Georgetown ISD

2026–2027 Employee Handbook

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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 GISD's Human Resources Department.

All GISD employees are expected to read, understand, and comply with these rules and procedures, and are subject to all applicable state laws and regulations.

Some departments and campuses have created their own handbook to orient new employees to their department or campus. In the event of any conflicting statements between the department's handbook and this handbook, the GISD Handbook will supersede.

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 non-contract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. District policies can be accessed online at https://pol.tasb.org/home/index/1240.

The Handbook continues to be revised each year. To help you easily view the changes, use the following guide:



New policy



Important policy to review every year

Highlighted Text

New language added or changed to a policy

District Information

Description of the District

Located in Georgetown, Texas, GISD serves a diverse population of Williamson County students from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade. The District serves 14,000+ students at eleven elementary schools, four middle schools, three high schools, and two alternative campuses. The school district also offers a behavior alternative campus and is the fiscal agent for a county Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program ("JJAEP").

The District is administered by a superintendent and administrative staff located in the central administration offices. Policy decisions and administrative suggestions are made by the Board of Trustees, who is elected by the community.

The District is fully accredited by the Texas Education Agency.

District Snapshot

Visit GISD
(updated maps may be found at: www.georgetownisd.org)



Vision and Mission

Policy AE

GISD's Vision – What we aspire to be…

Home of the most inspired students, served by the most empowered leaders

GISD's Mission – Who we are, what we do…

Inspiring and empowering every learner to lead, grow, and serve

Beliefs – What we believe…

We believe public education is the foundation of our community.

Our actions should be student-centered. [relationships]

It is our responsibility to prepare students for their future. [innovation]

Developing leaders is vital to our success. [system + structure]

Instruction should be designed based on the needs of learners. [learning]

Community engagement enhances educational experiences. [collaboration + engagement]

Strategic Direction

During the fall of 2022, Georgetown ISD embarked on a discovery process to review the existing strategic plan, identify areas where the district was both performing well and needed improvement, review the system's capacity for change and establish a strategic direction for the future. This work took place over a period of six months and included feedback from more than 1,000 community members, parents, GISD staff members and students.

From this process, four strategic priority areas were identified:

- Excellence in Academics
- Student Connection + Belonging
- Exceptional Staff Experience
- Partnering with our Community

Each priority area is supported by a picture of success and includes objectives that will guide the work on the district moving forward and will be evidenced in district and campus improvement plans. The new Strategic Direction was adopted by the board in March 2023 and provides a

framework for campuses and departments that prioritizes district-wide objectives and provides for more frequent and transparent evaluation of progress.

Board of Trustees

Policies BAA, 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 serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the district.

Board members shall be elected at-large by place for three-year terms with elections conducted annually, as follows: The election for places 6 and 7 shall be held in 2027 and 2030 and in three-year intervals thereafter. The election for places 1, 2, and 3 shall be held in 2028, 2031 and in three-year intervals thereafter. The election for places 4 and 5 shall be held in 2029, 2032 and in three-year intervals thereafter.

Current board members include:

- ***JAMES SCHERER***
- ***RACHEL GALLARDO***
- ***CODY HIRT***
- ***DR. LAURA KINCHELOE***
- ***ANTHONY BLANKENSHIP***
- ***JENNIFER MAULDIN***
- ***STACY MCLAUGHLIN***

The board usually meets on the third Monday of every month, unless it conflicts with an academic holiday at the Hammerlun Center for Leadership & Learning located at 507 E. University Ave, Georgetown, TX 78626. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the District website and at www.georgetownisd.org at least three business days before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a one-hour notice.

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

Board Meeting Schedule

Meeting dates are subject to change. Please refer to our website for the most current information.

Administration

A Department and Program Staff Directory may be found at: www.georgetownisd.org

School Calendar

The 2026-2027 School Calendar may be found at: www.georgetownisd.org

Work Calendars

The 2026-2027 work calendars may be found at: www.georgetownisd.org

GISD Staff Information

Resources for GISD Staff

Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity

Policies DAA, DIA

Georgetown 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.

All employees must complete the new hire documents associated with the hiring process prior to beginning work. This includes providing the human resources department with copies of all relevant certificates, forms, etc, as well as choosing or declining benefits.

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 requirement not to discriminate 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: Brian Johnson, Executive Director of Campus Leadership and Operations and Title IX, 507 E. University Avenue, Georgetown, TX 78626, johnsonb6@georgetownisd.org, (512) 943-5000. 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 coordinator for employees for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: Leslie Talamantes, Executive Director of Human Resources, 507 E. University Avenue, Georgetown, TX 78626, talamantesl@georgetownisd.org, (512) 943-5000.

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

Job Vacancy Announcements

Policy DC

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis to the district's website. Vacancies may also be advertised by other appropriate means consistent with the law. Current GISD employees are eligible to apply for any vacancy by submitting a completed online application.

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.

The number of hours you work for any public school district may impact your TRS annuity status and, in some cases, jeopardize your annuity payments. You are responsible for tracking your hours and understanding how your employment affects your TRS benefits. Please contact TRS directly to confirm your hourly limits and any potential impact. If you believe this applies to your situation, notify the District immediately.
To ensure accurate reporting to TRS, you are required to email Payroll@GeorgetownISD.org on the first of each month with the total number of hours and days you worked during the previous month. Only report the totals—do not include a daily breakdown.

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 at www.trs.texas.gov.

TRS retirees that are rehired must agree not to sue or otherwise bring a claim against GISD, its Board of Trustees, Superintendent, or any other employee or agent of GISD for any loss or reduction in the value of the retirement benefits. All TRS Retirees hired after July 1, 2026 will be responsible for 50% of their TRS Annuity Surcharge and 100% of their TRS Care Surcharge, if applicable. *(One noted exception for 2026-2027: GISD will continue covering the cost of any TRS surcharges for one year for retirees who were employed with GISD and subject to TRS surcharges in 2025-2026 and are continuing employment, with no break in service in 2026-2027. This exception will cease in the 2027-2028 school year.)*

Contract and Noncontract Employment

Policy DC series

State law requires the district to employ all full-time professional employees who hold a certificate issued from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and registered 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. Registered nurses and full-time professional employees new to the District who hold a certificate issued by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and are 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 full 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.

Addenda

Districts may wish to add contract provisions to address a specific issue as a condition of employment. For example, when an individual is working on a permit, temporary certificate, or deficiency plan, is not appropriately certified for an assignment, or is a retiree. An addendum outlines requirements for the particular situation and becomes a part of the employee's contract. The addendum is a supplement to the contract in order to outline expectations for

steps required to become eligible, or maintain eligibility, for a teaching or professional assignment.
If you fail to fulfill the requirements, or if your certification expires, is canceled, or is revoked, the District may provide you with notice that the Contract is void pursuant to Texas Education Code section 21.0031.

Term Contracts. Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification and registered 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 an electronic notification of their contract with the option to print. 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 typically 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 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 GISD's Human Resources Department in a timely manner. Employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) must notify GISD's Human Resources Department 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 Rosie Bunik in Human Resources at (512) 943-5000 or TEA if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

All newly certified professional staff or currently certified professionals who acquire additional certification are required by TEA to renew their certificates every five (5) years. This requires

150 clock hours of training. State law stipulates that professional employees are responsible for keeping records of all training that meets this requirement.

It is essential that professional employees who fall under these requirements maintain complete and accurate documentation of all hours earned, and if requested submit the documentation to the proper TEA office in time for re-certification. Failing to do so could result in the loss of professional certification and GISD employment contract.



