There shall be no retaliation against employees who report others for inappropriate behavior.

If a finding of unacceptable behavior at work is made, all employees shall cooperate with any disciplinary actions taken as a result of this policy.

ABUSIVE CONDUCT

Abusive conduct in the workplace includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Repeated verbal abuse;
2. Verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a threatening, intimidating, or humiliating nature; or
3. The sabotage or undermining of an employee's performance.

This type of conduct applies to written or electronic communications by employees. A single act shall not constitute abusive behavior unless such conduct is determined to be severe and egregious.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

Employees may report abusive workplace conduct to their immediate supervisor or Assistant Director of Schools if their immediate supervisor is named in the complaint. Complaints may be provided orally or in writing. If provided orally, the complaint shall be documented in writing by the individual receiving the complaint. Once the complaint has been fully investigated, the outcome will be reported to the Director of Schools/Designee.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

In the event of a finding of abusive conduct, the school district will take immediate and appropriate corrective action.

The immediate supervisor or Assistant Director of Schools shall be responsible for developing a corrective action plan for any employee found to have engaged in abusive conduct.

Legal References

1. TCA 50-1-501

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Complaints and Grievances**	**5.501**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/10/99; 07/08/13; 06/10/19**

EMPLOYMENT-RELATED COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

Conflicts shall be resolved as quickly as possible and at the lowest supervisory level.

In instances of questions by an individual staff member concerning the interpretation of policies and procedures to that staff member, administrative practices within the staff member's particular school, and relationships with other employees, the staff member concerned shall consult his/her supervisor. If a satisfactory resolution of the problem cannot be reached after ample opportunity for consideration of the matter, the staff member concerned may discuss the matter with the next level of supervision, up to and including, the Director of Schools.

In instances where an individual staff member feels, for personal reasons, that they cannot discuss a problem with their immediate supervisor, the staff member may take the problem directly to the Director of Schools. After review of the case, the Director of Schools shall take action as he/she deems appropriate, and within a prompt, reasonable time, shall notify all parties concerned of his/her decision.

HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCES

Employees shall notify any district complaint manager if they believe the Board, district employees, or agents have violated their rights guaranteed by the state or federal constitution, state or federal statute, board policy, or the following:[1,2,3]

1. Age Discrimination Employment Act;[1]
2. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act;[4]
3. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972;[5]
4. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;[6] or
5. Claims of sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.[7,5]

The complaint manager will endeavor to respond and resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure, and if a complaint is filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. The right of an employee to prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint shall not be impaired by the employee's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies, and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies.

Filing a Complaint

An employee who wishes to avail himself/herself to this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any district complaint manager. The employee may request a complaint manager of the same sex. The complaint manager may assist the employee in filing a grievance.

Investigation

The complaint manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his/her behalf. The complaint and identity of the complainant will not be disclosed except (1) as required by law or this policy; (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint; or (3) as authorized by the complainant. The complaint manager shall file a written report within ten (10) days of the filing of the grievance of his/her findings with the Director of Schools. If a complaint contains allegations involving the Director of Schools, the written report shall be filed with the Board. The Director of Schools shall keep the Board informed of all complaints.

Decision and Appeal

After receipt of the complaint manager's report, the Director of Schools shall render a written decision within five (5) days of the receipt of the report that shall be provided to the employee. If the employee is not satisfied with the decision, the employee may appeal the decision to the Board by making a written request to the complaint manager. The complaint manager shall be responsible for promptly forwarding all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Board. Thereafter, the Board shall, within thirty (30) days from the date the appeal was received, review the report, affirm, overrule, or modify the decision, and render a written finding that shall be provided to the complainant. This grievance procedure shall not be construed to create an independent right to a board hearing.

APPOINTING COMPLAINT MANAGERS

The Director of Schools shall appoint at least two (2) complaint managers, one of each gender. The Federal Rights Coordinator may be appointed as a complaint manager. The Director of Schools shall make employees aware of each complaint manager’s contact information.

Legal References

1. Age Discrimination Employment Act, 29 USCA § 621; 42 USCA § 6101; 34 CFR § 110.25
2. Equal Pay Act, 29 USCA § 206(d)
3. Immigration Reform and Control Act, 8 USCA § 1324
4. Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USCA § 12101
5. Title IX of the Education Amendments, 20 USCA § 1681
6. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, 29 USCA § 701
7. Title VII of Civil Rights Act, 42 USCA § 2000e

Cross References

Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
Equal Opportunity Employment 5.104
Discrimination/Harassment of Employees 5.500
Title IX & Sexual Harassment 6.3041

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Staff Rights & Responsibilities**	**5.600**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds: **5.114**	Issued: **5/13/24; 8/14/23; 11/13/17**

In fulfilling any rights and responsibilities, employees shall give proper consideration to the educational welfare of students and ensure that no conflict exists with their duties.

Each staff member has the right to a work environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment.[1]

Educators have the right to:[2]

1. Be treated with civility and respect;

2. Have their professional judgment and discretion respected;

3. Report any errant, offensive, or abusive content or behavior of a student to the principal and/or appropriate agencies;

4. Provide students with a safe environment;

5. Defend themselves and their students from physical violence or harm;[3]

6. Share information regarding a student's educational experience, health, or safety with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) unless otherwise prohibited;[4]

7. Review all instructional material or curriculum before being utilized by students;

8. Not be required to use his/her personal money to appropriately equip a classroom;

9. Report students who commit offenses of assault and battery or vandalism on school property endangering the life, health, or safety of others pursuant to state law;[5] and

10. Receive benefits in accordance with state law if the educator is a teacher who is on leave due to a physical assault or other violent criminal act committed during the course of employment.[6]

Each staff member has the responsibility to:

1. Make themselves familiar with and abide by the laws of the state, the policies of the Board, and the procedures designed to implement them;

2. To adhere to the Teacher Code of Ethics, to the extent applicable;[7]

3. Refrain from any sexually related behavior with students, including students who have graduated or withdrawn in the immediately preceding twelve (12) months;[8]

4. Exercise good judgment in selecting issues for discussion and balance the relative maturity of students and the students' right to know;

5. Be courteous and helpful in interacting and responding to parent(s)/guardian(s), visitors, and members of the public;

6. Keep all records and prepare and submit promptly all reports that may be required by state law, State Board of Education rules and regulations, board policy, and administrative procedures; and

7. Wear appropriate dress for work according to local school rules.

Legal References

1. 42 USCA § 2000e-2(a), (b); TCA 49-6-8004
2. TCA 49-5-209
3. TCA 49-6-2802
4. 20 USCA § 1232g
5. TCA 49-6-4301
6. TCA 49-5-714
7. TCA 49-5-1001
8. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 898

Cross References

Curriculum Development 4.200
Controversial Issues 4.800
Religious Content of Courses 4.804
Staff-Student Relations 5.610
Ethics 5.611

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Conflict of Interest**	**5.601**	**06/10/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

Administrative and supervisory personnel shall have no financial interest, directly or indirectly, in supplying books, maps, school furniture, or apparatus for the schools or to act as agent for any author, publisher, bookseller, or dealer in school furniture or apparatus; however, a spouse or family member of a principal, teacher, or other school administrative employee may participate in business transactions with the school district where a sealed competitive bid system is used, provided that the employee does not have discretion in the selection of bids or specifications.[1]

It shall be a misdemeanor for the Director of Schools to take any other contract under the Board, to perform any other service for additional compensation, to act as principal or teacher in any school, or to become the owner of a school warrant other than that allowed for his/her service as Director of Schools or as Secretary to the Board.[2]

PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Employees will not engage in, or have financial interest in, any activity that raises a reasonable question of conflict of interest with their duties and responsibilities as members of the school staff. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. School employees may not purchase for sale to students any goods or equipment or render any service to the school district on a commission basis;[1]

2. Employees who have patented or copyrighted any device, publication, or other item will not receive royalties for use of such item in the school district;

3. Employees will not engage in any type of work where the source of information concerning a customer, client, or employer originates from information obtained through the school district;

4. The Board shall make no purchase of supplies, materials, or equipment from a school district employee; and

5. Employees shall not solicit for the purpose of selling instructional supplies, equipment, and reference books in a territory that includes the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the students of the school in which the employee is assigned.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2003
2. TCA 49-2-301(c)

Cross References

Gifts and Bequests 2.401
Purchasing 2.805
Bids and Quotations 2.806
Purchase Orders and Contracts 2.808
Staff Gifts and Solicitations 5.605

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Staff Time Schedules**	**5.602**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

WORK SCHEDULES

The workday for full-time professional staff will be a minimum of seven (7) hours and thirty (30) minutes[1] and will continue until professional responsibilities to the student and the school are completed. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, student supervision, assigned duties, parent conferences, group or individual planning, and extracurricular activities may require hours beyond the stated minimum. Teachers shall be allotted an individual, duty-free planning period of two and one-half (2 1/2) hours each week to provide time for planning, preparation for effective teaching, and attention to major program improvement.[2] Work schedules for other employees will be defined by the Director of Schools/designee, consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act and provisions of this policy.

WORKWEEK DEFINED

Working hours for all employees not exempted under the Fair Labor Standards Act,[3] including secretaries, bus drivers, cafeteria, janitorial, and maintenance personnel, will conform to federal and state regulations. The Director of Schools/designee will ensure that job positions are classified as exempt or non-exempt and that employees are made aware of such classifications. Supervisors will make every effort to avoid circumstances which will require non-exempt employees to work more than forty (40) hours each week. For purposes of compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, the workweek for school district employees will be 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday.

OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME[4]

The Board discourages overtime work by non-exempt employees. A non-exempt employee will not work overtime without the express approval of his/her supervisor. All overtime work shall be expressly approved by the Director of Schools/designee. All supervisory personnel shall monitor overtime on a weekly basis and report such time to the Director of Schools/designee. Principals and supervisors will monitor employees' work, will ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the Fair Labor Standards Act are followed, and will ensure that all employees are compensated for any overtime worked. Principals or supervisors may need to adjust daily schedules to prevent non-exempt employees from working more than forty (40) hours in a workweek. Accurate and complete time sheets of actual hours worked during the workweek will be completed by each employee and submitted to the Payroll Clerk. The Payroll Clerk will review work records of employees on a regular basis to make an assessment of overtime use.

Non-exempt employees whose workweek is less than forty (40) hours will be paid at the regular rate of pay for time worked up to forty (40) hours. Such employees shall be provided overtime pay as provided for working more than forty (40) hours in a workweek.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

All employees are expected to be present during all work hours. Absence without prior approval, chronic absences, habitual tardiness, or abuses of designated working hours are all considered neglect of duty and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.31(5)
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.31(6); TCA 49-1-302(e)(2)
3. 29 CFR § 553.20
4. 29 CFR § 541.100—101, 200, 204, 300, 303

Cross References

School Day 1.801
Curriculum Development 4.200
Reporting Student Progress 4.601
In-Service and Professional Learning Opportunities 5.113

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Staff Meetings**	**5.603**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Staff meetings shall be held in each school for the purpose of promoting school improvement and professional growth and may be conducted by the principal, teachers, or committees.

All staff members are expected to attend all meetings called by the administration and all in-service programs designed to improve the total school, unless excused by the person calling the meeting.

Teachers' meetings may include, but not be limited to:

1. Meetings of the entire staff of the school;
2. Meetings of teachers in the same subject area or on the same grade level;
3. System-wide/school-level in-service meetings; and
4. Committee meetings dealing with specific issues.

Cross References

School Day 1.801
In-Service and Professional Learning Opportunities 5.113

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Staff Gifts and Solicitations**	5.605	05/13/24
		Rescinds:	Issued:

GIFTS

Employees shall not accept gifts from students unless the gifts are of token value only.

Individual employees shall not give gifts of material value to staff members who exercise administrative or supervisory jurisdiction over them.

Employees may collect money for group gifts subject to the approval of the principal.

Employees are prohibited from accepting things of material value from individuals, companies, or organizations doing business with the school district. Exceptions to this policy are the acceptance of minor items which are generally distributed to all by the companies through public relations programs.

SOLICITATIONS

No organization shall solicit funds from employees within the schools. Flyers or other materials related to fundraisers shall not be distributed through the schools without the written approval of the Director of Schools/Designee.

Employees shall not be responsible for the collection of any money or the distribution of any fundraising materials within the schools unless such activity has the Director of Schools/Designees' written approval.

Cross References

Advertising and Distribution of Materials in Schools 1.806
Gifts and Bequests 2.401
Fundraising Activities 2.601
Vendor Relations 2.809

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Political Activities**	**5.606**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **03/03/25**

Employees have a right to express their views on any issue, but shall in each case, make clear that the view expressed is not the official view of the Board or school district.

Employees may, on their own time, campaign for or against any candidate or referendum but are prohibited from using district owned property to engage in political activity. District owned property includes, but is not limited to: all buildings, signage, message boards, telephonic equipment, electronic equipment, and email accounts. District-owned property, including school buildings, district offices, and other facilities, shall not be used as a location for filming or recording content intended for political promotion or solicitation. Employees shall not use audio or video messages to engage in any political promotion or solicitation during school hours.[1]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2009

Cross References

Board-Community Relations 1.500
Advertising and Distribution of Materials in Schools 1.806

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Non-School Employment**	**5.607**	**05/13/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

A given professional position may require additional hours during evenings or other times when offices may be closed. Outside employment is regarded as employment for compensation that is not within the duties and responsibilities of the employee's regular position with the school district.

An employee will not perform any duties related to an outside job during his/her regular working hours or during the additional time that the responsibilities of the position require nor will an employee use any district facilities, equipment, or materials in performing outside work. This includes the Board's computer systems and networks and any configuration of hardware and software. The systems and networks include all of the computer hardware, operating system software, stored text, and data files. This includes, but is not limited to, electronic mail, local databases, externally accessed databases (such as the Internet), CD-ROM, optical media, clip art, digital images, digitized information, communications technologies, and new technologies as they become available. The Board reserves the right to have all technology resource activity monitored.

The Board's technology resources will be used only for learning, teaching, and administrative purposes consistent with the Board's mission and its goals. Commercial use of the Board's system is strictly prohibited.

When certain evenings, days, or vacation periods are duty-free, the employee may use such off-duty time for the purposes of compensation provided the following conditions are met:[1]

1. The work in no way interferes with the degree of effectiveness of his/her work in the school district;

2. The work in no way reflects detrimentally upon the school district or its prestige;

3. Such outside obligations do not prevent the individual from assuming duties required by the regular position; and

4. The individual does not receive compensation for work that is customarily within their regular position.

SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Support personnel shall not be prohibited from holding employment outside the school district so long as such employment does not interfere with regular and overtime scheduled duties for the school district.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-410

Cross Reference

Tutoring for Pay 5.608

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Tutoring for Pay**	**5.608**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/13/24**

Any teacher may enter into an agreement with parent(s)/guardian(s) for tutoring children for a fee, but this practice shall be limited to those children whom the teacher is not currently exercising teaching, administrative, or supervisory responsibility.[1] No private teaching or tutoring shall be done during the hours of the regular school day.

Any teacher who enters into a private tutoring agreement with a parent/guardian does so as an independent actor and not as an agent of the school district. The school district shall not be liable for any claims, damages, or liabilities arising from or related to private tutoring services provided by a school employee. The teacher providing such tutoring services shall assume full responsibility and liability, and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the school district, its board members, administrators, and employees from any and all claims, demands, actions, or causes of action arising out of or in connection with such services.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-1003(b)(11)

Cross Reference

Community Use of School Facilities 3.206
Non-School Employment 5.607

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Staff-Student Relations**	**5.610**	**05/13/24**
		Rescinds: **5.203**	Issued:

Staff members shall maintain professional relationships with students at all times and develop wholesome and constructive relationships with them.

Staff members shall promote a learning environment that encourages fulfillment of each student's potential in regard to his/her program, consistent with district goals, and with optimal opportunities for students. This goal may be reached by adapting instruction to individual needs by:

1. Insisting on reasonable standards of scholastic accomplishment for all students;
2. Creating a positive atmosphere in and out of the classroom;
3. Extending courtesy and respect to students; and
4. Treating all students with consistent fairness.[1]

Staff members shall use good judgment in their relationships with students beyond their work responsibilities and/or outside the school setting and shall avoid excessive informal and social involvement with individual students. Any appearance of impropriety shall be avoided. Sexual relationships between employees and students shall be prohibited.[1,2]

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-1003
2. TCA 39-13-506; TCA 39-13-527

Cross References

Staff Rights & Responsibilities 5.600
Ethics 5.611
Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation 6.304
Reporting Child Abuse 6.409

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Ethics**	**5.611**	**05/13/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

An effective educational program requires the services of men and women of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, all employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships. These standards include the following:

1. The maintenance of just and courteous professional relationships with students, parent(s)/guardian(s), staff members, and others;

2. The maintenance of their own efficiency and knowledge of the developments in their fields of work;

3. The transaction of all official business with the properly designated authorities of the school district;

4. The establishment of friendly and intelligent cooperation between the community and the school district;

5. The representation of the school district on all occasions that the contributions of the school district to the community are recognized;

6. The welfare of children as the first concern of the school district when placing professional personnel. The use of pressure on school officials for appointments or transfers is unethical;

7. Restraint from using school contacts and privileges to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda of any kind;

8. The responsibility to make any criticism of other staff members or of the school district directly to the particular school administrator who has the administrative responsibility for improving the situation and then to the Director of Schools, if necessary; and

9. The proper use and protection of all school properties, equipment, and materials.

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Cross References

Staff Rights & Responsibilities 5.600
Staff-Student Relations 5.610

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Interim Employees**	**5.700**	**09/27/21**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Certified and non-certified positions will be filled at the discretion of the Director of Schools in a manner that is the least disruptive on the educational process of students. Said positions shall be filled as quickly as possible to ensure a continuous function of the specified position.

Individuals hired on an interim certified contract shall only do so when a vacancy is created by an employee taking a leave of absence.[1] Such interim employees shall be considered as temporary replacements for the duration of scheduled leave and the contract term will not be considered as initial employment.

Persons filling any interim/temporary positions shall have no expectancy of continued employment beyond the duration of the contract, but such person may be considered for employment in filling subsequent vacancies. The contract of each temporary employee shall contain the following statement: *I understand that in filling a temporary position I have no expectancy of continued employment.*

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-203(a)(1)(A); TCA 49-5-702

Cross References

Application and Employment 5.106
Long-Term Leaves of Absence for Professional Personnel 5.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Substitute Teachers**	**5.701**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/13/17; 11/08/21; 08/08/22; 07/18/24**

Substitute teachers are those teachers used to replace teachers on leave or to fill temporary vacancies until a licensed teacher is available.[1,2] Substitute teachers may be employed and paid directly by the Board or by a third-party employer through an agreement between such third-party employer and the Board.

Substitute teachers employed by third party entities shall be subject to the same unemployment benefit eligibility conditions as substitute teachers employed directly by the Board.[2]

APPLICATION/QUALIFICATIONS

Criminal history record checks and fingerprinting of applicants for substitute teaching are required.[3]

Applicants with revoked or suspended licenses or certificates according to the State Board of Education shall not be hired.[4]

Qualifications for substitute teachers shall be determined by the Director of Schools/designee in compliance with board policy, state laws, and State Board of Education rules and regulations.

A list of substitute teacher(s) will be prepared by the Office Manager who will maintain file(s) which may include transcripts, credentials, recommendations, and other pertinent information.

COMPENSATION

If employed directly by the district, the compensation of substitute teachers shall be determined annually by the Board.

Retired teachers serving as substitutes who do not have an active teaching license shall be paid the same as a retired substitute teacher with an active teaching license. This only applies to teachers who retired after July 1, 2011 through July 1, 2016.[5]

CERTIFICATION

When substituting for a regular teacher who has been absent for thirty (30) consecutive days, a substitute teacher shall possess a teaching certificate with endorsement in the discipline(s) to be taught or shall be a retired teacher that held the appropriate endorsement.[6] When substituting for a teacher without sick leave, the substitute shall be certified and paid according to the state salary schedule.[1]

EMERGENCY NEEDS

All teacher aides, secretaries, and clerks are approved substitute teachers for use in emergency situations. Emergency use shall be defined as less than a full day due to the regular or substitute teacher being unable to arrive on time or remain for the full day.

Said substitutes shall receive the proportionate equivalent salary regular substitute teachers would receive under similar circumstances or their regular salary, if higher; however, they shall not receive pay for both positions at the same time.

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

The Director of Schools/designee shall be responsible for ensuring that there are appropriate training and development programs for substitute teachers that includes the annual school safety training required by state law.[7]

RESPONSIBILITIES

Substitute teachers shall assume the same responsibilities as the regular teacher, including but not limited to, bus duty and playground supervision.

RE-EMPLOYMENT/TERMINATION

On an annual basis, the Director of Schools/designee, with input from the principals, shall determine which substitute teachers performed at an acceptable level. Substitute teachers who performed below an acceptable level shall not be re-employed.

All substitutes shall be responsible for providing correct addresses and phone numbers and for notifying the principal and/or third-party employer if they wish to terminate their service as substitutes.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.04(5)
2. TCA 49-5-709
3. TCA 49-5-413(a)(2)
4. TCA 49-2-203(a)(14)(C)
5. TCA 49-3-312(b)
6. TCA 49-3-312(a); TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.04(5)(b); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 235
7. TCA 49-2-203(a)(14)(A); TCA 49-6-805(7)

Cross References

Background Investigations 5.118
Employment of Retirees 5.119

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Student Teachers/Interns**	**5.702**	**03/03/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Student teachers/interns shall be accepted or refused by either the principal or the cooperating teacher/mentor.

A student teacher/intern shall be granted the same protection of the laws as all other teachers/certified personnel and shall comply with all policies of the Board and observe all duties of professional staff as set forth by state law.[1]

In addition, student teachers/interns shall be required to fulfill all normal local responsibilities, both school and extracurricular, and shall familiarize themselves with the policies of the Board and procedures of the Director of Schools/designee.

No student shall have more than one (1) student teacher per year in a given subject. Any exception to this policy shall have prior approval from the Director of Schools/designee.

The evaluation of a student teacher/intern shall be based upon a joint agreement between the cooperating teacher and the student's supervising teacher/mentor.

A student teacher/intern may be asked to terminate his/her service upon the mutual consent of the principal, the cooperating teacher/mentor, and the university supervisor at any time during the term.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-5-403(c); TCA 49-5-201

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Director of Schools**	**5.800**	**05/11/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **03/03/25**

The Director of Schools shall be the chief executive officer of the school district and shall have, under the direction of the Board, general supervision of all the public schools, personnel, and departments of the school district. The Director of Schools is the only employee directly employed by the Board of Education. All other employees of the district are employed, supervised, and managed under the authority of the Director of Schools.[1]

The Director of Schools is charged by the Board with the responsibility to oversee and manage all personnel matters within the district, consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and Board policies. This includes hiring, assignment, evaluation, discipline, and dismissal of employees, as well as the delegation of such duties as appropriate.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301(a)
2. TCA 49-2-301(e)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Director of Schools Recruitment and Selection**	**5.801**	**11/08/21**
		Rescinds: **5.401**	Issued: **04/14/08; 07/08/13**

When a vacancy occurs, the appointment of a director of schools is a function of the Board.[1] The Board is responsible for finding the person it believes can most effectively translate into action the policies of the Board and the goals of the community and the professional staff.

