

Coahoma County School District

Employee Handbook

2018 – 2019



Dr. Ilean Richards
Interim Superintendent
1555 Lee Drive – Post Office Box 820
Clarksdale, MS 38614
662-624-5448- Phone 662-624-5512- Fax

***“COMMITTED TO CARING – DEDICATED TO
EXCELLENCE”***

Coahoma County School District
P. O. Box 820
Clarksdale, MS 38614
662-624-5448
(Phone)
662-624-5512 (Fax)
Web:
www.coahoma.k12.ms.us

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BOARD OF EDUCATION

Patrick Campbell	President	District #1
Lester Myles, Jr.	Vice-President	District #2
Edward Kinard	Secretary	District #3
Milroy Harris	Board Member	District #4
Rico Smith	Board Member	District #5
Nathaniel Armistad	Board Attorney	

ADMINISTRATION AND DIRECTORY

Mrs. Latasha Turner	Interim Superintendent	624-5448 Ext. 1001
	Director of Federal Programs/ Director of Curriculum/District Testing	624-5448 Ext. 1004
Mrs. Timikia Hoskins Hawkins	H R Director/Superintendent	624-5448 Ext. 1003
	Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk	
Ms. Zatara Bolden	Special Education Program Director	624-5448 Ext. 1051
Ms. Mildred Moore	Finance Director	624-5448 Ext. 1020
Ms. Eddy Johnson	Food Service Manager	624-5448 Ext. 1041
Mr. Anthony Dixon	Technology Director/Fixed Assets Manager	624-5448 Ext. 1030

PRINCIPALS

Lynn Lang	Coahoma County Jr/Sr High	627-7378
Anna Watson	Friars Point Elementary	383-2477
Crystal Hall-Gooden	Lyon Elementary	624-8544
Charlette Artis-Harris	Jonestown Elementary	358-4496
Kevin Carter	Sherard Elementary	624-4629

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been developed to provide employees with helpful information related to employment with the Coahoma County School District. This handbook summarizes information contained in board policies which address various topics of interest but is in no way exhaustive. The Manual of Coahoma County School District Board Policy is in the office of the Superintendent of Coahoma County School District and is the final authority for all issues pertaining to employees. If Board Policies are revised during the school year, the revised policies will supersede any information contained in this handbook.

SECTION I: AUTHORITY AND MISSION

A. Statutory Authority

1. Board of Education

The Coahoma County School District is governed by a school board consisting of five (5) members elected in the manner provided by law. This board exercises legislative authority over the school district in accordance with the laws of the State of Mississippi. It determines policy, delegate executive, supervisory and instructional authority to its employees, and appraises the results in light of the goals of this school district. All matters to the school board shall first be brought before the superintendent for investigation. If such matters require school board action, they will be presented to the school board by the superintendent.

2. Superintendent

The superintendent of this school district is elected in the manner as provided by law and is responsible for administering the schools within the district and implementing the decisions and policies of the school board. In addition to all other powers, authority and duties imposed or granted by law, the superintendent shall have the powers, authority and duties as set forth in Section 37-9-14 of the Mississippi Code, Annota

B. Mission Statement

The mission of the Coahoma County School District is to provide a high quality education to each child in a safe and caring environment in order to produce contributing citizens who will be able to excel in a global society.

SECTION II: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

A. Notice of Equal Employment Opportunity

This Board shall not discriminate in its policies and practices with respect to compensation, terms or conditions of employment because of an individual's race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, height, weight, age, marital status, political beliefs, disability, or handicap which does not impair an individual's ability to perform adequately in that individual's particular position or activity.

B. Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace

The Coahoma County School District operates under the Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace policy and as a condition of employment in the district, each employee shall abide by the terms of Board Policy GBRL which prohibits the possession, presence or use of illegal drugs or alcohol in or on school premises, and the involvement or use of drugs and alcohol off the job which may adversely affect an employee's health or job performance. Any employee who violates the terms of this policy may be suspended, non-renewed or terminated at the discretion of the Board and in accordance of the district policy and procedure. Suspension or dismissal may result in the suspension or revocation of the certificate of a certified employee in the accordance with the MS Code Section 37-3-2 (1994).

C. Smoke Free Environment

In the compliance with PL 103-227, cited as the Pro-Children Act of 1994, the Coahoma County School District prohibits smoking in any indoor facility of the school district. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

D. Weapons

No employee or visitor may possess a handgun or other weapon in, on or about school buildings, grounds, athletic fields, or any other property used for school related purposes. No employee or visitor may possess or carry any weapon within a vehicle brought onto school property. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action including immediate suspension with recommendation for termination of employment.

E. Recruitment of Personnel

The Coahoma County School District makes every effort to recruit and attract the best-qualified personnel to the District. Applications for employment are available on the district website at: www.coahoma.k12.ms.us and are kept on file for one (1) year unless requested otherwise. Job positions available for administrative, certified, and/or classified personnel are posted on the district website, MDE Teacher Center webpage, Mississippi Association of School Superintendents website, and the Mississippi Association of School Administrators website, as appropriate in an attempt to recruit qualified personnel. Additionally, the district may advertise in local newspapers.

F. Selection/Hiring of Personnel

Applications are reviewed and qualified applicants are interviewed by the superintendent, personnel director, principal, supervisor, and/or an interview team as appropriate. Recommendations for employment are made by the principal or supervisor to the superintendent who, in turn, makes the recommendation to the Board of Education. As of July 1, 2000, all employees hired are subject to a background check, will be processed according to Policy GDB of the district board policy manual.

The District recruits and employs certified and non-certified personnel as defined below:

Certified Personnel:

Certified personnel must hold valid certificates (licenses) from the Mississippi Department of Education and are employed under terms and condition of written employment contracts. This classification generally includes administrators, teachers, and other persons who are required to hold a license for their position.

Non-Certified/Classified Personnel:

Non-Certified or classified employees are those whose positions do not require a certificate or license, such as assistant teachers, bus drivers, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers, etc. Classified employees serve the district “at will” and their employment may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the employer without notice.

G. Reassignment of Personnel

The Superintendent of schools shall have the power and authority to make assignments to the various schools in the district of all non-instructional and non-licensed employees and all licensed employees, as provided in Sections 37-9-15 and 37-9-17, and to make reassignments of such employees from time to time; however, a reassignment of a licensed employee may only be to an area in which the employee has a valid license issued by the State Department of Education. Upon request from any licensed employee transferred, such assignment shall be subject to review by the school board.

H. Reduction-in Force (RIF)

The need for any reduction in certified staff members will be determined by the Board of Education and will be in accordance with the provisions of Policy GBKAR. This policy does not apply to classified/non-certified employees who serve “at will”.

I. Suspension/Dismissal/Non-renewal of Certified Employees

Any suspension, dismissal or non-renewal of a certified employee will be executed in accordance with applicable state laws and board policies including due process provisions outlined in the School Employment Procedures Act.

J. Resignation of Professional Personnel/Release from Contract

All personnel seeking to resign or retire should put their request in writing to the superintendent.

All certified employees who are under contract with the district to teach or perform other duties must make application in writing to the Board of Education for release from such contract and the reasons for such release shall be clearly stated. If the Board approves the request for release, the contract shall be considered null and void as of the date action was taken by said Board. Release from contract after July 1st will only be granted under extreme personal circumstances.