School District Teaching Permits

A district may issue a school district teaching permit and employ as a teacher of record a person who does not hold a teaching certificate issued by SBEC on approval by the board of trustees.

To be eligible for a school district teaching permit, a person must:

Hold a baccalaureate degree; or

Have served at or been employed by the district as a paraprofessional for not less than 180 days during the preceding calendar year and be:

Currently enrolled in a postsecondary program that could lead to a baccalaureate degree; and on track to earn a baccalaureate degree and receive a probationary certificate not later than the third anniversary of the date the person receives a school district teaching permit under this section. Education Code 21.055(a)-(b).
Promptly after employing a person under a school district permit under the provision requiring a baccalaureate degree, a district shall send a written statement to the commissioner. This statement must identify the person, the person's qualifications as a teacher, and the subject or class the person will teach. The person may teach the subject or class pending action by the commissioner.

Not later than the 30th day after the commissioner receives a district's statement, the commissioner may inform the district that the person is not qualified to teach. The person may not teach if the commissioner finds that the person is not qualified. If the commissioner fails to act before the 30th day after receiving the statement, a district may issue the school district teaching permit and the person may teach the subject or class identified in the statement sent to the commissioner.

The following requirements do not apply to a person who will teach only noncore academic career and technical education courses:

The requirement to hold a baccalaureate degree;

The requirement that the district send a written statement to the commissioner identifying the person, the person's qualifications as a teacher, and the subject or class the person will teach; and

The requirement that the commissioner inform the district in writing if the commissioner finds the person to be not qualified to teach.

A board may issue a school district teaching permit to a person who will teach courses only in career and technical education based on qualifications certified by the superintendent. Qualifications must include demonstrated subject matter expertise such as professional work experience, formal training and education, holding an active professional relevant industry license, certification, or registration, or any combination of work experience, training and education, or industry license, certification, or registration, in the subject matter to be taught.

The superintendent shall certify to the board that a new employee has undergone a criminal background check and is capable of proper classroom management. A district shall require a new employee to obtain at least 20 hours of classroom management training and to comply with continuing education requirements as determined by the board.
A person may teach a career and technical education course immediately upon issuance of a permit. Promptly after employing a person who qualifies under Education Code 21.055(d-1), the board shall send to the commissioner a written statement identifying the person, the course the person will teach, and the person's qualifications to teach the course.
A school district teaching permit remains valid unless the district issuing the permit revokes it for cause. A person authorized to teach under a school district teaching permit issued by a particular district may not teach in another school district unless that other district complies with the permit-issuing provisions.

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 GISD's Human Resources Department 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 Director of Transportation, Josh Albro, at (512) 943-7282.

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 GISD's Athletic Director, Jason Dean, or Director of Fine Arts, Carol Watson, by the start of the school year.

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. Nurses must submit their certification or documentation to the Director of Health Services, Mindy Petty. Other employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to GISD's Athletic Director, Jason Dean, or Director of Fine Arts, Carol Watson, by the start of the school year.

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

Reassignments and Transfers

Policy DK

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. Teachers are offered an opportunity annually to complete an online transfer request to express their interest in transferring to other campuses into similar positions. Principals, supervisors, and HR staff will take these requests into account when determining placement. Consideration may be given to transfer requests from employees on campuses identified as requiring a reduction in staff. Transfers are typically limited in availability. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a suitable replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by Human Resources.

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.

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.

Teachers assume reasonable duties other than their regular teaching responsibilities. Activities and services that make minor demands on a teacher's time shall be part of the teacher's basic assignment. These duties may be scheduled before and after, as well as during, certain parts of the school day and at co-curricular activities. Administrators will strive to equalize such duties among teachers and to keep such duties to a minimum.

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.

Work Hours. While start and end *dates* are already set by new annual work calendars, campus and department staff work *hours* may be determined based on whether an individual employee is expected to work 7.5 or 8 hours per day. Campuses and departments should stagger support staff positions for coverage as needed.

The standard established daily work hours will be as follows, and are subject to change based on operational needs:

Elementary School Staff	7:10 - 3:10
Middle School Staff	8:35 - 4:35
High School Staff	7:50 - 3:50

State law regulates only minimum days of employment and gives teachers the right to a minimum amount of planning and preparation time and duty-free lunch time during the school day. Otherwise, there are no state restrictions on work hours during the day for teachers.

For all other staff, meal breaks are not required by the FLSA, but they are customary. Many hourly employees believe they're guaranteed two 15-minute breaks, this is not required by FLSA or state law.

Work From Home. Work from home options are limited to intermittent pre-approved designated positions within the district. All work from home arrangements are made in collaboration with HR and documented with district forms. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for all time worked, whether from home or at a district work site. If work from home occurs without a supervisor's and Human Resource pre-approval, then the employee will be compensated (hourly) and the supervisor may take disciplinary action to address the failure to obtain prior approval.

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 accommodations by contacting the Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-5000 x6092.
Upon receiving the accommodation request, the Benefits Coordinator/HR will provide the medical ADA accommodation form along with a copy of the employee's job description. The medical information concerning the employee's disability will 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.

Once the completed medical ADA accommodation form is received by the Benefits Coordinator/HR, it will be reviewed and 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. An interactive ADA meeting will be held with the employee, their Supervisor and the Benefits Coordinator/HR. The Benefits Coordinator/HR 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. If you need additional assistance with this accommodation contact Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at 512-943-5000 x6092.

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 GISD Human Resources at hr@georgetownisd.org or Leslie Talamantes, Executive Director of Human Resources, at 512-943-5000 x6091.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) provides consideration of accommodations to employees who have known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. An employee seeking a PWFA accommodation should contact Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-5000 x6092 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 Rosie Bunik in Human Resources at (512) 943-5000 or TEA.

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.

Teachers shall not privately tutor their assigned students for pay during the school year. However, if the teacher does not have any instructional duties after the last day of school and until the first day of school, teachers may privately tutor GISD students. School resources should not be used for paid private tutoring.

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 hr@georgetownisd.org or Leslie Talamantes, Executive Director of Human Resources, at 512-943-5000 x6091 for more information.

Performance Evaluation

Policy DN 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, unless the employee has been approved for a less than annual appraisal. 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 may review 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.

All GISD teachers participate in evaluative walkthrough observations, and as appropriate are evaluated by a formal T-TESS observation. All GISD teachers receive a summative evaluation - see teachfortexas.org for appraisal guidelines and reference the district timeline for appraisal

T-TESS Response and Rebuttal

The T-TESS appraisal process provides teachers the opportunity for response or rebuttal if the teacher disagrees with the written observation summary or written summative report. The teacher may submit a written response or rebuttal for Domains I, II, and III, after receiving a written observation summary or any other written documentation related to these domain ratings. For Domain IV, the teacher may submit a written response or rebuttal after receiving the summative annual appraisal report following the end-of-year conference.

The written response or rebuttal to an observation summary or summative annual appraisal report must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving the report, and any written response must be related to the current summary or appraisal report and cannot address documentation provided at an earlier instance in the school year.

Teacher Second Appraisal

The T-TESS appraisal process also provides teachers with the opportunity to request a second appraisal by another certified appraiser. Teachers may request a second appraisal at the following times:

The teacher disagrees with the written observation summary for Domains I, II, and III, as identified in TAC §150.1002(a) of the Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Appraisal; or

The teacher disagrees with the written summative annual appraisal report for Domain IV, and for the performance of teachers' students, as defined in TAC §150.1001(f)(2) of Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Appraisal.