The Board may employ a consultant to advise and assist the Board in the search and selection process. However, final selection shall rest with the Board after a thorough consideration of qualified applicants. An interim director of schools appointed during the time of a search shall not become a candidate unless the Board expressly permits such inclusion in the selection procedures. A board member may not apply for or in any other way be considered for the position of director of schools.[2]

Prior to conducting a search to fill the position, the Board shall initially develop the following: [3]

- a job description
- a timeline
- a process for accepting and reviewing applications
- selection procedures which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The Board may invite the community, including board employees, to participate in the process of selecting a director of schools. Resumes of persons interviewed by the Board shall be available in the central office for public inspection.

2. The interview process for each finalist shall include meetings with various staff and community groups and an interview with the entire board.

3. Candidates shall be interviewed by the Board in an open session. Only board members will be allowed to ask questions during the interview.

4. The Board will attempt to select a director by unanimous vote, but only a majority vote of the membership of the board shall be required for the appointment of a director of schools.

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Legal References:

1. TCA 49-2-203 (a)(13)
2. TCA 49-2-203 (a)(1)(D)
3. TCA 49-2-203 (a)(13)(B)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in February	**Qualifications and Duties of the Director of Schools**	**5.802**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **09/13/99; 05/14/18; 11/12/18; 09/27/21**

QUALIFICATIONS

1. A professional educator's license
2. A master's degree in education with a preference for a doctorate degree
3. Three (3) years of successful experience in school administration
4. Such other qualifications as the Board deems desirable

REPORTS TO: The Board of Education

SUPERVISES: All administrative and supervisory personnel in the district

JOB GOAL: To provide leadership in developing and maintaining the best possible educational programs and services

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY: The management responsibilities of the Director of Schools shall extend to all activities of the district, to all phases of the educational program, to all aspects of the financial operation, to all facility management, and to the conduct of such other duties as may be assigned by the Board. The Director of Schools may delegate these duties together with appropriate authority but may neither delegate nor relinquish ultimate responsibility for results or any portion of accountability.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

General Administrative

1. Provides leadership in identification of priorities and assures that all activities reflect those board-established priorities.
2. Prepares and recommends short and long-range plans for board approval and implements those plans when approved.
3. Prepares, in conjunction with the Chair, agenda recommendations relative to all matters requiring board action, including all facts, information, options, and reports needed to assure informed decisions. Provides advice and counsel to the Board on matters before it.

4. Attends all regular and special meetings of the Board and keeps a complete and accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Board and of its official acts.

5. Recommends drafts of new policies or changes to the Board. Anticipates potential problems. Recommends policies or courses of staff action.

6. Develops administrative procedures to implement board policy or for the items deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the schools and disseminates these procedures to appropriate staff.

7. Keeps the Board informed regarding development in other districts or at state and national levels that would be helpful to the district.

8. Ensures that all local, state, and federal standards for the health and safety of the students and staff are maintained and that required reports are maintained.

9. Fulfills all statutory obligations and implements the education laws of the State of Tennessee and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.[1]

Financial Management

1. Provides direction to and supervision of school business functions. Encourages development and implementation of sound business practices. Continually assesses business practices to achieve efficiency.

2. Prepares, annually, a budget and submits it to the Board for approval. Presents approved budget to the appropriate local funding body for adoption.

3. Makes appropriate written reports for the Board, detailing all receipts and expenditures of the school funds, and submits them to the local funding body.

4. Ensures that funds are spent prudently by providing adequate control and accounting of the district's financial and physical resources.

Personnel Administration

1. Establishes lines of authority which shall be approved by the Board and shown on the district organization chart. Lines of authority shall not restrict the practical working relationships of all staff members at all levels.

2. Employs such personnel as may be necessary within the limits of budgetary provisions and recommends to the Board teachers who are eligible for tenure.

3. Develops recruitment procedures to assure well-qualified applicants for professional and non-professional positions.

4. Assigns and transfers employees as the interest of the district may dictate and reports such action to the Board for information and record.

5. Holds meetings of teachers and other employees as necessary for the discussion of matters concerning the welfare and improvement of the schools.

6. Communicates directly, or through delegation, all actions of the Board relating to personnel matters to all and receives employees' communications to be made to the Board.

7. Evaluates principals annually.

8. Informs the Office of Educator Licensing of licensed educators or educators who have a temporary teaching permit who have been suspended or dismissed, or who have resigned, following allegations of conduct, including sexual misconduct, which, if substantiated, would warrant consideration for license suspension, revocation, or formal reprimand or who have been convicted of a felony. This report shall also be made if the licensed educator has pleaded guilty or nolo contendere to, or has been convicted or otherwise found guilty of such an offense or equivalent offense in another jurisdiction. The report shall be submitted within thirty (30) days.[2]

Instructional Leadership

1. Serves as the chief school executive. Ensures the development and maintenance of a positive educational program designed to meet the needs of the community and to carry out the policies of the Board. Ensures that a system of thorough and efficient education, as defined by state law, is available to all students.

2. Recommends to the Board for its adoption all courses of study, curriculum guides, and major changes in tests and time schedules to be used in the schools.

3. Oversees the timely revisions of all curriculum guides and courses of study.

4. Develops guidelines and direction for monitoring the effectiveness of existing and new programs.

5. Conducts a periodic audit of the total school program and advises the Board of recommendations for the educational advancement of the schools.

6. Seeks out available sources for grant funding to support programs and projects.

7. Ensures that the goals of the school district are adequately reflected in its educational program and operations.

Community/Public Relations

1. Promotes community support of the schools. Interprets district programs and services, reports, plans, events, and activities of interest and solicits community opinions regarding school and educational issues.

2. Identifies available community resources and links to social service agencies that support education and healthy child development.

3. Develops strategies to promote parental involvement in their student's education and provides opportunities for parent-teacher interaction.

4. Maintains contact and good relations with local media.

5. Ensures that the district interests will be represented in meetings and activities of municipal and other governmental agencies.

6. Represents the school district and its interests in community organizations, activities, and projects.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Serves in accordance with the terms of the contract between the Board and the Director of Schools. Salary to be determined by the Board.

EVALUATION: Performance of this job will be evaluated in accordance with provisions of state law and the Board's policy on evaluation of the Director of Schools.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS: The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by the person assigned to this position. They are not intended to be a complete list of responsibilities, duties, and skills required of personnel so assigned.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-301
2. TRR/MS 0520-02-03-.09(2); TCA 49-5-417(c); TCA 49-5-106(f); Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 577

Cross References

Executive Committee 1.301
Board-Media Relations 1.502
Administrative Procedures 1.601
Administrative Committees 1.602
Administrative Reports 1.603
School District Planning 1.701
Job Descriptions 5.103
Application and Employment 5.106
Evaluation of the Director of Schools 5.803

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Evaluation of the Director of Schools**	**5.803**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **5.402**	Issued:

Through an annual evaluation of the director of schools,[1] the Board will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Clarify the role of the director according to a job description as agreed upon by the Board and the director;

2. Develop harmonious working relationships between the Board and the director; and

3. Develop improvements in the administrative leadership of the school system.

The Board will develop, with the director, a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the system. The performance of the director will be reviewed in accordance with these specified goals. The performance objectives will be memorialized in an evaluation plan that includes, at a minimum, sections regarding job performance, student achievement, relationships with staff and personnel, relationships with board members, and relationships with the community.[2]

At a time agreed to by the Board and the director, the Board will meet as a body to evaluate the director's performance.

The following guidelines will be used in the evaluation process:

1. The director will know the standards upon which he/she will be evaluated and will be involved in the development of those standards.

2. A part of the evaluation may be a composite of the evaluation by individual board members, but the Board, as a whole, will meet with the director to discuss the composite evaluation.

3 The evaluation shall include a discussion of strengths as well as weaknesses.

4. Both the Board and director will prepare for the evaluation; the director will conduct a self-evaluation and board members will document the evidence used in rating the director's performance.

5. All documentation will be supported by objective evidence.

Legal Reference:

1. TRR/MS 0520-2-1-.01
2. TCA 49-2-203(a)(16)

Cross References

Board-Director Relations 1.205

Houston County Board of Education

6 – STUDENT

Descriptor Code	Policy Title	Issued Date
6.100	Instructional Goals	07/08/13
Attendance		
6.200	Attendance	07/13/26
6.2001	Attendance During Postsecondary Visits	12/10/18
6.201	Compulsory Attendance Ages	07/08/13
6.2011	Voluntary Pre-K Attendance	07/18/24
6.202	Home Schools	08/10/26
6.203	School Admissions	07/18/24
6.204	Attendance of Non-Resident Students	08/14/23
6.205	Student Assignment	07/13/26
6.206	Student Transfers Within the System	06/13/22
6.207	Withdrawals	09/23/19
6.208	Release During School Hours	12/12/16
6.209	Child Custody/Parental Access	06/14/21
Behavior and Discipline		
6.300	Code of Conduct	06/09/25
6.301	Rights and Responsibilities	05/12/25
6.302	Procedural Due Process	05/12/25
6.303	Questioning Students and Searches	07/13/26
6.304	Student Discrimination/Harassment and Bullying/Intimidation	06/09/25
6.3041	Title IX and Sexual Harassment	07/18/24
6.305	Student Concerns	12/14/20
6.306	Interference/Disruption of School Activities	07/13/26
6.307	Drug-Free Schools	07/08/13
6.3071	Student Alcohol and Drug Testing	06/08/26
6.308	Bus Safety and Conduct	08/11/25
6.309	Zero Tolerance Offenses	05/12/25
6.310	Dress Code	05/12/25
6.311	Care of School Property	06/09/25
6.312	Use of Personal Communication and Electronic Devices	06/09/25
6.314	Corporal Punishment	08/13/18
6.315	Detention	05/12/25
6.316	Suspension	07/18/24
6.317	Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority	06/09/25
6.318	Admission of Suspended or Expelled Students	08/10/26
6.319	Alternative Education	08/14/23

Student Welfare

6.400	Promoting Student Welfare	08/08/22
6.4001	Surveys of Students	08/14/23
6.402	Physical Examinations and Immunizations	08/14/23
6.403	Student Communicable Diseases	07/08/13
6.4031	Pediculosis (Head Lice) and Cimicidae (Bed Bugs)	10/28/24
6.404	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)	07/08/13
6.405	Medicines	07/13/26
6.4051	Glucagon and Diazepam Gel	10/28/24
6.4052	Opioid Antagonist	06/10/24
6.4081	Safe Relocation of Students	10/28/24
6.409	Reporting Abuse	07/18/24
6.410	Emergency Contact Information	10/28/24
6.411	Student Wellness	04/13/26
6.412	Emergency Allergy Response Plan	10/28/24
6.413	Prevention and Treatment of Sports Related Concussions	01/13/20
6.414	Prevention and Treatment of Sudden Cardiac Arrest	12/10/18
6.415	Student Suicide Prevention	08/08/22

Individual Needs Students

6.500	Special Education Students	03/14/22
6.503	Homeless Students	02/11/19
6.504	Migrant Students	07/08/13
6.505	Students in Foster Care	12/12/16
6.506	Students from Military Families	08/10/26

Student Records

6.600	Student Records	06/09/25
6.601	Student Records - Annual Notification of Rights	03/09/15
6.602	Student Records - Inspection and Correction Procedure	03/09/15

Student Activities

6.704	Student Publications	07/08/13
6.709	Student Fees and Fines	01/13/25

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Instructional Goals**	**6.100**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **IB**	Issued:

In order to establish an environment conducive to learning for each student, the Board establishes the following goals:

1. To assure all students the same educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, religion, ethnic origin, sex or disabilities.[1]

2. To protect and observe the legal rights of students;

3. To enhance the self-image of each student by helping him/her feel respected and worthy through a learning environment which provides positive encouragement from frequent success;

4. To provide an environment of reality in which students can learn personal and civic responsibility for their actions through meaningful experiences as school citizens;

5. To deal with students in matters of discipline in a fair and constructive manner;

6. To provide for the safety, health and welfare of students; and

7. To promote faithful attendance and good work.

Legal Reference:

1. 20 U.S.C. § 1703; TCA 49-6-3109

Cross References:

School District Goals 1.700
Instructional Goals 4.100
Discrimination/Harassment 6.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring: **Review: Annually, in March**	Descriptor Term: **Attendance**	Descriptor Code: **6.200**	Issued Date: **07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/14/25; 04/07/03; 06/11/18; 12/10/18; 08/12/19; 09/27/21; 08/08/22; 05/08/23; 03/11/24**

General

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement; therefore, students are expected to be present each day school is in session.

The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and disseminated to all students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, and administrative staff.

The Attendance Supervisor shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include:[1]

1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;

2. Alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;

3. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;

4. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and

5. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license withdraws from school.[2]

Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information without the consent of the student or parent(s)/guardian(s).[3]

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal/designee. Excused absences shall include:[4]

1. Personal illness/injury;

2. Illness of immediate family member;

3. Death in the family;

4. Extreme weather conditions;

5. Religious observances;[5]

6. Pregnancy;

7. School endorsed activities;

8. Summons, subpoena, or court order; or

9. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control.

The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:[6]

1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;

2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent for the majority of the day;

3. All student absences are verified;

4. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness; and

5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

TRUANCY

Annually, the Director of Schools/designee will provide written notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) that attendance at school is required. Students shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled school day in order to be counted present. Students may attend part-time days, alternating days, or for a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan and shall be considered present for school attendance purposes. If a student is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school district provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.[7]

A student who is absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Director of Schools/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's absence. If a parent/guardian does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences or request an attendance hearing, then the Director of Schools shall implement the progressive truancy intervention plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court.

Progressive Truancy Plan[8]

Tier I of the progressive truancy plan shall apply to all students within the district and include schoolwide prevention-oriented supports to assist with satisfactory attendance. These supports shall include, but are not limited to, all students and parents receiving information regarding truancy prevention. This information will be provided through district website, social media, automated calls/texts/emails, the Student Handbook, and enrollment packets.

Tier II of the progressive truancy plan shall be implemented after the student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, but before referral to juvenile court, and includes the following:

1. Mailed letter to parent/guardian.

2. A conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s);

3. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Attendance Supervisor/Designee. The contract shall include:

    a. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student;
    b. The period for which the contract is effective; and
    c. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court.

4. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress; and

5. A school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a student has been absent from school. The employee may refer the student to counseling, community-based services, or other services to address the student's attendance problems.

Tier III shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful, as is evidenced by the student accumulating ten (10) unexcused absences. Tier III may consist of the following interventions:

1. Mailed letter to parent/guardian;
2. Required attendance meeting with district truancy supervisor and family;
3. Review/revision of attendance contract;
4. Referral for appropriate supports (e.g., Truancy Intervention Class, Parenting Strategies Class, individual school program). The interventions shall address students' needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Director of Schools/Designee.
5. Non-compliance truancy petition with the juvenile court.

Transfer Students and Truancy Tracking

The district shall request attendance records for students enrolling after the start of the school year from the previous public school district. Unexcused absences accumulated at a previous district for the

current school year shall be factored into the student's placement on the truancy intervention plan tiers, if applicable.[9]

NON-SCHOOL SPONSORED EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY[9]

A principal/designee may excuse a student to participate in non-school sponsored extracurricular activities. The principal shall document the approval in writing and shall excuse no more than ten (10) absences each school year. No later than seven (7) business days prior to the student's absence, the student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of the student's participation along with a written request for the excused absence from the student's parent/guardian. The request shall include the following:

1. Student's name and personal identification number;

2. Student's grade;

3. The dates of the student's absence;

4. The reason for the student's absence; and

5. The signatures of the student and parent/guardian.

RELEASED TIME COURSE[11]

A principal/designee may excuse a student to attend a course in religious moral instruction for up to one (1) class period per school day. Students shall not be excused during any class which requires an examination for state or federal accountability purposes.

Students shall only be permitted to attend courses provided by entities that certify in writing that they have complied with the background check requirements outlined in state law.[12] The student shall submit a written consent form signed by the student's parent/guardian prior to participation in the released time course. The principal/designee shall document the approval in writing. The student shall provide documentation to the principal/designee as proof of the student's participation in the released time course.

The district shall not be responsible for transporting students to and from the place of instruction.

Upon submission of the student's transcript from the entity that provided the released time course, the student may be awarded one (1) unit of elective credit. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures with secular criteria for determining whether credit shall be awarded.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students shall be permitted to make up schoolwork missed during the excused absences. However, the student is excused for the day or days of absences, not the material covered in his/her classes. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility, not the teacher's, for make-up work in all subject matter covered during his/her absence. The time limit for make-up work is at the direction of the teacher. The student shall make arrangements for make-up work within three (3) working days, provided teachers are available.

STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENT

Students who are absent the day of the scheduled end-of-course (EOC) exams shall present a signed doctor's excuse or have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to receive an excused absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Excused students will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the EOC exam.

CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL

Credit/promotion denial determinations may include student attendance; however, student attendance may not be the sole criterion.[13] If attendance is a factor prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

1. The student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be advised if the student is in danger of credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism; and

2. Procedures in due process are available to the student when credit or promotion is denied.

DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION[2]

A student who has more than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) unexcused absences during any semester shall be ineligible to retain a driver's permit or license.

ATTENDANCE HEARING[14]

Students with excessive (more than five (5)) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the principal. If the student chooses to appeal, the student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist to excuse an absence(s) or to determine if the student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Director of Schools/designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Director of Schools/designee.

The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

Within five (5) school days of the Director of Schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record. Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools/designee. The action of the Board shall be final.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3006
2. TCA 49-6-3017(c)
3. 20 USCA § 1232g
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.17(5); State Board of Education Policy 4.100
5. TCA 49-6-2904(b)(5)
6. TCA 49-6-3007
7. TCA 49-6-3021
8. TCA 49-6-3007; TCA 49-6-3009
9. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 844
10. TCA 49-6-3022
11. TCA 49-2-130
12. TCA 49-2-130(i)
13. TCA 49-2-203(b)(7); TCA 49-6-3002(b)
14. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.17(7)

Cross References

School Calendar 1.800
Extracurricular Activities 4.300
Interscholastic Athletics 4.301
Field Trips/Excursions/Competitions 4.302
Reporting Student Progress 4.601
Promotion and Retention 4.603
Recognition of Religious Beliefs, Customs, & Holidays 4.803
Voluntary Pre-K Attendance 6.2011
Homeless Students 6.503
Students in Foster Care 6.505
Students from Military Families 6.506
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Attendance During Post-Secondary Visits**	**6.2001**	**12/10/18**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **12/10/18**

While postsecondary school visits are not required, any high school student wishing to participate in a postsecondary school visit during the school year shall submit to the principal/designee prior notice from his/her parent/guardian specifying the date of the school visit. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student shall be responsible for facilitating any postsecondary school visits and for ensuring the safety of the student during the visit.[1]

The principal/designee shall count a student **present** for no more than three (3) days each school year for students participating in a postsecondary school visit. The student shall be counted present for the day of the postsecondary school visit and shall not be counted present during any travel days.

In order to be counted present for the school day missed, the student shall submit to the principal/designee a signed letter or form from a campus official verifying that the visit to the postsecondary school occurred. The student shall complete any school work missed due to the student participating in a postsecondary school visit.

Legal References

1. State Board of Education Policy 4.100

Cross References

Attendance 6.200

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring: **Review: Annually, in April**	Descriptor Term: **Compulsory Attendance**	Descriptor Code: **6.201**	Issued Date: **07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **JBA**	Issued:

Children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) years, both inclusive, must attend a public or private school.[1] A parent/guardian or legal custodian who believes that their child is not ready to attend school at the designated age of mandatory attendance may make application to the principal of the public school which the child would attend for a one (1) semester or one year deferral in required attendance. Any such deferral shall be reported to the director of schools by the principal. Under certain circumstances the Board may temporarily excuse students from complying with the provisions of the compulsory attendance law.[2]

A child entering kindergarten shall be no less than five (5) year of age on or before September 30 of the 2012-13 school year, August 31 for the 2013-14 school year, and August 15 for all school years thereafter.[3, 4] No child shall be eligible to enter first grade without having attended an approved kindergarten program.[4] Once a child has been enrolled continuously for thirty (30) days, the student shall be subject to compulsory attendance laws of the state of Tennessee. If the Director of Schools, upon written request of the parent, finds that a child who is five years of age on or before September 30 (for school years 2012-13 and thereafter) is sufficiently mature emotionally and academically, the child may be permitted by the Director of Schools to enter Kindergarten.[3]

A child entering a special education program shall be no less than three (3) years of age.[5]

A person eighteen (18) years of age or older who applies for admission must have the application approved by the principal and director of schools when:

1. He/she fails to enroll within thirty (30) calendar days after school officially starts; or
2. He/she has dropped out of school and wants to re-enter.

The compulsory attendance law shall not apply to the following:[2]

1. A student who has received a diploma or other certificate of graduation;
2. A student who is enrolled and making satisfactory progress in a course leading to a GED;
3. A student enrolled in a home school who has reached the age of seventeen (17).
4. A student six years of age or younger whose parent has filed a notice of intent to home school;
5. A student mentally or physically incapacitated to perform school duties, such disability to be attested by a duly licensed physician, in accordance with state law.
6. A student who has attained their seventeenth birthday and whose continued compulsory attendance in the opinion of the Board, results in detriment to good order and discipline and to the instruction of other students, in accordance with state laws; or
7. A student meeting any other requirement of state law or state rules and regulations.

Legal References:

1. TCA 49-6-3001(c)(1);
   Covell v. State (1920), 143 Tenn. 571, 227 S.W. 41
2. TCA 49-6-3005; TCA 49-6-3001(c)(5)
3. TCA 49-6-3001(a); TCA 49-6-3001(b)(1)
4. TCA 49-6-201(b)(3); TCA 49-6-201(8)(d); TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(10)
5. 20 U.S.C. Sec 5. 1400-1485

Cross References:

Adult Education Program 4.208
Special Education Students 6.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Voluntary Pre-K Attendance**	**6.2011**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds: **6.210**	Issued: **11/13/17; 03/14/22**

The board may establish an early childhood education program to address the educational needs of eligible preschool-aged children. The program will provide educational services in accordance with state law and the policies, rules, and regulations of the state board of education and the department of education.[1]

While enrollment in an approved pre-kindergarten program is voluntary[2], attendance is a key factor in student achievement; therefore, students are expected to be present each day school is in session.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the site-level administrator. Excused absences shall include, but not be limited to:

1. The child has a personal illness or injury;
2. The child has other ongoing health related ailments which temporarily prevent attendance;
3. The child contracts a communicable disease (virus or flu);
4. Religious observances;
5. Death in the family; and
6. Limited medical/dental/therapy appointments.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Students who have four (4) or more unexcused absences within one (1) month shall be reported to the site-level administrator who will, in turn, contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student and determine the child's participation status in the program. The site-level administrator shall document all communication attempts to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the outcomes of those attempts.

Students who have five (5) or more unexcused absences in a three (3) month period shall be reported to the site-level administrator who will, in turn, contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student and develop an attendance plan with the help of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and other appropriate school personnel. The attendance plan shall:

1. Identify the reasons for the absences;
2. Include a specific plan and date for establishing regular attendance or alternative services that meet the student's educational goals; and

3. Include the documentation of services and student outcomes to determine the effectiveness of the attendance plan.

DISMISSAL

Students who are absent five (5) days or more within one (1) month or ten (10) days in one (1) year without adequate excuse may be terminated from the program. The site-level administrator shall submit dismissal documentation to the Department of Education's Voluntary Pre-K director for approval.