Any arbitrary and willful breach of contract and abandonment of employment without being released by a certified employee shall result in the contract being null and void and the certification of such employee may be suspended by the State Board of Education for a period of one (1) year.

K. Retirement

Employees of the district may retire from public employment under the conditions and provisions established by the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS).

L. Certified Personnel Appraisal

The Coahoma County School District implements a formal annual performance appraisal system based on job descriptions and on-the-job performance of every certified employee. Principals are responsible for conducting both formal and informal evaluations of all certified employees under their supervision. The Superintendent or his/her designee is responsible for conducting evaluations of all building level principals and district administrators. Please see M-STAR and MPES Evaluations on page 41.

M. Classified/Non-Certified Personnel Evaluations

Building level principals and program supervisors are responsible for on-going on-the-job evaluation of non-instructional employees under their supervision.

N. License/Certification

An employee whose position requires licensure or certification by the State of Mississippi is responsible for obtaining and maintaining a current license or certificate. Continuing Education Units or coursework necessary for license renewal are the responsibility of the employee. Failure to present or maintain a current and valid license may result in non-renewal or termination of employment.

O. Section 504/ADA/Title IX Compliance

The Coahoma County School District does not discriminate on the basis of disability or sex in employment in, admission, or access to its programs and activities to the extent provided by law. Employees and students in the District are also protected from sexual harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 to the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The following person has been designated as the Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act/Title IX Coordinator and will handle inquiries regarding the District’s non-discrimination policies, the filing of grievances, and requests for copies of grievance procedures covering discrimination or sexual harassment.

Dr. Christopher Hill, Assistant Superintendent
Coahoma County School District
P.O. Box 820
Clarksdale, MS 38614
662-624-5448 (Phone)
662-624-5512 (Fax)

SECTION III: TIME AND ATTENDANCE

A. Work day

Full-time employees are expected to work eight hours per day. The district office hours are generally 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. In the schools, the work-day is generally 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for principals and 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for teachers and other employees who remain “on duty” during the lunch period. The work day may be adjusted within legal parameters with consideration of the instruction and activity schedules established by the principal, with the approval of the superintendent. No non-licensed/classified employee may work over a 40 hour work week without prior approval by the superintendent. Every effort will be made to provide a uniform work day for employees where this is practical and consistent with the safe and efficient administration of the school. Part-time employees’ hours and work-day will be

determined by the principal or supervisor in accordance with the terms of their employment. All employees are required to sign in and out daily as designated by the principal or supervisor. Employees who must leave work during the day must have approval from the principal or supervisor and must sign out and in to document the period of absence from work.

B. Absenteeism

Employees are expected to report to and leave work at the time designated by the principal or supervisor. Employees are required to report to work and prepared for duty at the time designated as the beginning of their work day. Any employee who is to be absent from work must notify his/her principal or immediate supervisor. The principal or supervisor is responsible for maintaining current and accurate records of employee absences and reasons. Repeated unexcused absences from work without cause presents grounds for dismissal or non-renewal.

C. Tardiness

Employees must notify his/her principal or supervisor when they will be tardy/late for work. Employees may be docked for unexcused time late and/or may be subject to disciplinary action including dismissal or non-renewal.

D. Job Description/Extra Duties

All employees are expected to perform duties assigned in accordance with their job description. From time to time, employees may be assigned special or extra duties to facilitate the overall operation of the school and/or district. Such assignments may include, but not limited to, campus duty, duty at athletic events or school functions, sponsoring school clubs or activities, serving on special committees, etc.

E. Record of Attendance

All employees are to sign in and out daily using the time keeping system designated by the Coahoma County School Board.

SECTION IV: WAGES AND LEAVE

A. Compensation and Wages

Salaries, as set by the Board, shall be payable by direct deposit in equal monthly installments on the last regular school/work day of each calendar month. Unless paid leave status has been scheduled and approved, employees are not entitled to pay for days not worked. All employees, including part-time personnel, are required to

complete both state and federal withholding forms. These forms must be completed at the beginning of the person's employment with the district and under no circumstances will employees receive compensation without having first completed such forms. All employees are responsible for keeping their personnel data on file current with the payroll clerk.

B. Legal Holidays

The Coahoma County School District recognizes the following paid legal holidays for its employees: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Birthday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

C. Leave for Certified and Classified Personnel

The Coahoma County Board of Education desires to provide a fair and equitable procedure to address the personal needs of its employees and has established the following leave policies which are in compliance with state and federal regulations. The administration is responsible for implementing leave policies.

An employee's falsification of reasons for absence shall result in penalties as follows: Full loss of pay for the period of absence, entry on personnel record, recommendation for termination of employment. Any or all of these penalties may be applied in cases involving materially false statements by the employees as to the cause of the absence.

I. Certified Personnel

A. Sick Leave

1. At the beginning of each school year, each certified staff member shall be credited with seven (7) days of sick leave allowance with pay, except administrators are credited with ten (10).
2. Any unused portion of the sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next year if the employee remains in the district. In the event the employee transfers from this district to another district in Mississippi, any unused portion of sick leave allowances accrued shall be credited to the teacher for retirement purposes (MS Code 25-11-109).
3. No deduction from the pay of the employees shall be made because of absence of such employee caused by illness or physical disability until all sick leave allowance has been used.
4. For the first ten (10) days of absence of the employee because of illness or physical ability in any school year, in excess of the sick leave accumulated, the employee's pay shall be reduced by the amount paid to substitute teachers. Thereafter, the regular daily pay of such employee shall be withheld in its entirety, for any period of absence, because of illness or physical disability during that school year.

5. If an employee is absent on the first or last working day of the contractual period or on the day before or day after a school holiday, a written doctor's statement providing information verifying the necessity for the absence is required before the absence can be classified as a sick leave day.
6. If an employee is absent five (5) days or more during a school year (not necessarily consecutive), a written doctor's statement and other documentation may be required at the discretion of the principal or immediate supervisor before absence may be classified as sick leave days. The doctor's statement must specify that the person was ill and unable to perform his/her duties.
7. An employee who is absent for more than one half day (four hours) will have one (1) full day of leave charged. One-half day will be charged for absences of one-half day (four hours) or less. All employees paid on an hourly basis will be charged for the actual time absent.
8. If an employee is absent the Friday before and the Monday after a weekend and want the leave to be counted as sick leave, s/he must bring a medical excuse in order for the absences to be considered under the district's sick leave policy.

B. Personal Leave

1. At the beginning of each year, each certified employee shall be credited with two (2) days for absences caused by personal reasons during that school year.
2. Personal leave shall not be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday, unless on such days an immediate family member of the employee is being deployed for military service. Personal leave on those days shall result in a deduction of a day's pay.
3. At the end of each school year, any unused personal leave days shall be converted to sick leave for accumulated leave purposes.
4. No deduction from the pay of such certified employee may be made because of absence caused by personal reasons until after the personal leave allowance has been used.
5. Under extenuating circumstances, the Board of Education may approve additional leave to an employee for personal reasons upon request. However, such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the Board shall determine whether such additional leave shall be at a reduced pay rate or without pay.