The teacher must request the second appraisal within 10 working days of receiving a written observation summary or the written summative annual appraisal report. A teacher may not request a second appraisal by another certified appraiser in response to a written summative annual appraisal report for the ratings of dimensions in Domains I, II, and III, if those ratings are based entirely on observation summaries or written documentation already received by the teacher earlier in the year for which the teacher already had the opportunity to request a second appraisal.

If a second appraisal is granted, the teacher may be given advanced notice of the date and time of the second appraisal. However, advanced notice is not required. Appraisers should refer to local board policy or district procedures to determine the observation window timing. Upon

approval for a second appraisal, the Superintendent or designee shall select the second appraiser from a pre-established roster of trained appraisers.
Both formal observation ratings shall be considered for summative evaluations.

Employee Involvement

Policies BQA, BQB

At both the campus and district levels, Georgetown ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from the Chief of Construction Services and Future Readiness Initiatives, Wes Vanicek, at (512) 943-5000 ext 6004.

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 non-instructional personnel is designed to meet specific licensing requirements (e.g., bus drivers) and continued employee skill development.

To encourage professional growth, move forward district initiatives, and provide staff a way to earn SBEC hours, GISD staff are asked to earn 24 Exchange Hours by midnight the day before they begin their school year work calendar. These hours are in "exchange" for the four days throughout the calendar year that staff receive pay but do not work (three in Fall and one in Spring). Staff who do not complete exchange hours will have their pay docked for the hours not completed. Several ways to earn these hours are:

- Attend GISD-U sessions.
- Earn 6 hours by completing the Vector compliance plan assigned to your job description.
- Complete up to 6 hours outside of GISD-U, pre-approved by your Administrator.

Staff who are hired late should earn exchange hours outside of normal working hours and no later than the day scheduled as a Staff Exchange Day. Employees and supervisors may direct questions to the Teaching & Learning department.

Teachers that attend out-of-district training and are offered additional compensation to attend the training must use available paid leave for this time.

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

Auxiliary staff may be required to attend staff development sessions throughout the year. The department director or designee organizes these activities. Employees are also encouraged to participate in additional appropriate staff development opportunities that are available from other sources.

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.

All employees have access to their assignment and pay through SKYWARD (See HR/Finance tabs: Employee Access, Employee Information, Personal Information, Personnel, & Assignment).

The Assignment tab lists the employee's assignment, term, salary, & payroll information. Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time registered nurses, and full-time counselors will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Each year the GISD Board of Trustees may recommend an increase for GISD employees. Therefore, the current year hiring scales are not an indicator of what an employee's salary will be the following year. 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.

Booster Club/PTA Payment to Employee. Booster/PTA organizations may not contribute funds in an effort to increase the personnel allocations and/or stipends for any program or campus. A booster/PTA organization will not give cash to any school employee to use at her or his discretion.

Extra-Duty Pay. GISD grants extra duty pay for some work beyond an employee's regular job responsibilities. Employees earning extra-duty pay will be compensated through district extra duty pay.
The district teacher-sub coverage program provides additional compensation to eligible employees who cover teacher absences, to acknowledge the lost planning time that the teacher gave up to cover the absence, and the assumed additional hours that would be spent outside of the normal instructional day to make up for that missed work. Extra duty pay for teacher substitute coverage submitted after the 5th of each month will be paid out in the next pay period.

Employees should contact Julie Cornish in Human Resources at (512) 943-6057 for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

Paychecks

Policy DEA

Payroll is handled by the Business Office. To access payroll information, time entry deadlines, pay periods, W-2 forms, and direct deposit forms, please visit the Business Office Payroll Webpage.



All professional and salaried employees are paid monthly. Auxiliary employees are paid on a semi monthly pay schedule. 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 payroll@georgetownisd.org if they have any questions.

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

Pay for Emergency Closures of Schools and Facilities. Should it be necessary to evacuate a GISD building for construction or maintenance repair, supervisors should contact HR for guidance on compensation of staff prior to sending staff home during work hours.

Automatic Payroll Deposit

Paychecks are electronically deposited into an employee-designated account (employees commonly elect to use bank accounts, but are also allowed to use pay cards instead). Employees can update their direct deposit account information by logging into Skyward HR/Finance from the Staff tab on the GISD website. If you have questions, contact payroll@georgetownisd.org

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), or other court-ordered garnishment of wages
- 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, in-district child care, and certain charitable contributions approved by the Board. 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.

Overtime Compensation

Policies DEC & DEAB



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. Non-exempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule, including taking or placing work-related phone calls, sending or checking text messages and emails, or performing any other work-related tasks without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval may be subject to disciplinary action **up to and including termination.**

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

Employees may be compensated for overtime 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 50 hours of comp time.
- An employee must use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., state sick, local, state).
- Use of comp time is at the employee's request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- Paid leave or holidays taken during a workweek are not counted as hours worked in determining FLSA overtime hours.
- Employees will be paid for any unused FLSA overtime at the time of separation from GISD employment.



- An employee shall use compensatory time within the fiscal year in which it is earned. If an employee has any unused compensatory time remaining at the end of a fiscal year, the District shall pay the employee for the compensatory time as per Board Policy *DEAB.*
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

Nonexempt employees who 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 compensated through the accrual of compensatory time. Any remaining compensatory time balance will be paid in full on the June payroll each year. See "Leaves and Absences" for additional information regarding the use and payment of compensatory time.

Travel Expense Reimbursement

Policy DEE

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor 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.

If an employee receives an annualized Travel Stipend they will not be reimbursed for mileage for travel within the Region 13 Education Service Center boundaries. For more information, please see Section 5.02 of the Business Services Procedure Manual.

Health, Dental, and Life Insurance

Policy CRD

Group health insurance coverage is provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield (managed by Higginbotham). 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:

- All full time employees are eligible for all benefits

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). Changes must be made within thirty (30) days of the qualifying life event. Documentation of the event is required. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are available for review by all employees on the Human Resources homepage > Benefits & Leaves and/or in MyBenefitsHub online. Employees should contact Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-5000 x6092 for more information.

Supplemental Insurance Benefits

Policy CRD

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs (e.g. dental, vision, cancer, accident, life, disability, etc). Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-5000 x6092 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. medical, dental, vision, cancer plan, accident plan hospital indemnity plan, FSA, HSA, dependent care FSA). A third-party administrator handles employee claims made on these accounts.

New employees must accept or reject these benefits during their first 30 days of employment. All existing employees must accept or reject these benefits on an annual basis during the specified open enrollment time period.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Policy CRE

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees and substitutes who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) serves as the district administrator for Workers' Compensation benefits.

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

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See below for information on use of paid leave for such absences.
Employees should contact Risk Management Coordinator, Verenice Martinez at 512-943-5000 ext. 6009 for more information and/or help reporting the incident.

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 Verenice Martinez in Human Resources at (512) 943-5000 ext: 6009 .

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 their supervisor 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-line, including information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

Other Benefit Programs

Employee Assistance Program ("EAP"): All GISD employees and their qualifying family members may access the District's "EAP" for immediate confidential assistance with work, health, and other life concerns. Additional helpful information can be found online under Employee Assistance Program (EAP) on our Human Resources webpage.

Employee Perks: A wide array of employee discounts and special offers can be found at our Employee Perks Directory on the Human Resources webpage. Many of these perks are provided by the Georgetown business community and coordinated by the District's Community Engagement and Communications Department (communityrelations@georgetownisd.org). These perks have specified expiration dates and change often.

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 a period of more than three (5) days, or intermittently more than an average of one day per month, should call Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-5000 x6092 for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the district.