The district shall not dismiss a student without first implementing an attendance plan, unless there are special circumstances approved by the state VPK director.

Once dismissal is approved, a waiting list applicant who meets eligibility determinations may fill the vacant position.

The student may re-enter the program after a 30-day waiting period and a parent conference if there are any available vacancies.

DISTRICT VOLUNTARY PRE-K CONTACT

PK-5 Director of Teaching and Learning
931-289-4148

Legal References
1. TCA 49-6-101 et seq.; TRR/MS 0520-12-01
2. TCA 49-6-103(a)

Cross References

Attendance 6.200

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Home Schools**	**6.202**	**8/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **12/13/21; 07/08/13; 01/09/95**

General

A home school is a school conducted or directed by parent(s)/guardian(s) for their own children. Home schools which teach grades K-12 where the parent(s)/guardian(s) are associated with an organization that conducts church-related schools[1] are exempt from the following provisions but shall follow procedures issued by the State Department of Education.

A parent/guardian wishing to conduct a home school shall meet the following requirements:[2]

1. Provide annual notice to the Director of Schools before the commencement of each school year of the intent to conduct a home school;

2. Submit to the Director of Schools the name, number, age, grade level of children involved, location of the school, curriculum to be offered, proposed hours of instruction, and qualifications of the parent-teacher;

3. Maintain attendance records, subject to inspection by the Director of Schools;

4. Submit attendance records to the Director of Schools at the end of each school year;

5. Provide instruction for at least four (4) hours per day for the same number of instructional days as required by state law;[3]

6. Possess a high school diploma or a high school equivalency credential approved by the State Board of Education;[4]

7. Ensure the administration to home school students of appropriate tests approved by the State Board of Education or a standardized test selected by the parent-teacher that provides nationally normed analytics in English and math in grades five (5), seven (7), and nine (9);

8. Submit proof to the Director of Schools that other health services and examinations as required by state law have been received by the home school student; and

9. In the event of illness or inadequacy of the home school parent-teacher to teach a specific subject, employ a tutor having the same qualifications as required of parent-teacher.

If one or more of these requirements are not met, the Board authorizes the Director of Schools to take formal action to bring the child into compliance with the compulsory attendance law (until the child has reached age seventeen (17), either in the home school or in a public, private, or church-related school).

FACILITIES USE

School facilities shall be available for home school instruction only when *all* of the following conditions exist:

1. Special needs courses are being taught which require services unavailable to the home school student;

2. These services cannot be provided through any means other than the schools;

3. Requests for services are made known by the home school parent when notice is given to the Director of Schools of the intent to conduct a home school;

4. The Director of Schools investigates the request and makes recommendations to the Board;

5. No overcrowding, additional expenses, including providing transportation, or other special situations which interfere with the normal operation of the school district shall be incurred; and

6. Approval by the Board shall be on a case-by-case basis.

RECORD ACCESS

The Director of Schools, through the Attendance Supervisor, shall have the attendance records of the home school inspected at least two (2) times each school year in order to provide assistance in implementing the compulsory attendance law.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-50-801(a)
2. TCA 49-6-3050(b), (c)
3. TCA 49-6-3004(a); TCA 49-6-3050(b)(3)
4. TCA 49-6-3050(b)(4)
5. TCA 49-6-3050(b)(5); Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 912

Cross References

Compulsory Attendance Ages 6.201

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**School Admissions**	**6.203**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/11/02; 07/08/13; 06/14/21**

General

Any student entering school for the first time shall present:

1. A birth certificate or officially acceptable evidence of date of birth at the time of registration;[1]

2. Evidence of a current medical examination;[2] and

3. Evidence of state-required immunizations or exemption as authorized by state law.[3]

The name used on the records of a student entering school shall be the same as that shown on the birth certificate unless evidence is presented that such name has been legally changed through a court as prescribed by law. If the parent/guardian does not have or cannot obtain a birth certificate, then the name used on the records of such student will be the same as that shown on documents which are acceptable to the principal as proof of date of birth.[4]

A child whose care, custody, and support have been assigned to a resident of the district by a power of attorney or order of the court shall be enrolled in school provided appropriate documentation has been filed with the central office.[5]

A student may transfer into the school district at any time during the year if his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) moves his/her residence into the school district.

ADJUDICATED DELINQUENT STUDENT[6]

A principal or principal's designee may ask a parent/guardian in writing if their student has been adjudicated delinquent for an offense listed in TCA 49-6-3051 within thirty (30) days of the student first enrolling in the school and when any such student:

1. Resumes school attendance after suspension, expulsion, or adjudication of delinquency; or

2. Changes schools within this state.

This information shall be shared only with school employees who have responsibility for classroom instruction of the student, the school counselor, social worker, or psychologist who is developing a plan for the student while in the school, and the school resource officer. Such information is otherwise confidential and shall not be released to others, and the written notification shall not become a part of the student's record.[7]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3008(b)
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-13-.01(1)(a); 20 USCA § 1232h(c)
3. TCA 49-6-5001(c)
4. TCA 49-6-5106
5. TCA 49-6-3001(c)(6)
6. TCA 37-1-153(e), 154; TCA 49-6-3051; Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 721
7. TCA 49-6-3051(d)

Cross References

Admission of Suspended/Expelled Students 6.318
Homeless Students 6.503
Migrant Students 6.504
Students in Foster Care 6.505
Students from Military Families 6.506

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Attendance of Non-Resident Students**	**6.204**	**08/14/23**
		Rescinds: **6.204**	Issued: **03/11/02; 11/13/17; 06/14/21**

Students residing outside the boundaries of the school system may attend schools within the school system under the following conditions:

1. Their enrollment does not cause overcrowding (determined annually from BEP ratios), split classes, or additional staffing in the chosen school and must be approved by the director of schools and/or principals.[1]

2. They must pay a tuition fee (cost per family, not per student) established by the Board. Tuition may not exceed per student, per annum, an amount equal to the amount of funds actually used for school purposes by the school system per student during the preceding school year minus any funds received from the state or from the student's resident system.[2]

3. Full tuition must be paid ***prior to enrollment***.

4. When an LEA has created a regional school with a specific focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), a student transferring to the LEA will be followed by the local basic education program (BEP) school funds. No tuition may be charged by the receiving LEA.

5. Students who become residents of the school system will be returned any unused portion of the tuition on a pro-rate basis.

6. If an in-county student moves outside the county during the school year, they must immediately pay the prorated share of the established out of county tuition to continue to attend Houston County Schools.

7. Those employed by the Houston County School District but live outside the county, shall be allowed to enroll their children in grades K-12 in the school system without cost of tuition.[3]

8. To access Houston County educational services, out of county students must provide their own transportation.

9. Attendance may be denied at any time by the director of schools with a recommendation from the school principal, if the student does not adhere to the school and/or school system's rules and regulations, enrollment causes overcrowding (determined annually from BEP ratios), split classes, or additional staffing or false information was provided to the school system prior to enrollment.

Attendance of non-resident students must comply with all applicable State laws and regulations of the state board of education.

Legal References:
1. TCA 49-6-3104; TCA 49-6-3105; TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(11)(f-i)
2. TCA 49-6-3003; TCA 49-6-403 (f)
3. TCA 49-6-3113; TCA 49-6-3103

Cross Reference:
Foreign Exchange Students 6.502

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Student Assignments**	**6.205**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/14/21; 07/07/15**

TO SCHOOLS

Students, including those in kindergarten, are expected to attend the school to which they are assigned by virtue of their residence. Students will enroll in the school of appropriate grade nearest their residence.[1] Parents may be required to show verification of residency.

Parents who are dissatisfied with the assignment of their children may, within ten (10) days after the assignment, make application to the Board for a hearing requesting a transfer to another school.[2]

TO CLASSES

The principal shall be responsible for assigning all students to classes.

Students who enter the district from another school district are to be placed by the principal in the grade and/or level as indicated by records from the former school. If the student's placement is inappropriate in or level assigned, he/she may be reassigned by the principal to another grade level. Parents shall be kept advised.

The principal shall separate an alleged victim of child sexual abuse from an alleged perpetrator if the abuse allegedly occurred while the child was under the supervision or care of the school. If available and appropriate, a child shall be reassigned if a request is made by the child's parent or custodian and the perpetrator has been: (1) substantiated by the department of children's services; (2) adjudicated by a juvenile court to have committed the child sexual abuse; or (3) criminally charged.[3]

If an order of protection is issued to protect a student from another student enrolled in the same school, then the principal shall develop a student safety plan and implement it for the student who is named as the petitioner. This shall occur as soon as possible, but no later than five (5) school days from the date on which the school receives a copy of the order of protection. When reasonably practicable and appropriate, the building-level school safety team and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student named as the petitioner shall provide input into the plan. The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures to implement this process.[4]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3102, 3103

Cross References

Promotion and Retention 4.603

2.	TCA 49-6-3201	Transfers Within the System 6.206
3.	TCA 49-6-3102(h), (i)	Homeless Students 6.503
4.	Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 862	Students in Foster Care 6.505

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Student Transfers Within the School System**	**6.206**	**06/13/22**
		Rescinds: **6.206**	Issued: **12/10/18; 03/09/20; 06/14/21**

General[1]

Each year, the Director of Schools/designee shall review the number of spaces available in each school by grade, class, and program levels. This information shall be posted on the district's website along with the dates of the district's open enrollment period. The open enrollment period shall last for thirty (30) days and information about the number of seats available shall be posted for at least fourteen (14) days prior. The Director of Schools/designee shall reserve a reasonable number of enrollment spaces at each school to account for the enrollment of zoned students, siblings of students, and students who have a parent/guardian employed at the school.[2]

During the district's open enrollment period each year, a parent/guardian may request that his/her child attend a school within the district other than the one to which the child is zoned. The Director of Schools/designee shall review such requests, and if adequate space is available, grant such transfers. If the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces, the Director of Schools/designee shall implement a lottery to fill the available spaces.

A parent/guardian of a student who is registering for kindergarten may submit a request to attend a school within the district other than the one to which the child is zoned only *after* registration in the school of zone is completed. The deadline for submitting kindergarten requests will be the date designated for new student registration each year.

The open enrollment process shall be completed before other nonresident transfers are approved.

POST ENROLLMENT[1]

Once accepted, the student shall provide his/her own transportation to and from the school. The student must maintain satisfactory attendance, behavior, and effort to remain in the new school.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a transfer decision for the student may, within ten (10) days of the decision, make written application to the Board for a hearing to appeal the decision.[3]

A student shall not be permitted to transfer to a school out of zone after the transfer request deadline. Any exception to this policy shall be brought before the Director of Schools for evaluation and decision.

CHANGE IN RESIDENCE[1]

Students whose families transfer their residence to another school area after the first month of school may complete the school year at their former school. Students who present evidence that they will move during the school year and who desire to enroll in a new school in the new area may do so with prior written request for a change of school area.

The Director of Schools/designee may grant other exceptions to this policy for good and sufficient reasons.

NOTE: Not effective in the event of federally-mandated desegregation order.[3]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-128
2. TCA 49-6-3113
3. TCA 49-6-3201
4. 34 C.F.R. § 100.4

Cross References

Student Assignments 6.205
Homeless Students 6.503
Students in Foster Care 6.505

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Withdrawals**	**6.207**	**09/23/19**
		Rescinds: **JBCDB**	Issued: **07/08/13**

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures and forms to ensure adequate notification and subsequent documentation of the withdrawal of students from school.

Cross References

Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Release During School Hours**	**6.208**	**12/12/16**
		Rescinds: **JBF**	Issued:

The following procedure will be observed with regard to dismissal of students:

1. No student will leave school prior to regular dismissal hours, except with the approval of the principal and parent. Elementary students will be permitted to leave school prior to regular dismissal time only in the company of a parent, legal guardian, school employee, police officer, court officer, or a person designated in writing by the parent(s).

2. No student will be sent from the school during school hours to perform an errand or act as a messenger.

3. When dental and medical appointments cannot be scheduled outside school hours, parent(s) must send a written request for dismissal or call for the student in person.

4. Children will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child, or who is the parent or guardian registered on the school record.

5. High school students may be released for jobs and approved training at centers outside their home schools under regulations approved by the Board.[1]

Release of Students to Persons Exhibiting Risky Behavior

It is the policy of the Houston County Schools that school staff take specific precautions when a parent/legal guardian or other responsible person as designated by the parent, requests release of a student while exhibiting behavior that school staff deems may place the children at risk.

Release to Parent or Legal Guardian

School personnel may not withhold access of a child to a parent or legal guardian unless presented with a current court order or court approved parenting plan removing the rights of a parent or legal guardian from the child or a current court order restraining a parent or legal guardian from the child.

If the person requesting release of the child is a parent or legal guardian and is deemed by school staff as demonstrating behavior which may place the child in imminent risk, school staff will immediately call 911, local law enforcement or other emergency services prior to release of the child. Staff members will base determination of imminent risk on the observation of behaviors that in their view may result in the child being placed in harm's way. School staff may request the parent or legal guardian not to take the child and may call another parent or legal guardian or other approved responsible person but cannot physically detain the individual or refuse release of the child prior to the arrival of law enforcement.

Release to Other Authorized Individual(s)

If the person requesting release of the child is not a parent or legal guardian but is authorized to pick up the child yet is deemed by school staff as demonstrating behavior which may place the child in imminent risk, school staff will not release the child to such individual. Staff members will base determination of imminent risk on the observation of behaviors that in their view may result in the child being placed in harm's way. School staff will immediately contact a parent or legal guardian. Under no circumstances will school personnel release the child to the individual demonstrating such behavior even if the parent or legal guardian verbally authorizes such release. Staff members will call 911, local law enforcement or other emergency services if deemed necessary based on the behavior of person requesting release of the child.

Legal References:

1. TRR/MS 0520-1-7-.03

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Child Custody/Parental Access**	**6.209**	**06/14/21**
		Rescinds: **JBFA**	Issued: **07/08/13**

The Board presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student's custodial parent. Unless a Tennessee court specifies otherwise, the custodial parent shall be the one whom the school district holds responsible for the education and welfare of that child.

When the child is scheduled to reside an equal amount of time with both parents, the address of either parent may be used to determine school zoning.[1]

Parents or guardians shall have the right to receive information contained in school records concerning their minor child. [2] The Board, unless informed otherwise, assumes there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent's right to be kept informed of the student's progress and activities. If restrictions are made relative to the rights of the non-custodial parent, the custodial parent shall be requested to submit a certified copy of the court order which curtails these specific rights.

Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent, upon request, shall be given access to all of the student's educational records including but not limited to the student's cumulative file and the student's special education file, if applicable. [3]

No principal or teacher shall permit a change in the physical custody of a child at school unless:

1. The person seeking custody of the child presents the school official with a certified copy of a valid court order from a Tennessee court designating the person who has custody of the child; and

2. The person seeking custody shall give the school official reasonable advance notice of his/her intent to take custody of the child at school. [4]

Legal References:

1. TCA 36-6-415
2. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g
   (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974)
3. TCA 49-6-902
4. TCA 36-6-105

Cross Reference:

Student Records 6.600-604

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Code of Conduct**	**6.300**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 05/12/14; 05/13/19; 06/08/20; 06/13/22; 06/12/23; 07/18/24**

The Board delegates to the Director of Schools/Designee the responsibility of developing specific codes of conduct which are appropriate for each level of school.[1] Codes of conduct for students in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten shall utilize alternative disciplinary practices such as modeling, redirection, positive behavioral supports, individual behavior plans, and/or time out. Exclusionary discipline shall only be used as a measure of last resort.[2] The development of each code shall involve principals and staff members of each level and shall be based on evidence-based behaviors supports and interventions.[3]

The following levels of misbehavior and disciplinary procedures and options are standards designed to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and duties and to maintain a safe learning environment where orderly learning is possible and encouraged.[4] These misbehaviors apply to student conduct on school buses, on school property, and while students are on school-sponsored outings. Staff members have the authority to enforce the code of conduct[3] and shall ensure that disciplinary measures are implemented in a manner that:[5]

1. Balances accountability with an understanding of traumatic behavior;

2. Teaches school and classroom rules while reinforcing that violent or abusive behavior is not allowed at school;

3. Minimizes disruptions to education with an emphasis on positive behavioral supports and behavioral intervention plans;

4. Creates consistent rules and consequences; and

5. Models respectful, non-violent relationships.

In order to ensure that these goals are accomplished, the school district shall utilize the following trauma-informed discipline practices including but to limited to school-wide positive behavior supports, “Access for All” strategies, preventative strategies for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), individual behavior plans, and/or school Behavioral Support Teams planning and supports. Principals shall use appropriate discipline management techniques when enforcing the code of conduct.

MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL I

This level includes minor misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom guidelines or interferes with the orderly operation of the school but which can usually be handled by an individual staff member.

Examples (not an exclusive listing)

- Classroom disturbances
- Classroom tardiness
- Cheating and lying
- Abusive/inappropriate language
- Failure to do assignments or carry out directions
- Wearing, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment

Disciplinary Procedures

- The staff member intervenes immediately.
- The staff member determines what offense was committed and its severity.
- The staff member determines who committed the offense and if the student understands the nature of the offense.
- The staff member employs appropriate disciplinary options.
- The record of the offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the staff member.

Disciplinary Options

- Verbal reprimand
- Special assignment
- Restricting activities
- Counseling
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Behavior plan
- Office referral

MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL II

This level includes misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. These misbehaviors do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but have educational consequences serious enough to require corrective action on the part of administrative personnel.

Examples (not an exclusive listing)

- Continuation of unmodified Level I misbehaviors
- Using forged notes or excuses
- Disruptive classroom behavior
- Victimization of any student (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing)

Disciplinary Procedures

- The student is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action.
- The principal meets with the student and the staff member.
- The principal hears the accusation made by the staff member and allows the student the opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
- The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action and notifies the staff member of the action.
- The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.

Disciplinary Options

- Teacher/schedule change
- Peer counseling
- Referral to outside agency
- In-school suspension
- Detention
- Suspension from school-sponsored activities or from riding school bus
- Out-of-school suspension
- Individual behavior plan

MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL III

This level includes acts directly against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school.

Examples (not an exclusive listing)

- Continuation of unmodified Level I and II misbehaviors
- Fighting
- Vandalism (minor)
- Use, possession, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of tobacco or alcohol
- Use, possession, sale, or distribution of drug paraphernalia
- Use, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of drugs
- Stealing
- Threats to others
- Victimization of any student (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing)

Disciplinary Procedures

- The student is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action.
- The principal meets with the student and the staff member.
- The principal hears the accusation and allows the student the opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
- The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action and notifies the staff member of the action.
- The principal may refer the incident to the Director of Schools and make recommendations for consequences.
- The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.

Disciplinary Options

- In-school suspension
- Detention
- Restitution from loss, damage, or stolen property
- Out-of-school suspension
- Social adjustment classes
- Behavior assessment
- Behavior intervention plan
- Remandment to alternative school

MISBEHAVIORS: LEVEL IV

This level of misbehavior includes acts which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a threat to the safety of others in the school. These acts are so serious that they usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the Board.

If a student's action poses a threat to the safety of others in the school, a teacher, principal, school employee, or school bus driver may use reasonable force when necessary to prevent bodily harm or death to another person.[7]

Examples (not an exclusive listing; see Student Discipline & Behavior section of the district's current Student Handbook)[8]

- Continuation of unmodified Level I, II, and III misbehaviors
- Death threat
- Threat of mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity*
- Extortion
- Bomb threat*
- Possession, use, and/or transfer of dangerous weapons
- Bringing to school or being in unauthorized possession of a firearm on school property*
- Assault
- Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or a school resource officer*
- Aggravated assault*
- Vandalism
- Theft, possession, and/or sale of stolen property
- Arson
- Possession of unauthorized substances (e.g., any controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug)*
- Use or transfer of unauthorized substances
- Victimization of any student (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing)
- Electronic threat to cause bodily injury or death to another student or school employee

Disciplinary Procedures

- Law enforcement officials and the Director of Schools are immediately contacted, if applicable.[9]
- The principal confers with appropriate staff members and with the student.
- The principal hears the accusations and allows the student the opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified.
- Recommendations are made to the Director of Schools.
- The principal notifies the staff members of the resolution.
- If the student's placement is to be changed, adequate notice of the charges shall be given to the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and his/her right to appear at a hearing.

Disciplinary Options

- Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement
- Remandment to Alternative School

* Designates zero tolerance offenses.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-4005
2. TCA 49-6-3024
3. TCA 49-6-2801
4. TCA 49-6-4002
5. TCA 49-6-4109
6. TCA 49-6-4009
7. TCA 49-6-2802
8. TCA 39-16-517; TCA 49-6-3401(g); Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 882; Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 915
9. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 882

Cross References

Security 3.205
Traffic and Parking Controls 3.403
Procedural Due Process 6.302
Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation 6.304
Title IX & Sexual Harassment 6.3041
Interference/Disruption of School Activities 6.306
Bus Safety and Conduct 6.308
Zero Tolerance Offenses 6.309
Dress Code 6.310
Corporal Punishment 6.314
Detention 6.315
Suspension 6.316
Safe Relocation of Students 6.4081

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Rights and Responsibilities of Students**	**6.301**	**05/12/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

The Board expects all employees, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s) to assume the responsibility for appropriate behaviors in the school.

Each student has the right to:

1. Have the opportunity for a free education in the most appropriate learning environment;
2. Be secure in his/her person, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizure;
3. Be educated in a safe and secure environment;
4. Have appropriate resources and opportunities for learning;
5. Not be discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, or disabilities;[1] and
6. Be fully informed of school rules and regulations.

Each student has the responsibility to:

1. Know and adhere to the board's policies and the district's administrative procedures;
2. Respect the human dignity and worth of every other individual;
3. Refrain from libel, slanderous remarks, and obscenity in verbal and written expression;
4. Study and maintain the best possible level of academic achievement;
5. Be punctual and present in the regular school program;
6. Dress and groom in a manner that meets reasonable standards of health, cleanliness, modesty, and safety;
7. Maintain and/or improve the school environment, preserve school and private property, and exercise care while using school facilities;
8. Refrain from behavior which would lead to physical or emotional harm or disrupts the educational process;

9. Respect the authority of school administrators, teachers, and other authorized personnel in maintaining discipline in the school and at school-sponsored activities;

10. Obey the law and school rules as to the possession or the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and other unauthorized substances or materials; and

11. Possess on school grounds only those materials which are acceptable under the law and accept the consequences for articles stored in one's locker.

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 1703

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Procedural Due Process**	**6.302**	**05/12/25**
		Rescinds: **JCAA**	Issued: **07/08/13**

General

Before school authorities administer disciplinary measures, reasonable inquiry shall be made to determine the truth of what happened.[1] The nature of this inquiry will vary in degree with the seriousness of the offense and the consequence.

MINOR OFFENSES

For minor offenses where corrective measures are taken by the classroom teacher, no formal procedure is required. The teacher shall ensure the following:

1. The offender is accurately identified;
2. That he/she understands the nature of the offense; and
3. That he/she understands the consequences for the offense.