6. **All requests for personal leave must be made in writing to the principal for approval and forwarded to the district superintendent for approval one week in advance of the desired day for that leave. A copy of the request should be kept on file in the school office in the employee's file and also at the district office.**

C. Accumulation of Sick/Personal Leave

1. For each employee entering the school system during the school year, leave entitlement for both sick leave and personal leave will be prorated according to the terms of employment.
2. At the end of each school year, any unused sick or personal leave, as recorded in the payroll office, will convert to sick leave and be credited to the employee's sick leave accumulation.
3. An employee who leaves the school district and who later returns to employment in the system will receive all unused accumulated leave to which he/she was entitled at the time he/she left the district.
4. Upon retirement, an employee may choose to be paid a the substitute teacher pay rate for a maximum of 30 day unused accumulated leave or to have all accumulated leave certified to PERS for credit toward retirement. In the event the employee chooses to be paid as above for the 30 days maximum, any additional leave accrued shall be certified to PERS for credit toward retirement.

II. Classified Employees

A. Sick Leave

1. At the beginning of each school year, each teacher assistant shall be credited with seven (7) days of sick leave allowance with pay.
2. At the beginning of each school year, each classified employee with the exception of teacher assistants shall be credited with sick allowance according to the terms of employment for the position they hold as follows: 180-184 day employees-4 days; 185-207 day employees -5 days; 208-227 day employees-6 days; 228 and up day employees-7 days.
3. No deduction from the pay of the employee shall be made because of absence due to illness or physical disability until all sick leave allowance has been used.
4. Any unused portion of the sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next year if the employee remains in the district. In the event the employee leaves the district, the amount of sick leave allowance accrued shall be credited to them for retirement purposes. Upon retirement from the district, the employee may elect to be paid for a maximum of 30 days of accumulated leave at the daily minimum wage rate.
5. If any employee is absent on the first day or last day of a scheduled work day or the day before or after a school/legal holiday, a written doctor's statement is required before the absence can be classified as a sick leave day.

6. If any employee is absent five (5) or more days during the year (not necessarily consecutive), a written doctor's statement and other documentation may be required at the discretion of the principal or immediate supervisor before absences may be classified as sick leave.
7. All employees paid on an hourly basis will be charged for the actual time absent.

III. All Employees (Certified and Classified)

A. Bereavement/Illness in Family Leave

A maximum of three (3) days per year of sick leave may be used in cases of illness in the family or in cases of death of mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, mother-in-law, father-in-law, child, grandchild, blood relative dependent as defined by the IRS, or foster parents. The absence report used to report all absences of employees must show the relationship between the employee and the family member whose illness or death occasioned the absence.

B. Maternity Leave

Absences necessitated due to the birth of a child shall be treated the same as absences described under the "sick leave" provisions of this policy. Principals should be notified in advance when leave is expected to begin and end. Pregnancy is not considered a catastrophic illness unless specified in writing by a licensed physician.

C. School Business Leave

Leave for attendance at required meetings, workshops, etc. related to the job description of the employee may be allowed without reduction in pay or loss of leave credited to the employee provided such leave is approved. All requests for school business leave should be on the proper form and approved by both the principal/supervisor and the district superintendent prior to the day for such leave.

D. Jury Duty

Absence from duty as a result of jury service will not result in the loss of leave benefits or pay. A copy of the summons to jury duty should be provided to the building principal, as documentation for such leave and employees must report the status of jury service to the principal and/or supervisor on a daily basis so substitutes can be arranged.

If an employee does not have to report for jury service any day during the week of summoned duty that employee will be expected to report to work.

Employees who must appear in court under subpoena for reasons outside their responsibilities may do so provided **they use personal business leave.**

E. Vacation Leave

1. Every employee who works on a twelve month basis with the Coahoma County School District will be entitled to a two-week vacation with pay **at the end of each year** employed (July 1 through June 30).
2. For employees entering the system during the year, vacation leave will be prorated according to the days worked. Employees who work on a nine (9), ten (10), or eleven (11) month basis are not entitled to vacation leave.
3. Vacation leave may be used during the year after it is earned and may not be accrued beyond June 30 of the following year.
4. Employees are encouraged to plan vacation leave around the school calendar and their job responsibilities. Vacation leave must be requested in writing to the principal or immediate supervisor for approval and forwarded to the superintendent. In cases where a hardship on the district could result from an employee's absence, vacation leave may be denied and rescheduled.

F. Military Leave

1. Personnel may be granted a leave of absence, without pay, to fulfill other military requirements, such as, being called to duty by a Reserve or National Guard Unit, with said leave not exceeding one year, except in time of war. Such leave shall have prior approval of the Superintendent. If possible, requests for military leave of absence should be submitted by March 1 of the school year preceding the absence or immediately upon notification. Any employee returning from military leave will be placed on the salary schedule one step above that upon which the last full year contract was written, provided the previous contract year was completed.
2. Any employee who is an active reservist or member of the National Guard shall be required to make a written request to the appropriate military authorities (with a copy submitted to the Office of the Superintendent) to have short-term annual tours of duty scheduled during the summer months between regular school sessions. In the event that such short-term tours of duty must be scheduled during the school year, the employee must request his/her commanding officer to submit a letter to the Superintendent specifying the dates of such service and reasons for not rescheduling these dates. When appropriate leave is granted during the school year, leave will be classified by the school district as "other leave" and will not result in loss of pay.
3. If an employee is called to reserve or guard duty of fifteen (15) days or less, no deductions will be made from the employee's salary or from accumulated sick leave or vacation time. However, such duty shall have prior approval of the Superintendent.

G. Other Absences

1. Any other absences not covered in the preceding explanations shall be considered “other absence” and may result in loss of full pay. Any person required to be absent for “other reasons” must submit a written request stating the reason for the absence, the number of days requested, and the dates of the absences requested. The request must be submitted to the principal and/or supervisor who will in turn forward the request to the Superintendent for his/her approval or disapproval of the absence. The Superintendent, at his/her discretion, may elect to submit the request to the Board of Education for final approval or disapproval of the absence.
2. As a general rule, employees will not be excused for personal travel other than personal leave on days school is in session except in very special cases of unusual opportunity for travel. Such request should be approved by both the principal and the superintendent for a limited period of time and without pay. Deductions shall be made at the employee’s full rate of pay per day.

H. Family and Medical Leave

The Coahoma County School District shall be in compliance with provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which became effective August 5, 1993. The Administration of the district is charged with the responsibility of implementing the provisions of this policy.

The district shall be in compliance with provisions of the Act regarding rights of employees and employer liability.

The district shall not be in violation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2)U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), or Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), solely as a result of an eligible employee of the district exercising the rights of such employee under this Act.

I. Donated Leave

Senate Bill 2317 allows any state employee to donate accrued personal or major medical leave to another state employee who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, or to another employee who has a member of his/her immediate family who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness.

“Catastrophic injury or illness” means a life-threatening injury or illness of an employee or member of an employee’s immediate family that totally incapacitates the employee from work, as verified by a licensed physician, and forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee, resulting in the loss of compensation from the state

for the employee. Conditions that are short-term in nature, including, but not limited to, common illnesses, such as influenza, and common injuries are not catastrophic. Chronic illnesses or injuries, such as cancer or major surgery that result in intermittent absences from work, are long-term in nature, and require long recuperation periods may be considered catastrophic. Pregnancy is not considered catastrophic.