Paid leave must be used in full or half-day increments with the exception of hourly employees. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order in accordance with the qualifying circumstances for the absences:

- Local Leave
- Old State Sick Leave

- State Leave:



Earned comp time and accrued flex time must be used before any available paid state and local leave, and paid leave must be used before a "dock" status is permitted or imposed.

When an employee separates from the District, Payroll will review the employee's leave usage for the current school year. Any qualifying absences charged to local or state leave that should have been covered by available compensatory time or accrued flex leave, in accordance with District policy, will be reallocated before the employee's final payroll is processed. Any remaining eligible accrued compensatory or flex leave balance will then be paid in accordance with District policy. The use of accrued paid leave in conjunction with a resignation must be approved by the employee's supervisor.

This approach aligns with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which allows compensatory time to be used as paid leave rather than additional wages. The intent is for comp time to be used as leave during employment, with payout only considered for unused comp at separation. See also Overtime Compensation on page 23.

Employees must follow district and department/campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence, complete the appropriate application(s), provide medical certification if applicable, and record absences using district absence management software. All employees must enter all absences in Skyward regardless of the need for a substitute. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated or available paid leave shall result in deduction from the employee's pay.

If an employee does not report to work or request leave of absence(s) according to district procedures, the incident is considered a "no show". An employee who is absent for 3 consecutive days without notice is considered to have abandoned their job and may face disciplinary consequences up to and including termination.

Immediate Family. For purposes of leave *other than* Family and Medical Leave (FMLA), 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 (for military leave ONLY). The definition of these are found in Policy DECA (LEGAL).



Medical Certification. Any employee, who is absent more than three (5) days because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification to their supervisor 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 with or without restrictions.

A supervisor who reasonably suspects that an employee is abusing a leave policy or practice, or that the employee has excessive absences, may require the employee to provide a health care provider/physician statement after each illness related absence. 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.

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 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 benefit 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.

Leave Accrual

State law entitles all employees to five (5) days of paid leave per year. Employees earn five (5) state leave days per school year. These days are earned on a basis of ½ day per eighteen (18) days worked, up to a maximum of five (5) days. Leave is available for use at the beginning of the

year. A day of leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time. State leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. 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 (*see* below).

Discretionary. Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave, and includes leave taken to perform extra-duty work for the District. Discretionary leave must be approved by the employee's principal or supervisor. An employee wishing to take discretionary leave must submit a request to the campus principal or department supervisor at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the anticipated absence.

Discretionary use of leave shall not exceed 3 consecutive work days or 10 work days per school year.



In deciding whether to approve or deny a request for discretionary leave, the principal shall consider the effect of the employee's absence(s) on the educational program or department operations, the availability of substitutes, as well as the number of approved absences for the same day and timely submission of request. Failure to receive approval prior to taking leave for discretionary absences may result in denial of request, and any unapproved discretionary leave will result in the employee's pay being "docked" at their daily rate of pay.

Schedule Limitations: (*block out days*) - see District Calendars
Due to the negative impact on students and to the operation of the district, discretionary leave may not be taken on the following key dates:

- Day before or after a District holiday
- Days scheduled for semester or final exams
- Days scheduled for state-mandated assessments
- Days scheduled for staff development or professional development
- First or last day of duty year

Supervisor approval for discretionary leave on block out days:
Campus principals or directors may choose to approve a discretionary absence on a block out day, based on their consideration of the following factors:

- Educational Program Impact: The effect your absence will have on classroom instruction, student learning, and daily campus operations;

- Substitute Availability: Whether a qualified substitute teacher or replacement staff member is available to cover your position;
- Duration of Absence: Requests that exceed the maximum consecutive days allowed by local policy (3 discretionary);
- Timeliness of your request: if your request is not made to your supervisor at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of your anticipated absence, this may be grounds for denial;
- Percentage Limits: Caps on the total number or percentage of campus staff allowed to be off on discretionary leave on the same day at your campus within your grade level or department.

Medical Certification for Absences on a blockout day:



Medical certification/documentation is required for campus employee's absences occurring on any of the blockout days listed above. Documentation must be attached to the absence in Skyward Time Off. If medical certification/documentation is not attached by the 10th of the following month, the employee's pay will be docked at their daily rate of pay the month after the occurrence. Documentation must be received by the 10th of the month in order to be reimbursed the docked amount on the current month's paycheck. Documentation received after the 10th will be reimbursed on the next paycheck. Documentation must also be received during the current school year in order to be reimbursed for docked pay.

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, 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 leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rate entitlement for the school year.

State Sick Leave

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

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

- Active military service

Local Leave

Employees local leave days on a basis of ½ day per eighteen (18) days worked, up to a maximum of: five (5) days for 10 month employees, 6 days for 11 month employees, and 7 days for 12 month employees.

Local leave may be taken for the illness of the employee or an immediate family member, or for an approved discretionary absence.

Local leave may also be used for first-year care following the birth or adoption of an employee's son or daughter, or the placement of a child with the employee for foster care. Paid leave must be used in full or half-day increments with the exception of hourly employees. Employees shall be charged leave as used even if a substitute is not employed.

Local leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of thirty (30) days. Employees who separate from the District surrender all accumulated local Georgetown ISD employee leave, even if later rehired by the District, unless they meet the qualifications described in the above paragraph on State Sick Leave.



Catastrophic Leave

Policy DEC Local

Catastrophic illness or injury is a severe, prolonged, or life-threatening condition, or combination of conditions, affecting the mental or physical health of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, child, or parent) that requires the services of a licensed practitioner for a prolonged period of time, and that forces the employee to exhaust all paid leave time and any applicable compensatory 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 shall be considered catastrophic if they meet the requirements of this paragraph. Bereavement shall not be covered.

The District has established a Catastrophic Leave Bank (previously known as the Sick Leave Bank) that employees may join through a one-time contribution of two (2) days of their local leave balance. Membership in the Georgetown ISD Catastrophic Leave Bank is available only to full and part-time regular employees. Participating employees are eligible to apply for Catastrophic Leave. Should the Catastrophic Leave Bank be depleted, the District reserves the

right to require employees to donate additional days to remain eligible to apply for catastrophic leave. Employees who resign from the District and later are rehired will be required to contribute two (2) days of their local leave if they choose to join the Catastrophic Leave Bank upon rehire.

Leave contributed to the bank shall be solely for the use of participating employees. An employee who is a member of the bank may request up to sixty (60) days of paid leave from the bank if the employee, or a member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, child or parent) experiences a catastrophic illness or injury and the employee has exhausted all paid leave. Employees will remain a member of the Catastrophic Leave Bank until they have exhausted all 60 days of Catastrophic Leave. This could happen over several incidents and years. Once the 60-days have been exhausted, the employee will no longer be a member of the Bank. However, the employee will have the opportunity to rejoin during the next open enrollment. If contributions fall below usage of the Catastrophic Leave Bank, the district has the right to reduce the number of days for which an employee can apply.

If the employee is unable to request leave from the Catastrophic Leave Bank, a member of the employee's family, or the employee's supervisor, may submit the request.

A committee made up of GISD employees shall confidentially consider applications in accordance with District policy and established Catastrophic Leave Bank procedures. The Benefits & Leaves Coordinator will remove names from applications before review by the Committee to allow anonymous leave requests. The Benefits & Leaves Coordinator will appoint Committee members on an annual basis. The Committee shall be representative of multiple departments and include employees who have relevant expertise and/or experience. All decisions regarding the Catastrophic Leave Bank may be appealed in accordance with DGBA(LOCAL), beginning with the Superintendent or designee.