SEVERE OFFENSES

In cases of severe offenses where there is a possibility of suspension, the student shall be advised of the nature of his/her misconduct, questioned about it, and allowed to give an explanation.[2]

If a student is suspended more than ten (10) days, he/she shall receive notice of the right to appeal to the Disciplinary Hearing Authority (if applicable).[3]

Legal References

1. *Ingraham v. Wright*, 430 U.S. 651 (1977)
2. *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975)
3. TCA 49-6-3401(c)(4)(A)—(B)

Cross References

Code of Conduct 6.300
Interrogations and Searches 6.303
Suspension 6.316
Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Questioning Students and Searches**	**6.303**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **06/09/25; 05/12/25; 06/12/23; 07/08/13; 11/11/02**

QUESTIONING BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Students may be questioned by teachers or principals about any matter pertaining to the operation of a school and/or the enforcement of its rules. Questioning shall be conducted discreetly and under circumstances which will avoid unnecessary embarrassment to the student. Any student answering falsely or evasively or refusing to answer a question may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension.

If a student is suspected or accused of misconduct or infraction of the student code of conduct, the principal may question the student without the presence of parent(s)/guardian(s).

INTERROGATIONS BY POLICE AT ADMINISTRATOR'S REQUEST

If the principal has requested assistance by law enforcement to investigate a crime involving his/her school, the police may interrogate a student suspect in school during school hours. The principal shall first attempt to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student unless circumstances require otherwise. However, the interrogation may proceed without attendance of the parent(s)/guardian(s), but the principal/designee shall be present during the interrogation.[1]

POLICE-INITIATED INTERROGATIONS

If the police deem circumstances of sufficient urgency to interrogate students at school for unrelated crimes committed outside of school hours, the police department should first contact the principal regarding the planned interrogation and inform him/her of the probable cause to investigate. The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the interrogation unless circumstances require otherwise. The interrogation may proceed without attendance of the parent(s)/guardian(s), but the principal/designee shall be present during the interrogation.

SEARCHES BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The school principal shall authorize all searches at the outset per state law.[2] All principal initiated searches shall be conducted by a school security officer, or a school administrator or school employee designated by the Director of Schools/Designee who has completed the state required orientation and training.[2,3] The following conditions shall apply to principal initiated searches:

1. All the following standards of reasonableness must be met:
    a. A particular student has violated school policy;

b. The search will yield evidence of the violation of school policy or will lead to finding dangerous weapons, drugs, or drug paraphernalia;
c. The search is in pursuit of legitimate interests of the school in maintaining order, discipline, safety, supervision, and education;
d. The search is not conducted for the sole purpose of discovering evidence to be used in criminal prosecution; and
e. The search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive considering the age and sex of the student (Sex shall be defined as the "immutable characteristics of the person's reproductive system that identify the person as male or female, as determined by anatomy and genetics existing at the time of birth.") as well as the nature of the alleged infraction;[4]

2. A school administrator shall be on-site at any principal-initiated search;

3. A school administrator shall oversee the search and may end the search at any time; and

4. If a student is under the age of eighteen (18), the principal must notify the student's parent or guardian within a reasonable time of the search.[7]

If a school resource officer searches a student, based on having probable cause, the principal shall notify the Director of Schools/designee.[5]

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures regarding the searching of students, lockers, vehicles, and containers which are consistent with state law. The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop additional procedures to ensure compliance with all of the provisions of the School Security Act of 1981.[6]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-4203(b)
2. TCA 49-6-4204(a); TCA 49-6-4205(a)
3. TCA 49-6-4212; Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 1040
4. TCA 49-6-4205(b); Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 938
5. State v. R.D.S., No. M200801724COAR3JV, 2009 WL 2136324, at *1 (Tenn. Ct. App. July 16, 2009)
6. TCA 49-6-4201; Tenn. Op. Att'y Gen. No. 14-21 (February 24, 2014)
7. TCA 49-6-4205(a)

Cross References

Traffic and Parking Controls 3.403
Procedural Due Process 6.302
Reporting Child Abuse 6.409

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation**	**6.304**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/12/12; 07/11/16; 12/14/20; 06/13/22**

In order to maintain a safe, civil, and supportive environment in school for students to learn and achieve high academic standards, acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, discrimination (including the definition of antisemitism found in policy 4.100), harassment, intimidation, hazing, or any other victimization of students, based on any actual or perceived traits or characteristics, are prohibited.[1]

This policy shall be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s).[2] This policy shall cover employees, employees' behaviors, students, and students' behaviors while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation, or at any official school bus stop. If the act takes place off of school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity, this policy is in effect if the conduct is directed specifically at a student and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the education environment or learning process.

The principal/designee is responsible for educating and training respective staff and students as to the definition and recognition of discrimination/harassment.[3]

The Director of Schools shall develop forms and procedures to ensure compliance with the requirements of this policy and state law.

DEFINITIONS[4]

"Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment" is an act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, and the act has the effect of:

1. Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;

2. Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;

3. Causing emotional distress to a student; or

4. Creating a hostile educational environment.

Bullying, intimidation, or harassment may also be unwelcome conduct based on a protected class (race, nationality, origin, color, sex, age, disability, religion) that is severe, pervasive, or persistent and creates a hostile environment.

"Cyber-bullying" is a form of bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones or other wireless telecommunication devices, text messaging, emails, social networking sites, instant messaging, videos, web sites, or fake profiles.

"Hazing" is an intentional or reckless act by a student or group of students that is directed against any other student(s) that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of the student(s) or that induces or coerces a student to endanger his/her mental or physical health or safety. Coaches and other employees of the school district shall not encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate hazing activities.

Hazing does not include customary athletic events or similar contests or competitions and is limited to those actions taken and situations created in connection with initiation into or affiliation with any organization. [5]

COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Any individual who has knowledge of behaviors that may constitute a violation of this policy shall promptly report such information to the principal/designee.[6]

While reports may be made anonymously, an individual's need for confidentiality shall be balanced with obligations to cooperate with police investigations or legal proceedings, to provide due process to the accused, to conduct a thorough investigation, or to take necessary actions to resolve a complaint. The identity of parties and witnesses may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know.

The principal/designee at each school shall be responsible for investigating and resolving complaints. Once a report is received, the principal/designee shall initiate an investigation within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the report. If an investigation is not initiated within forty-eight (48) hours, the principal/designee shall provide the Director of Schools with appropriate documentation detailing the reasons why the investigation was not initiated within the required timeframe.[7] The principal/designee shall immediately notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student is involved in an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying. The principal/designee shall provide information on district counseling and support services. Students involved in an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying shall be referred to the appropriate school counselor by the principal/designee when deemed necessary.[8]

The principal/designee is responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy, and such act shall be held to violate this policy when it meets one of the following conditions:

1. It places the student in reasonable fear or harm for the student's person or property;

2. It has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;

3. It has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or

4. It has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Upon the determination of a violation, the principal/designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. All investigations shall be completed and appropriate intervention taken within twenty (20) calendar days from the receipt of the initial report.[7] If the investigation is not complete or intervention has not taken place within twenty (20) calendar days, the principal/designee shall provide the Director of Schools with appropriate documentation detailing the reasons why the investigation has not been completed or the appropriate intervention has not taken place.[7] Within the parameters of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act,[9] a written report on the investigation will be delivered to all involved parties and the Director of Schools.

RESPONSE AND PREVENTION[10]

The principal/designee shall consider the nature and circumstances of the incident, the age of the individual, the degree of harm, previous incidences or patterns of behavior, or any other factors, as appropriate, to properly respond to each situation.

A substantiated charge against an employee shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. The employee may appeal this decision by contacting the Federal Rights Coordinator.

A substantiated charge against a student may result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including suspension. The student may appeal this decision in accordance with disciplinary policies and procedures.

REPORTS

When a complaint is filed alleging a violation of this policy where there is physical harm or the threat of physical harm to a student or a student's property, the principal/designee of each middle school, junior high school, or high school shall report the findings and any disciplinary actions taken to the Director of Schools and the Chair of the Board.[11]

By July 1st of each year, the Director of Schools/designee shall prepare a report of all of the bullying cases brought to the attention of school officials during the prior academic year. The report shall also indicate how the cases were resolved and/or the reasons they are still pending. This report shall be presented to the Board at its regular July meeting, and it shall be submitted to the state department of education by August 1st.[12]

RETALIATION AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Retaliation against any person who reports or assists in any investigation of an act alleged in this policy is prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in retaliation shall be determined by the principal/designee after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.[13]

False accusations accusing another person of having committed an act prohibited under this policy are prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including expulsion.[14]

Legal References	Cross References
1. TCA 49-6-4503(a), (b)(3); 20 USCA §§ 1681 to 1686	Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
2. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(11)	Instructional Program 4.100
3. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(12)	Staff-Student Relations 5.610
4. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(2), (13)	Student Goals 6.100
5. TCA 49-2-120	Title IX & Sexual Harassment 6.3041
6. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(5)	Code of Conduct 6.300
7. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(6)	Student Concerns 6.305
8. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(14)	Reporting Child Abuse 6.409
9. 20 USCA § 1232g	Emergency Contact Information 6.410
10. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(4), (7)-(8)	Student Suicide Prevention 6.415
11. TCA 49-6-4503(d)(3)	
12. TCA 49-6-4503(c)(2)(B)	
13. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(9)	
14. TCA 49-6-4503(b)(10)	

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Title IX & Sexual Harassment**	**6.3041**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **12/14/20**

General

In order to maintain a safe, civil, and supportive learning environment, all forms of sexual harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex are prohibited.[1] This policy shall cover employees, employees' behaviors, students, and students' behaviors while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation, or at any official school bus stop in accordance with federal law. This policy shall be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s).[2] The Title IX Coordinator as well as any personnel chosen to facilitate the grievance process shall not have a conflict of interest against any party of the complaint.[3] These individuals shall receive training as to how to promptly and equitably resolve student and employee complaints.[3]

All employees shall receive training on complying with this policy and federal law.[4]

TITLE IX COORDINATOR[5]

The Title IX Coordinator shall respond promptly to all general reports as well as formal complaints of sexual harassment. He/she shall be kept informed by school-level personnel of all investigations and shall provide input on an ongoing basis as appropriate.

Any individual may contact the Title IX Coordinator at any time using the information below:

Title: Assistant Director of Schools/Title IX Coordinator

Mailing address: 6420 Hwy 13S PO Box 209 Erin, TN 37061

Phone number: (931) 289-4148

Email: civilrightscomplaints@houstonk12tn.net

DEFINITIONS[4]

“Complainant” is an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

“Respondent” is an individual who is reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

“Sexual harassment” is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:[3]

1. A school district employee conditioning an aid, benefit, or service of an education program or activity on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the education program or activity; or

3. Sexual assault,[6] dating violence,[7]domestic violence,[8] or stalking[9] as defined in state and federal law.

Behaviors that constitute sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

1. Sexually suggestive remarks;

2. Verbal harassment or abuse;

3. Sexually suggestive pictures;

4. Sexually suggestive gesturing;

5. Harassing or sexually suggestive or offensive messages that are written or electronic;

6. Subtle or direct propositions for sexual favors; and

7. Touching of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may be directed against a particular person or persons, or a group, whether of the opposite sex or the same sex.

"Supportive measures" are non-disciplinary, non-punitive, individualized services and shall be offered to the complainant and the respondent, as appropriate. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Counseling;

2. Course modifications;

3. Schedule changes; and

4. Increased monitoring or supervision.

The measures offered to the complainant and the respondent shall remain confidential to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the school district to provide the supportive measures.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Upon learning of an instance of alleged sexual harassment, even if no formal complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator shall:

1. Promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures;

2. Consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;

3. Inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures; and

4. Explain the process for filing a formal complaint.[10]

While the school district will respect the confidentiality of the complainant and the respondent as much as possible, some information may need to be disclosed to appropriate individuals. All disclosures shall be consistent with the school district's legal obligations and the necessity to investigate allegations of harassment and take disciplinary action.

Disciplinary consequences or sanctions shall not be initiated against the respondent until the grievance process has been completed. Unless there is an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student arising from the allegation of sexual harassment that justifies removal, the respondent's placement shall not be changed.[11] If the respondent is an employee, he/she may be placed on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance process.[12] The Title IX Coordinator shall keep the Director of Schools informed of any employee respondents so that he/she can make any necessary reports to the State Board of Education in compliance with state law.[13]

Complaints

Any individual who has knowledge of behaviors that may constitute a violation of this policy shall immediately report such information to the Title IX Coordinator, however, nothing in this policy requires a complainant to either report or file a formal complaint within a certain timeframe. If the complaint involves the Title IX Coordinator, the complaint shall be filed with the Director of Schools.

If a complaint involves allegations of child abuse, including child abuse on school grounds, appropriate notification shall be made per the board policy on reporting child abuse.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly:[14]

1. Provide written notice of the allegations, and the grievance process to all known parties to give the respondent time to prepare a response before an initial interview;

2. Inform the parties of the prohibition against making false statement or knowingly submitting false information;

3. Inform the parties that they may have an advisor present during any subsequent meetings; and

4. Offer supportive measures in an equitable manner to both parties.

If the Title IX Coordinator dismisses a complaint, written notice, including the reasons for dismissal, shall be provided to both parties simultaneously.[15]

Investigations[16]

The Title IX Coordinator shall serve as the investigator and be responsible for investigating complaints in an equitable manner that involves an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence. The burden for obtaining evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on the school district and not the complainant or respondent.

Once a complaint is received, the investigator shall initiate an investigation within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the complaint. If an investigation is not initiated within forty-eight (48) hours, the investigator shall provide the Title IX Coordinator with appropriate documentation detailing the reasons why the investigation was not initiated within the required timeframe.

All investigations shall be completed within twenty (20) calendar days from the receipt of the initial complaint. If the investigation is not complete within twenty (20) calendar days, the investigator shall provide the Title IX Coordinator with appropriate documentation detailing the reasons why the investigation has not been completed.

All investigations shall:

1. Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and evidence;

2. Not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or gather and present relevant evidence;

3. Refrain from requiring, allowing, relying upon, or otherwise using questions or evidence that seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege unless such privilege has been waived;[17]

4. Provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding;

5. Provide to parties whose participation is requested written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews, or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate;

6. Provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint; and

7. Result in the creation of an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.

    a. Prior to the completion of the investigative report, the investigator shall send to each party the evidence subject to inspection and review. All parties shall have at least ten (10) days to submit a written response which shall be taken into consideration in creating the final report.

Within the parameters of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act,[18] the Title IX Coordinator shall keep the complainant and the respondent informed of the status of the investigation process. At the close of the investigation, a written final report on the investigation will be delivered to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the complainant, parent(s)/guardian(s) of the respondent, and to the Director of Schools.

Determination of Responsibility[19]

The respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.[20] The preponderance of the evidence standard shall be used in making this determination.[21]

A Complaint Committee, comprised of three (3) district administrators, shall convene and act as the decision-maker. They shall receive the final report of the investigation and allow each party the opportunity to submit written questions that he/she wants asked of any party or witness prior to the determining responsibility.

The Complaint Committee shall make a determination regarding responsibility and provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously along with information about how to file an appeal.

A substantiated charge against a student may result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. A substantiated charge against an employee shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

After a determination of responsibility is made, the Title IX Coordinator shall work with the complainant to determine if further supportive measures are necessary. The Title IX Coordinator shall also determine whether any other actions are necessary to prevent reoccurrence of the harassment.

APPEALS[22]

Either party may appeal from a determination of responsibility based on a procedural irregularity that affected the outcome, new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the determination that could affect the outcome, or an alleged conflict of interest on the part of the Title IX Coordinator or any personnel chosen to facilitate the grievance process. Appeals shall be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator within ten (10) days of a determination of responsibility.

Upon receipt of an appeal, the Title IX Coordinator shall:

1. Notify the Director of Schools, who shall act as the impartial hearing officer, within five (5) days of receipt of the appeal; and

2. Notify the parties in writing.

During the appeal process, the parties shall have a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit written statements. Within ten (10) calendar days, the hearing officer shall issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result. The written decision shall be provided simultaneously to both parties.

RETALIATION[23]

Retaliation against any person who makes a report or complaint or assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any investigation of an act alleged in this policy is prohibited.

Legal References

1. 34 CFR § 106.1
2. 34 CFR § 106.8(b),(c)
3. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(1)(iii); 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(10)(D)
4. 34 CFR § 106.30(a)
5. 34 CFR § 106.8(a)
6. 20 USCA 1092(f)(6)(A)(v); TCA 36-3-601(10); TCA 71-6-302
7. 34 USCA 12291(a)(10)
8. 34 USCA 12291(a)(8); TCA 40-14-109
9. 34 USCA 12291(a)(30); TCA 39-17-315; TCA 36-3-601(11)
10. 34 CFR § 106.44(a)
11. 34 CFR § 106.44(c)
12. 34 CFR § 106.44(d)
13. TRR/MS 0520-02-03-.09(2); TCA 49-5-417(c)
14. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(2)
15. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(3)
16. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(5); 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(1)(v)
17. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(1)(x)
18. 20 USCA § 1232g
19. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(7)
20. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(1)(iv)
21. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(1)(vii)
22. 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(8)
23. 34 CFR § 106.71

Cross References

Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
Discrimination/Harassment of Employees (Sexual, Racial, Ethnic, Religious) 5.500
Complaints and Grievances 5.501
Staff-Student Relations 5.610
Code of Conduct 6.300
Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation 6.304
Student Concerns 6.305
Reporting Child Abuse 6.409

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Student Concerns**	**6.305**	**12/14/20**
		Rescinds: **JCACA**	Issued: **07/08/13**

Decisions made by school personnel, such as aides, teachers, or assistant principals, which students believe are unfair or in violation of pertinent policies of the Board or individual school rules may be appealed to the school principal/designee. To appeal, students shall contact the principal's office in their school and provide their name, the issue, and the reason for their appeal on a printed form available at the school office within two (2) days. The appeal shall be decided confidentially and promptly, preferably within 10 school days.

However, if the principal does not make a decision within 15 school days, students or parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal at that time by contacting the Director of Schools/designee at the central office. The information provided should include the student's name, the school, and a description of the problem.

An investigation and decision shall be made within two (2) school days and communicated to the school principal and student by telephone. A written copy of the decision also shall be sent to the student and the principal.

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Cross References

Appeals To & Appearances Before the Board 1.404
Instructional Program 4.100
Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation 6.304
Title IX & Sexual Harassment 6.3041

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Interference/Disruption of School Activities**	**6.306**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds: **JCB/JCBB**	Issued: **05/12/25; 01/09/95; 07/08/13; 12/13/21**

General

A student shall not engage in conduct which causes the disruption or interference with the operation of the school while on school property, in school vehicles or buses, or at school-sponsored events, whether on or off campus. The student shall not urge other students to engage in such conduct.

Employees are authorized to take reasonable measures to establish appropriate school behavior and have the authority to control the conduct of any student while under the supervision of the school district.[1]

A student may receive disciplinary action ranging from verbal reprimand to suspension and/or expulsion depending on the severity of the offense and the student's prior record.[2]

REMOVAL OF STUDENT[1]

If a student repeatedly or substantially interferes with the learning environment, the teacher may submit a written request along with the required documentation to the principal/designee to remove the student from the teacher's classroom. The student will be given notice of the rationale for the request as well as the opportunity to offer an explanation.

The principal/designee will investigate the request and make a decision regarding the student's placement. The principal will notify the teacher as to his/her decision.

If a teacher abuses or overuses the student removal process, the principal/designee shall address the abuse or overuse with the teacher and may require the teacher to complete additional professional development to improve the teacher's classroom management skills.

Appeal Process

If the teacher's request for removal is denied, he/she may file an appeal with the Director of Schools/designee. He/she will review the teacher's request for removal as well as the decision of the principal/designee and make a determination as to the student's placement.

CLASSROOM EVACUATION

Some or all students may be removed from a classroom or instructional area due to violent, aggressive, or severely disruptive behavior of another student that creates a safety concern or substantially interrupts classroom instruction.[3]

Parental Notification

The principal/designee shall provide notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each student in the classroom or instructional area at the time of the classroom evacuation. The notification shall be provided by the end of the day in which the classroom evacuation took place unless the event that prompted the evacuation is an ongoing emergency or is otherwise under investigation by state or local law enforcement.

Notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) must include:[3]

1. The fact that a classroom evacuation occurred;

2. A brief description of the general nature of the incident sufficient to explain why the classroom evacuation occurred; and

3. Any steps taken by the school to ensure the continued safety and supervision of students.

Parental notification provided in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable privacy laws.[4] No information shall be disclosed about the student whose conduct caused the classroom evacuation, or any other student, if the disclosure would violate privacy laws.

Recordkeeping

Each school shall maintain records of:

1. The date and time of the classroom evacuation;

2. The number of students evacuated;

3. The time and manner of parental notification; and

4. The staff member responsible for issuing parental notifications.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2804
2. TCA 49-6-3401
3. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 850
4. 20 USCA § 1232g; TCA 10-7-504

Cross References

Code of Conduct 6.300
Suspension 6.316
Safe Relocation of Students 6.4081

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Drug-Free Schools**	**6.307**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **JCBD**	Issued: **02/08/99**

In order to protect the rights of students, to safeguard the learning environment, and to contribute to a "Drug Free" community, the Board's plan for dealing with alcohol and drugs [1] shall include the following:

1. Appropriate ways for handling alcohol/drug-related medical emergencies;
2. Guidelines for reporting alcohol/drug incidents and illegal activities;
3. Guidelines for referral of students who may have an alcohol/drug problem and/or are considered "high risk" to agencies and other sources of appropriate help;
4. Effective working relationships with appropriate community agencies, such as alcohol/drug service providers, law enforcement agencies and judicial officials.

Through the use of state guidelines, the director of schools shall be responsible for:

1. Developing and implementing an appropriate curriculum on alcohol and drug education for students;
2. Providing adequate information and training for all staff personnel as appropriate to their responsibilities;
3. Implementing the relevant portions of the Drug-Free Youth Act[2] ;
4. Developing administrative rules and guidelines for the school system to effectively respond to alcohol and drug situations that may occur at school or school-sponsored events; and
5. Providing notification to parents and students that compliance with this policy is mandatory.

Students will not consume, possess, use, sell, distribute or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages in school buildings or on school grounds at any time, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity, function or event whether on or off school grounds. This includes but is not limited to abuse of inhalants and prescription drugs.[3]

Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on students who violate standards of conduct required by this policy. Such sanctions will be consistent with local, state and federal laws, up to and including suspension/expulsion as well as referral for prosecution.[4] Completion of an appropriate rehabilitation program may also be recommended.

Information about drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation programs will be made available through the school office.

Legal References:

1. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.08(2)(d)
2. 20 USCA § 7116; 34 CFR § 86.200.
3. TCA 39-17-417; TCA 39-17-715
4. TCA 49-6-4209; TCA 49-6-3401

Cross References:

Drug-Free Workplace 1.804
Zero Tolerance Offenses 6.309
Suspension/Expulsion/Remand 6.316

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Student Alcohol and Drug Testing**	**6.3071**	**06/08/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 05/13/24**

The possession and/or use of illegal drugs and the misuse of prescription drugs is prohibited. The distribution, abuse, or misuse of over the counter medications or other chemicals or substances is likewise prohibited. Students shall be notified in writing at the beginning of each school year, or at the time of enrollment, that they shall be subject to testing for drugs and alcohol during the school year.[1] The Board shall pay costs of any testing required pursuant to this policy.[2]

REASONABLE SUSPICION DRUG TESTING

Principals are authorized to order drug tests for individual students when there is a reasonable cause to believe that:[3]

1. A school board policy on alcohol and drug use has been violated;

2. A search of lockers has produced evidence of the presence of drugs and/or alcohol;

3. A search of persons and containers has produced evidence of a presence of drug and/or alcohol;

4. A search of vehicles has produced evidence of the presence of drugs and/or alcohol; or

5. Through observation or other reasonable information reported by a teacher, staff member, or other student, a student is using and/or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol on school property.

