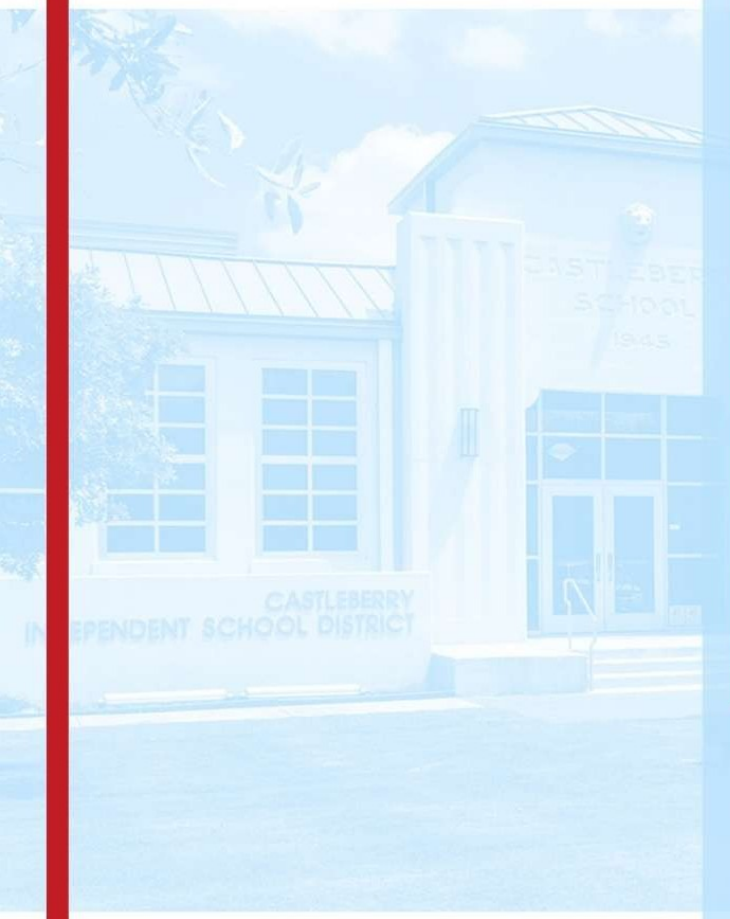
If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of a disability, please email walkerk1@castleberryisd.net.



Castleberry ISD

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2026–2027

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EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge receipt of information that the Castleberry ISD Employee Handbook is available to me on the District's website on the Employee Resources page located under the Talent Acquisition Department's website. I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document. I also understand that I may access the policies, including employment online: Policy Online.

I understand that by acknowledging receipt of the Employee Handbook, I also acknowledge receipt of the Castleberry ISD Responsible Use Guidelines. I agree to read the guidelines and abide by them. I understand that each campus library and administrative department has Internet access. I understand that I may print the handbook from the website or call the Talent Acquisition and Development Department at 817-252-2000 to request a paper copy.

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

I understand that no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will employment relationships are intended by this handbook. I understand that I have an obligation to inform the Talent Acquisition and Development Department, my supervisor, and the State Board of Educator Certification (if applicable) of any changes in personal information, such as name, phone number, address, etc. I also accept responsibility for contacting my supervisor or the Talent Acquisition and Development Department if I have questions or need further explanation.

By completing the Employee Handbook Receipt through my PowerSchool account, I agree that my typed name shall serve as my digital signature. By submitting my digital signature, I agree that I have read and understand this notice and acknowledge receipt and understanding of the Castleberry ISD Employee Handbook.

INTRODUCTION

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

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

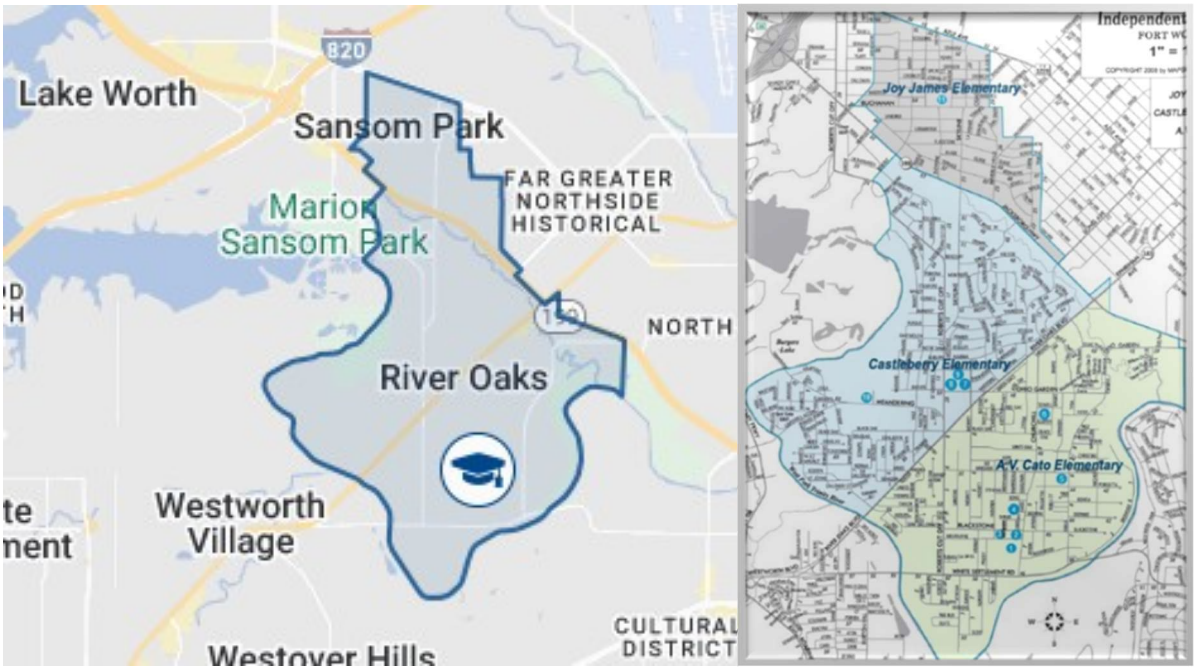


DISTRICT INFORMATION

Castleberry Independent School District is located in River Oaks, Texas, just north and west of downtown Fort Worth. The district services the populations of River Oaks, Sansom Park, and a portion of Fort Worth.