Participating employees can visit the Catastrophic Leave page under the Human Resources Department> Benefits & Leaves. For more information please contact Benefits & Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin at 512-943-5000 ext.6092 if you need to request Catastrophic Leave.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions

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

Leave Entitlements

Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

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

The definition of "spouses" for FMLA purposes includes same-sex married couples and common-law married couples. A common law marriage must have been validly entered into in a state that permits the formation of common law marriages. A valid common law marriage in Texas requires the couple to agree to be married, live together in Texas as husband and wife, and tell other people that they are married. All employees who request FMLA to care for a spouse will be required to provide reasonable documentation of their marriage. It is the employee's choice of what documentation to provide. Employees may provide a marriage license, court order, or a simple statement regarding the marriage.

Other family definitions include:

- **Child –** "Son or daughter" (for purposes of FMLA) means a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis, who is either under age 18, or age 18 or older and "incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability" at the time that FMLA leave is to commence.

- **Parent –** Means a biological, adoptive, step or foster mother or father, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the employee when the employee was a son or daughter. The term does not include "parent-in-law".

Intermittent and Continuous Use of Leave. An employee does not need to use leave in one continuous block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. However, employees may NOT take intermittent

leave to bond with a child within the first year of the birth or placement; i.e. this type of FMLA leave must be taken in one continuous block of time (*see* also below under Intermittent Leave).

GISD requires the use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave, and the employee must comply with the district's normal paid leave policies.

Benefits and Protections

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

An employer may not interfere with an individual's FMLA rights or retaliate against someone for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

Eligibility Requirements

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave; and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

Requesting Leave

Generally, employees must give 30-days' advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days' notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally, follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection.

Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

Employer Responsibilities

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

Enforcement

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

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.

Where can I find more information?

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

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

WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

SCAN ME

Local Procedures for Implementing Family and Medical Leave Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period measured backward from the date an individual employee's first FML begins, which is often described as the "rolling" method of calculation.

Use of Paid Leave. FML runs concurrently with accrued state and local 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.

In addition, the expectant mother is entitled to FMLA leave for incapacity due to pregnancy, for prenatal care, or for her own serious health condition following the birth of the child. The expectant mother is entitled to leave for incapacity due to pregnancy even though she does not receive treatment from a health-care provider during the absence and even if the absence does not last for more than three consecutive calendar days. A spouse is entitled to FMLA leave if needed to care for a pregnant spouse who is incapacitated, during her prenatal care, or following the birth of a child if the spouse has a serious health condition.

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 emergency, 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 Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-5000 x6092 for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Temporary Disability Leave

Certified Employees. Any full-time employee whose position requires them to hold or obtain certification from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is eligible for temporary disability leave. The purpose of temporary disability leave is to provide unpaid 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 and runs concurrently with any other applicable leave. 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 temporary disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days. Weekends, holidays and extended breaks (including spring, winter and summer break) do count towards total leave time entitlement.

Employees placed on an involuntary temporary disability leave of absence have the right to present the board with testimony or other information relevant to the educator's fitness to continue in the performance of regular duties.

When an employee is ready to return to work, Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, should be notified at least 30 days in advance by calling her at (512) 943-5000 x6092. 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.

An absence due to a work related injury or illness shall be designated as FML leave, temporary disability leave, ADA leave and/or assault leave as applicable.

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 Risk Management Coordinator, Verenice Martinez, at (512) 943-5000 x6009.

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 not responsible for purposes of criminal liability.

With medical certification, 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 she or he sustained. At the request of an employee made via Employee Access in Skyward, the district will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. While the law mandates immediate placement on leave upon request, the employee ultimately bears the burden to provide medical certification from a physician to justify a continuing need for leave. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued paid leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation, the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

Bereavement Leave

Policy DEC

An employee shall be granted up to three days of paid bereavement leave upon the death of a member of the employee's immediate family, as defined in DEC(Local). Such leave shall be taken with no loss of pay or other paid leave and shall be noncumulative.

Bereavement leave is separate from and in addition to other forms of paid leave. Because of the necessary approval process, employees need to initially enter their own leave time (or unpaid "dock", if you have no available paid leave). Once approved by the Benefits & Leaves Coordinator , up to three days of paid bereavement leave will be issued and the employee's leave balance will be adjusted accordingly. For more information or to obtain a Bereavement Leave request form, please visit the Benefits webpage under the Human Resources Department. For more information please contact, Benefits & Leaves Coordinator Brooke Irwin @ 512-943-5000 ext.6092.

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.

Upon receiving a jury summons, the employee must immediately notify their supervisor and submit a copy of the summons. The employee should enter the absence in the timekeeping system using their available paid leave type. After jury service, the employee must email proof of court attendance (jury certification or release form) to Payroll@georgetownisd.org. Payroll will then convert the recorded paid leave to Jury Duty leave, restoring the employee's leave balance.

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. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides.

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 available paid

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 available paid 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 paid 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 7 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 paid state and local 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 Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-5000 x6092. 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 Benefits and Leaves Coordinator, Brooke Irwin, at (512) 943-6092 for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Payment for Accumulated Leave Upon Separation

The following leave provisions shall apply to flex days earned prior to July 1, 2025.

A nonexempt employee who voluntarily separates from employment with the District through resignation or retirement is eligible to receive payment for any unused accumulated flex leave. Employees who are discharged or whose employment is nonrenewed are not eligible for payment of accumulated flex leave.

Prior to payment, Payroll will review and adjust the employee's leave balances in accordance with District leave policies, including any required leave reallocations and leave proration. Payment will be made for the remaining eligible accumulated flex leave balance at the rate in effect when the flex leave was originally earned.

If the employee is subsequently reemployed by the District, any flex leave for which payment was previously received will not be restored.

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 an annual Recognition Ceremony to honor retirees, years of service, Teachers of the Year, and Employees of the Year.

District Communications

Throughout the school year, the Community Engagement & Communications Department, campuses, and various other departments publish newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials, including electronic publications. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements.

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, District policy DGBA (LOCAL) describes the process of bringing concerns and complaints, and our district Grievances and Complaints site provides immediate access to procedures and forms.

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 to SBEC by the superintendent. See *Reports to the Texas Education Agency* below 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

(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

(A) 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.

(B) 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.

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

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

(E) 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.

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

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

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

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

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

(K) 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.

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

(M) 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.

(N) Standard 1.14. The educator shall comply with the prohibitions on diversity, equity, and inclusion duties in Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.005.

(O) Standard 1.15. The educator shall comply with the prohibitions on assistance with social transitioning in TEC, §11.401.

(P) Standard 1.16. The educator shall comply with the restrictions on instruction regarding sexual orientation and gender identity in TEC, §28.0043.

(Q) Standard 1.17. The educator shall comply with the requirements to provide full information to a parent concerning a student in TEC, §26.008.

(R) Standard 1.18. The educator shall not promote, advocate, or encourage, in a manner that is reasonably accessible or visible to students, illegal conduct:

(i) described by TEC, §22A.201(a); or

(ii) directly related to student behavior or school property.

(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

(A) 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.

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

(C) 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.

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

(E) 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.

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

(G) 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.

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

(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

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

(B) 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.

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

(D) 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.

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

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

(G) 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.

(H) Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard. Factors that may be considered in context and on the totality of the circumstances in assessing whether appropriate boundaries were maintained include, but are not limited to:

(i) physical proximity or physical contact beyond the professional role or that the student has indicated is unwelcome, unless such contact is professionally required;

(ii) contacting or meeting the student beyond the professional role or making efforts to gain access to or time alone with a student with no discernible professional purpose;

(iii) transporting the student without permission from the student's legal guardian or in violation of school board policy, unless for an emergency;

(iv) taking or possessing a photo or video of the student beyond the professional role or in violation of school board policy; and

(v) showing favoritism or isolation through gifts, rewards, or privileges.