Notice to Employees

The District requires that the employee exhaust all paid leave prior to requesting FMLA leave. The District will post and keep posted, in conspicuous places where notices to employees and applicants are customarily posted, a notice summarizing the entitlement to FMLA leave.

Definitions

1. “Eligible employee” means an employee who has (1) been employed by the district for at least twelve months and (2) for at least 1,250 hours of service with the district during the previous twelve-month period. Fifty-two (52) weeks of casual, intermittent or occasional employment qualifies as “at least 12 months”. School district employees exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements are presumed to have worked 1,250 hours.
2. “Employee’s spouse” means husband or wife as defined by Mississippi Law.
3. “Employee’s son or daughter” means biological child, adopted child or foster child, legal ward or the child for whom the employee is standing in loco parentis who is either under the age of 18 or above the age of 18 and incapable of self-care because of mental or physical disability.
4. “Employee’s parent” means biological parent or an individual who stood (or now stands) in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child. This does not include parents-in-law.
5. “Employee’s immediate family member” means spouse, son or daughter or parent as defined above.
6. For the purposes of FMLA, “serious health condition” means illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves either in-patient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Entitlement

1. Subject to certification which is required by the District to substantiate a request for family or medical leave, an eligible employee shall be entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of unpaid, protected leave during a twelve-month period, as specified, for the following family or medical reasons:

- A. Because of the birth of a son or daughter of the employee and in order to care for such son or daughter.
 - B. Because of the placement of child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
 - C. In order to care for the spouse, or a son, daughter, or parent of the employee, if such spouse, son, daughter, or parent has a serious health condition.
 - D. Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the position for such employee.
2. Entitlement to leave as defined in A or B above shall expire at the end of the twelve-month period beginning on the date of such birth or placement. Leave under subparagraph (A) or (B) in #1 above shall not be taken by an employee intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless the employee and the administration agree otherwise.
 3. The twelve-month period for reasons C & D above will begin at the date of the employee's first FMLA leave.
 4. Spouses who are both employees of the District are jointly entitled to a combined total of 12 work-weeks of family leave for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care, and to care for a sick parent (but not a parent "in-law") who has a serious health condition.
 5. If accumulated paid leave is provided for fewer than twelve work weeks, the additional weeks of leave necessary to attain the 12 work weeks of leave required under this Act may be provided without compensation.

Notice to Agency

1. In any case in which the necessity for leave is foreseeable based on an expected birth or placement, the employee will provide the district with no less than thirty day notice, before the date the leave is to begin, and of the employee's intention to take such leave, except that if the date of the birth or placement requires leave to begin in less than thirty days, the employee will provide such notice as is practical.
2. In cases where the necessity for leave is foreseeable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the operations of the district and shall provide the employer with not less than thirty days' notice before the date the leave is to begin or such notice as is practicable.
3. If the employee had actual notice of the need for FMLA leave and he/she fails to give thirty day notice for foreseeable leave with no reasonable excuse for the delay, the agency may deny taking FMLA leave until at least thirty days after the date of the employee provides notice to the district of the need for FMLA leave.

Intermittent Leave on a Reduced Leave Schedule

1. Family leave for child birth, adoption or foster care may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless the district approves otherwise.
2. Leave to care for a seriously ill family member or due to the employee's own serious health condition may be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule whenever medically necessary.
3. If an employee requests intermittent leave, or leave on a reduced leave schedule, that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the district may require such employee to transfer temporarily to an available alternate position for which the employee is qualified and with the equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodates recurring periods of leave than the employee's regular employment position.
4. Only the time actually taken as FMLA may be charged against the employee's leave entitlement when leave is taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule. For part time employees and those who work various hours, the FMLA leave entitlement is calculated on a pro-rated basis by comparing the new schedule with the normal schedule (i.e., if an employee who normally works 30 hours per week works only 20 hours under reduced leave schedule, the employee's 10 hours of leave would constitute 1/3 of the week of FMLA leave for each week the reduced schedule is worked.

Certification

1. The district may require that a request for leave under entitlements C and D be supported by certification issued by the health care provider of the eligible employee or of the son, daughter, or spouse, or parent of the employee, as appropriate. Certification shall be deemed sufficient if it states the date on which the serious health condition commenced, the probable duration of the condition, the appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition, a statement that the eligible employee is needed to care for the son, daughter, spouse or parent for leave under C above, and a statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of the position of the employee for leave under D above. In cases of certification for intermittent leave, or leave on a reduced leave schedule, for planned medical treatment, the dates on which such treatment is expected to be given and the duration of such treatment, together with appropriate statements regarding the necessity for such intermittent or reduced leave.
2. The district may require, at the expense of the district, that the eligible employee obtain the opinion of a second health care provider designate or approved by the district concerning any information used for certification/substantiation purposes.
3. The district may require that the eligible employee obtain subsequent recertification on a reasonable basis at the district's expense.

Restoration

1. An eligible employee who takes leave under the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act for the intended purpose of the leave shall be entitled, on return from such leave (a) to be restored to the position of employment held by the employee when leave commenced or (b) to be restored to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay and other terms and conditions of employment. The taking of leave under the provisions of this act shall not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date on which the leave commenced. As a condition of restoration under D, the district shall require that employee obtain certification from the health care provider of the employee that the employee is able to resume work.
2. For salaried employees among the highest paid 10 percent of the employees of the district , the district may deny restoration as described above if (a) such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the district; (b) the district notifies the employee of the intent to deny restoration on such basis at the time the determination that such injury would occur is made; and (c) in any case in which the leave has commenced and the employee elects not to return to employment after receiving such notice.

Maintenance of Benefits

1. Except as provided below, during any period that an eligible employee takes leave under this Act, the district shall maintain any coverage under any “group health plan” as defined in section 5,000 (b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the duration of such leave at the level and under the conditions that coverage would have been provided if the employee had continued in employment continuously for the duration of such leave.
2. The district may recover the premiums that the district paid for maintaining coverage for the employee under such group health plan during any period of unpaid leave under this Act if (a) the employee fails to return from family or medical leave after the period of leave to which the employee is entitled has expired; and (b) the employee fails to return to work for a reason other than the continuation, recurrence, onset of a serious health condition that entitles the employee to leave as noted in C and D above.
3. If the employee fails to return to work at the end of the leave period because of a serious health condition, the district may request that the employee furnish a medical certification from the health care provider of the employee or the employee’s family to support the employee’s claim. If the employee fails to furnish the requested certification within 30 days of the district’s request, the district may recover the health insurance premiums it paid during the period of unpaid leave.
4. If an employee desires to continue life insurance, disability insurance or other types of benefits for which he /she typically pays during unpaid FMLA leave, the district and the employee must agree upon arrangements to continue coverage before FMLA leave begins.
5. With respect to retirement, any period of FMLA leave will be treated as continued service (i.e. no break in service) for purposes of vesting and eligibility to participate.