Castleberry had its beginning in the year 1898 with a one room frame building known as Marine School No. 3 located where the Gary S. Jones Administration Building now stands. In 1909 another room was added, and the school became known as Rosen Heights School No. 2. In 1919, a three-room red brick building was constructed and was named after Zack and Aunt Fannie Castleberry who furnished water from their well for school use. The first group of students to receive their high school diploma from Castleberry High School graduated in 1958. Today, there are approximately 3,800 students served by the Castleberry Independent School District.

DISTRICT MAP



DISTRICT MISSION, VISION, AND CORE COMMITMENTS

Policy AE

Vision

Inspire, Empower, Innovate

Mission

Castleberry Independent School District is inspiring and empowering all students to be innovative thinkers in the global community.

Beliefs

- We believe our students are valued, independent thinkers who embrace the opportunities of character development, and college, career and military readiness to become productive global citizens.
- We believe that parents and families are essential partners in the educational process that amplifies students' success.
- We believe teachers, being integral in facilitating student learning, are valued, supported, and empowered to develop their knowledge and skills.
- We believe campus leaders are valued, culturally aware, sensitive to students' needs, instructional coaches, effective communicators, and foster a climate of belonging and success.
- We believe the Superintendent and Central Office equip district personnel with innovative tools and resources, engage the community, and lead for student success.
- We believe the School Board inspires excellence in students and staff, approves strategies for student achievement, prioritizes resources, and cultivates connections in the district and community.

Culture

It is expected and natural for the CISD staff to:

- Cultivate an environment where students come first.
- Strive to make every single day a great learning experience for all students.
- Model high expectations for students, teachers, and staff.
- Work collaboratively with students, parents, and the community.
- Demonstrate professionalism, compassion, and respect.
- Provide digital learning experiences.
- Enhance learning through digital platforms and use of new innovative technologies.

District Priorities

- Provide a transformative learning experience for all students which incorporates collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity.
- Foster a culture of respect and appreciation of each individual and his or her unique talents by modeling professionalism, compassion, and servantship.
- Optimize resources to sustain and enhance district operations.

Student Outcomes

- Students will be prepared to meet the challenges of life after graduation.
- Students will demonstrate mastery of the local, state, and federal curriculum standards.
- Students will learn to make good choices, respect others, and value education.
- Students will have the capabilities to live, learn, and prosper in a free society that is globally, connected, and increasingly competitive.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Policies BA, BB series, BD series, and BE series

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

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

Current board members include:



The board usually meets on the second Monday of the month at 5228 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114In the event that large attendance is anticipated, the board may meet at an alternate location. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the district website and at the Administration Building located at 5288 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114 at least three business days before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a one-hour notice.

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

Board Meeting Schedule

July 20, 2026	January 19, 2027* *special meeting
August 17, 2026	February 8, 2027
August 24, 2026* *special meeting	March 8, 2027
September 14, 2026	April 5, 2027
October 5, 2026	May 3, 2027
November 2, 2026	May 11, 2027* Canvass Election
December 14, 2026	June 7, 2027
January 11, 2027	June 14, 2027* Tax Hearing

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The Castleberry ISD Administration Building is located at 5228 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114. The receptionist may be reached at 817-252-2000.

School Calendar

2026-2027 School Calendar

Helpful Contacts

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

Superintendent's Cabinet

Renee Smith-Faulkner, Superintendent of Schools
(817) 252-2005, smithr@castleberryisd.net

Lenny Lasher, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Facilities, and Operations
(817) 252-2006, lasherl@castleberryisd.net

William Wooten, Chief Financial Officer
(817) 252-2023, wootenw@castleberryisd.net

Dr. June Ritchlin, Executive Director of Educational Leadership
(817) 252-2016, ritchlinj@castleberryisd.net

Kathryn Walker, Director of Talent Acquisition and Development
(817) 252-2003, walkerk1@castleberryisd.net

Christi Patton, Executive Director of Special Programs
(817) 252-2570, pattonc@castleberryisd.net

Jacob Bowser, Executive Director of Technology Operations
(817) 252-2087, bowserj@castleberryisd.net

District Coordinators, Directors, And Managers

Athletics

Didi Pierce, Director of Athletics
(817) 252-2072, pierced@castleberryisd.net

Auxiliary Services/Facilities

Rigo Martinez, Maintenance Manager
(817) 252-2052, martinezr@castleberryisd.net

Michael Hammond, Transportation Manager
(817) 252-2053, hammondm@castleberryisd.net

Teaching, Learning, and Innovation

Whitney Harper, Lead Elementary Coordinator Math/Title Funds
(817) 252-2031, harperw@castleberryisd.net

Scott Hutchings, Lead Secondary Coordinator Math/Performance Systems
(817) 252-2030, hutchingss@castleberryisd.net

Denise Chedville, Assessment Coordinator/Advanced Academics
(817) 252-2013, chedvilles@castleberryisd.net

Stephanie Balster, Innovation Coordinator
(817) 252-2089, balsters@castleberryisd.net

Kristen Schmitt, ELA Coordinator (Grades PK-5)
(817) 252-2016, schmittk@castleberryisd.net

Vianey Lemus Martinez, Elementary Bilingual Coordinator
(817) 252-2014, lemusv@castleberryisd.net

Dr. Nicole McDorman, Elementary Science/GT Coordinator
(817) 252-2015, mcdormann@castleberryisd.net

Dr. Jennifer Garcia, Secondary ELA Coordinator
(817) 252-2084, garciaj@castleberryisd.net

Laura Guzman, Bilingual/ESL Curriculum Content Coordinator
(817) 252-2038, guzmanl@castleberryisd.net

Marcey Cogar, Secondary Science/GT Coordinator
(817) 252-2032, cogarm@castleberryisd.net

Kelly James, Social Studies Coordinator
(817) 252-2113, jamesk@castleberryisd.net

Technology Operations and Management Information Systems (MIS)

Brian Huff, Network and Infrastructure Coordinator
(817) 252-2091, huffb@castleberryisd.net

Les Baerwaldt, Cybersecurity Coordinator
(817) 252-2093, baerwaldt@castleberryisd.net