(I) 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 context and on the totality of the circumstances in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

(i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;

(ii) the subject matter of the communication;

(iii) whether the communication was made openly, or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

(iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;

(v) whether the communication was sexually explicit;

(vi) 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; and

(vii) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as threatening the welfare and/or safety of 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.

District policy DIA (LOCAL) includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

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 suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities within 24 hours of reasonable suspicion, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse* and *Bullying* below for additional information.

District policies DHB (LEGAL), FFH (LOCAL), FFH (LEGAL) include definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students.

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 first has reasonable cause to believe that the child has been abused or neglected. Law enforcement agency includes the Texas Department of Public Safety, 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 at https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx or (800-252-5400) or through the Georgetown Police Department, the Williamson County Sheriff's Department. 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 report suspected child abuse 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 suspected child abuse 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 on the district's webpage for Counseling Services. 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 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.

Employees are required to follow the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

Reports to Texas Education Agency

Policies DF, DHB, DHC

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting Crime

Policy DG

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

Scope and Sequence

Policy DG

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

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

Miscellaneous Instructional Policies
Teaching About Controversial Topics

Policy EMB

The District shall address controversial topics in an impartial and objective manner. Teachers shall not use the classroom to transmit personal beliefs regarding political or sectarian issues. Students and educators shall ensure that, to the extent possible, discussions are conducted fairly and courteously.

Publications that could be considered controversial should receive prior approval by the campus administration before posting. Items posted without prior approval are subject to removal.

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; and
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance
- Artificial intelligence (AI) should only be used as a support tool to improve student outcomes, not to replace the decisions made by teachers or students

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use in compliance with all laws, policies, and administrative guidance and regulations.

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the 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 legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact GISD's Technology Department and reference the *Technology Responsible Use Policy for Employees* and the *Guidelines for Staff Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)*.

Personal Use of Electronic Communications

Policy CQ CY DHA

Electronic communications includes 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 includes 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 communication as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media 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, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct district business.

- The employee shall not use district and campus trademarks, including names, logos, mascots, and symbols or other copyrighted material on social media or in texts without express written consent.

- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on district business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:

    - Confidentiality of student records [See Policy FL];

    - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law [See DHA(LEGAL)]

    - Confidentiality of district records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses [See Policy GBA];

    - Copyright law [See Policy CY]; and

- 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. See the Social Media Guidelines in Appendix A.

Integrity, Availability, and Security of all Technology Resources

The following technology acceptable use guidelines apply to district employees:

- Use technology resources, including district-issued accounts such as email, for purposes primarily related to your job duties in a way that does not disrupt the teaching, learning, or work of others. For example, do not store personal music files, pictures, or software/games in your home folder.

- Limit personal use of technology resources to purposes that do not impose a tangible cost on the district, do not unduly burden the network, and have no adverse effect on job performance or student academic performance. For example, do not continuously listen to or watch (stream) music, radio, news, or video from the Internet unless it is related to a learning activity.

- Do not use district technology resources to promote, market, or sell products or services, or to lobby.

- Do not intentionally modify computers or other equipment by attempting to install software, hacking, spreading viruses or malware, or making physical changes to or damaging technology equipment.

- Do not attempt to bypass Internet filters by using proxy sites, hacking, or any other means. Request unblocking of educationally appropriate Internet resources using established district procedures.

- Employees have the option to take home certain mobile devices, such as laptops that are issued to individuals, for professional use. If you take home a mobile device, you must have a home network connection which allows the device to receive software updates. Georgetown ISD is not responsible for any costs or technical support associated with connecting the device at home. If you take home a mobile device, you must also have insurance, such as homeowner's or renter's insurance, to cover the device if it is lost or stolen. You may be held financially responsible for the device if proven negligent.

- You may connect one personal mobile device at a time to the district's guest wireless network. However, do not connect other personally-owned equipment to district

computers, to other wireless networks, or to the wired network without prior approval from the Technology Department.

- Immediately report problems or security violations, such as broken equipment or inappropriate technology or password use, to a supervisor or administrator.



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 an exception 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 communications 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, which are not provided or approved by the district, as well as 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 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.

- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.

- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.

- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics including:
    - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
    - Copyright law [Policy CY]
    - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DH]
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.
- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district's record retention policy.
- Staff are expected to respond to all parent electronic communications within 2 business days. Should the employee be out for personal reasons, the employee is expected to respond within 2 business days upon return. Employees are encouraged to use the Out of Office (OOO) feature in Google when absent on a business day.
- 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

PTA/Booster Club Roles

Employees are not allowed to hold any GISD school PTA/booster club officer position that has a financial capacity. “Financial capacity” positions include the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Fundraising Chair, Financial Review Committee member, acting as a check signer for the club, or any other role that involves the receipt, distribution, or oversight of club money.

• Employee is defined as EVERY person employed by GISD (e.g., crossing guards, teachers, cafeteria workers, transportation, faculty, and employees).

• With roles clearly defined, employees can collect money as part of an PTA/Booster Club event (i.e., ticket taking, snack bar.) Employees can count GISD fundraising money, following good financial controls (at least 2 people should always count money). Employees should also clearly separate their role as an GISD employee from the work they do as a parent volunteer. Employees should not take full control, deposit, or take off premise PTA/Booster club event funds.

• Substitute teachers can hold an officer position with financial capacity but are required to disclose this in writing to the HR/ Substitute office.

Criminal History Background Checks

Policy DBAA

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

Employee Arrests and Convictions

Policy DH, DHB, DHC

An employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor within three (3) 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 (see below)

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
- Acts constituting public intoxication, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance, or disorderly conduct
- 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.

Dress Code

Policy DH

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

Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention

Policy DH

Georgetown 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. District policy DH (Local) addresses employee drug use.

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 or nicotine 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. In addition, employees may be required to show proof that they voted during their absence.

Charitable Contributions

Policy DG

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

Safety and Security

Policy CK series

The district has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety 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 more information under *Emergencies* below.

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

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

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

While driving on district business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on district business are prohibited from texting and using other

electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgment on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact Chief of Construction Services and Future Readiness Initiatives, Wes Vanicek, at (512) 943-5000 ext 6004.

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 911 immediately.

Visitors in the Workplace

Policy GKC

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

Asbestos Management Plan

Policy CSC

The district is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited/licensed asbestos management planner has developed an Asbestos Management Plan for each school. A copy of the district's management plan is kept at the Facilities Maintenance Department and is available during normal school hours.

Pest Control Treatment

Policies CLB, DI

The District is required to follow integrated pest management ("IPM") laws and procedures to control pests on district property. As such, employees are prohibited from applying any pesticide or herbicide without appropriate training, licensure, 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.

Although the District strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, pesticide use is sometimes necessary. All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the Environmental Protection Agency and applied only by certified pesticide applicators.

Except in an emergency, notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a district building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located on the front door of the building and in the staff workroom on the bulletin board. 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 electronic means. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Employees who have questions or who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their building may contact the district IPM coordinator.

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 at www.georgetownisd.org and provide information to local television and radio stations.

Emergencies

Policies CKC, CKD

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to emergencies, including a medical emergency. Employees should locate the 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.

GISD uses School Messenger and/or Parent Square for emergency communication to employees and parents. Messages can be sent by text, phone, or email. If there is an emergency or unexpected closure of school, we would communicate by Parent Square, using district/parent emails and possibly by phone. It's important that employees keep phone numbers up to date in Employee Access in Skyward, so that they can be reached in an emergency.