Other Provisions

1. The district may require that an eligible employee who works principally in an instructional capacity who requests leave under C or D above that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment and the employee would be on leave for greater than 20% of the total number of working days in the period during which such leave would extend as follows: (a) take leave for period of a particular duration not to exceed the duration of the planned medical treatment; or (b) transfer temporarily to an available alternative position offered by the district for which employee is qualified and that has equivalent pay and benefits and better accommodates recurring periods of leave than the regular employment position of the employee.
2. The following rules shall be applicable to periods near the conclusion of an academic term with respect to leave in the case of any eligible employed principally in an instructional capacity by the district;
 - A. If the eligible begins family or medical leave more than five weeks prior to the end of the academic term, the district may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of such term if as follows: (1) the leave is of at least three weeks duration; and (2) the return to employment would occur during the three week period before the end of such terms.
 - B. If the eligible employee begins leave under A, B, or C above during the period that commences five weeks prior to the end of the academic term, the district may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if (1) the leave is of greater than two weeks duration and (2) the return to employment would occur during the two-week period before the end of such term.
 - C. If the eligible employee begins leave under A, B, or C above during the period that commences three weeks prior to the end of the academic term and the duration of the leave is greater than five working days, the district may require the employee to continue to take leave until the end of such term.

Enforcement

The U.S. department of Labor is responsible for the enforcement of the FMLA and may investigate and resolve complaints and violations under the Act in the same manner as under the fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

D. Benefits

1. Retirement

Employees of the District become members of the Public Employees Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS) as a condition of employment. Exceptions to membership in the systems are: bus drivers, employees who work less than 15 days a month or who work less than ½ of a normal work load for their position; persons compensated on a per diem basis; and retired

members of the PERS who are employed less than six months. PERS manuals are available through the personnel clerk.

2. Social Security

All employees are required to participate in Federal Social Security.

3. Insurance

Employees who work 20 hours or more a week are eligible to participate in the State and Public school employees Group Health Insurance program on the date of employment. Employees may select and pay for additional dependent coverage for dependents at the rates under this policy and may select other types of insurance coverage approved by the District for payroll deductions. Employees on leave without pay may pay the premiums themselves in order to keep insurance coverage current.

Notice of Right to Continue Group Health Insurance Coverage

Employees in the group health insurance program have the opportunity for temporary extension of health coverage (called “continuation coverage”) at group rates in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end. Employees who desire “continuing coverage” should consult the payroll clerk concerning the eligibility criteria and procedures necessary to obtain such continued coverage.

SECTION V: GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Workplace Conduct

Employees of the District are expected to maintain professional conduct at all times. Employees should be courteous and should not generate or contribute to malicious gossip. Abusive or vulgar language, threats, or other disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Employees are expected to be diligent in performance of job responsibilities and are prohibited from having visitors during work hours except in cases of emergency or extenuating circumstances. Employees should maintain a professional relationship with students at all times. Harassment, bullying, and discrimination toward students or other employees are strictly prohibited. See district policy JDDA-P for procedures relating to the bullying policy. Gum chewing is unprofessional in the workplace and is absolutely prohibited

**SECTION VI: MS Educator Code of Ethics
and Standards of Conduct**

This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to the rules established by the Mississippi State Board of Education and protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators.

Any educator or administrator license may be revoked or suspended for engaging in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4). Superintendents shall report to the Mississippi Department of Education license holders who engage in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4).



Mississippi Department of Education

DESCRIPTOR TERM: Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct	CODE: 1717
ADOPTION DATE: April 17, 1998	REVISION: January 20, 2011

STATE BOARD POLICY

Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

Each educator, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation.

This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to the rules established by the Mississippi State Board of Education and protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators.

Ethical conduct is any conduct which promotes the health, safety, welfare, discipline and morals of students and colleagues.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the license holder's ability to function in his/her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, safety, welfare, discipline, or morals of students and colleagues.

Any educator or administrator license may be revoked or suspended for engaging in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4). Superintendents shall report to the Mississippi Department of Education license holders who engage in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4).

Code of Ethics Standards

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 2. Trustworthiness

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

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

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

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

1. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following:

1. Employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
 2. Information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
 3. Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
 4. Reasons for absences or leave
 5. Information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
2. Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so

Standard 3. Unlawful Acts

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

3. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or sexual offense. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4. Educator/Student Relationship

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

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

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

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

1. Committing any act of child abuse
2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
3. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
4. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
5. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
6. Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationship with a student.

Examples of these acts may include but not be limited to:

1. Sexual jokes
2. Sexual remarks
3. Sexual kidding or teasing
4. Sexual innuendo
5. Pressure for dates or sexual favors
6. Inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing or grabbing
7. Rape
8. Threats of physical harm
9. Sexual assault
10. Electronic communication such as texting
11. Invitation to social networking
12. Remarks about a student's body
13. Consensual sex

Standard 5. Educator Collegial Relationships

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

5. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the following:
 1. Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
 2. Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
 3. Interfering with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities
 4. Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or family status
 5. Using coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues

Standard 6. Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

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

- 6.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice

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

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

Standard 7. Public Funds and Property

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 8. Remunerative Conduct

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

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

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

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

1. Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body.
2. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
3. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. *(This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service)*

Standard 9. Maintenance of Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 10. Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment

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

10. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

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

B. Workplace Dress

All employees should dress professionally and appropriately for their job responsibilities. Professional male staff, including coaches are expected to wear shirts with collars, tails tucked into pants, and belts. Professional dress excludes blue jeans, head gear (to include sun glasses and electronic devices), athletic wear, hospital scrubs, revealing or suggestive clothing (to include tops and blouses that expose cleavage or midriff), and excessively tight clothing such as spandex. Excessive tattooing, face and body piercings (such as nose and tongue piercings) are prohibited. Other dress may be prohibited at the discretion of the supervisor.

C. District Property/Inventory Control

The District's property and equipment should be properly used and maintained. Supplies, equipment and materials should be used for the maximum benefit of students and unauthorized personal use of such by employees should be reported to the administration and may result in disciplinary action. The District maintains an inventory of assets assigned to each school by building, room and teacher. Building administrators and teachers are responsible for securing and maintaining the items assigned to them and for verifying the accuracy of their inventories. Items such as cell phones and laptop computers must be properly checked out when not in the location to which they are inventoried. Missing or stolen items should be reported immediately to the administrator of the building, the district office, and to the local law enforcement agency. Assets may not be transferred between teachers, rooms or buildings without authorization and completion of the necessary inventory control forms. A full inventory will be taken at least annually by the Fixed Assets Coordinator and at least twice annually by the building level administrator/supervisor. The teacher and/or building level administrator will be responsible for the cost of any item determined to be missing during the year which has not been properly reported as stolen, transferred or discarded. CCSD Policy DM gives procedures for handling of fixed assets. Violations of inventory control procedures may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

D. Personal Property and Workplace Search Policy

Employees should refrain from bringing personal property to the work site and any personal valuables necessary should be kept with the employee or in a secure place. While the District will take reasonable precaution against theft or vandalism, the District is not responsible for the loss of personal property of employees or students.