Kale Sweet, Technical Support Manager
(817) 252-2092, sweetb@castleberryisd.net

Heather Mayfield, Management Information System Coordinator
(817) 252-2083, mayfieldh@castleberryisd.net

Communications

Abigail Offenbaker, Communications Coordinator
(817) 252-2019, offenbakera@castleberryisd.net

College, Career, and Military Readiness

Stephanie Martinez, Director of CTE
(817) 252-2173, martinezs@castleberryisd.net

Manuel Saldivar, CCMR Advisor
(817) 252-2173, saldivarm@castleberryisd.net

Child Nutrition

Ginny Blickenstaff, Director of Child Nutrition
(817) 252-2040, blickenstaffg@castleberryisd.net

Financial Services

Sandra Cervantez, Academic and Finance Operations Manager
(817) 252-2023, cervantezs@castleberryisd.net

Fine Arts

Stacia Graves, Director of Fine Arts
(817) 252-2196, gravess@castleberryisd.net

Safety and Security

Sam Cervantez, Safety & Security Coordinator
(817) 991-2911, cervantezs@castleberryisd.net

Antonio Provencio, Chief of Police – CISD Police
817) 252-2192, provencioa@castleberryisd.net

Special Programs and Multi-Tiered System of Support

Jennifer Kedare, Special Programs Coordinator
(817) 252-2580, kedarej@castleberryisd.net

Student Support and Alternate Placement Programming

Wesley Jackson, Director of School Policy and Student Support
(817) 252-2021, jacksonw@castleberryisd.net

Talent Acquisition and Development

Cassandra Sweet, Talent Acquisition Specialist
(817) 252-2002, sweetc@castleberryisd.net

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

A.V. Cato Elementary

Principal: Michelle Strambler, stramblerm@castleberryisd.net

4501 Barbara Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114

Phone: (817) 252-2400, Fax: (817) 252-2499

Castleberry Elementary

Principal: Charles Gideon, gideonc@castleberryisd.net

1100 Roberts Cut Off, Fort Worth, TX 76114

Phone: (817) 252-2300, Fax: (817) 252-2399

Joy James Academy of Leadership

Principal: Dr. Teresa Phelps, phelpst@castleberryisd.net

5300 Buchanan, Fort Worth, TX 76114

Phone: (817) 252-2500, Fax : (817) 252-2599

Irma Marsh Middle School

Principal: Kerissa Bearce, bearcek@castleberryisd.net

415 Hagg Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76114

Phone: (817) 252-2200, Fax: (817) 252-2599

Castleberry High School

Principal: Scott Runyan, runyans@castleberryisd.net

215 Churchill Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114

Phone: (817) 252-2100, Fax: (817) 252-2199

Alternative Learning Center

Principal: Sal Limas, limass@castleberryisd.net

1101 Merritt, Fort Worth, TX 76114

REACH High School - Phone: (817) 252-2390, Fax: (817) 252-2398

TRUCE Learning Center- Phone: (817) 252-2490, Fax: (817) 252-2498

EMPLOYMENT

Equal Employment Opportunity

Policies DAA, DIA

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

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

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator for employees to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: Wes Jackson, Director of Student Support and School Policy, 5228 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth TX, jacksonw@castleberryisd.net, 817-229-6956. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, email, or phone. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator for employees for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: Wes Jackson, Director of Student Support and School Policy, 5228 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth TX, jacksonw@castleberryisd.net, 817-229-6956.

Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Talent Acquisition and Development Department.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Policy DC

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

Employment after Retirement

Policy DC

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

Contract and Noncontract Employment

Policy DC series

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

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

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

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

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

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

Certification and Licenses

Policies DBA, DF

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or a professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to the Department of Talent Acquisition and Development in a timely manner. Employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) must notify Kathryn Walker, Director of Talent Acquisition and Development at 817-252-2001 when there is action against, or revocation of, their license.

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

Recertification of Employment Authorization

Policy DC

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

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

Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing

Policy CQ, DHE

Non-investigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the district reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of

work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The district may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including district-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on district premises or work sites or used in district business. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may result if an employee refuses to submit to testing or is found to violate district policy.

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug testing policies and related educational material should contact Talent Acquisition and Development.

Health Safety Training

Policies DBA, DMA

District employees who are head directors of a marching band or head coaches or chief sponsors of an extracurricular athletic activity (including cheerleading) that is sponsored or sanctioned by the district or UIL must maintain and submit to the district proof of current certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another authorized organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to Lenny Lasher by August 31, 2026.

Nurses, athletic coaches or sponsors, PE teachers, marching band directors, cheerleading coaches, and other certain employees must obtain and maintain certification in the principles and techniques of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) provided by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another authorized organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees

subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to Lenny Lasher by August 31, 2026.

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

Reassignments and Transfers

Policy DK

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit his or her request by April 1, 2026. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Talent Acquisition and Development office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

Workload and Work Schedules

Policies DEAB, DK, DL

Professional Employees

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

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation including conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30

minutes. The district may require teachers to supervise students during lunch one day a week when no other personnel are available.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees

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

ADA Accommodations

Policies DAA, DBB, DIA

The district will provide reasonable accommodations to employees with a disability if the accommodation would allow the individual to perform the essential functions of their job, unless doing so would create an undue hardship. An employee or their supervisor may initiate a request for accommodation by contacting Talent Acquisition and Development and identifying an adjustment or change at work that is needed because of a disability. An employee may also submit a written request to HR using the ADA Accommodation Request Form, which is available at the Office of Talent Acquisition and Development located at 5228 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114.

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

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

Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk

Policies DEAB, DG

The district supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk. A place, other than a multiple user bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from other employees and the public where the employee can express breast milk will be provided.

A reasonable amount of break time will be provided when the employee has a need to express milk. For nonexempt employees, these breaks are unpaid and are not counted as hours worked. Employees should meet with their supervisor to discuss their needs and arrange break times.

The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections of Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) requires an employee to notify the district if they believe the district is out of compliance in providing breaks for a nursing mother. The employee must give the district 10 days to come into compliance before making any claim of liability against the district. An employee with concerns should contact Kathryn Walker, Director of Talent Acquisition and Development, 817-252-2003.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) provides consideration of accommodations to employees who have known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. An employee seeking a PWFA accommodation should Kathryn Walker, Director of Talent Acquisition and Development, 817-252-2003 to begin the interactive process.

Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications

Policies DK, DBA

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

Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to an uncertified substitute, inappropriately certified teacher, or an uncertified teacher. This notice is not required if parental notice under ESSA is sent. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit, including substitutes. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request. Employees who have questions about their certification status can call Talent Acquisition and Development at 817-252-2001.

Outside Employment and Tutoring

Policy DBD

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

Administrators

An employee who has significant administrative duties relating to the operation of a school district, including the operation for a campus, program, or other subdivision of the district is restricted from outside employment. Administrators may not receive financial benefits for performing personal services for any business entity that conducts or solicits business with the district.

Administrators are also prohibited from receiving financial benefits for performing personal services for any education business that provides services regarding the curriculum or administration of any school district or financial benefits for performing personal services for other school districts, open enrollment charter schools, and education service centers. An exception applies to an administrator who is not a superintendent, assistant superintendent, or member of a board of managers if the board approves as required by statute. Services must be performed on the administrator's personal time. Contact Talent Acquisition and Development for more information.

Performance Evaluation

Policy DN, DPB series

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

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

Employee Involvement

Policies BQA, BQB

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

Staff Development

Policy DMA

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

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

Mental Health Training

Policy DMA

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

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

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB

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

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

Employees should contact Payroll and Benefits for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

Paychecks

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

The schedule of pay dates for the current school year can be found on the CISD Payroll Information webpage.

Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of 30 days is necessary to activate this service. Contact the payroll department for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll Deductions

Policy CFEA

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

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or Social Security employee contributions

- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable

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

Overpayments

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

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

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

Overtime Compensation

Policies DEAB, DEC

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees and paraprofessional employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and ends at midnight on Saturday.

Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for the hours set by the normal work schedule. Hours worked beyond the normal schedule up to 40 hours will be paid at a regular rate of pay.

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

- Employees can accumulate up to 30 hours of comp time.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- An employee is required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

Travel Expense Reimbursement

Policy DEE

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

Health, Dental, and Life Insurance

Policy CRD

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school employee health insurance program. The district's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

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

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

Supplemental Insurance Benefits

Policy CRD

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for term life, vision, dental, disability, cancer, and long-term care. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact CISD Payroll/Benefits for more information.

Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)

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

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

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Policy CRE

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from 9/1/2025-8/31/2026, effective 9/1/2017.

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

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

Unemployment Compensation Insurance

Policy CRF

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

Teacher Retirement

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

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

Other Benefit Programs

Attendance and Longevity Incentives

Castleberry offers an attendance and longevity incentive. For more information, see the Castleberry ISD Compensation Plan.

Tuition-Free Attendance

Children, grades Pre-Kindergarten to 12th, of nonresident full-time employees may attend a school in CISD tuition-free, subject to availability of space.

403(b)

Castleberry ISD employees are eligible to participate in 403(b) plans. Other benefits can be found by visiting the CISD Benefits website.

LEAVES AND ABSENCES

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

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

Paid leave must be used in half-day increments. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave.

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

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

Definitions

Absence Limits. Campuses and departments are limited in the number of people that may use discretionary leave on any given day, in order to maintain the integrity of the academic environment. The number of employees using discretionary leave on any one day will be limited by Administrative Regulation. In cases where a campus or department has met its discretionary absence limit, and the employee submits a discretionary or non-discretionary leave that day(s), the supervisor or principal may request medical certification from the employee in order for the employee to not be docked pay for the absence.

Current limits are:

Castleberry Elementary School	4 people
A.V. Cato Elementary School	4 people
Joy James Elementary School	4 people
Irma Marsh Middle School	5 people
Castleberry High School	5 people
REACH High School	1 person
TRUCE Learning Center	1 person

All Other Departments	*at supervisor's discretion

Excessive Absenteeism

Absences over 10 days in a school year are considered to be excessive absenteeism. Absences due to approved FMLA, Temporary Disability, assault, jury duty, subpoena, or an accommodation under ADA are not considered when determining excessive absenteeism.

Limits on the Use of Unpaid Days

If an employee has exhausted all paid leave and is not on an approved leave of absence (i.e., short-term disability, FMLA, parental or military leave), there is a maximum of 8 unpaid days that can be taken. An employee who exceeds this 8-day limit may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Unpaid days are deducted from employee pay at the employee's daily rate.

Any scheduled absence for which the employee is not covered under an approved FMLA or TDL time, did not obtain approval from their principal/supervisor, or absences beyond leave limits, accumulated, or available paid leave, shall result in deductions from the employee's pay.

Approved extended leave does not negate the requirements to provide medical certification such as doctor's notes.

Three consecutive, unexcused absences without prior notice may be considered by the district as job abandonment and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Catastrophic Illness or Injury. A catastrophic illness or injury is a severe condition or combination of conditions affecting the mental or physical health of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family that requires the services of a licensed practitioner for a prolonged period of time and that forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee and to lose compensation from the district.

Such conditions typically require prolonged hospitalization or recovery or are expected to result in disability or death. Conditions relating to pregnancy or childbirth will be considered catastrophic if they meet the requirements of this paragraph (up to 60 days during the course of employment upon approval and must be requested by the employee).

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

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.
- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.

- Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law
- Grandparent and grandchild
- Any person residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death

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

Family Emergency. The Term "family emergency" shall be limited to disasters and life-threatening situations involving the employee or a member of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family.

Leave Day. A "leave day" for purposes of earning, using, or recording leave will mean the number of hours per day equivalent to the employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time.

Medical Certification. Any employee, who is absent more than 2 days because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee's fitness to return to work.

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

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

Medical certification is REQUIRED in the following circumstances (failure to provide documentation will result in the employee's pay being docked at their daily rate):

1. Employees are absent for more than 2 consecutive workdays due to a personal illness or family illness.
2. On the day before or after a holiday;
3. On the first or last day of a semester;

4. On days scheduled for state assessment tests; or
5. On professional or staff development days
6. A questionable pattern of absences or when deemed necessary by the supervisor or Superintendent; or
7. The employee requests FMLA leave for the employee's serious health condition; a serious health condition the employee's spouse, parent, or child;
8. The employee requests FMLA leave for military caregiver leave;
9. The employee requests and is approved for a sick leave pool to be created.