Prior to performing a drug test on a student based on reasonable suspicion, the following conditions shall be met:

1. A particular student has violated school policy;

2. The test will yield evidence of the violation of school policy or will establish that a student either was impaired due to drug use or did not use drugs;

3. The test is in pursuit of legitimate interests of the school in maintaining order, discipline, safety, supervision, and education of students;

4. The test is not conducted for the sole purpose of discovering evidence to be used in a criminal prosecution; and

5. Tests shall be conducted in the presence of a witness. Persons who shall act as witnesses shall be provided by an accredited testing facility.

Upon receiving reasonable information, the principal shall take the following steps:

1. Call the student into the principal's office or another private place;

2. Summon an appropriate qualified witness;

3. Discuss with the student the basis for the determination that a test is necessary;

4. Inform the student of the procedures which shall be followed in administering the test;

5. Notify the parent/guardian of the student of the impending test; and

~~6.~~ Give the student an opportunity to decline the test and inform the student that if the test is not taken~~.~~ the disciplinary action taken shall be consistent with the same procedures/consequences as those for a positive drug/alcohol test.

DRUG TESTING PROCESS

All drug and alcohol screenings will be conducted at an off-site accredited facility accredited by the Tennessee Department of Health and designated by the Board. Parents/guardians will be responsible for transporting their student to the designated testing facility. The appropriately qualified and trained witness shall take the student to a designated place in the testing facility and collect a specimen from the student. The specimen shall be taken in a manner which will ensure the integrity, validity, and accuracy of the test results but are minimally intrusive and provide maximum privacy to the tested student.

The type of specimen taken shall depend on the substance in question, and the test performed on the specimen shall be appropriate for accurate detection of the substance in question. Once taken, the facility personnel shall give the specimen an identifying number which in no way will reveal the identity of the student. Specimens shall be retained for ten (10) days.[4]

Upon receiving a written, certified copy of the analysis from the laboratory, the principal shall do one of the following:[5]

1. If the results of the analysis are negative, they shall be reported as negative, and all evidence of the individual test, including all records in the school that the test was ordered and the reasons therefore, shall be destroyed and expunged.

2. If the results of the analysis are positive, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given the written notice of the result. All records of the test, request for a test, or indication a student has been tested shall be confidential student records in accordance with state law.[6]

The Board will provide students testing positive an assessment to determine the severity of the student's alcohol and drug problem and a recommendation for referral to intervention or treatment resources as appropriate.[7]

PENALTIES

Each confirmed incident shall result in a referral to the youth services officer.

Malicious use of authority granted by this policy by any school personnel may be grounds for dismissal.[8]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-4213
2. TCA 49-6-4213(g)
3. TCA 49-6-4213(a)(1)
4. TCA 49-6-4213(d)
5. TCA 49-6-4213(j)-(k)
6. TCA 10-7-504
7. TCA 49-6-4213(l)
8. TCA 49-6-4213(m)

Cross References

Alcohol & Drugs in the Workplace 1.804
Drug-Free Schools 6.307
Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Bus Safety and Conduct**	**6.308**	**08/11/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/10/99; 07/08/13; 07/15/19**

In order to maintain conditions and atmosphere suitable for learning, no person shall enter onto a school bus except students assigned to that bus or parent(s)/guardian(s) of students or other persons with lawful and valid business on the bus.[1]

The school bus is an extension of school activity; therefore, students shall conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior.

Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on his/her bus, and all reasonable directions given by him/her shall be followed. A driver may remove a student in the event that the driver finds it necessary for the safety of the other student passengers or the driver, provided that the driver secures the safety of the ejected student for the uncompleted trip. A driver shall report to school authorities as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the route, any student refusing to obey the driver or exiting the bus without the driver's permission at a point other than the student's destination for that trip.[2]

The principal of the student transported shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary. A student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal determines that his/her behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus or if he/she disobeys applicable policies and procedures pertaining to student transportation.

Any student wishing to ride a bus other than his/her designated bus shall have written parental permission and the approval of the principal/designee. A note from the school office with details of the change shall be presented to the bus driver.

Students who transfer from bus to bus while en route to and from school shall be expected to abide by the discipline policies adopted by the Board and procedures maintained by the terminal school.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO FOOTAGE

Cameras or video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior on school buses transporting students to and from school or extracurricular activities. Photographs and video footage shall be used only to promote the order, safety, and security of students, staff, and property.

Students in violation of bus conduct rules shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with established board policy governing student conduct and discipline.

The district shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to photographs and video footage.[3] These materials shall be maintained for three (3) school days. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must

submit a written request within three (3) school days (excludes weekends and school breaks) of the specific date desired to view to the Director of Transportation. Requests should include the name of the parent/guardian's custodial child to be viewed, bus number, date and time of desired footage, and reason for the request. A time shall be arranged for viewing.

Prior to viewing footage, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to sign a confidentiality/non-disclosure agreement. The Director of Transportation/principal/designee shall be present when parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided the opportunity to review photographs and video footage.4 Recorded materials shall be maintained by the school district for a minimum of three (3) days unless a written request has been received.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may not take still photographs or recordings of viewed footage. All photographs and videos are property of Houston County Schools and may not be retained in any form by parent(s)/guardian(s). Requests to view images does not exempt a student from disciplinary action if applicable.

As used in this section, "parent" means the parent, guardian, person who has custody of the child, or individual who has caregiving authority.[5]

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may submit requests to view photographs and video footage to the Director of School/designee, and a time shall be arranged for viewing. The Director of Schools/designee shall be present when parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided the opportunity to review photographs and video footage.[4]

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures governing the use of cameras and video cameras in accordance with the provisions of state and federal law and established board policies.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2008
2. TCA 49-6-2118(d)
3. TCA 10-7-504; 20 USCA §1232g
4. TCA 49-6-2119

Cross References

Student Transportation Management 3.400
Scheduling and Routing 3.401
Code of Conduct 6.300
Suspension 6.316
Student Records 6.600
Annual Notification of Rights 6.601
Inspection & Correction of Student Records 6.602

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Zero Tolerance Offenses**	**6.309**	**05/12/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/19/95; 05/11/15; 05/13/19; 06/14/21; 06/13/22; 06/12/23; 07/18/24**

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following offenses shall not be tolerated:[1]

1. Bringing to school or being in unauthorized possession of a firearm on school property;[2]

2. Unlawful possession of any drug, including any controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event;[3]

3. Aggravated assault;[4]

4. Assault that results in bodily injury[5] upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or school resource officer; or

5. Valid threats of mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity as determined by a threat assessment team.[6]

Committing any of these offenses shall result in a student being expelled from the regular school program for at least one (1) calendar year unless modified by the Director of Schools. Modification of the length of time shall be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students that commit zero tolerance offenses may be assigned to an alternative school or program at the discretion of the Director of Schools.[7]

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the principal shall notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law.[8]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3401(g)
2. 18 USCA § 921(a)(3); 20 USCA § 7961
3. TCA 39-17-454; TCA 53-10-101
4. TCA 39-13-102
5. TCA 39-13-101(a)(1)
6. TCA 39-16-517; TCA 49-6-3401(g)(2)(D); Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 882
7. TCA 49-6-3401(g)(2); TCA 49-6-3402
8. TCA 49-6-4209; TCA 39-17-1312; 20 USCA § 7961(h)(1); Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 882

Cross References

Threat Assessment Team 3.204
Code of Conduct 6.300
Drug-Free Schools 6.307
Suspension 6.316
Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317
Alternative Education 6.319
Safe Relocation of Students 6.4081

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Dress Code**	**6.310**	**05/12/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

Students shall dress and groom in a clean and neat manner so as not to distract or interfere with the operation of the school.

More specific procedures appropriate for each level of school (elementary, middle, and high) shall be developed by the Director of Schools/Designee.[1] Principals and appropriate faculty shall be involved in the development of each set of procedures.

When a student is dressed in a manner which causes disruption or interference with the operation of the school or in a manner that violates the developed procedures, the principal shall take appropriate action, which may include suspension.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-4215(a)

Cross References

Code of Conduct 6.300
Suspension 6.316

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Care of School Property**	**6.311**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

Students shall help maintain the school environment, preserve school property, and exercise care while using school facilities.

All district employees shall report all damage or loss of school property to the principal/designee immediately after such damage or loss is discovered. The principal/designee shall make a full and complete investigation of any instance of damage or loss of school property. The investigation shall be carried out in cooperation with law enforcement officials when appropriate.

When the person causing damage or loss has been identified and the costs of repair or replacement have been determined, the Director of Schools/Designee shall take steps to recover these costs. This may include recommending the filing of a civil complaint in court to recover damages. If the responsible person is a minor, recovery will be sought from the minor's parent/guardian.[1]

In addition, the district may withhold the grades, diploma, and/or transcript of the student responsible for vandalism or theft or otherwise incurring any debt to a school until the student or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) has paid for the damages.[2] If a student and/or his/her parent/guardian dispute the damages or the amount of damages, the Director of Schools/Designee shall meet with them to discuss the matter. Within five (5) days of the meeting, the Director of Schools/Designee shall notify the student and his/her parent/guardian of the final decision.

When the minor and parent/guardian are unable to pay for the damages, the Director of Schools/Designee may meet with the parent/guardian in an attempt to reach an agreement. Upon payment or completion of an agreement between the Director and a parent/guardian, the student's grades, diploma, and/or transcripts shall be released. Such sanctions shall not be imposed if the student is not at fault.

Legal References

1. TCA 37-10-101
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.16(2)(b)

Cross References

Visitors to the School 1.501
Safety 3.201
Security 3.205
Community Use of School Facilities 3.206
Student Fees and Fines 6.709

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Use of Wireless Communication Devices**	**6.312**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/8/13; 08/08/22; 06/12/23**

General[1]

Students are permitted to use wireless communication devices in certain limited situations. Wireless communication devices include any portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two (2) or more parties, such as wearable technology, cell phones, tablets, and gaming devices.

A student may be permitted to utilize a wireless communication device under the following circumstances:

1. In case of emergency;

2. When authorized by a teacher;

3. To manage the student's health, as documented in the student's individual healthcare plan;

4. When the possession or use is required by the student's individual education program, 504 plan, or individual learning plan; or

5. When the device is being used by a student with a disability for the operation of assistive technology to increase, maintain, or improve the student's functional capabilities.

GRADES PK-5

Students may possess wireless communication devices so long as such devices are turned off and stored for the entirety of the school day unless one of the exceptions above applies.

GRADES 6-12

Students may possess wireless communication devices so long as such devices are turned off and stored during instructional time. During breaks throughout the school day, students may use wireless communication devices as permitted by school administrators/designees.

PENALTIES

Any audio or visual recording by students is strictly prohibited on school property or at school functions unless authorized by the principal/designee.

Unauthorized use or improper storage of a device will result in confiscation until such time as it may be released to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAN

In the event of an emergency or possible emergency occurring at school, parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be alerted by school/district phone notification system, social media, or school/classroom-based notification apps.

Legal References	Cross References
1. Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 103	Code of Conduct 6.300

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Corporal Punishment**	**6.314**	**08/13/18**
		Rescinds: **6.314**	Issued: **01/09/95; 07/8/13**

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure in any school.[1]

The Director of Schools shall be responsible for developing and implementing in-service training programs for teachers and staff in the use of alternative, positive measures of discipline.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-4104

Cross References

Code of Behavior and Discipline 6.300
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Detention**	**6.315**	**05/12/25**
		Rescinds: **JCCB**	Issued: **07/08/13**

Students may be detained before or after the school day as a means of disciplinary action.

The following guidelines shall be followed:

1. The student shall be given at least one (1) day of notice before detention;
2. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be informed before detention takes place;
3. Parents shall be responsible for arranging the students' transportation to comply with the detention schedule;
4. Students in detention shall be under the supervision of school personnel;
5. Detention shall not exceed one (1) hour after the official closing of the school day but may be administered several days in succession; and
6. Teachers shall have the approval of the principal before detaining a student.

Cross References

Code of Conduct 6.300

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Suspension**	**6.316**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **09/10/07; 07/08/13; 08/10/20**

General

A principal may suspend a student from attendance in a specific class or school related activity without suspending the student from attendance at school. Based on the severity of the offense, a principal may suspend a student from attendance at school and all school activities.

Students may be suspended for good and sufficient reasons including, but not limited to:[1]

1. Willful and persistent violation of the rules of the school;
2. Immoral or disreputable conduct, including vulgar or profane language;
3. Violence or threatened violence against the person of any personnel attending or assigned to any school;
4. Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school or the property of any person attending or assigned to the school;
5. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in any of the action that would justify suspension;
6. Marking, defacing, or destroying school property;
7. Possession of a pistol, gun, or firearm on school property;[2]
8. Possession of a knife or other weapons, as defined in state law, on school property;[3]
9. Assaulting a principal, teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel with vulgar, obscene, or threatening language;
10. Unlawful use or possession of barbital or legend drugs as defined in state law;[4]
11. Engaging in behavior which disrupts a class or school-sponsored activity;
12. Making a threat, including a false report, to use a bomb, dynamite, or any other deadly explosive or destructive device including chemical weapons on school property or at a school-sponsored event, or an invalid threat of mass violence;[5]

13. One (1) or more students initiating a physical attack on an individual student on school property or at a school activity, including travel to and from school;

14. Assault against a school employee as defined in state law;[6]

15. Off-campus criminal behavior resulting in felony charges;

16. When behavior poses a danger to persons or property or disrupts the educational process;

17. Any other conduct prejudicial to good order or discipline in any school.

Except in an emergency, a principal shall not suspend any student until that student has been advised of the nature of his/her misconduct, questioned about it, and allowed to give an explanation.

If, as a result of an investigation, a principal/designee finds that a student acted in self-defense under a reasonable belief that the student, or another to whom the student was coming to the defense of, may have been facing the threat of imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury, then the student may not face any disciplinary action.[5]

When a student is suspended, the principal shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Director of Schools/designee of the following:

1. Student's suspension;

2. Cause for the suspension; and

3. Any conditions for readmission which may include a meeting of the parent(s)/guardian(s), student, and the principal.

If a student is suspended during the last ten (10) days of any term or semester, he/she shall be permitted to take such final examinations or submit such required work as necessary to complete the course of instruction for that semester, subject to conditions prescribed by the principal.[6]

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION[7]

In-school suspension shall be offered to students as an alternative program (if applicable) to complete academic assignments and receive credit for work completed.

Students given an in-school suspension in excess of one (1) day from classes shall attend special classes attended only by students guilty of misconduct or be placed in an isolated area appropriate for study. Personnel responsible for in-school suspension shall ensure that each student is supervised at all times and has textbooks and classwork assignments from his/her regular teachers.

SUSPENSIONS LONGER THAN FIVE DAYS[8]

If a suspension is longer than five (5) days, the principal shall develop and implement a plan for improving the student's behavior.

SUSPENSIONS LONGER THAN TEN DAYS[9]

If the principal suspends a student for longer than ten (10) days, he/she shall immediately give written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student of the right to appeal the decision. All appeals shall be filed within five (5) days of receipt of the notice. These appeals may be filed by the parent(s)/guardian(s), the student, or any person holding a teaching license who is employed by the school district if requested by the student.

The appeal from this decision shall be to the Disciplinary Hearing Authority appointed by the Board. If a Disciplinary Hearing Authority has not been appointed, then the appeal shall be to the Board.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED EVENTS[6]

If a student assaults an employee, he/she shall be suspended from school-sponsored events for one (1) calendar year unless modified by the Director of Schools. A school-sponsored event is an activity that is not directly related to a student's grade in a course of instruction.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-203(a)(7); TCA 49-6-3401(a)
2. TCA 39-17-1309(b)
3. TCA 39-17-1309
4. TCA 53-10-101; TCA 39-17-454
5. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 882
6. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 915; TCA 39-13-101
7. TCA 49-6-3401(i)
8. TCA 49-6-3401(d)
9. TCA 49-6-3401(b)
10. TCA 49-6-3401(c)(3)
11. TCA 49-6-3401(a)-(c); *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975); 20 USCA § 1415

Cross References

Traffic and Parking Controls 3.403
Code of Conduct 6.300
Procedural Due Process 6.302
Interference/Disruption of School Activities 6.306
Drug-Free Schools 6.307
Bus Safety and Conduct 6.308
Zero Tolerance Offenses 6.309
Dress Code 6.310
Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317
Alternative Education 6.319

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority**	**6.317**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **01/09/95; 05/11/15; 08/10/20**

A Disciplinary Hearing Authority (DHA) shall conduct appeals for students who have been suspended for more than ten (10) school days. The Board shall appoint a DHA which shall consist of 3 members and a Chair. The Director of Schools shall recommend members of the DHA to the Board for approval. At least one (1) DHA member shall be a licensed employee of the district. All appointments are for one (1) year terms and subject to reappointment. Board members shall not serve on the DHA.[1]

The Director of Schools shall appoint a Chair of the DHA from the members appointed by the Board. The Chair shall perform the following duties:

1. Set the time, place, and date for each hearing;
2. Maintain order and structure during each hearing; and
3. Prepare, sign, and disseminate the minutes of each meeting.

Upon receiving notification of the request to appeal the suspension decision, the DHA shall provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student, the student, and any other appropriate person of the time, place, and date of the hearing. The hearing shall be held no later than ten (10) days after the beginning of the suspension.[2]

The DHA may take the following disciplinary actions:[3]

1. Affirm the decision of the principal;
2. Order removal of the suspension unconditionally;
3. Order removal of the suspension upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable;
4. Assign the student to an alternative school or program; or
5. Suspend the student for a specified period of time.*

Within five (5) days of the DHA rendering a decision, the student, principal, principal-teacher, or assistant principal may request a review by the Board, and the Board shall review the record. Following the review, the Board may take the following actions.

Grant Request for Hearing[4]

If the Board grants a hearing, it shall provide notice to the student and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s). The notice of the hearing shall include a statement that, unless the student or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) requests an open hearing in writing within five (5) days of receipt of the notice, the hearing shall be closed to the public.

The Board may affirm, overturn, or modify the decision of the DHA.

Deny Request for Hearing[4]

If the Board does not grant a hearing, it may affirm, overturn, or modify the decision of the DHA. The Board shall not impose a more severe penalty than that imposed by the DHA without first providing an opportunity for a hearing before the Board.

* Note: Zero-tolerance offenses as set forth in statute require mandatory calendar year expulsion unless modified by the Director of Schools.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3401(c)(4)(C)
2. TCA 49-6-3401(c)(4)(D)
3. TCA 49-6-3401(c)(5)
4. TCA 49-6-3401(c)(6)

Cross References

Procedural Due Process 6.302
Zero Tolerance Offenses 6.309
Suspension 6.316
Alternative Education 6.319
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in March	**Admission of Suspended or Expelled Students**	**6.318**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/18/24; 08/08/22; 07/08/13**

STUDENT READMISSION TO DISTRICT[1]

The district may continue a disciplinary investigation of a student who withdraws from the district during the investigation. If the student later reenrolls in the district, then the disciplinary investigation and/or consequences shall resume.

STUDENT DISCSIPLINED IN ANOTHER DISTRICT

The Board may deny admission of any student (except those in state custody) who has been expelled or suspended from another school district in Tennessee or another state even though the student has established residency in the district in which he/she seeks enrollment.

After a request for enrollment is made, the Director of Schools shall investigate the facts surrounding the suspension or expulsion from the former school district. [3]The principal may ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing if their student has been adjudicated delinquent for an offense listed in TCA 49-6-3051 and submit any records to the Director of Schools.[2] Based on the results of the investigation, the Director of Schools shall make a recommendation to the Board to approve or deny the request.

The Board shall not deny enrollment beyond the length of the imposed suspension or expulsion.

A student may be dismissed if it is determined subsequent to the enrollment that the student has been suspended or expelled from the former school district.

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 760
2. TCA 49-6-3051(a)
3. TCA 49-6-3401(f); 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(4), (h)

Cross References

School Admissions 6.203
Student Records 6.600

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring: **Review: Annually, in April**	Descriptor Term: **Alternative Education**	Descriptor Code: **6.319**	Issued Date: **08/14/23**
		Rescinds: **JCCE**	Issued: **05/14/18; 08/10/20; 04/26/21**

General[1]

The Board shall operate an alternative school and/or program for students in grades three through twelve (3-12) who have been suspended or expelled from the regular school program.

An alternative school is a short-term intervention program designed to provide educational services outside the regular school program for students who have been suspended or expelled. The alternative school is located in a separate facility from the regular school program.

An alternative program is a short-term intervention program designed to provide educational services outside the regular school program for students who have been suspended or expelled. Alternative programs may be located within the regular school or be a self-contained program within a school. Alternative programs shall include, but are not limited to, in-school suspension.

The alternative school and/or program shall be operated in accordance with state laws and the rules of the State Board of Education, and instruction shall proceed as nearly as practicable in accordance with the instructional program at the student's regular school. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures that provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students assigned to the alternative school or program. These educational opportunities shall adhere to Tennessee's academic standards.[2]

ASSIGNMENT

Students who have been suspended for more than ten (10) days or expelled shall be assigned to the alternative school or program if there is staff and space available.[3] Availability of staff and space shall be determined at the time the disciplinary decision is rendered. The Director of Schools/designee shall make this determination by evaluating factors including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Level of supervision available;
2. Safety considerations; and
3. Type of infraction.

The Director of Schools/designee is not required to assign a student to the alternative school or program if the students committed one of the following:

1. A zero tolerance offense;[4] or

2. An offense of violence or threatened violence, or an offense that threatened the safety of other students at the school if the location of the alternative school or program is on the same grounds as the school from which the student was disciplined or assigning the student to that location would endanger the safety of the students or staff.[5]

Prior to the assignment of the student to the alternative school or program, the Director of Schools/designee shall provide written notice to the student's parent/guardian stating the reason for the student's placement.[~~5~~ 6]

Placement in an alternative education setting shall be reserved for students who significantly disrupt the educational process. If a student has an active Individualized Education Plan, a 504 plan, or is suspected of having a disability, all state and federal laws and rules and regulations related to special education shall be followed. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop procedures regarding placement of students in the program, taking into consideration the impact of exclusionary discipline practices.[6 7]

The Director of Schools/designee shall monitor and regularly evaluate the academic progress of each student enrolled in the alternative school.

REMOVAL[8]

A student may be removed from the alternative school or program if:

1. He/she violates the rules of the alternative school or program; or

2. He/she is not benefitting from the assignment and all interventions have been exhausted unsuccessfully.

ADDITIONAL OFFENSES[9]

Any new disciplinary offense committed during a student's original suspension or expulsion period shall be treated as a new and separate offense. These offenses shall not constitute an extension of the original suspension or expulsion.