Entering onto District property is deemed to be consent to all reasonable searches. At any time, the District reserves the right of access to search all District property, including desks, lockers, state-owned vehicles, storage areas or work areas and to inspect personal property on District premises including lunch boxes, briefcases, purses, parcels, tool boxes and personal vehicles for the purposes of investigating thefts, misuse of District, student or employee property or other misconduct. Searches may be conducted by any lawful means. In conducting investigative searches special care will be taken to ensure and preserve individual dignity and the privacy of personal items to the extent possible. Accordingly, the

employee may be asked to open personal items and to remain present during investigative searches of said items.

E. Workplace Safety

The District seeks to conduct all operations as safely and efficiently as possible. The District follows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) codes and regulations regarding environmental protection. All employees have the obligation to report unsafe conditions to their immediate supervisor for prompt correction.

The District has further assigned responsibility, authority and accountability for safety to all principals and supervisors within their building or area of operation. The designated Safety Coordinator will provide guidance for use of equipment, facilities, training and supervisor necessary to achieve a risk management program that prevents or recovers all types of potential losses as deemed necessary by the administrator and Safety Committee.

Authorized vehicle operators and bus drivers are expected to follow the principles of defensive driving to prevent accidents in spite of incorrect action of other drivers or adverse highway or weather condition that may affect driving. Seatbelts are required to be worn in vehicles where they are available and all vehicles operators are required to obey the State of Mississippi Motor Vehicle laws.

F. Accidents, Incidents, and Emergencies

All employees must report all accidents, incidents, health or safety hazard or injury of an employee or visitor to his/her immediate supervisor. Reports should be made on the appropriate accident or incident report form as soon as possible after the incident occurs and should be reported regardless of the nature or extent of injury and regardless of whether or not medical attention is needed or not needed. The Safety Coordinator and Business Manager will assist employees and his/her supervisor in completing the necessary forms for a Worker's Compensation claim when necessary.

G. Fire and Disaster Evacuation and Crisis Management Plans

Each building shall maintain effective fire and disaster evacuation plans and crisis management plans to protect all individuals. Employees are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the details of the plans in their building and procedures and evacuation diagrams shall be posted throughout each building. Periodic drills will be conducted and may be announced or unannounced so as to test the effectiveness of these plans and procedures. The building principal is responsible for holding fire, tornado, bus evacuation and crisis management drills as determined by the administration.

H. Communications Policy/Cell Phone Policy

All computer systems networks, business and telephone equipment and other electronic communications systems and all communications and stored information transmitted, received or contained in the District information systems are the property of the District and are to be used solely for work-related purposes. The District prohibits non-work related use of its computer equipment, software, telephone systems, copy machines and facsimiles or other communications equipment.

Mailboxes are provided for each school at the District Office and for employees at each school site. Mailboxes should be checked daily. Mailboxes may not be used for solicitation or distribution of any material that is not school related business.

Employees are not to post derogatory or degrading comments regarding school, staff, or student matters on any social networking site, such as Face Book, You Tube, etc.

Personal telephone calls are prohibited except in emergencies. No personal long distance calls will be placed on district telephones nor will collect calls be accepted. Employees are reminded that district telephones are to be used for school-related business only.

EMPLOYEE CELL PHONE USE-CCSD Policy IFBB

The Board of Trustees of the Coahoma County School District respects the professionalism demonstrated by the district's certified and classified staff. As in most cases the use of common sense leads to good employee practices that support the high level of professionalism expected of all staff members.

In keeping with this expectation of professionalism, the parameters for employee cell phone use include, but are not limited, to the following:

1. Teachers and support staff may use cell phones while on break or during lunch period when necessary, but under no circumstances while children are under their supervision or in their presence, such as in the cafeteria.
2. Teacher and support staff cell phones may not emit an audible sound while students are present in the classroom.
3. Use of cell phones to include text messaging by teachers and support staff is prohibited while students are present in the classroom except in cases of life threatening emergencies.
4. Use of cell phones to include text messaging by teachers and support staff is prohibited while on duty inside or outside the building except in cases of life threatening emergencies.

5. Use of cell phones to include text messaging by bus drivers is prohibited while the bus is in operation. In cases of life threatening emergencies, bus drivers must bring the bus to a complete stop prior to using the cell phone.

Due to the nature of the administrative role, rules applying to the use of cell phones by school administrators differ from those required of teachers and support staff. Administrators will be required to use appropriate etiquette in the use of cell phones. Cell phone use for personal calls while in the presence of school colleagues is not considered appropriate.

I. Purchasing and Receipting of Funds

All purchases by employees of the Coahoma County School District shall be made in accordance with state law and purchasing procedures outlined by the Office of the State Auditor as well as district guidelines and procedures. All purchases must be made on an official purchase order signed by the superintendent. Employees will be responsible for payment of any and all invoices, which are incurred without a signed purchase order. Each principal and supervisor is responsible for purchasing within their building or department and for training staff and faculty in the proper procedures for procurement of supplies, material and equipment. Any funds collected by teachers or other school personnel should be receipted properly in accordance with district accounting procedures. Any funds on hand at the building level must be turned in or deposited in a timely manner to avoid loss or theft. Teachers should not keep money in their personal possession overnight. Failure to follow district accountability procedures with regard to collection, receipting or depositing in funds may result in disciplinary action including dismissal and/or repayment of funds.

J. Reimbursement of School Business Travel Expenses

Employees who have been authorized by the superintendent to travel in the performance of their duties shall be advanced or reimbursed their expenses by the school district for such travel as indicated. Each employee will be reimbursed for per diem and for each mile actually and necessarily traveled in the employee's automobile or other private vehicle at a rate as determined by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration. Employees are expected, by the board, to carpool when practical where two (2) or more employees are traveling to the same destination. In such an event, only one (1) travel expense allowance at the authorized rate per mile shall be allowed for any one (1) trip. Meal per diem or reimbursement will not be allowed for trips that do not require an overnight stay. Receipts are required for all other expenses such as registration, parking hotel, etc.

K. Outside Employment

The Board of Education considers employment in the Coahoma County School District as an employee's primary employment. Employees shall not engage at any time in any outside employment that would interfere with their effectiveness in performing regular assigned duties, would compromise or embarrass the school district or would in any way conflict with assigned duties. Employees may not be employed or involved in any private or other public

business during the hours necessary to fulfill their contractual obligations. Employees are required to report outside employment to their immediate supervisor.

L. Political Activities

The Board of Education recognizes the rights and responsibilities of employees of the District, including the right to campaign for elective offices and to hold elective or appointive offices as provided by law. Employees of the District have the same rights and responsibilities to political activity as other citizens and are encouraged to participate. However, employees have an additional obligation to the District that requires good judgment in their participation and shall not create the impression they are speaking for the board, the District or for any other employee. Engagement in a political activity should in no way interfere with an employee's presence on the job or performance of job duties. Letters reflecting an individual's opinion shall not be written on District or school letterhead and the expenditure of district, state or federal funds or the use of school owned equipment for conducting supporting partisan political activity is strictly prohibited.

M. Fund Raising/Solicitation

Employees may not solicit, canvass or distribute literature, goods or services during work hours in work sites or at any time in area accessible to students or the general public unless authorized by the superintendent or board as school related activity. All fund-raising activities to be conducted by employees or students must have prior approval of the superintendent and funds collected during authorized activities must be handled in accordance with District financial accountability procedures. Outside agencies and/or persons may not solicit, canvass or distribute goods on school property without written permission from the superintendent and/or board as deemed appropriate. See purchasing and receipting of funds for procedures on receipting and turning in money in a timely fashion.