Approved extended leave (FMLA, TDL, sick leave pool) does not negate the requirements to provide medical certification such as doctor's notes. In each case, medical certification will be made by a health-care provider as defined by the FMLA. DECA (LEGAL) Employees requesting leave on a blocked day, or for more than (2) consecutive days, will need to submit their request for approval (after obtaining principal/supervisor approval), by filling out the 25-26 Absence Request Form (must be signed in to your CISD gmail account to be able to access this form).

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

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

School Year. A "school year" for purposes of earning, using, or recording leave will mean the term of the employee's annual employment as set by the District for the employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time.

Paid Leave

*Employees must meet the eligibility requirements.

The District shall make state personal leave and local leave for the current year available for use at the beginning of the school year. An employee will not earn any local leave when he or she is in an unpaid status. An employee using full or proportionate paid leave will be considered to be in paid status. The District will not approve paid leave for more leave days than have been accumulated in prior years plus leave currently available. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated and available paid leave will result in deductions from the employee's pay.

If an employee separates from employment with the District before his or her last duty day of the school year, or begins employment after the first duty day of the school year, state personal leave and local leave will be prorated based on the actual time employed.

If an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck will be reduced for local and state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year.

For purposes of leave, an employee who is regularly scheduled to work 30 hours or more per week is considered full time. Leave is recorded in ½ day, and whole days (depending on the classification of the employee's assignment as a non-exempt or exempt employee). Employees in positions that are provided a substitute are charged leave as used, even if a substitute is not employed.

Employees may elect the order in which they use leave with the exception of compensatory time (comp time) which must be used before any available paid state and local leave. The reason for the absence must meet the criteria of the leave elected. Employees must complete a leave report in Red Rover when absent. The election is made on the leave report and may not be changed after the report is submitted. If employees do not elect the type of leave they wish to use, or if they do not have a sufficient balance in the leave they elect, the District will apply leave in the following order as applicable:

1. Compensatory Time (non-exempt employees)
2. State sick leave accumulated prior to the 1995-1996 school year
3. Local sick leave
4. State personal leave

Use of sick leave pool days will be permitted only after all available state and local leave has been exhausted. When an absent employee is eligible for FMLA leave, the District will designate the absence as FMLA leave after completing all required FMLA forms. The District will require the employee to use temporary disability leave and paid leave, including compensatory time, concurrently with FMLA leave.

An employee receiving worker's compensation income benefits may be eligible for paid or unpaid leave. An absence due to a work-related injury or illness will be designated as FMLA leave, temporary disability leave, and/or assault leave, as applicable.

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

Local Leave

- Earned at a rate of ½ day per 18 days worked.
- Employees receive 5 days maximum per year.
- Leave is recorded in ½ day and whole days (depending on the classification of the employee's assignment as a non-exempt or exempt employee).
- Discretionary leave must be requested (3) business days in advance and receive supervisor approval.
- Discretionary leave shall not exceed (2) consecutive workdays.
- Leave is prorated for employees who start after the official beginning date of their position or separate before their last duty day.
- End of year balance rolls over to the next year.
- Eligible for reimbursement upon retirement for employees who meet the requirements.

Personal Leave

- Earned at a rate of ½ day per 18 days worked.
- Employees receive 5 days maximum per year.
- State Sick Leave is only available to employees that accumulated this state leave on/before May 30, 1995.
- Leave is recorded in ½ day and whole days (depending on the classification of the employee's assignment as a non-exempt or exempt employee).
- Discretionary leave must be requested (3) business days in advance and receive supervisor approval.
- Discretionary leave shall not exceed (2) consecutive workdays.
- Leave is prorated for employees who start after the official beginning date of their position or separate before their last duty day.
- End of year balance rolls over to the next year.
- Transferable to other Texas school districts and generally transfers to education service centers.

Non-Contract (Non-Duty) Days

- Only employees who work 207 (Child Nutrition Managers) and 226 days are eligible for non-contract days.

- End of year balance does not roll over to the next year.
- Days must be approved by the supervisor in advance.
- Days are allocated according to the present year calendar and vary from year to year.

Unpaid Leave

*Employees must meet the eligibility requirements

Family Medical Leave – up to 12 work weeks/26 work weeks for military-related injuries

- Contact the Payroll/Benefits office for paperwork.
- Employees must be employed by the district for one year and work a minimum of 1,250 hours to be eligible.
- Leave runs concurrent with district-paid leave and Temporary Disability Leave.
- Leave becomes unpaid once leave is exhausted.

State Temporary Disability Leave – up to 180 calendar days

- Contact the Payroll/Benefits office for paperwork.
- For qualified employees only (employees whose position requires them to hold a certificate through SBEC) i.e., Teachers, Principal,
- It runs concurrently with district-paid leave and Family Medical Leave. Leave becomes unpaid once leave is exhausted.
- For personal illness only.

Personal Leave

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

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

Discretionary. Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor 3 business days in advance of the

anticipated absence. The effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor. Discretionary use of state personal leave shall not exceed two consecutive workdays. Discretionary leave that exceeds two consecutive workdays may result in full dock of pay for the absence, and is subject to final approval notification from Talent Acquisition, even if it is taken as a docked day.

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

State Sick Leave

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

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

Sick Leave Bank (or Pool)

The Sick Leave Pool is discontinued effective July 1, 2026.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions

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

What is FMLA leave?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Am I eligible to take FMLA leave?

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

- You work for a covered employer,
- You have worked for your employer at least 12 months,
- You have at least 1,250 hours of service for your employer during the 12 months before your leave, and

- Your employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of your work location

Airline flight crew employees have different “hours of service” requirements.

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

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

How do I request FMLA leave?

Generally, to request FMLA leave you must:

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

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

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

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

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

What does my employer need to do?

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

- Allow you to take job-protected time off work for a qualifying reason,

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

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

After becoming aware that your need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, your employer must confirm whether you are eligible or not eligible for FMLA leave. If your employer determines that you are eligible, your employer must notify you in writing:

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

Where can I find more information?