TRANSITION PLAN [10]

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop procedures regarding the implementation of transition plans for the integration of students assigned to the alternative school.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3402; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(a)
3. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(A)
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(6)(a); TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(B)
5. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(C); Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 279
6. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(i)
7. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(h)
8. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(2)(B)
9. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(g)(2)
10. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(m)

Cross References

Special Education 4.202
Virtual Education Program 4.212
Suspension 6.316
Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317
Special Education Students 6.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Promoting Student Welfare**	**6.400**	**08/08/22**
		Rescinds: **JE; 6.400-*Student Counseling Program***	Issued: **07/08/13; 01/10/22**

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures to promote and protect the health and welfare of students. These should provide, at a minimum, for the following:

1. Student school counseling services;[1]
2. School health services;[2]
3. School psychological services; and
4. School social support services.

The development of these programs and the scope of the services provided shall be consistent with state law and relevant rules, regulations, and policies adopted by the state board of education. .[3, 4]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-303
2. TSS/MS 0520-01-13-.01
3. SBE Policy 5.103
4. SBE Policy 4.209

Cross References

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome 5.401
Attendance 6.200
Drug-Free Schools 6.307
Physical Examinations and Immunizations 6.402
Student Communicable Diseases 6.403
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome 6.404
Medicines 6.405
Reporting Child Abuse 6.409
Student Suicide Prevention 6.415

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Student Surveys, Analyses, and Evaluations**	**6.4001**	**08/14/23**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **11/08/99; 07/08/13; 02/11/19**

Surveys, analyses, and evaluations for research purposes shall be allowed by the Board when the project is viewed as contributory to a greater understanding of the teaching-learning process, the project does not violate the goals of the Board, and the disruption of the regular school program is minimal. The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures for approving requests for conducting surveys, analyses, or evaluations by agencies, organizations, or individuals. The requests shall outline what is to be done, who is to be involved, and how the results will be used and distributed.[1]

Prior to the dissemination of a survey, analysis, or evaluation to students, parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the opportunity to review the materials.[1] Such notification shall include information indicating the purpose of the survey, analysis, or evaluation as well as who will have access to the results. The survey, analysis, or evaluation shall only be administered to students under the age of eighteen (18) whose parent(s)/guardian(s) provide written, informed, and voluntarily signed consent. A student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older may participate after he/she provides written, informed, and voluntarily signed consent. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures for granting such parental requests.[1]

No student shall be required, as part of any program, to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:[1,2]

1. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
2. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
3. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
4. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
5. Legally privileged relationships;
6. Income; or
7. The collection of student biometric data involving the analysis of facial expressions, EEG brain wave patterns, skin conductance, galvanic skin response, heart-rate variability, pulse, blood volume, posture, and eye-tracking[3]

without the prior consent of the student (if the student is an adult or emancipated minor), or in the case of an unemancipated minor, without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian.

The collection of the following student data is strictly prohibited:[4]

1. Political affiliation or voting history;
2. Religious practices; and
3. Firearm ownership.

COLLECTING, DISCLOSING, OR USING INFORMATION FOR MARKETING[5]

In general, the district will not collect, disclose, or use personal student information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose.

If any collected information is to be marketed or sold, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be directly notified at least annually at the beginning of the school year of the specific or approximate dates when such information will be collected. Parent(s)/guardian(s), upon request, may inspect any instrument used to collect personal information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information before the instrument is administered or distributed to the student. All parent(s)/guardian(s) and students of appropriate age may decline to provide the information requested.

This portion of the policy does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for or to students or educational institutions to the extent allowed by law, such as the following:

1. College or other postsecondary education recruitment or military recruitment;
2. Book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;
3. Tests and assessments used by elementary schools and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments;
4. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education related activities; or
5. Student recognition programs

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-211; Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 353
2. 20 USCA § 1232h
3. TCA 49-1-706
4. TCA 49-1-705
5. 20 USCA § 1232h(c)(1); 20 USCA § 1232h(c)(4)

Cross References

Testing Programs 4.700

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Physical Examinations and Immunizations**	**6.402**	**08/14/23**
		Rescinds: **6.402**	Issued: **11/11/02; 07/08/13; 12/14/20**

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS[1]

The principal shall ensure that there is a complete physical examination of each student prior to:

1. Entering school for the first time and

2. Participating as a member of any athletic team or in any other strenuous physical activity program.

Cost of the examination shall be covered by the parent/guardian of the student. These records shall be on file in the principal's office.

Screening tests as required by the Tennessee Department of Education and the Department of Health will be conducted. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive written notice of any screening result that indicates a condition that might interfere with the student's progress. Parents(s)/guardian(s) may excuse their student from participating in health screenings that are part of a coordinated school health program by submitting a request in writing to the school nurse, instructor, school counselor, or principal.[3]

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students will not be permitted to attend school without proof of immunization as determined by the Commissioner of Health unless circumstances outlined in state or federal law prevent a student from producing such records. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to have their children immunized and to provide such proof to the principal of the school which the student is to attend.[4]

Exceptions will be granted to any student whose parent/guardian files with school authorities a signed, written statement that such measures conflict with the one of the following:

1. His/her religious tenets and practices if in the absence of an epidemic or immediate threat of an epidemic;[5] or

2. Due to medical reasons if the student has a written statement from his/her doctor excusing him/her from the immunization.[6]

The Director of Schools shall ensure that appropriate immunization records are maintained for each student.

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 1232h(c)
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-13-.01(1)(a)
3. Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 353; Tennessee School Health Screening Guidelines, https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/csh/FINAL_Health_screening_Guidelines_2022.pdf ; 20 USCA § 1232h(c)(2)(C)
4. TCA 49-6-5001(a),(c)
5. TCA 49-6-5001(b)(2)-(3)
6. TCA 49-6-5001(c)(2)

Cross References

Promoting Student Welfare 6.400

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Student Communicable Diseases**	**6.403**	**10/10/17**
		Rescinds: **JGCC**	Issued: **07/08/13**

No student shall be denied an education solely because of a communicable disease, and his/her educational program shall be restricted only to the extent necessary to minimize the risk of transmitting the disease.

Parents or guardians of infected students shall inform appropriate school officials of the infection so that proper precautions for the protection of other students, employees, and the infected student shall be taken.

No student with a communicable disease which may endanger the health of either himself/herself or other individuals shall enter or remain in the regular school setting.[1,2] If a school principal has reason to believe a student has a communicable disease which may endanger the health of either himself/herself or other individuals in the regular school setting, the principal shall:

1. Assign the student to a setting which will protect other students, employees and the student; or

2. Exclude the student from school until certification is obtained from a physician or the County Health Department by either the parent or principal stating that the disease is no longer communicable.

If the principal has reason to believe that the student has a long-term communicable disease, the principal must require confirmation from a physician or the County Health Department as to the student's condition. If the student is confirmed to have a long-term communicable disease the principal shall refer the student for special education services.[1]

The principal may request that further examinations be conducted by a physician or County Health Department and may request periodic re-examinations after the student has been readmitted to the school.[2] Expenses incurred from examinations requested by school officials shall be paid by the board.

The names of all students excluded from school under this policy shall be forwarded to the office of the director of schools.

Legal References:

1. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.08(2)(c)
2. TCA 49-2-203(b)(2)

Cross References:

Special Programs 4.202
Special Programs 4.206

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Pediculosis (Head Lice) and Cimicidae (Bed Bugs)**	**6.4031**	**10/28/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: 12/11/17; 11/13/17

No student shall be denied an education solely by reason of head lice or bed bug infestation and his/her educational program shall be restricted only to the extent necessary to minimize the risk of transmitting the infestation.[1]

It shall be the responsibility of the principal or school nurse to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) in the event a student has pediculosis (head lice) or cimicidae (bed bugs). A letter shall be sent home with the student to explain the condition, requirements for readmission, and deadlines for satisfactory completion of the treatment.

Prior to readmission, satisfactory evidence shall be submitted to school personnel that the student has been treated for pediculosis (head lice) or cimicidae (bed bugs). This evidence may include but not be limited to:

(1) Proof of treatment with a pediculicide product (e.g. head lice shampoo);

(2) Acknowledgement of inspection of home environment for presence of bed bugs with action plan (if appropriate) signed by parent/guardian, or

(3) Satisfactory examination by a school health official.

Treatment and prevention procedures shall be developed by the Director of Schools/Designee in consultation with the school nurse and distributed to all classroom teachers. These procedures shall also be distributed to the parent/guardian of any student who has evidence of head lice or bed bugs.

Any subsequent incidents of head lice or bed bugs for a student during the school year shall require submission of satisfactory evidence of treatment or be found free of lice or bed bugs by a school health official.

A student shall be expected to have met all requirements for treatment and return to school no later than two (2) days following absence for head lice or bed bugs. All days in excess of the allowable period shall be marked as unexcused absences and referred to the attendance supervisor at the proper time.

Legal References

1. TRR/MS 1200-14-01-.24

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome**	**6.404**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **6.404**	Issued: **01/09/95**

LIABILITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Students infected with HIV shall not be denied enrollment in school. The Board shall not prevent an HIV infected student from participating in the continuation of his/her education on the basis of HIV infection. Further, the student shall be subject to the same rules for class assignment, privileges and participation in any school-sponsored activities as all other students. The Board shall strive to maintain a respectful school climate for HIV infected students.

Mandatory screening for communicable diseases not spread by casual everyday contact, such as HIV infection, shall not be a condition for school entry or attendance.[1]

ATHLETICS

A student who is HIV positive may not be denied the opportunity to participate in school athletic programs based solely on his/her HIV status. All reasonable accommodations shall be made to allow students with HIV to participate in school-sponsored physical activities.[1]

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

If a student's parents/guardians choose to disclose the child's HIV status, all matters pertaining to that student will be directed by procedures initiated by the director of schools.

The director of schools shall be responsible for requesting medical records from the parent/guardian and a statement from the student's physician regarding health status of the student reported to have HIV/AIDS. In addition, the director of schools will gather information regarding the student's cumulative school record.

CONFIDENTIALITY

No information concerning an HIV infected student shall be divulged, directly or indirectly, to any other individual or group without the written consent of the parent/guardian. All medical information and written documentation of discussions, telephone conversations, proceedings and meetings shall be kept by the director of schools in a locked file. If the HIV infected student is under the age of eighteen (18), access to this file will be- granted only to those persons who have the written consent of the infected student's parents/guardians.

Under no circumstances shall information identifying a student with AIDS be released to the public.[2, 3]

APPROPRIATE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In determining the educational placement of a student known to be infected with HIV, school authorities shall follow established policies and procedures for students with disabilities. School authorities shall reassess placement if there is a change in the student's need for accommodations or services.

HIV PREVENTION EDUCATION/CURRICULUM

The director of schools shall be responsible for developing instructional objectives to address each terminal objective in the state AIDS curriculum framework and provide each teacher responsible for teaching AIDS education with these objectives. Students shall further be taught universal precautions through the K-8 Healthful Living and Lifetime Wellness curricula and through the Board's HIV prevention education program.

The state AIDS curriculum and related instructional objectives will be used in grades K-12. Parents and guardians shall have convenient opportunities to preview all HIV prevention curricula and materials in accordance with the provisions of the Family Education Law of 1989.

Students shall have access to voluntary and confidential counseling about matters related to HIV. Administrators shall maintain a list of counseling and testing resources for student use.

INFECTION CONTROL

The director of schools shall develop an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)-based infection control plan in which each school will provide for: 1) well-maintained and easily accessible materials necessary to follow universal precautions, and 2) designate first responders responsible for implementing infection control guidelines, including investigating, correcting, and reporting on instances of exposure. All schools shall further follow the most current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus, and Other Blood borne Pathogens in Health Care Settings and the OSHA blood borne pathogens standard.[4]

Legal References:

1. TRR/MS 0502-1-3-.08(2)(g)
2. TCA 68-10-113
3. 20 USC 1232(g); 34 CFR § 300.571-2
4. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.05(1)(c)
5. State Board of Education Policy No. 5.300, HIV/AIDS Policy for Employees and Students of Tennessee Public Schools Revised, August 18, 2005

Cross References:

Section 504 & ADA Grievance Procedures 1.802
Special Education 4.202
Special Programs 4.206

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Medicines**	**6.405**	**12/14/20**
		Rescinds: **6.405**	Issued: **07/02/04; 03/12/18**

If under exceptional circumstances a student is required to take non-prescription or prescription medication during school hours and the parent/guardian cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the principal/designee will assist in self-administration of the medication if the student is competent to self-administer medicine with assistance in compliance with the following guidelines.[1]

Written instructions signed by the parent/guardian are required and shall include:

1. Child's name;
2. Name of medication;
3. Name of physician;
4. Time to be self-administered;
5. Dosage and directions for self-administration (non-prescription medicines shall have label directions);
6. Possible side effects, if known; and
7. Termination date for self-administration of the medication.

Students with asthma shall be permitted to self-administer prescribed, metered dosage asthma-reliever inhalers if the additional information is provided by a parent/guardian:

1. Written statement from the prescribing health care practitioner that the student suffers from asthma and has been instructed in self-administration; and
2. Purpose of the medication.

The medication shall be delivered to the principal's office in person by the parent/guardian of the student unless the medication shall be retained by the student for immediate self-administration.

The principal/designee will:

1. Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication to be self-administered;
2. Keep written instructions from the parent/guardian in the student's record;
3. Keep an accurate record of the self-administration of the medication;
4. Keep all medication in a locked cabinet except medication retained by a student per physician's order;

5. Return unused prescription to the parent/guardian only; and

6. Ensure that all guidelines developed by the Department of Health and the Department of Education are followed.

The parent/guardian is responsible for informing the designated official of any change in the student's health or change in medication.

A copy of this policy shall be provided to a parent/guardian upon receipt of a request for long-term administration of medication.

BLOOD GLUCOSE SELF-CHECKS[2]

Upon written request of a parent/guardian and if included in the student's medical management plan and in the Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP), a student with diabetes shall be permitted to perform a blood glucose check or administer insulin using any necessary diabetes monitoring and treatment supplies, including sharps. The student shall be permitted to perform the testing in any area of the school or school grounds at any time necessary.

Sharps shall be stored in a secure, but accessible location, including the student's person, until use of such sharps is appropriate.

Use and disposal of sharps shall be in compliance with the guidelines set forth by the Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administration (TOSHA).[3]

STUDENTS WITH PANCREATIC INSUFFICIENCY OR CYSTIC FIBROSIS[4]

Students diagnosed with pancreatic insufficiency or cystic fibrosis shall be permitted to self-manage their prescribed medication in a manner directed by a licensed health care provider without additional assistance or direction. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures for the development of an IHP for every student that wishes to self-administer.

STUDENTS WITH ADRENAL INSUFFICIENCY[5]

The parent/guardian of a student diagnosed with adrenal insufficiency shall notify the school district of the student’s diagnosis. Once notified, the district shall observe the following guidelines:

1. The district shall train school personnel who will be responsible for administering the medication for the treatment of adrenal insufficiency and any who volunteer to administer the medication;

2. The district shall maintain a record of all school personnel who have completed this training; and

3. If a student is suffering from an adrenal crisis, a school nurse or other licensed health care professional may administer the prescribed medication to the student. If a school nurse or other licensed health care professional is not immediately available, trained school personnel may administer the prescribed medication.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures on the administration of medications that treat adrenal insufficiency, including the treatment of an adrenal crisis while on school transportation and during activities such as field trips, and recordkeeping per state law.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-50-1602 *et seq.*; TRR/MS 0520-01-13-.03
2. TCA 49-50-1602(d)(7)
3. State Board of Education Policy 4.205; TRR/MS 0800-01-10
4. TCA 49-50-1601
5. TRR/MS 0520-01-13; State Board of Education Policy 4.205

Cross References

Promoting Student Welfare 6.400
Emergency Allergy Response Plan 6.412

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Glucagon and Diazepam**	**6.4051**	**10/08/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/14/18**

General

School personnel, who volunteer under no duress or pressure and have been properly trained by a registered nurse, are permitted to administer glucagon in emergency situations to a student based on physician's orders and/or the student's Individual Health Plan (IHP). If the school nurse is on site, the nurse shall provide the service to the student.[1]

The school nurse shall be responsible for updating and maintaining each IHP. There shall be a parent/guardian signature on file giving permission prior to training school personnel to administer glucagon.

DEFINITION OF GLUCAGON

Glucagon is a hormone that helps the liver release sugar, thus increasing the level of sugar in the blood. It can be injected with a syringe into the body like insulin or inhaled in a nasal spray.

WHEN TO USE GLUCAGON

Glucagon is administered when the student has low blood sugar and is unable to take liquid or food by mouth because of unconsciousness or seizure activity as per a medical provider's written instructions.

TRAINING

1. The volunteer shall complete an initial in-depth diabetes-related training recognizing signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia and respond with student-specific interventions.

2. The volunteer trainee shall be able to state glucagon's action and the need for its use.

3. The volunteer trainee shall be able to state how glucagon should be prepared, the dosage, and side effects as well as follow-up care after the administration of glucagon.

4. The volunteer trainee shall be able to identify where glucagon will be stored (shall be kept in a secure location away from heat and direct light) and readily available to the student.

5. The volunteer trainee will notify or delegate notification of EMS/911 personnel, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the school nurse any time glucagon is administered to any student.

6. The volunteer trainee shall document observations, administration of glucagon, and follow-up care on the appropriate diabetic and medication forms.

7. Training will be provided until competency is demonstrated, and retraining shall be completed on a yearly basis. Training will be documented and include a skills checklist, instructor's name, trainee's name, date of training, and documentation of competency of trainee to administer glucagon. A copy of the trainee's competency training form will be kept in the employee's personnel file.

DEFINITION OF DIAZEPAM[2]

Diazepam works to stop seizure activity by acting on brain cell interactions that inhibit the seizure discharges. Diazepam is administered rectally as a gel or inhaled in a nasal spray.

School personnel who volunteer under no duress or pressure and who have been properly trained by a registered nurse or employed or contracted by Houston County Schools may administer anti-seizure medications, including diazepam gel to a student in an emergency situation based on the student's IHP. If the school nurse is available, on site, and able to reach the student within the time limit for administration specified in the IHP, then the school nurse shall provide this service to the student.

WHEN TO USE DIAZEPAM

Upon the decision of a trained volunteer to administer diazepam, school officials shall immediately summon local emergency medical services to the school to provide necessary monitoring of transport to safeguard the health and condition of the student.

Trained volunteer school personnel administering anti-seizure medications, any registered nurse who provides training to administer such medications, and any local board of education shall not be liable in any court of law for injury resulting from the reasonable and prudent assistance in the administration of such medications, if performed pursuant to the policies and guidelines developed by the Departments of Health and Education and approved by applicable regulatory or governing boards or agencies.

Houston County Schools shall not assign a student with epilepsy or other seizure disorder to a school other than the school for which the student is zoned or would otherwise regularly attend because the student has a seizure disorder.

A student's parent/guardian, who has given the student's school written authorization to administer anti-seizure medication, shall, in accordance with the student's IHP, notify the school administrator or school nurse if anti-seizure medication or prescription or over-the-counter medicines are administered at a time at which the student is not present in school. The student's IHP shall set forth with specificity the requirements of reporting administration of medication and for the dissemination of such information to volunteer school personnel trained to administer anti-seizure medication. Such notification shall be given after administration of medication before or at the beginning of the next school day in which the student is in attendance.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Prior to administration of an anti-seizure medication to a student by volunteer school personnel or a school nurse in an emergency situation, the student's parent/guardian shall provide:

1. The school with a written authorization to administer the medication at school;

2. A written statement from the student's health care practitioner, which shall contain the student's name, the name and purpose of the medication, the prescribed dosage, the route of administration, the frequency that the medication may be administered, and the circumstances under which the medication may be administered; and

3. Prior to its date of expiration, the prescribed medication to the school in its unopened, sealed package with the intact label affixed by the dispensing pharmacy.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-50-1602(b)
2. TCA 49-50-1602(g)

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Opioid Antagonist**	**6.4052**	**06/10/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

General

The school district shall maintain an opioid antagonist at each school in at least two (2) unlocked, secure locations to be administered to any student believed to be having a drug overdose.[1] The opioid antagonist shall be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.[2] School nurses and other school personnel expected to provide emergency care to students shall be trained according to the Tennessee Department of Health guidelines. The school nurse or other trained school personnel may utilize the school's supply of opioid antagonists to respond to a drug overdose under a standing protocol from a physician.

School district staff shall not prohibit a student, employee, or visitor from possessing an opioid antagonist while the person is on school property or attending a school-sponsored activity held at a location that is not school property.[2]

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

The school district shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student to whom an opioid antagonist has been administered.

PROCEDURES

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop procedures for the maintenance and usage of opioid antagonists as well as procedures regarding record keeping and reporting after any incident.

Legal References

1. State Board of Education Policy 4.205; TCA 49-50-1604
2. Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 629

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Outside Applied Behavior Analysis Therapy**	**6.4053**	**07/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/13/26**

General

This policy applies to "private pay providers", which include licensed behavior analysts, registered behavior technicians, and licensed assistant behavior analysts, who are under contract with parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with autism spectrum disorder or developmental delays.[1]

Private pay providers shall adhere to the memorandum of understanding ("MOU"), board policies, and state and federal laws while assisting students on school property and/or at school functions. This includes adhering to student confidentiality laws for any student the private pay provider encounters. The school district shall require a background check and fingerprinting of all private pay providers.

A private pay provider accompanying a student on campus shall be responsible for attending to the ongoing needs of the student they are contracted to assist. The school district shall not request the private pay provider to provide services to any other students, staff, or visitors.

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.

IEP TEAM COORDINATION

Private pay providers shall coordinate with the student's IEP team by:

- Attending an onboarding session;
- Defining roles and communication channels;
- Conducting a review of relevant student records;
- Ensuring documentation is accurate and promptly provided to all parties; and
- Coordinating with the IEP team prior to each meeting.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

Services of the private pay provider may be terminated for cause. Termination shall be based on violation of the terms of the MOU. If termination is necessary, the Director of Special Programs shall provide the parent/legal guardian with a letter outlining the reason for the termination.

APPEALS PROCESS

If a parent/legal guardian disagrees with the school district on the provision of services, a complaint may be filed in writing with the Director of Schools. The Director shall appoint a panel to make a decision on the appeal. The panel shall be composed of three individuals: a building level administrator, a special education staff member, and one other school employee. The panel shall review the complaint from the parent/legal guardian along with information provided by district staff and make a determination on the matter within ten (10) business days.

Legal References

1. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 1112; 20 U.S.C. § 1401

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Safe Relocation of Students**	**6.4081**	**10/28/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

Teachers who are directly responsible for a student's education or other employees who interact with students on a professional basis may relocate a student from the student's present location to another location when such relocation is necessary for the student's safety or the safety of others.[1] If relocation is necessary, the process will comply with all special education laws. Such employees may also intervene in a physical altercation between two (2) or more students or between a student and a district employee. Reasonable or justifiable force may be used to physically relocate or intervene in a conflict if a student is unwilling to cooperate.[2] If an employee is unable to resolve the matter with the use of reasonable or justifiable force, the student shall be allowed to remain in place until local law enforcement officers or school resource officers can be summoned to relocate the student or take the student into custody until a parent/guardian can retrieve the student.