N. Field Trips

Teachers and school staff are required to obtain approval for field trips. Requests for field trips must be made through the building principal on the proper request form and submitted to the superintendent for approval at least two weeks in advance of the projected date of the trip. Principals and teachers are encouraged to exercise good judgment as to the appropriateness of the field trip for the students' age, grade, course content, etc. The superintendent may approve/disapprove the request subject to available funds or other criteria or the request may be submitted for Board approval.

Students clubs and organizations may be granted permission to attend district and state conventions or other activities. However, the cost for such trips may be required to be paid by students individually or from club or organization funds.

O. Supervision of Students

All employees must follow the schedules, assignments and directives of the principal related to supervision of students. Students must never be left in classrooms unsupervised or allowed to be in the hallways, bathrooms, auditorium or gym without permission. Failure to properly

supervise students may result in the employee's personal liability for any accident, injury or misconduct and could result in disciplinary action by the District, including dismissal.

P. Visitors

All visitors to school campuses are required to report to the school office upon arrival. No one may visit a classroom, teacher or student without permission from the school administration or its designee. Employees are required to report unauthorized visitors to the office immediately.

R. Use of District Facilities

Any use of District owned facilities for purposes other than school related events or functions must be approved by the Board in accordance with its policy. A request for use of a school facility must be made in writing and must be approved by the principal and superintendent prior to submission to the Board for final approval and authorization. Groups or organizations who desire to use school facilities may be required to have liability coverage, to pay a reasonable fee for use and clean-up and to pay a school employee to be duty during such use to ensure proper use of the facility. The Board reserves the right to refuse requests for use of facilities, to place restrictions on the use and/or to waive any provisions of its policy for use on a case by case basis.

SECTION VII: DISCIPLINE

A. Violations

All employees of the Coahoma County School District are required to abide by the policies and procedures included in this Handbook as well as other policies or administration of the District. Any employee who violates or neglects to follow a policy or procedure of the District is subject to disciplinary action.

B. Scope of disciplinary Actions

The District, through its Superintendent and Administration, reserves the right to impose discipline in accordance with Board policy and state law. Possible disciplinary actions include but not limited to verbal reprimands, written reprimands, suspensions with or without pay for a specific period of time, transfers, non-renewal or termination of employment. The specific disciplinary action to be taken will depend on the nature and extent of the violation and such other factors as deemed relevant by the superintendent.

A certified employee who if suspended, non-renewed or terminated will be given written notice an opportunity for a hearing as required by law in the School Employment Procedure Act and as outlined in Board policies governing suspension, non-renewal and/or termination of a contractual employee.

C. Grievance Procedures-Staff Complaints and Grievances

The following procedure has been established by the Board of Education to ensure at the first possible administrative level an equitable solution to any grievance concerning employment, performance appraisal, working conditions, assigned duties, unfair treatment or other good reason held by a certified employee of the District. A grievance should be processed in accordance with the following procedures:

Level One

1. All grievances must be presented orally to the principal or immediate supervisor of the grievant within five (5) days of the act or omission complained of, and the principal or immediate supervisor will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
2. If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given by his/her principal or immediate supervisor, the grievant shall, within five (5) days after the meeting with his principal or supervisor, file a written statement with his principal or immediate supervisor setting forth in detail how the grievant claims to have been discriminated against. This written statement shall contain, in addition to the above, the time, place, and nature of the alleged act or omission and the state or federal law or board policy violated. The statement must be signed by the grievant.
3. In the event the grievant does not submit to his principal or immediate supervisor a written statement as required, his/her failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by the principal or supervisor.
4. Within five (5) days after receiving the grievant's signed statement the principal or immediate supervisor shall send to the superintendent a copy of the grievant's statement, along with a statement from the principal or immediate supervisor setting forth his response to the grievant and/or his decision, as is applicable. At the same time, the principal or immediate supervisor shall also provide a copy of his written statement to the grievant.

Level Two

1. Upon receipt by the superintendent of a written notice that the grievant intends to appeal the decision of his supervisor, the superintendent shall notify the grievant in writing within five (5) days of the date and time, the matter will be considered by the superintendent. The superintendent shall meet with the grievant to hear the grievance no later than ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal.
2. The written statement submitted by the grievant to his principal or immediate supervisor in Level One shall form the basis of the grievance before the superintendent. The grievant shall submit any and all additional information on his/her behalf with he/she desires to the superintendent to writing no later than five (5) days prior to the date upon which the matter is scheduled to be heard by the superintendents.
3. In the event the grievant does not personally attend the hearing scheduled by the superintendent, his/her failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the written decision rendered by the principal or immediate supervisor.

4. The superintendent shall render a written decision to the grievant within five (5) days of the date upon which the matter was heard.

Level Three

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

D. Investigative Procedures

Investigations may be initiated into employee complaints or other matters as deemed appropriate by the superintendent. The superintendent reserves the right to initiate investigations necessary to determine facts relevant to the complaint, grievance or incident reported by an employee. Failure of any employee to participate in or assist in any official investigation will be deemed a serious violation and will be subject to disciplinary action.

SECTION VIII: STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Teachers should handle minor infractions of the school rules with their “Positive Behavior Intervention System” classroom discipline plan. Rules and consequences should be posted in the classroom on the first day of school, taught, and retaught as necessary, in order to maintain order in the classroom. The majority of discipline problems can be avoided by actively engaging students from the beginning to the end of class. School rules developed by each school’s discipline committee should be posted in the halls, bathrooms, and cafeteria, and should be enforced consistently by all staff members. Only serious or repeated infractions of the rule should be referred to the principal. **Refer to the student handbook for more detailed student discipline procedures.**

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The District policy allows the use of corporal punishment (paddling) when deemed appropriate by the principal or his/her designee. Corporal punishment will be administered in a professional manner, outside the presence of other students and will be witnessed by at least one other adult. Should a parent refuse the use of corporal punishment for his/her child, the school principal should be notified in writing and other consequences for misbehavior shall be imposed.

The Coahoma County School District does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

The Coahoma County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other school employees or students. Likewise, the District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person engages in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official.

The School Board directs the superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors. The procedures should be appropriately placed in District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedure that deals with student or employee behavior. The discipline policies and procedures must recognize the fundamental right of every student to report to the principal menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the Coahoma County School District defines "reasonable action" as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

Ref: SB 2015; Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-301(e)

Bullying policy Procedures

Students and employees in the Coahoma County School District are protected from bullying or harassing behavior by other students or employees. It is the intent of the Board and the administration to maintain an environment free from bullying and harassing behavior. This complaint procedure provides a process for filing, processing and resolving complaints of such conduct. Adherence to these

procedures is mandatory. The failure of any person to follow these procedures will constitute a waiver of the right to pursue a complaint at any level, including review by the Board.

I. Definitions

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

II. Procedures for Processing a Complaint

Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, or has witnessed or who has reliable information that a student, school employee or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school official. The report shall be made promptly but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the names of the victim of the misconduct, the names of any witnesses and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board chairman.