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

WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

SCAN ME

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

Local Procedures for Implementing Family and Medical Leave Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses FML.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

District Contact. Employees that require FML or have questions should contact Payroll and Benefits for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Temporary Disability Leave

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

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

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

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

Workers' Compensation Benefits

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

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use accumulated sick leave or any other paid leave benefits. An employee choosing to use paid leave will not receive workers' compensation weekly income benefits until all paid leave is exhausted or to the extent that paid leave does not equal the pre-illness or -injury wage. If the use of paid leave is not elected, then the employee will only receive workers' compensation wage benefits for any absence resulting from a work-related illness or injury, which may not equal his or her pre-illness or -injury wage.

Assault Leave

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

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

An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take all the leave time medically necessary (up to two years) to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. At the request of an employee, the district will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. Days

of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

Bereavement Leave

District employees (except substitute or temporary) are eligible for bereavement leave.

- Employees may use up to five (5) available leave days to cover workdays missed per occurrence, subject to the District's approval, for a death in the employee's immediate family.
- Bereavement leave may last no longer than five (5) days.
- Appropriate documentation must be provided for all bereavement leave. The documentation must establish the relationship between the employee and the deceased and will be kept on file by the principal or designee or immediate supervisor or designee, with a copy sent to the Payroll department.

For Bereavement Leave purposes, immediate family is defined as the employee's:

- Spouse;
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis;
- Parent, stepparent, current parent-in-law, or another individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee;
- Sibling, stepsibling, current brother- or sister-in-law; or
- Grandparent, grandchild, spouse's grandparent.

Jury Duty

Policies DEC, DG

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

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

- Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides.
- An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and is required to provide the district a copy of the summons to document the need for leave (must be uploaded by the employee in Red Rover prior to the absence).
- An employee must report back to work as soon as they are released from jury duty or court proceeding if four or more hours remain in the workday and the absence is not for an employee's personal business.
- A copy of the release from jury duty or documentation of time spent at the court is required (must be uploaded by the employee in Red Rover for the absence).

Compliance with a Subpoena

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

Truancy Court Appearances

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

Religious Observance

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

Military Leave

Paid Leave for Military Service. Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to 15 days of paid

leave per fiscal year when engaged in authorized training or duty orders by proper authority. An additional seven days of leave per fiscal year are available if called to state active duty in response to a disaster. In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service.

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

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

Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers and Licensed Telecommunicators

A District Peace Officer who experiences a traumatic event in the scope of employment shall be granted a maximum of three days of mental health leave per traumatic event. A traumatic event is an incident or event that causes physical, emotional, or psychological harm.

Quarantine Leave for Peace Officers

A District Peace Officer who is ordered by the Department of Health or the Superintendent to quarantine due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while on duty is entitled to paid leave for the period specified in the order. During the leave, a peace officer is entitled to all employment benefits and compensation, including leave accrual and other benefits, for the officer’s regular job assignment.

Leave for Police Officers for Illness or Injury

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

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

Payment for Accumulated Leave Upon Retirement

A full-time employee who voluntarily retires, has provided a 90-day written notice to the District, and has at least fifteen consecutive years of service in Castleberry ISD, shall be eligible for payment for unused local leave up to 75 days. Eligible leave must have been accumulated after April 17, 1995.

The employee shall receive payment for each day of accumulated leave multiplied by the rate adopted by the Board. The rate established by the Board shall be in effect until the Board adopts a new rate. Any changes to the rate shall apply beginning with the school year following the adoption of the rate change.

If the employee is reemployed with the district, days for which the employee received payment shall not be available to that employee.

Employee Relations and Communications

Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the district. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the district newsletter, and through special events and activities. Recognition and appreciation activities also include our annual district-wide Employee Celebration, Superintendent's Breakfasts, and our regular board meetings.

District Communications

Throughout the school year, the Communications Department publishes newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements. Additionally, www.castleberryisd.net is the district's home page on the world wide web. This page includes links to information about each of the district's campuses.

All publications edited, printed, or distributed in the name of or within the district schools shall be under the control of the school administration and the Board of Education.

All publications approved and issued by individual schools shall be part of the instructional program, under the supervision of a faculty sponsor, and shall be subject to prior review by the campus principal.

All publications approved and issued by individual schools shall be carefully edited to reflect the high ideals and expectations of citizens of the District and their schools.

The principal, subject to the Superintendent's approval, shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to the organization, issuance, and sale of such publications and any other publication procedure.

Students who have complaints about the procedures or a professional decision affecting the content or style of a school-sponsored publication shall present that complaint in accordance with FNG (LOCAL).

All written material intended for distribution to students, over which the school does not exercise editorial control, shall be submitted for prior review in accordance with School Board policy.

Complaints and Grievances

Policy DGBA

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

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees.

For ease of reference, the district's policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints is reprinted as follows: Policy DGBA (Local)

For more information on the employee grievance procedure, please contact Wes Jackson, the Director School Policy and Student Support at jacksonw@castleberryisd.net or 817-252-2021.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WELFARE

Standards of Conduct

Policy DH, DHA

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the district and to be courteous to students, one another, and the public. Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor in advance or as early as possible in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and failure to follow procedures for reporting an absence may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Know and comply with department and district policies and procedures.
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism through appropriate channels.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
- Use district time, funds, and property for authorized district business and activities only.

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a district investigation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported by the superintendent to SBEC within the required timeframe. See Reports to the Texas Education Agency, for additional information.

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

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

Purpose and Scope

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall

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

Enforceable Standards

2. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Ethical Conduct toward Students

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
2. the subject matter of the communication;
3. whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
4. whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
5. whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
6. whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Policies DH, DIA

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

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

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

The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation: Policy DH(Local), Policy DIA(Local)

Harassment of Students

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

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

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

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

Procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students: Policy DHB(-(LEGAL), Policy FFH(Local), Policy FFH Regulation

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Policies DG, FFG, GRA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children

Policy FFG

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

Reports to Texas Education Agency

Policies DF, DHB, DHC

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

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

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

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

- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on district property or at a school-sponsored event.

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

Crime

Policy DG

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

Scope and Sequence

Policy DG

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

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

Technology Resources

Policy CQ, CQD

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

- Imposes no tangible cost to the district.
- Does not unduly burden the district's technology resources.
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance.

- Artificial intelligence (AI) should only be used as a support tool to improve student outcomes, not to replace the decisions made by teachers or students.
- Personally-Identifiable Information should not be used in any publicly accessible artificial intelligence tool.