Purchasing Procedures

Policy CH

All requests for purchases must be submitted to GISD's Business Office on an official district Purchase Order Form ("PO") 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 GISD's Director of Purchasing for additional information on purchasing procedures.

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees should make all changes to their address, emergency contact, and phone numbers in Skyward HR/Finance. Employees must notify the Payroll Department if there are any changes or corrections to their name, marital status, or beneficiary. An employee may complete an address change form or use a W4 form. Both forms can be found on the Business Office website.

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
- Information that reveals whether they have family members
- Emergency contact information

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 GISD's Department of Human Resources. New or terminated employees have fourteen (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. GISD's Custodial Services Office is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. The Athletics Office is responsible for scheduling the use of school athletic facilities. GISD's website contains *Facilities Rental Information* pertaining to specific contacts to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

Children of Employees in the Workplace

The primary mission of the district is to educate students. To that end, the district has the responsibility to provide a place of instruction that is free from distractions and conducive to learning. Therefore, children of employees should not be present in classrooms during the school day or in other district offices without explicit pre-approval from a supervisor and adherence to any supervisor expectations and parameters. Employees are responsible for making appropriate childcare arrangements for their children.

Employees with children who are students at the parent's campus must be professional at all times when discussing administrative policies, campus events, and faculty/staff members with or in front of their children. Parents shall respect their teaching colleagues and schedule parent conferences to discuss any concerns or questions, and follow all procedures the campus has established for discussing student issues. In addition, children of employees are expected to follow all campus and district student procedures and policies.

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 employee's Principal or Director to accept and then submit to GISD's Department of Human Resources. 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). 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.

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 employee's supervisor to accept and then submit to the Department of Human Resources at least two weeks prior to the effective

date. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so.

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

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

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to SBEC.

The use of available paid leave for the purpose of extending a resignation date is not permitted without approval from the supervisor. If approved, leave in conjunction with a resignation shall not exceed 5 consecutive work days without a doctor's note. Standard procedure will be to consider the final day worked as the effective resignation date unless approved by the supervisor.

Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

Policies DF Series, DHB, DP

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

Policy DCD, DP

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* above)

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, Handbook Appendix B

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, Handbook Appendix B

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 interview surveys will be available for all employees leaving the district to provide feedback on his or her employment experience. Information on the final paycheck, continuation of benefits, and TRS retirement resources will also be provided by the district's Payroll Department. Separating employees are also asked to provide the district with a forwarding address and phone number.

All district keys, books, property, including intellectual property, technology devices, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment. In addition, any district-purchased clothing that is worn or adaptable for general usage as ordinary clothing (e.g. school spirit shirts) shall be returned to the district at the end of employment in light of applicable sections of the Internal Revenue Code and corresponding regulations.

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, Georgetown 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 Brian Johnson, Executive Director of Campus Leadership and Operations and Title IX, 507 E. University Avenue, Georgetown, TX 78626, johnsonb6@georgetownisd.org, (512) 943-5000, the district Title IX coordinator for students. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Leslie Talamantes, Executive Director of Human Resources, 507 E. University Avenue, Georgetown, TX 78626, talamantesl@georgetownisd.org, (512) 943-5000, 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.

When any employee is informed of a student's pregnancy or related conditions by a student or a person who has a legal right to act on behalf of the student, the employee must promptly inform that person of the Deputy Title IX Coordinator's contact information, Carey Thornell GISD Coordinator 507 E. University Avenue, Georgetown, TX 78626, thornellc@georgetownisd.org (512) 943-6925, so that the Deputy Title IX Coordinator can coordinate specific actions to prevent sex discrimination, unless the person reasonably believes the Title IX Coordinator has already been notified.18

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 current or prior campus the student attended 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 Brian Johnson, Executive Director of Campus Leadership and Operations and Title IX, johnsonb6@georgetownisd.org, (512) 943-5000 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 school employees may administer prescription medications, nonprescription medications, and herbal or dietary supplements to students.

Any medication given during the school day—other than emergency medications for respiratory distress, anaphylaxis (e.g., Epinephrine), opioid overdose, or diabetes management—**requires BOTH**:

1. A signed order from a licensed healthcare provider, **and**

2. A written request signed by the student's parent/guardian.

The medication must be provided in its **original, properly labeled container**.

To ensure compliance with district policy and procedures, please contact the principal or school nurse for full instructions before sending medication to school.

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 contact the campus attendance office and bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason(s) for the absence(s). These requirements are addressed in campus training and in the student handbook. Contact the campus principal or the campus nurse 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 Brian Johnson, Executive Director of Campus Leadership and Operations and Title IX, 507 E. University Avenue, Georgetown, TX 78626, johnsonb6@georgetownisd.org, (512) 943-5000. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and is reprinted below:

Bullying Prohibited

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited.

Examples

Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

Retaliation

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

Examples

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

False Claim

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Timely Reporting

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Reporting Procedures

Student Report

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent has developed procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying through the Georgetown ISD Stay Safe! Anonymous Online Reporting System.

Employee Report

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

Report Format

A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

Notice of Report

When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

Prohibited Conduct

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

Investigation of Report

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

Concluding the Investigation

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee.

Notice to Parents

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

District Action

Bullying

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

Discipline

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

Corrective Action

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

Transfers

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions.

Counseling

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

Improper Conduct

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

Records Retention

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

Access to Policy and Procedures

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

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.

Appendix A
Social Media Guidelines

***DOs**:*

- Use GISD email address to create/manage classroom accounts. Classroom accounts created to communicate with students and their families should be completely separate from personal accounts.
- Follow law, regulations, GISD Acceptable Use Guidelines, Board policy, Educators' Code of Ethics, HIPAA, FERPA, COPPA or copyright and legal guidelines.
- Student Access accounts list permissions granted by parents during the annual enrollment verification process. The DISTRICT definition includes use of "district/school/classroom social media sites," which provides consent for use if the parent has said YES for that choice. However, in the rare instance where a student may be identified by name (an award, for example), it is recommended that the teachers ask the parent for email consent.
- For teachers who use social media regularly as part of classroom routine, it is recommended that an early-year email inform parents about what social media platforms likely will be used and how they will be used. Teachers can reference the fact that the "District" definition includes social media use, but offer parents the opportunity to contact teachers with any concern.
- Revise content regularly/frequently.
- Be aware at all times that content is available in a public domain and represents the campus and Georgetown ISD. For instance, news media can use comments or images that are posted.
- Understand that, while not the norm, negative feedback or comments could be posted on the site.
- While social media language tends to be informal by its nature, proper grammar should still be used.
- Proof/edit all content before posting.
- Before posting any content that could be considered sensitive or related to any topic that could be considered sensitive, consult with the principal.
- Refer any media requests or comments stemming from a post to the Communications Department, and contact the Executive Director of Communications to provide information.
- Control your privacy settings and keep up with changes that various platforms may make to settings.
- Show off the great things happening in GISD classrooms!
- Post content that shows good moral character.