The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) working days after initial receipt of the complaint by the District. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The District official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents as appropriate when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the District official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and

other affected parties as deemed necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within ten (10) working days.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents as appropriate to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY

The Coahoma County School District wishes to make available to all students and staff members access to computers, networked resources, and the Internet. Access to network resources and the Internet will enable staff and students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards and to exchange messages with people throughout the world. The Coahoma County School District supports access by staff and students to electronic information resources, which include the Internet (e-mail, WWW, search engines, etc.), along with the development of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources. The district believes the benefits from access to electronic resources and opportunities for collaboration are beneficial for student achievement. The Coahoma County School District also desires for these computers, networked resources, and the Internet to be used in ways appropriate for an educational institution. Staff and students are to be held responsible for appropriate behavior on school computers, network resources, and the Internet just as they are during any other school activity. General rules for behavior and communications apply.

Overview

This policy was developed for the purpose of providing additional regulations and procedures as may be required to guide and monitor students and employees in the appropriate use of computer resources, network resources, and the Internet. This policy has been approved by the Coahoma County School Board and is a legal and binding document. This policy is to be incorporated into each of the School's student and parent handbooks as well as the district's staff handbook. The Coahoma County School District is CIPA and COPPA compliant. Any school or library that receives discounted rates for "Internet access, Internet service or internal connections" under the E-Rate program, or receives funding through the Library Services & Technology Act or Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, in order to purchase computers used to access the Internet, or to pay for direct costs associated with accessing the Internet, must comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), passed by Congress in October 1998, requires the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to issue and enforce rules concerning children's online privacy. The COPPA rule's primary goal is to place parents in control over what information is collected from their children online.

Personal Safety- Users will not disclose, use, disseminate, or divulge personal and/or private information about himself/herself, minors, or any others including personal identification, etc. The Coahoma County School district will not disclose personal information about students on websites - such as their full name, home or email address, telephone number, and social security number. Users will

immediately report to the Coahoma County School District authorities any attempt by other Internet users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal contact.

Illegal and/or Unacceptable Usage

1. Users shall not access, transmit or retransmit any materials in furtherance of any illegal act or conspiracy to commit any illegal act in violation of local, state, or federal law or regulations and/or school district policy.
2. Users shall not access, transmit, or retransmit: copyrighted materials (including plagiarism), threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, or material protected by trade secret, and/or any other material that is inappropriate to minors.
3. User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit any material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by devices including, bombs, incendiary devices, or other similar materials.
4. Users shall not use the network for any illegal activity including, but not limited to, unauthorized access including hacking.
5. Users shall not access, transmit, or retransmit language that may be considered offensive, defamatory, or abusive.
6. Users shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
7. Users shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that harasses another person or causes distress to another person.

System Resource Limits

1. Users shall not pirate software. All software installed on district computers must be licensed. Other than district or state provided software, any additional software to be installed must have prior approval of the principal, technology coordinator, or superintendent.
2. Users shall not use the computer as an entertainment box or radio. PBS and educational recordings/speeches, etc. are ok, and encouraged - for classroom enhancement.
3. Users shall not use technology to download music. Programs like Kazaa, Audiogalaxy, GNutella, Napster, AIM, and Zebra shall not be installed. Be aware and considerate of copyright laws.
4. Users shall not use the technology to play online games, access chat rooms, dating services, or non-instructional bulletin board messaging sites.
5. Users shall not install programs like Instant Messenger or Weather Bug that have an always on, constant connection.
6. Users shall not treat the technology as a babysitting device or as a free for all. Just because its lunch or study hall or instruction has finished for the period is not a reason for individuals to play games or randomly surf the web.
7. Users shall not download large files unless it is absolutely necessary. If absolutely necessary to download large files, users shall download the file at a time when the system is not being heavily used.
8. Users shall not post chain letters or engage in "spamming" (that is, sending an annoying or unnecessary message to large numbers of people).

9. Users shall immediately notify his/her teacher or other school administrator should use access inappropriate information. This will assist in protecting users against a claim of intentional violation of this policy.

User Rights

Users shall have the responsibility to use computer resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. The only exception will be for academic research by a staff member with the approval of school administration. The Coahoma County School District will fully cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the user's Internet account. Under no conditions should a user provide his/her password to another person or use another person's password.

Users shall not expect files stored on a school-based computer to remain private. Authorized staff will periodically inspect folders and logs of network usage will be kept at all times. Routine review and maintenance of the system may indicate that a user has violated this policy, school codes, municipal law, state law, or federal law. Parents of minor users shall have the right to inspect the contents of user's files.

Individual schools within the district may create additional guidelines and procedures consistent with this policy. Such guidelines and procedures will be appropriate for the electronic information resources being used and the students served at the school.

Use of the internet is a privilege, not a right. Unacceptable and/or illegal use may result in denial, revocation, suspension, and/or cancellation of the user's privileges, as well as disciplinary action imposed by school officials.

The school district may include a process for the student to appeal the decision to deny, suspend, revoke, or cancel Internet privileges.

Education

The Coahoma County School District will educate minors (students) about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms. CCSD will educate students and staff on cyberbullying awareness and response.

Consequences of Failure to Follow Terms and Conditions of AUP

There will be consequences for any user who fails to follow the Coahoma County School District's school guidelines and policies. The consequences may include paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion, or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy, and state or federal law. At the discretion of the Coahoma County School District, law enforcement authorities may be involved and any violations of state and/or federal law may result in criminal or civil prosecution. All students, staff, and guest who make use of computers and the internet will be required to return a permission form signed by the student and parent agreeing to the rules and regulations set forth by district policy for acceptable use of technology and the internet. Students who do not return forms will not be allowed to participate in computer activities

2018 - 2019 Employee Handbook and MS Code of Ethics Notification and Receipt

Dear District Employee:

This publication contains the Employee Handbook and Mississippi Code of Ethics for the Coahoma County School District and is intended to serve as a resource to district employees and the Board of Education. The information in this publication is reviewed and revised annually by district personnel. The Employee Handbook provides general and specific information regarding the district’s policies, practices, and procedures. The Mississippi Code of Ethics, approved by the Mississippi Department of Education and the Mississippi School Board Association, specifies ethical and unethical conduct for professional educators and administrators. It is very important that you review the information contained in the Employee Handbook and in the Mississippi Code of Ethics. The Coahoma County School District is committed to meeting the educational needs of students and promoting the health, safety, discipline, and morals of students, educators, and employees.

Please complete this form and sign it. If you have any questions regarding the Employee Handbook or the Mississippi Code of Ethics, please contact Tamika Hawkins in the Central Office.

Sincerely,

Ilean Richards
Interim Superintendent

Acknowledgement of Receipt *(Please return this section)*

I have received a copy of the 2018 – 2019 Coahoma County School District Employee Handbook and the Mississippi Code of Ethics. I understand that I am responsible for adhering to the rules, procedures, and expectations as outlined in this document and in the MS Code of Ethics.

Employee’s Name (please print): _____

School/Location _____ Date: _____

Employee’s Signature: _____

Name of Witness (please print): _____

Signature of Witness: _____