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

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the district's acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and/or legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Executive Director of Technology Operations.

Personal Use of Electronic Communications

Policy CQ, CY, DHA

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

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

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

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the district's computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, mealtimes, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct district business.

- The employee shall not use district and campus trademarks, including names, logos, mascots, and symbols or other copyrighted material on social media or in texts without express written consent.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on district business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
    - Confidentiality of student records. [See Policy FL]
    - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law. [See DH(LEGAL)]
    - Confidentiality of district records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses. [See Policy GBA]
    - Copyright law [See Policy CY]
    - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system. [See DHA(LEGAL)]

See Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents, below, for regulations on employee communication with students through electronic media.

Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents

Policy DH

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

An employee is not subject to the provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult

friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

- The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol;
- The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school;
- The parent understands that the employee's communications with the student are excepted from district regulation; and
- The parent is solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the employee and the student.

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

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

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

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the district unless a specific exception is noted below.
- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:

  - The employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message;
  - The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
  - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee's district email address.

- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics including:
  - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
  - Copyright law [Policy CY]
  - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DH]
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.

- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.
- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district's record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

Public Information on Private Devices

Policy DH, GB

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

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

Social Media Guidelines

The Electronic Communication Policy is cited in DH(LEGAL) policy. Electronic communication means any communication facilitated by the use of any electronic device. This includes emails, texts messages, instant messages, and any communication made through a website, including social media, blogs, wikis, social networks, and virtual worlds.

Castleberry ISD employees are personally responsible for all comments/information published online. Due to the nature of the internet, employees should be mindful that once published, information may remain public for a long time.

As a public employee, you should understand that when you make statements pursuant to your official duties, including statements made through social media, you are not speaking as a citizen for First Amendment purposes. However, even when speaking as a private citizen about a matter of public concern, your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that you use face-to-face, and be in accordance with the highest professional standards to avoid impairing your ability to maintain an effective working relationship, or maintain good rapport, with parents, the community, or colleagues.

Be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings what you 'say' online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Protect your privacy but understand that even items posted on private sites expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a 'private

conversation' can be captured with a screen shot and shared by others into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.

Comments related to the school should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even in the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.

Before posting personal photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.

We encourage all who participate in social media to understand and follow these guidelines.

Criminal History Background Checks

Policy DBAA

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

Employee Arrests and Convictions

Policy DH, DHB, DHC

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

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

Moral turpitude includes the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud

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

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

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

Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention

Policy DH

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

Tobacco and Nicotine Products and E-Cigarette Use

Policies DH, FNCD, GKA

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

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

1. A device regardless of whether it is manufactured, distributed, or sold as an ecigarette, e-cigar, or e-pipe or under another product name or description; and
2. A component, part, or accessory for the device, regardless of whether the component, part, or accessory is sold separately from the device.

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

Fraud and Financial Impropriety

Policy CAA

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

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

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

Conflict of Interest

Policy CB, DBD

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

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

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

Gifts and Favors

Policy DBD

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

Copyrighted Materials

Policy CY

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

Associations and Political Activities

Policy DGA

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

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

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

Charitable Contributions

Policy DG

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

Safety and Security

Policy CK series

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

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

The safety program includes:

1. Guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies. Emergency procedure guides are posted in every room in the district. All employees are responsible for reviewing and understanding the content of the guides.
2. Program activities intended to reduce the frequency of accidents and injury, including:
    a. Inspecting work areas and equipment.

b. Training frontline staff and supervisory staff.

c. Establishing safe work procedures and regulations.

d. Reporting, investigating, and reviewing accidents.

3. Promoting responsibility for District property on the part of students, employees, and the community.

4. All buildings and doors shall be locked at all times. This includes all interior and classroom doors when students are present.

5. A Castleberry ISD photo identification badge is required to be worn and visible at all times. In addition, contractors and their employees whose work takes them inside Castleberry ISD occupied locations must display identification including their name and the company for which they work.

Procedures for staff photo identification badges are:

- Employees should wear their Photo ID badge when hosting or appearing at school functions or events. Employees may wear their Photo ID badge while conducting business in the community at their discretion.
- The Photo ID badge may be used only by the individual to whom it was issued. Employees may not “loan” their Photo ID badge to anyone for any reason.
- Employees shall surrender the Photo ID badge to their supervisor or designee upon termination or separation of employment, beginning an extended leave of absence, or when requested.
- Photo ID badges provide a visible means of identification for Castleberry ISD employees and help us know who belongs in a non-public work area and who does not.
- At their discretion, district employees observing people in confidential areas without appropriate identifications may approach the person to determine their status or may immediately report the person to a supervisor, or if an emergency situation, may request emergency services personnel, an SRO or call 911.
- A lost, stolen or misplaced Photo ID badge is to be immediately reported to the employee’s supervisor and office of Safety and Security. A replacement Photo ID badge will be issued as necessary and a record of the lost Photo ID badge will be noted. A fee may be charged to the employee for a new Photo ID.
- If an employee transfers from one department to another or an employee’s name changes, a replacement Photo ID badge will be issued upon surrendering the old Photo ID badge.

- In case of a lost or stolen ID badge, the employee is responsible for notifying their campus administrator and the Safety and Security department on the next business day or as soon as possible.

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the Safety and Security Department.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Policies DH, FNCG, GKA

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

Visitors in the Workplace

Policy GKC

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

Visitors may not volunteer unless authorized by the Talent Acquisition Department and the Principal/Supervisor. See Volunteer Coordinator's Handbook for more information.

Staff Visitor Guidelines

- Staff may have visitors only during non-instructional times, when they are also not responsible for the supervision of students.
- Visitors must present ID and have a valid visitor badge. Visitors must be accompanied by a staff member at all times.
- If a staff member wishes to have a guest as a volunteer, for educational purposes, prior approval must be obtained from the principal.

Asbestos Management Plan

Policy CSC

The district is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for each school. A copy of the district's management plan is kept in the Assistant Superintendent's office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Pest Control Treatment

Policies CLB, DI

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

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

Other Topics

Staff Dress Code

All faculty and employees of Castleberry Independent School District serve as role models for the students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. Consistent with these roles, all faculty and employees shall dress in a manner and have an appearance that is appropriate and professional in light of the environment in which they work, the duties of their jobs and the impressionable youth they serve.