In the event that physical relocation becomes necessary, the employee shall immediately file a brief report of the incident with the principal. If the student's behavior constitutes a violation of the Board's zero tolerance policy, the report shall be placed in the student's permanent record. Otherwise, the report shall be kept in the student's discipline record and not become a part of that student's permanent record. The principal/designee shall notify the employee involved of the actions taken to address the behavior of the relocated student.[1]

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop administrative procedures regarding the safe relocation of students consistent with state law. Each principal shall fully support the employees' authority to relocate a student and ensure appropriate implementation and reporting.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-2802
2. TCA 39-11-603; TCA 39-11-609 to 614

Cross References

Code of Conduct 6.300
Interference/Disruption of School Activities 6.306
Zero Tolerance Offenses 6.309
Special Education Students 6.500

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Reporting Child Abuse**	**6.409**	**07/18/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **12/10/18; 07/08/13; 08/10/20; 08/08/22**

General

The Director of Schools shall:[1]

1. Designate one employee as the Child Abuse Coordinator (the Coordinator) and an additional employee to serve as the Alternate Child Abuse Coordinator (the Alternate) for each school and submit this information to the Department of Children's Services;

2. Require that the Coordinator and the Alternate receive appropriate training;

3. Supply the Coordinator with all necessary resources;

4. Ensure that all employees working directly with students annually complete the child abuse training program required by state law.[2]

The Coordinator shall assist any employee with appropriately reporting and responding to instances of child abuse or child sexual abuse.

REPORTING

All personnel shall be alert for any evidence of child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect.[3] If personnel know or have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, a report shall be filed immediately with the Coordinator, the Department of Children's Services (DCS), and law enforcement.[4] When alleged abuse involves someone employed by, previously employed by, or otherwise affiliated with the school, the report may be made directly to the DCS and law enforcement prior to notifying the Coordinator.[5]

The report shall include, to the extent known by the reporter:[6]

1. The name, address, telephone number, and age of the child;

2. The name, telephone number, and address of the parents or persons having custody of the child;

3. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect; and

4. Any evidence to the cause or any other information that may relate to the cause or extent of the abuse or neglect.

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop reporting procedures, including sample indicators of abuse and neglect, and shall disseminate the procedures to all school personnel.

CONFIDENTIALITY

District employees shall keep all information regarding any child abuse confidential in accordance with state law.

INVESTIGATIONS

School administrators and employees have a duty to cooperate, provide assistance, and information in child abuse investigations[7] including permitting DCS teams to conduct interviews while the child is at school. The principal may control the time, place, and circumstances of the interview but may not insist that a school employee be present even if the suspected abuser is a school employee or another student. The principal is not in violation of any laws by failing to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) that the child is to be interviewed even if the suspected abuser is not a member of the child's household.[8]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-1601; Public Acts of 2024, Chapter No. 571
2. TCA 37-1-408
3. TCA 37-1-403(a)(1); TCA 37-1-412; TCA 37-1-602; TCA 37-1-605(a)(4)
4. TCA 37-1-403(a)(2); TCA 49-6-1601
5. TCA 49-6-1601(d)(1)(B)(v)
6. TCA 37-1-403(b)
7. TCA 37-1-611(b)
8. Tenn. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 87-101 (June 9, 1987)

Cross References

Recommendations and File Transfers 5.203
Staff-Student Relations 5.610
Interrogations and Searches 6.303
Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation 6.304
Title IX & Sexual Harassment 6.3041
Promoting Student Welfare 6.400

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Emergency Contact Information**	**6.410**	**10/28/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of all students shall provide the schools with emergency contact information which shall contain the following information:

1. Location and phone numbers of parent(s)/guardian(s) during the school day; and

2. Information concerning a student's particular physical disability or medical condition.

This information shall be required annually and shall be kept on file in the principal's office.

If a student suffers an injury or becomes ill, the staff member in charge shall have the responsibility to render first-aid or ensure that it is rendered if there is a consent form on file from the parent/guardian. In the event of serious injury or illness to a student, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified as whether to pick up the student at school or meet the student at the hospital. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, the student shall be transported to the hospital emergency room. Efforts to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall continue until they are reached.

Principals shall inform the Director of Schools/Designee immediately of any serious injuries suffered by students while under the jurisdiction of the school.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) who object to the guidelines contained in this policy shall submit to the principal a written emergency plan for his/her approval.

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures to implement this policy, including all local reporting requirements.

Cross References

Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Intimidation 6.304

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Student Wellness**	**6.411**	**04/13/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **05/08/06; 07/08/13; 08/13/18; 01/13/20; 06/09/25**

The Board recognizes the value of proper nutrition, physical activity, and other health conscious practices and the impact that such practices have on student academic achievement, health, and well-being. In order to provide an environment conducive to overall student wellness, this policy shall be followed by all schools in the district.[1]

COMMITMENT TO COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH

All schools shall implement the Coordinated School Health (CSH) program for wellness related programs and services in schools and the surrounding community based on state law and State Board of Education CSH standards and guidelines. The school district's Coordinated School Health Coordinator or Supervisor shall be responsible for overseeing compliance with State Board of Education CSH standards and guidelines in the school district.

SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL[2]

A school district health advisory council shall be established to serve as a resource to schools for implementing policies and programs and develop an active working relationship with the county health council. The council shall consist of individuals representing the school and community, including parents, students, teachers, school administrators, health professionals, school food service representatives, and other stakeholders concerned with the health and wellness of students. The primary responsibilities of the council include, but are not limited to reviewing the CSH plan, and as necessary, making recommendations as to procedures and programs.

The State Board of Education's Coordinated School Health and Physical Activity policies shall be used as guidance by the council to make recommendations. The Board will consider recommendations of the council in making policy changes or revisions.

Additionally, each school shall have a Healthy School Team that is representative of all eight (8) components of the CSH program. The team members shall consist of the principal, teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members with at least half of the team members being non-school personnel.[2] The Team will hold Healthy School Team meetings during the school year to assess needs and oversee planning and implementation of school health efforts. The Director of Schools/designee will ensure compliance with the school wellness policy, to include an assessment of the implementation of the wellness policy and the progress made in attaining the policy goals. The assessment will be made available to the public.

COMMITMENT TO NUTRITION

All schools within the district shall participate in the USDA child nutrition programs, which may include but not be limited to, the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and the After School Snack Program.[3,4,5]

Meals shall be accessible to all students in a non-stigmatizing manner. Students will be given adequate time to enjoy healthy meals and relax in a pleasant environment. Good nutritional habits shall be encouraged. All foods and beverages including vending machines, fundraising items, and concessions shall meet guidelines set forth by the Healthy, Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010 and Smart Snacks in Schools.[4,5,6] The principal/designee shall be responsible for overseeing the school district's compliance with the State Board of Education rules and regulations for sale of food items in the school district.[2,4,5]

Fundraising

Food-and beverages sold that can be consumed on campus during the school day must meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks guidelines in school nutrition standards. Schools shall follow the limit on days per semester in which non-healthy foods may be used for fundraisers.[4]

DISTRICT GOALS

The school district will promote healthy nutrition through various activities, including nutrition related newsletters, informational links on the school district website, healthy eating posters and bulletin boards in dining areas, and informational booths at various community functions. Nutrition education will be offered as part of a standards based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to promote and protect their health as outlined in the State Board of Education Health Education and Lifetime Wellness Standards. Nutrition education will discourage teachers from using high fat, sugar, and sodium foods as rewards and encourage students to start each day with a healthy breakfast. If a district engages in food or beverage marketing, all marketing shall comply with the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.[6]

COMMITMENT TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION[7]

The Board recognizes that physical activity is extremely important to the overall health of a child. Schools shall support and promote physical activity. Physical activity may be integrated into any areas of the school program.

Physical education classes shall be offered as part of a standards based program designed to provide developmentally appropriate moderate to vigorous physical activity as an integral part of the class. All physical education classes shall comply with the State Board of Education's Physical Education Standards.

Unstructured physical activity periods shall be offered in addition to the school district's physical education program. Elementary school students shall receive a minimum of forty (40) minutes of physical activity each full school day. Middle and high school students shall receive a minimum of ninety (90) minutes of physical activity each full school week.

Physical activity will be conducted outside if weather permits. The following activities shall not be considered physical activity: walking to and from class, time spent on an electronic device, and time spent in a physical education class.

Schools shall continue to offer after school sports and activities. Physical activity shall not be employed as a form of discipline. Physical activity shall not be withheld from a student as a form of punishment.

COMMITMENT TO CURRICULUM[2]

All applicable courses of study shall be based on State-approved curriculum standards.

SCHOOL HEALTH INDEX[2]

All schools within the district shall annually administer a baseline assessment on each of the recommended School Health Index modules. Results shall be submitted to the School Health Advisory Council and reported to the Tennessee Department of Education.

RECORD KEEPING COMPLIANCE

The school district's Coordinated School Health Coordinator shall ensure that records demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements are maintained. The Coordinated School Health Coordinator shall additionally document that the school wellness policy and triennial assessments are made available to the public.[8]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-1022
2. State Board of Education Policy 4.204
3. 42 USCA § 1758b; TRR/MS 0520-01-06-.04
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-06
5. 7 CFR § 210; 7 CFR § 220
6. 7 CFR 210.31(c)(3)(iii)
7. TCA 49-6-1021; State Board of Education Policy 4.206
8. 7 CFR § 210.31(f)

Cross References

Student Suicide Prevention 6.415

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Emergency Allergy Response Plan**	**6.412**	**10/28/24**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13; 05/14/18**

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop and maintain an emergency allergy response plan that meets state guidelines for managing students with life-threatening allergies. The plan shall include measures to reduce exposure to allergens and procedures to treat allergic reactions. Components of the plan shall include, but are not limited to, education and training of personnel, record keeping/documentation, development and reviews of the allergy action plan, and protocols for classrooms and cafeterias that include strategies to reduce exposure to allergens.[1]

Using the state food allergy guidelines plan as a guide, the Director of Schools/Designee shall also develop a process to identify all students with food allergies and develop and implement an individualized health care plan (IHCP) with an allergy action plan for each specific student.[2]

EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTORS

Each school shall maintain epinephrine auto-injectors in at least two (2) unlocked, secure locations including, but not limited to, the school office and the school cafeteria.

In the event of such a reaction, the school nurse or other trained school personnel shall utilize these epinephrine auto-injectors to respond, under a standing protocol from a physician.

The Director of Schools/Designee is authorized to seek the auto-injectors through a prescription written to Houston County Schools. Upon the issuance of the auto-injectors, the Director of Schools/Designee shall ensure that they are placed within each school and that any needed trainings are conducted for staff.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-50-1602(f)
2. *Guidelines for Use of Health Care Professionals and Health Care Procedures in a School Setting* (Tennessee Department of Education and Tennessee Department of Health, 2023, pg. 90)

Cross References

Medicines 6.405

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Prevention and Treatment of Sports Related Concussions**	**6.413**	**01/13/2020**
		Rescinds: **6.406**	Issued: **01/13/14**

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head or body. In order to ensure the safety of students that participate in interscholastic athletics, it is imperative that student athletes, coaches, and parents are educated about the nature and treatment of sports related concussions. The Board recognizes that concussions can be a serious health issue and should be treated as such.

The Board adopts the guidelines and other pertinent information and forms developed by the Tennessee Department of Health to inform and educate coaches, school administrators, student athletes, and parent(s) / guardian(s) of the nature, risk and symptoms of concussions and head injuries. These guidelines and materials may be viewed on the Department of Health's website and shall be made available to interested parties through the Central Office.

This policy shall govern all school youth athletic activities and those individuals involved in those activities which constitute an organized athletic game or competition against another team or in practice or preparation for an organized game or competition. It does not govern those activities or individuals involved in those activities which are entered into for instructional purposes only or those that are incidental to a nonathletic program or lesson.[1]

REQUIRED TRAINING [2]

The director of schools shall ensure that each school's athletic director and coaches, employed or volunteer, annually complete the *Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know* online course. This course may be accessed online at www.nfhslearn.com.

Each school year, prior to the annual initiation of practice or competition, the following persons must review and sign a concussion and head injury information sheet approved by the Tennessee Department of Health: the director of schools, licensed healthcare professionals (if appointed), each school athletic director, and each coach, employed or volunteer.

In addition, prior to the annual initiation of practice or competition each school year, all student athletes and their parent(s)/ guardian(s) shall review the concussion and head injury information sheet approved by the Tennessee Department of Health. A form confirming this review shall be signed and returned by the student athlete, if the athlete is eighteen (18) years of age or older; or by the student athlete's parent(s)/ guardian(s), for athletes younger than eighteen (18) years of age.

All documentation of the completion of a concussion recognition and head injury safety education course program and signed concussion and head injury information sheets shall be maintained by the director of schools or his/her designee for a period of three (3) years.

REMOVAL FROM ATHLETICS [2]

Any student athlete who shows signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion during an athletic activity or competition shall be immediately removed for evaluation by a licensed healthcare professional, if available, and if not, by the coach or other designated individuals.

No student athlete who has been removed from an athletic activity or competition due to a concussion or suspected concussion shall be allowed to return to any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including games, competitions, or practices, until the student athlete has been evaluated by and received written clearance on forms approved by the Department of Health from a licensed health care provider for a full or graduated return. "Healthcare provider" means a Tennessee licensed medical doctor (M.D.), osteopathic physician (D.O.), a clinical neuropsychologist with concussion training, or a physician's assistant (P.A.) with concussion training who is a member of a health care team supervised by a Tennessee licensed medical doctor or osteopathic physician.[2]

This requirement for clearance prior to a student athlete returning to an athletic activity shall not apply if there is a legitimate explanation other than a concussion for the signs, symptoms, and/or behaviors observed.

The director of schools or his/her designee shall ensure that all protocols approved by the Tennessee Department of Health or required by law relative to the provisions of this policy are followed and implemented within each school.

Legal References

1. TCA 68-55-502(b)(1)(F)
2. TCA 68-55-501

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Prevention and Treatment of Sudden Cardiac Arrest**	**6.414**	**12/10/18**
		Rescinds: **6.4061**	Issued: **12/10/18**

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is a condition in which the heartbeat stops abruptly and unexpectedly, preventing blood flow to the brain, the heart, and the rest of the body. In order to ensure the safety of students that participate in interscholastic athletics, it is imperative that student athletes, coaches, and parent(s)/guardian(s) are educated about the nature and treatment of sudden cardiac arrest. The Board recognizes that sudden cardiac arrest is a serious health issue and should be treated as such.

The Board adopts the guidelines and other pertinent information and forms developed by the Tennessee Department of Health to inform and educate coaches, school administrators, student athletes, and parent(s)/guardian(s) of the nature, risk, and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest. These guidelines and materials may be viewed on the Department of Health's website and shall be made available to interested parties through the Central Office.

This policy shall govern all activities and those individuals involved in those activities which constitute an organized athletic game or competition against another team or in practice or preparation for an organized game or competition. It does not govern those activities or individuals involved in those activities which are entered into for instructional purposes only or those that are incidental to a nonathletic program or lesson.

REQUIRED TRAINING[1]

The Director of Schools shall ensure that each school's athletic director and coaches, employed or volunteer, annually complete the ***National Federation of State High School Association's Elective Course – Sudden Cardiac Arrest*** online course. This course may be accessed online at www.nfhslearn.com.

Prior to the annual initiation of practice or competition, the following persons must review and sign a sudden cardiac arrest information sheet approved by the Tennessee Department of Health: each school athletic director, licensed healthcare professionals (if appointed), and each coach, employed or volunteer.

In addition, prior to the annual initiation of practice or competition, all student athletes and their parent(s)/guardian(s) shall review the sudden cardiac arrest information sheet approved by the Tennessee Department of Health. A form confirming this review shall be signed and returned by the student athlete, if the athlete is eighteen (18) years of age or older, or by the student athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s), if the athlete is younger than eighteen (18) years of age.

All documentation of the completion of a sudden cardiac arrest education course program and signed sudden cardiac arrest information sheets shall be maintained by the Director of Schools/designee for a period of three (3) years.

Removal from Athletics[1]

Any student athlete who shows signs, symptoms, and/or behaviors consistent with sudden cardiac arrest during or after an athletic activity or competition shall be immediately removed for evaluation by a licensed healthcare professional, if available, and if not, by a coach or other designated individuals. Signs, symptoms, and/or behaviors include but are not limited to: passing out, fainting, unexplained shortness of breath, chest pains, dizziness, racing heart rate, and extreme fatigue.
Student athletes who have been removed from an athletic activity or competition shall not return to any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including games, competitions, or practices, until the student athlete has been evaluated by and received written clearance on forms approved by the Department of Health from a licensed health care provider for a full or graduated return.

Legal References

1. TCA 68-6-101, et seq.

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually in April	**Student Suicide Prevention**	**6.415**	**08/08/22**
		Rescinds: **6.414**	Issued: **08/08/16; 12/12/16**

The board is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students and understands that physical, behavioral, and emotional health are integral components of student achievement. Students are strongly encouraged to report if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal or in need of help. Students will be provided information regarding the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) and/or 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

PREVENTION[1]

All district employees shall attend either the annual in-service training in suicide prevention or participate in other equivalent training approved by the Director of Schools. The training shall include, but not be limited to, identification of risk factors, warning signs, intervention and response procedures, referrals, and postvention.

The Director of Schools shall identify a district suicide prevention coordinator responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of this policy. Each school principal shall designate a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation.

INTERVENTION[1]

Any employee who has reason to believe that a student is at imminent risk of suicide shall report such belief to the principal or designee. Belief that a student is at imminent risk of suicide shall include, but not be limited to, the student verbalizing the desire to commit suicide, evidence of self-harm, electronic communication suggestive of suicidal ideation, or a student self-refers.

Upon notification, the principal or designee shall ensure the student is placed under adult supervision. Emergency medical services shall be contacted immediately if an in-school suicide attempt occurs. The principal or designee shall contact the Director of Schools or designee as soon as practicable.

Prior to contacting the student's parent/guardian, the Director of Schools or designee shall determine if there could be further risk of harm resulting from parent/guardian notification. If parent/guardian notification could result in further risk of harm or endanger the health or well-being of the student, then local law enforcement and the Department of Children's Services shall be contacted.[2]

If appropriate, the Director of Schools or designee shall contact the student's parent/guardian and provide the following information:

1. Inform the parent/guardian that there is reason to believe the student is at imminent risk of suicide;
2. Assure the parent/guardian that the student is currently safe or inform the parent/guardian that emergency medical services were contacted;
3. Ask the parent/guardian whether he/she is aware of the student's mental state;
4. Ask the parent/guardian whether he/she wishes to obtain or has obtained mental health counseling for the student;
5. Provide the names of community mental health counseling resources if appropriate.

The Director of Schools or designee will seek parental permission to communicate with outside mental health care providers regarding a student. If the student is under the age of 18 and the parent/guardian refuses to seek appropriate assistance, the Director of Schools or designee shall contact the Department of Children's Services.[2]

The Director of Schools or designee shall document the contact with the parent/guardian by recording:

1. The time and date of the contact;
2. The individual contacted;
3. The parent/guardian's response; and
4. Anticipated follow-up.

The Director of Schools or designee shall ensure the student is under adult supervision until a parent/guardian or other authorized individual accepts responsibility for the student's safety.

Prior to a student returning to school, the Director of Schools or designee and/or principal shall meet with the student's parent/guardian, and student if appropriate. The parent/guardian shall provide documentation from a mental health care provider stating that the student has received care. The principal will identify an employee to periodically check in with the student to ensure the student's safety and address any problems with re-entry.

POSTVENTION[1]

Immediately following a student suicide death, the Crisis Team shall meet and implement the Crisis Management plan. At a minimum, the Crisis Management plan shall address the following:

1. Verification of death;
2. Preparation of postvention response to include support services;
3. Informing faculty and staff of a student death;
4. Informing students that a death has occurred;
5. Providing information on the resources available to students;

The Crisis Team shall work with teachers to identify the students most likely to be impacted by the death in order to provide additional assistance and counseling if needed. Additionally, staff and faculty will immediately review suicide warning signs and reporting requirements. The Director of Schools or designee shall be responsible for all media inquiries.

Legal Reference:

1. TCA 49-6-1901 *et. seq.*
2. T.C.A. 37-1-403

Cross Reference:

News Releases, News Conferences and Interviews 1.503
Crisis Management 3.203
Student Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-Bullying, and Intimidation 6.304
Promoting Student Welfare 6.400
Student Wellness 6.411

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Special Education Students**	**6.500**	**03/14/22**
		Rescinds: **6.500**	Issued: **02/10/03; 12/12/16; 12/14/20**

Students with disabilities between the ages of three (3) and twenty-one (21), inclusive, shall receive the benefit of a free appropriate public education. These students shall be educated with the general student population to the maximum extent appropriate and should be placed in separate or special classes only when the severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes, even with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be accomplished satisfactorily.[1]

Eligibility standards and options of service for special education services shall be based upon the criteria specified in state regulations.[2]

ISOLATION AND RESTRAINT

Students receiving special education services shall not be restrained except as permitted by state law and regulations.[3,4] Students receiving special education services may be isolated or restrained only in emergency situations. In the event that restraint or isolation occurs, it shall be administered by school personnel who have completed a behavior intervention training program or other school personnel when trained personnel are not immediately available.

When available, an additional staff member will serve as an observer to any act of physical restraint performed on a student to monitor the health and safety of all involved.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The District's Inservice Committee Chairperson shall be responsible for developing/scheduling a training program to certify all school personnel who have completed a behavior intervention training program and who have renewed on a periodic basis. The following components shall be included in the training program:

1. Evidence-based techniques shown to be effective in the prevention of isolation and physical restraint;

2. Evidence-based techniques shown to be effective in keeping both school personnel and students safe when imposing physical restraint or isolation;

3. Evidence-based skills training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, conflict prevention, functional behavior assessments, de-escalation, and conflict management;

4. Information describing state statutes, policies, rules, and procedures on restraint and isolation; and

5. Identification and reporting of abuse and neglect in the school setting.

INCIDENT REPORTING

School personnel who must isolate or restrain a student receiving special education services shall report the incident and the facts surrounding such use according to the Tennessee Department of Education's procedure.[4]

Each school shall maintain all records of isolation and restraint, and semiannually, shall submit a report to the Board that includes the following:

1. The number of incidents involving the use of isolation and restraint since the previous semiannual report;
2. The number of instances in which the school personnel imposing physical restraint or isolation were not trained and certified;
3. Any injuries, deaths, or property damage that occurred;
4. The timeliness of parental notification; and
5. Demographic information to determine whether disproportionate use of these interventions exists.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The Director of Schools shall develop administrative procedures to govern the following:

1. Personnel authorized to use isolation and restraint;
2. Training requirements for personnel working with special education students; and
3. Incident reporting procedures.[4]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-10-103(c)
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-09-.01
3. TCA 49-10-1301 *et seq.*
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-09-.23; TCA 49-10-1304

Cross References

Special Education 4.202
Compulsory Attendance Ages 6.201
Alternative Education 6.319

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Homeless Students**	**6.503**	**02/11/19**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **07/08/13**

A homeless student shall have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.[1]

Homeless students are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.[2] Homeless students include:[2]

1. Students sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; students living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; students living in emergency or transitional shelters; or students abandoned in hospitals;

2. Students who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;

3. Students living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or trains stations, or similar settings; and

4. Migratory students who are living in circumstances described above.

ENROLLMENT

Homeless students shall be immediately enrolled, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment (i.e. academic records, immunization records, health records, proof of residency) or missed the district's application or enrollment deadlines.[3] Parents/guardians are required to submit contact information to the district's homeless corrdinator.[3]

PLACEMENT

For the purposes of this policy, school of origin shall mean the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including a preschool/pre-k program.[4] School of origin shall also include the designated receiving school at the next grade level when the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin.[4]

Placement shall be determined based on the student's best interest.[5] At all times, a strong presumption that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest shall be maintained, unless doing so would be contrary to a request made by the student's parent/guardian or the student in the case of an unaccompanied youth.[6] When determining placement, student-centered factors, including, but not limited to, impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety, shall be considered.[6] The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the student lives with their homeless parents/guardians or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.[7]

If it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, the Director of Schools/designee shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for the determination, in a manner and form that is understandable to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.[6] The written explanation shall include a statement regarding the right to appeal the placement decision.[6] If the placement decision is appealed, the district shall refer the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student to the homeless coordinator who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible and in accordance with the law.[8] Upon notice of an appeal, the Director of Schools shall immediately enroll the student in the school in which enrollment was sought pending a final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.[8]

RECORDS

Records ordinarily kept by the school shall be maintained for all homeless students. Information regarding a homeless student's living situation shall be treated as a student education record and shall not be considered directory information.[9]

SERVICES[10]

The Director of Schools shall ensure that each homeless student is provided services comparable to those offered to other students within the district, including transportation, special education services, programs in career and technical education (CTE), programs for gifted and talented students, and school nutrition.
The Director of Schools shall designate a district homeless coordinator who shall ensure this policy is implemented throughout the district. The homeless coordinator shall ensure:

1. Homeless students are quickly identified and have access to education and support services, to include Head Start and district pre-k programs;

2. Coordination with local social service agencies and other entities providing services to homeless students;

3. Coordinate transportation, transfer of records, and other interdistrict activities with other school districts;

4. Coordinate transportation to the school of origin or choice for homeless students;

5. Refer homeless students and their families to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, and housing services;

6. Assist homeless students in obtaining immunizations, medical or immunization records, and any additional assistance that may be needed;

7. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated in places frequented by parents/guardians of homeless students, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens; and

8. Unaccompanied youth are enrolled and informed of their status as independent students.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures to ensure that homeless students are recognized administratively, and that the appropriate and available services are provided for these students. The Director of Schools shall ensure professional development is provided to school personnel providing services to homeless students.