Appendix A
Social Media Guidelines Continued

DON'Ts:

- Don't share login information or access to accounts with parents or students.
- Don't use social media to tell stories that don't reflect well on you or your profession. This isn't the place to complain about students, administrators or long hours worked; complaints should be handled through formal channels.
- Don't say anything on your social media profile that you wouldn't say in class or in front of parents.
- Think twice before connecting with parents on social media. Georgetown is still a small community.
- Even if accounts are separate, be aware that anything posted to personal accounts reflects on you as a professional and indirectly on your school and the district. (Google yourself to see what turns up.)
- Be careful when engaging in comments on social media as a representative of the District (GISD employee.)
- Don't post student photos or names on any personal or professional profile postings without parental consent.
- Don't use district logos on personal social media profiles or imply that a personal account is related to the district.
- Don't accept student "friend" requests on your personal social media accounts.
- Don't engage in or post about inappropriate social, sexual, romantic, harassing, threatening or abusive content related to a student, or other persons including coworkers, Board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers and parents.
- Don't violate professional standards for public conduct including violations of state or federal law, District policy, or the Educators' Code of Ethics.
- Don't post content that may interfere with your ability to effectively perform your job duties, is disruptive, or impairs professional working relationships.
- Don't post content that is discriminatory or retaliatory toward a student, parent, employee or trustee.
- Don't misrepresent facts or make false statements or claims against Georgetown ISD or any campus, employee, parent, student or trustee.
- Don't post confidential student information or content that adversely affects student learning, mental health, or safety

Appendix B
NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, VENDORS, & SERVICE PROVIDERS

This memorandum serves as notice to all employees, contractors, vendors and service providers of the District of important changes in state law and District policy prohibiting the consideration of race, sex, color or ethnicity in connection with District operations and decision-making. **All District employees, vendors, service providers and contractors are required to review this memorandum in its entirety**, disseminate its contents to all personnel assigned to District accounts, and maintain operations in strict conformity with District policy. Execution of services under any current or future District agreement serves as an acknowledgment of, and consent to, these contractual conditions.

I. Discrimination Prohibited

The District prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex or disability. Additionally, Texas Education Code Section 11.005 and District policy prohibit District employees, contractors, vendors, and service providers from performing, carrying out, or assigning certain responsibilities or job duties at, for, or on behalf of the District. This notice clarifies District policy prohibiting the consideration of race, sex, color, or ethnicity in District operations and decision-making.

Consistent with Texas Education Code § 11.005, the District prohibits certain activities related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives. The District's policies may be accessed online at: https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=1240 . Employees, contractors, vendors and service providers are charged with complying with all District policies while providing services to the District.

II. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Duties Defined

Diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI") duties prohibited by District policy are any action, role, or practice that involves the following:

1. **Influencing Employment Practices:** Any effort designed to influence hiring, recruitment, promotion, or general employment practices with respect to race, sex, color or ethnicity, unless strictly necessary to maintain compliance with established state or federal antidiscrimination statutes.

2. **Promoting Differential Treatment:** Proactively promoting differential treatment of individuals, or providing special or exclusive benefits to individuals, solely on the basis of race, color, or ethnicity.

3. **Developing Protected-Class Programming:** Developing, implementing, structuring, or delivering policies, operating procedures, professional trainings, educational activities, or instructional programs that reference race, color, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Exceptions exist for student recruitment collaborations involving historically black colleges and universities, or as otherwise mandated by state or federal law.

4. **Compelling DEI Statements:** Compelling, requiring, inducing, or soliciting any prospective or current employee, contractor, service provider or vendor to submit a diversity, equity, and

inclusion statement, or granting preferential consideration or advantage to any individual based on the provision or substance of such a statement.

III. District Policies

The following District policies are of particular importance in regulating the District's prohibition against DEI duties:

1. **Board Policy BT (LEGAL): ** Provides that except as explicitly required by state or federal law, the District shall not assign DEI duties to any person and must proactively prohibit independent contractors from engaging in such activities.

2. **Board Policy CJ (LEGAL) and (LOCAL):** These policies govern contracted services and provide that a District contract is subject to termination if a contractor or vendor intentionally or knowingly engages in DEI duties or assigns such duties to another individual. It further establishes the appeal process through which an affected contractor may appeal an adverse contract action.

3. **Board Policy DH (LOCAL):** Outlines employee standards of conduct, including the prohibition against engaging in or delegating to another DEI duties.

4. **Board Policy BJA (LEGAL):** Requiring the Superintendent to certify to the Commissioner of Education the District's compliance with TEC Sections 39.008, 11.005 and 28.0022.

5. **Board Policy CMD (LEGAL):** Regarding the acquisition of instructional materials.

6. **Board Policy DF (LEGAL):** Providing for the appropriate discipline, including termination, of a District employee or contractor who intentionally or knowingly engages in or assigns to another person prohibited diversity, equity, and inclusion duties.

7. **Board Policy DG (LEGAL):** Providing that a teacher may not be compelled to discuss a widely debated and currently controversial issue of public policy or social affairs.

8. **Board Policy BJCF (LOCAL):** Providing violation of the District's prohibition against engaging in or delegating to another DEI duties is a ground for Superintendent contract nonrenewal.

9. **Board Policy EMB (LEGAL):** Addressing the teaching of controversial topics, and prohibiting instruction, guidance, activities, or programming regarding sexual orientation and gender identity to students.

IV. Consequences for Violation of Policies

Employees and District contractors are on notice that violation of these District policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employees, or termination of third-party contracts with vendors and service providers:

- **Mandatory Termination of Contracts:** Policy CJ (LOCAL) provides that any intentional or knowing violation of these prohibitions constitutes a material breach of contract. If the District determines through administrative review or inquiry that a contractor has intentionally or knowingly engaged in DEI duties, assigned DEI duties to another individual, or conducted prohibited instruction or

guidance, the violation shall result in the termination of the contract. Penalties for violating the District's policies apply to all contractors, vendors and service providers, regardless of whether the prohibited act was committed by an executive officer, a staff employee, or a third-party agent acting on behalf of the contracting entity.

- **Employee Discipline:** Employees who violate the District's policies and standards of professional conduct may be subject to discipline, up to and including possible termination of employment.

V. Certain Practices Exempted

Policy BT (LEGAL) explicitly clarifies that these prohibitions do not apply to, restrict, or modify several core educational and commercial functions. Contractors and employees may safely engage in the following activities without violating the District's anti-discrimination policies:

1. **Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs):** The policy does not limit or prohibit the District from actively contracting with historically underutilized businesses in accordance with applicable Texas procurement statutes.
2. **Commemorative and Holiday Instruction:** Contractors may acknowledge, reference, or teach the historic significance of state and federal holidays, or celebrate federally designated commemorative months, provided the curriculum aligns with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) frameworks.
3. **Constitutional Protections:** Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to infringe upon or affect a student's core constitutional rights under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I, Section 8, of the Texas Constitution.
4. **Academic Achievement and Data Reporting:** Data collection, standard monitoring, or state reporting are not impacted by the District's policies. Practices, procedures, or programs designed to eliminate unlawful discriminatory patterns, address academic achievement gaps, or enhance postgraduate student success are not impacted by these policies. These programs are structured and implemented entirely without regard to race, sex, color, or ethnicity.

Thank you for your attention to these important policy changes. Anyone wishing to receive a printed copy of any or all of the policies referenced in this memorandum may access the policies from the District's online policy manual HERE or by contacting hr@georgetownisd.org.



Dr. Devin Padavil
Superintendent of Schools

Employee Handbook Receipt

Name _____
Campus/Department _____

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

Employees have the option of receiving the handbook in electronic format or hard copy.

I understand that the Employee Handbook may be found online at www.georgetownisd.org. Click on DEPARTMENTS, then HUMAN RESOURCES, then EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK. Or, access the Handbook by clicking on STAFF, then EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK.

Please indicate your choice by checking the appropriate box below:

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

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

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

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

_____ _____
Signature Date

Please sign and date this receipt and forward it to GISD's HR Department, or follow instructions to sign electronically in Skyward, which are emailed to every employee annually.

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