Shorts that fall at or below the knee for Maintenance Staff are permitted from June 1-September 1 due to rising temperatures during the summer months. For athletic coaches, shorts (at finger-tip length or longer) or athletic clothing (sweats) are permitted during athletic periods. All athletic

coaches and physical education teachers are required to wear “full length pants” (sweatpants, khakis, etc.) while present inside the campus.

During the workday and any time employees attend work-related activities, employees shall appear in appropriate dress. Examples of professional attire include, but are not limited to, collared shirts, dress slacks, dress coordinates, suits, dresses, ties and sport coats.

Items that are not acceptable include the following:

Attire such as: jogging/running shorts, cut-off shorts (or any shorts or similar article of clothing shorter than finger-tip length); sunglasses and/or hats (inside the building); rubber shoe thongs (flip-flops) or bedroom slippers; athletic wear, such as jogging suits or tennis shoes (except for physical education teachers); skirts and dresses shorter than finger-tip length; underwear as outerwear; inappropriately sheer, tight or short clothing; garments that inappropriately bare or expose traditionally private parts of the body, including, but not limited to, the stomach, buttocks, back and breasts (i.e., midriffs, halter tops, backless clothing, tube tops, garments made of fishnet, mesh or similar material, tank tops, muscle crops, etc.).

Also, any clothing, paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, hair coloring, accessories or body adornments (including tattoos) that contain advertisement, symbols, words, slogans, patches or pictures that are sexually suggestive, drug, tobacco or alcohol-related or that are obscene, profane, vulgar, lewd, indecent or plainly offensive; any clothing or paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, hair coloring, accessories or body adornments that are in any way disruptive or potentially disruptive to the learning environment or that pose a threat or potential threat to the safety or welfare of the employee or any other person; any other similarly inappropriate clothing, accessory, body adornment, etc., or inappropriate grooming or hygiene.

All tattoos that may be classified or considered as an arm or leg sleeve, must be covered. Visible body piercings and clipping jewelry is limited to facial piercings that are clear or small studs. Body piercings should remain concealed at all times.

Special event days (dress-up days, field days, workdays, Saturday school, etc.) may have different guidelines as approved by the principal. Dress jeans and tennis shoes are permitted on designated days by the principal if worn with a collared spirit logo shirt.

Spirit dress with jeans is limited to Fridays for campuses and on designated days for central office staff as determined by the Superintendent. Campus principals may also designate one Friday a month for spirit shirts that do not have a collar. Please note that t-shirts are not permitted to be worn without a dress or suit jacket unless approved by the principal with pre-approval from the Executive Director of Educational Leadership.

Requests for an accommodation to the dress code must be made in writing, with medical certification of the request from the employee’s doctor, to the Director of Talent Acquisition and Development. All accommodation requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and are limited to specific terms and timeframes. Medical recertification is required on all accommodation requests every year.

General Procedures

Emergency School Closing

Policy EB

The district may close schools because of severe weather, epidemics, or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the district's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post a notice on the district's website and notify the following radio and television stations:

- KXAS – Channel 5
- WFAA – Channel 8
- FOX4 – Channel 4
- CBS – Channel 11
- Channel 21

Emergencies

Policies CKC, CKD

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

Purchasing Procedures

Policy CH

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

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Talent Acquisition and Development office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. The form to process a change in personal information is located on the CISD Employee Resources webpage.

Personnel Records

Policy DBA, GBA

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

Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

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

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

Facility Use

Policies DGA, GKD

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

CISD employees will be able to use their Castleberry ISD Picture Identification Badge for a one-time entry into all home athletic events. Re-admission will be granted only by the purchase of a ticket.

By using their Castleberry ISD Picture Identification Badge, employees will only be allowed to bring in their immediate family. Employees must be present when using their Castleberry ISD Picture Identification Badge.

Termination of Employment

Resignations

Policy DFE, DHB

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

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

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

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

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to SBEC.

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

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

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

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to TEA.

Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

Policies DF Series, DHB, DPA, DPB

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

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

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

Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

Policies DCD, DHC, DPA, DPB

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

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

Discharge of Convicted Employees

Policy DF

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

- An offense requiring the registration as a sex offender.
- Improper relationship between an educator and a student
- Sale, distribution, or display of harmful materials to a minor
- Public indecency
- A felony offense involving school property

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

Prohibition on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Policies DF, DH

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

Prohibited Classroom Instruction

Policies DF, DH

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

Exit Interviews and Procedures

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

Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding

The district is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance. Notice of the following must be sent to the support recipient and the court or, in the case of child support, the Texas Attorney General Child Support Division:

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

Student Issues

Equal Educational Opportunities

Policies FB, FFH

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

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to the district Title IX Coordinator, Wes Jackson, Director of School Policy and Student Support at 5228 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114, 817-252-2021.

Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Christi Patton, Executive Director of Special Programs, 5300 Buchanan, Fort Worth, TX 76114, 817-252-2752, the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator for students. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to the Superintendent.

Student Records

Policy FL

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

- **Parents:** Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights
- **The student:** The rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A district is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student's records before this time.
- School officials with legitimate educational interests

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

Parent and Student Complaints

Policy FNG

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

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

Administering Medication to Students

Policy FFAC, FFAF

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

Dietary Supplements

Policies DH, FFAC

District employees are prohibited by state law from knowingly selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to a student with whom the employee has contact as part of his or her school district duties. In addition, employees may not knowingly endorse or suggest the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

Psychotropic Drugs

Policy FFAC

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

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

- Recommending that a student use a psychotropic drug

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

Student Conduct and Discipline

Policies in the FN series and FO series

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

Student Attendance

Policy FEB

Teachers and staff should be familiar with the district's policies and procedures for attendance accounting. These procedures require minor students to have parental consent before they are allowed to leave campus. When absent from school, the student upon returning to school, must be given the opportunity to complete missed assignments. These requirements are addressed in campus training and in the student handbook. Contact the campus principal for additional information.

Bullying

Policy FFI

Bullying is defined by §TEC 37.0832. All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying, including cyberbullying, to the campus principal. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and is linked: Policy Online FFI (local) http://policy.tasb.org

Hazing

Policy FNCC

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

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