Legal References

1. 42 USCA §§ 11431 to 11435; McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, § 721
2. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 725
3. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(3)(C)(i), § 722(g)(3)(H)
4. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(3)(G)
5. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(3)(A)
6. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(3)(B)
7. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(3)(F)
8. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(3)(E)
9. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(3)(D)
10. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95, § 722(g)(4) - (6)

Cross References

Student Transportation 3.400
Parent and Family Engagement 4.502
Promotion and Retention 4.603
School Admissions 6.203
Student Assignments 6.205
Transfers Within the System 6.206
Migrant Students 6.504

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Migrant Students**	**6.504**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

The Board directs the administration to identify migratory students in the district, as required by law, and to develop written administrative procedures for ensuring that migrant students receive services for which they are eligible. In developing and implementing a program to address the needs of migratory students the district will:[1]

1. Identify migratory students and assess the educational and related health and social needs of each student.
2. Provide a full range of services to migrant students including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs, elective classes, fine arts classes, etc.
3. Provide migratory children with the opportunity to meet the same statewide assessment standards that all students are expected to meet.
4. To the extent feasible, provide advocacy and outreach programs to migratory students and their families and professional development for district staff.
5. Provide parents an opportunity for meaningful participation in the program.

If a migrant student is identified by the district, the director of schools or designee will notify the Tennessee Department of Education and request assistance if needed.

Legal Reference:

1. No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L.107-110 Part C §§1301-1309

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Students in Foster Care**	**6.505**	**12/12/16**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **12/12/16**

Houston County Schools shall provide all students in foster care, to include those awaiting foster care placements, with a free and appropriate public education.

ENROLLMENT

Students in foster care, to include those awaiting foster care placement, shall be immediately enrolled, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment (i.e. academic records, immunization records, health records, proof of residency), or missed the district's application or enrollment deadlines.[1]

PLACEMENT

The district and the child welfare agency shall determine whether placement in a particular school is in a student's best interest. Other parties, including the student, foster parents, and biological parents (if appropriate), shall be consulted. If the child has an IEP or a Section 504 plan, then the relevant school staff members shall participate in the best interest decision process. This determination shall be made as quickly as possible to prevent educational disruption.

Placement shall be determined based on the student's best interest. At all times, a strong presumption that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest shall be maintained.[2]

For the purposes of this policy, school of origin shall mean the school in which the student was enrolled, including a preschool/pre-k program, at the time of placement in foster care or at the time of a placement change if the student is already placed in foster care.[3]

When determining placement, student-centered factors including, but not limited to, the following shall be considered:

1. Preferences of the student;
2. Preferences of the student's parent(s) or education decision maker(s);
3. The student's attachment to the school, including meaningful relationships with staff and peers;
4. Placement of the student's siblings;
5. Influence of the school climate on the student, including safety;
6. The availability and quality of the services in the school to meet the student's educational needs;
7. History of school transfers and how they have impacted the student;
8. How the length of the commute would impact the student;
9. Whether the student is receiving special education and related services, and if so, the availability of those required services in a school other than the school of origin; and
10. Whether the student is an EL and is receiving language services, and, if so, the availability of those required services in a school other than the school of origin.

Transportation costs should not be considered when determining a student's best interest.
If it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin, the director or his/her designee shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for the determination. The written explanation shall include a statement regarding the right to appeal the placement decision. If the placement decision is appealed, the district shall refer the student to the district coordinator for children in foster care, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible and in accordance with the law.[2] Until the dispute is resolved, to the extent feasible, the student shall remain in his/her school of origin.[2]

TRANSPORTATION[3,4]

The district shall collaborate with the local child welfare agency to develop and implement clear and written procedures governing how transportation to a student's school or origin shall be provided, arranged, and funded. This transportation will be provided for the duration of the student's time in foster care.
The director of schools shall develop administrative procedures to provide for transportation of students in foster care.[5] These procedures must ensure that:

1. Students in foster care needing transportation to their schools of origin will promptly receive that transportation in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with federal law; and
2. If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to the school of origin, the district will provide such transportation if:
    a. the local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the district for the cost of such transportation;
    b. the district agrees to pay for the cost; or
    c. the district and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost.[4]

The district will ensure that a student in foster care, to include a student awaiting foster care placement, remains in his/her school of origin while any disputes regarding transportation costs are being resolved.

Legal References

1. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95) § 1111(g)(1)(E)(ii)-(iii)
2. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 1111 (g)(1)(E)(i)-(iv)
3. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 1111 (g)(1)(E)
4. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 1112 I(5); § 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. § 675(4)(A)
5. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by ESSA (Pub. L. 114-95), § 1112 I(5)(B)(i)

Cross References

Attendance 6.200
School Admissions 6.203

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Students from Military Families**	**6.506**	**08/10/26**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/12/19**

General

The Director of Schools shall develop the necessary administrative procedures to ensure that students with parent(s)/guardian(s) in the armed services are identified and that appropriate and available services are provided for these students.[1]

RELOCATION OF MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER[2]

A student who does not currently reside within the school district shall be allowed to enroll if he/she is a dependent child of a service member who is being relocated to Tennessee on military orders. To be eligible for enrollment, the student will need to provide documentation that he/she will be a resident of the school district on relocation. This documentation must be provided to the school district within one (1) calendar year from the date of enrollment.

If the child of a military member enrolls per this policy and has an active 504 plan, IEP, or an individualized family service plan, then the district shall take the necessary steps to ensure that services are in place when the student enrolls.

ABSENCES

Principals shall provide students with a one (1) day excused absence prior to the deployment of and a one (1) day excused absence upon the return of a parent/guardian serving active military service.

Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for students to visit a parent/guardian during a deployment cycle. The student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of his/her parent/guardian's deployment. Students shall be permitted to make up school work missed during these absences.[3]

REMAINING IN THE DISTRICT[4]

If a student is enrolled in grades eleven (11) through twelve (12) and is a dependent child of a service member who relocates on military orders resulting in the student no longer residing in the school district due to relocation, the student shall have the option to remain enrolled in the same high school until the student graduates or withdraws.

Legal References

1. State Board of Education Policy 2.103
2. TCA 49-6-3101; Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 834
3. TCA 49-6-3019
4. Public Acts of 2026, Chapter No. 834

Cross References

Attendance 6.200
School Admissions 6.203

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Student Records**	**6.600**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds: **JF; JRD**	Issued: **01/19/95; 03/09/15; 08/10/15; 01/13/20**

General

A cumulative record shall be kept for each student enrolled in school. The folder shall contain a health record, attendance record, and scholarship record; shall be kept current; and shall accompany the student through his/her school career.[1]

The name used on the record of the student entering the school district shall be the same as that shown on the birth certificate unless evidence is presented that such name has been legally changed. If the parent/guardian does not have or cannot obtain a birth certificate, then the name used on the records of such student shall be as shown on documents which are acceptable as proof of date of birth.

The name used on the records of a student entering the school district from another school shall be the same as that shown on records from the school previously attended unless evidence is presented that such name has been legally changed as prescribed by law.

When a student transfers to another school within the school district or to a school outside of the school district, copies of the student's records, including the student's disciplinary records, shall be sent to the transfer school within five (5) business days of the date on which the student's records request was received by the school.[2]

All records shall be remitted in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).[3]

ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

Student records shall be confidential. Authorized school officials shall have access to and permit access to student education records for legitimate educational purposes.[4] A legitimate educational interest is the official's need to know information in order to:

1. Perform required administrative tasks;

2. Perform a supervisory or instructional task directly related to the student's education; and

3. Perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family such as health care, counseling, student job placement, or student financial aid.

Authorized school officials may release information from or permit access to a student's education record without the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student's* prior written consent in the following instances:

1. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. The school district will make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or the eligible student before making a disclosure;[5]

2. If the disclosure is an item of directory information;[6]

3. To comply with the requirements of child abuse reports to the extent known by the school officials including the name, address, and age of the student; the name and address of the person responsible for the care of the student; and the facts requiring the report;[7]

4. When certain federal and state officials need information in order to audit or enforce legal conditions related to federal- or state-supported education programs in the school district;[8]

5. When the school district has entered into a contract for an organization to conduct scientific research on the school district's behalf to develop tests or improve instruction, provided that the studies are conducted in a manner which will not permit the disclosure of personal identification of students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) by individuals other than to representatives of the organization, and that the information will be destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which the study was conducted;[9]

6. To appropriate officials if the parent(s)/guardian(s) claim the student as a dependent as defined by the Internal Revenue Code;[10]

7. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions;[11]

8. To officials of another school, school system, or postsecondary institution when a student seeks or intends to enroll in another school district or a postsecondary institution. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student shall be notified of the transfer and shall have the right to obtain copies of the record transferred as well as an opportunity to challenge the content of the record;[12]

9. To financial institutions or government agencies that provide or may provide financial aid to a student in order to establish eligibility, to determine the amount of financial aid, to establish conditions for the receipt of financial aid, and to enforce financial aid agreements;[13]

10. To the appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or others;[14]

11. To the Attorney General/designee for official purposes related to the investigation or prosecution of an act of domestic or international terrorism. An educational agency that, in good faith, produces education records in accordance with an order shall not be liable to any person for that production;[15]

12. To any agency caseworker or other representative of a state or local child welfare agency or tribal organization authorized to access the student's educational records when such agencies or organizations are legally responsible for the care and protection of the student;[16]

13. To the Secretary of Agriculture/designee for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements, provided that the data collected will be protected in a manner which will not permit the disclosure of personal identification of students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) by individuals other than to representatives of the organization, and that the information will be destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which it was conducted;[17] and

14. To state and local authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by state law that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released.[18]

Consent to Disclose Records[19]

Authorized school officials may release information from a student's education record if the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or the eligible student gives written consent for the disclosure. The written consent shall include:

1. Specification of the records to be released;

2. Reasons for the disclosure;

3. Person, organization, or class of persons or organizations to whom the disclosure is to be made;

4. Signature of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student; and

5. Date of the consent, and if appropriate, a date when the consent is to be terminated.

The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or the eligible student may obtain a copy of any records disclosed under this provision.

RECORDKEEPING

The school district will maintain an accurate record of all requests to disclose information from or to permit access to a student's education records. The school district will maintain an accurate record of information it discloses and access it permits. The district will maintain this record as long as it maintains the student's education record.[20]

The record will include at least:[20]

1. Name of the person or agency that makes the request;

2. Interest the person or agency has in the information;

3. Date the person or agency makes the request; and

4. Whether the request is granted, and if it is, the date access is permitted, or the disclosure is made.

** The student becomes an "eligible student" when he/she reaches age eighteen (18) or enrolls in a post-secondary school, at which time all of the above rights become the student's right.*[21]

Legal References

1. 20 USCA § 1232g
2. TCA 49-6-3001(c)(1); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 156
3. TCA 49-1-701; 20 USCA § 1232g
4. TCA 10-7-504(a)(4); 20 USCA § 1232g
5. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(2)(B); 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(J)
6. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(2); TCA 10-7-504(a)(4)(A)
7. TCA 37-1-403
8. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(3), (5); 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(C)
9. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(F)
10. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(H)
11. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(G)
12. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(B)
13. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(D)
14. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(I)
15. 20 USCA § 1232g(j)
16. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(L)
17. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(K)
18. 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(1)(E)
19. 34 CFR § 99.30; 20 USCA § 1232g(b)(2)(A)
20. 34 CFR § 99.32(a)
21. 34 CFR §§ 99.3, 99.5; TCA 49-1-704

Cross References

School District Records 1.407
Promotion and Retention 4.603
Testing Programs 4.700
Attendance 6.200
Withdrawals 6.207
Child Custody/Parental Access 6.209
Bus Safety and Conduct 6.308
Corporal Punishment 6.314
Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317
Admission of Suspended/Expelled Students 6.318
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome 6.404
Reporting Child Abuse 6.409
Media Access to Students 6.604

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Student Records Annual Notification of Rights**	**6.601**	**03/09/15**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

Within the first three weeks of each school year, the school system will notify parent(s) of students and eligible students* of each student's privacy rights.[1] For students enrolling after the above period, this information will be given to the student's parent(s) or the eligible student at the time of enrollment.[2] The notice will include the right of the student's parent(s) or the eligible student to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records in accordance with Policy 6.602;[3]
2 Seek correction of items in the record which are believed to be inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's rights, including the right to a hearing upon request;
3. File a complaint with the appropriate state or federal officials when the school system violates laws and regulations relative to student records;
4. Obtain a copy of this policy and a copy of such educational records;
5. Exercise control over other people's access to the records, except when prior written consent is given, or under circumstances as provided by law or regulations, or where the school system has designated certain information as "directory information." Parent(s) of students or eligible students have two weeks after notification to advise the school system in writing of items they designate not to be used as directory information. The records custodian will mark the appropriate student records for which directory information is to be limited, and this designation will remain in effect until it is modified by the written direction of the student's parent(s) or the eligible student.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

"Directory information" means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate; full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended.[4]

Student directory information for 11th and 12th graders shall be made available upon request to persons or groups which make students aware of occupational and educational options; including official recruiting representatives of the military forces of the State and the United States.[5]

*The student becomes an "eligible student" when he/she reaches age 18 or enrolls in a post-secondary school, at which time all of the above rights become the student's rights.[6]

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Legal References:

1. 34 CFR § 99.4; TCA 49-1-704(d)(1)(A)
2. 34 CFR § 99.7; TCA 10-7-504
3. TCA 49-1-704
3. 34 CFR § 99.3
4. TCA 49-6-406; 10 U.S.C.§503(c)
5. 34 CFR § 99.5

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Student Records Inspection & Correction Procedure**	**6.602**	**03/09/15**
		Rescinds: **JRE**	Issued:

INSPECTION PROCEDURE

Parent(s) of students and eligible students* may inspect and review the student's education records upon written request. [1]

Parent(s) or eligible students shall submit to the records custodian a request which identifies as precisely as possible the record(s) that he/she wishes to inspect, and the records custodian will contact the same to discuss how access will best be arranged as promptly and practicable as possible. This inspection procedure must be completed within 45 days from the receipt of the request.[2]

The right to inspect and review educational records includes the right to a response from school officials concerning requests for explanation and interpretation of the data. School officials shall presume that the parent has the authority to inspect and review records relating to his/her child unless the school system has been advised that the parent does not have the authority under applicable state law governing guardianship, separation, and divorce. [2]

When a record contains information about students other than the parent's child or the eligible student, the parent(s) or eligible student may not inspect and review that information. [3]

FEES FOR COPIES

A reasonable fee for copies provided to parent(s) or eligible students* will be determined by the director of schools. A maximum of three (3) copies of the transcript will be provided free of charge. If the fee represents an unusual hardship, it may be waived in part or entirely by the records custodian. [4]

CORRECTION PROCEDURES

Parent(s) of students or eligible students* may seek to change any part of the student's record they believe to be incorrect. [5] The director of schools shall develop an acceptable procedure to establish an orderly process to review and correct an education record.

**The student becomes an "eligible student" when he/she reaches age 18 or enrolls in a post-secondary school, at which time all of the above rights become the student's right.*

Legal References:

1. 34 CFR § 99.10; TCA 49-1-704
2. TCA 49-1-704
3. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.09(5)(e)(3); 34 CFR § 99.4
4. TCA 10-7-506; 34 CFR § 99.11
5. 34 CFR § 99.20; 21; 22

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Student Records Use of Records**	**6.603**	**03/09/15**
		Rescinds: **JRD**	Issued: **01/09/95**

Authorized school officials will have access to and permit access to student education records for legitimate educational purposes.[1] A "legitimate educational interest" is the official's need to know information in order to:

1. Perform required administrative tasks;

2. Perform a supervisory or instructional task directly related to the student's education;

3. Perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family such as health care, counseling, student job placement, or student financial aid.

Authorized school officials may release information from or permit access to a student's education record without the parent(s) or eligible student's* prior written consent in the following instances:

1. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. The school system will make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parent(s) or the eligible student before making a disclosure;

2. If the disclosure is an item of directory information;

3. To comply with the requirements of child abuse reports to the extent known by the school officials including the name, address and age of the child, the name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child, and the facts requiring the report; [2]

4. When certain federal and state officials need information in order to audit or enforce legal conditions related to federally-supported education programs in the school system;

5. When the school system has entered into a contract or written agreement for an organization to conduct scientific research on the system's behalf to develop tests or improve instruction, provided that the studies are conducted in a manner which will not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by individuals other than representatives of the organization and the information will be destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which the study was conducted;[3]

6. To appropriate officials if the parent(s) claim the student as a dependent as defined by the Internal Revenue Code;

7. To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions;

8. When a student seeks or intends to enroll in another school district or a post-secondary school. Parent(s) of students or eligible students have a right to obtain copies of records transferred under this provision;[4]

9. To financial institutions or government agencies that provide or may provide financial aid to a student in order to establish eligibility, to determine the amount of financial aid, to establish conditions for the receipt of financial aid and to enforce financial aid agreements.

10. To make the needed disclosure in a health or safety emergency when warranted by the seriousness, of the threat to the student of other persons, when the information is necessary and needed to meet the emergency, when time is an important and limiting factor and when the persons to whom the information is to be disclosed are qualified and in a position to deal with the emergency.

11. To the Attorney General or his designee for official purposes related to the investigation or prosecution of an act of domestic or international terrorism. An educational agency that, in good faith, produces education records in accordance with an order issued under this Act shall not be liable to any person for that production.[5]

Authorized school officials may release information from a student's education record if the student's parent(s) or the eligible student gives written consent for the disclosure. The written consent must include:

1. A specification of the records to be released;
2. The reasons for the disclosure;
3. The person, organization, or class of persons or organizations to whom the disclosure is to be made;
4. The signature of the parent(s) or eligible student;
5. The date of the consent and, if appropriate, a date when the consent is to be terminated. The student's parent(s) or the eligible student may obtain a copy of any records disclosed under this provision.

The school system will maintain an accurate record of all requests to disclose information from or to permit access to a student's education records.[6] The system will maintain an accurate record of information it discloses and access it permits. The system will maintain this record as long as it maintains the student's education record.

The record will include at least:

1. The name of the person or agency that makes the request;
2. The interest the person or agency has in the information;
3 The date the person or agency makes the request; and
4. Whether the request is granted and, if it is, the date access is permitted or the disclosure is made.

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Legal References:

1. 20 USCA 1232g; TCA 10-7-503; TCA 10-7-504; TCA 49-1-704
2. TCA 37-1-403
3. TRR/MS 0520-1-9-.14(7)(h)-(k)
4. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(11)(e)
5. USA Patriot Act of 2001 § 507
6. TCA 49-1-704

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in May	**Student Publications**	**6.704**	**07/08/13**
		Rescinds: **JHCC**	Issued:

STUDENT RIGHTS

The student shall be allowed to responsibly express himself/herself and to disseminate his/her views in writing. [1]

Any student may submit articles and editorials for school-sponsored publications.

STANDARDS

School-sponsored publications shall adhere to commonly accepted community standards, and no printed material may be distributed which:

1. Is obscene[3]
2. Is libelous[4]
3. May create a material and substantial disruption of the normal school activity or appropriate discipline in the school.[5]
4. Is ungrammatical, poorly written, or inadequately researched.[6]
5. Is biased, prejudicial, vulgar or profane, or [6]
6. Is unsuitable for immature audiences.[6]

CONTROL AND SUPERVISION

Student publications shall be under the control of the principal. Each school shall have a faculty sponsor who reviews all publications proposed to be distributed in the school by a student or school group. [2] Final approval of all publications proposed to be distributed shall be subject to the principal's approval.

DISTRIBUTION

School authorities shall regulate the time, manner, place and duration for the distribution of publications on school grounds.

As it pertains to the school, distribution shall be defined as any manner of disseminating written or printed materials equally, systematically or merely at random to several or many persons on school grounds.

APPEALS

If a request for distributing any portion of a student publication is denied by the faculty sponsor and/or the principal, the decision may be appealed-to the principal, then to the director of schools, and ultimately to the Board.

Legal References:

1. U.S. Constitution, First Amendment
2. *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969)
3. *Sharley v. Northwest Ind. School District*, 462 F. 2d 960, 970-71 (5th Cir.1971)
4. *Schwartz v. Schuker*, 298 F. Supp. 238, 242 (D.C.N.Y. 1969)
5. *Braxton v. Municipal Ct*., 10 Cal. 3d 138, 514 P. 2d 697, 109 Cal. Rptr. 897 (1973)
6. *Hazlewood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier*, 484 U.S. 260 (1988).

Cross References:

Use of Copyrighted Materials 4.404
Use of the Internet 4.406
Controversial Issues 4.800

Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in April	**Student Fees and Fines**	**6.709**	**01/13/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued:

FEES

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures regarding fees for school activities and programs. Such procedures shall comply with all state laws and regulations.[1]

FINES

The Director of Schools/Designee shall develop procedures regarding the assessing and collections of fines for the destruction or damage of school property. Such procedures shall comply with all state laws and regulations.[2]

Legal References

1. TCA 49-2-114; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.16
2. TCA 37-10-101, 102

Cross References

Revenues 2.400
Textbooks and Instructional Materials 4.400
Graduation Activities 4.606
Care of School Property 6.311