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Fort Worth ISD Employee Handbook
Revised September 2019
August 8, 2019

Dear Valued Team Member,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! I am confident that we will continue our successful transformation toward becoming the premier urban school district in Texas and the nation. Enclosed, please find the Employee Handbook, which has been prepared for your use and future reference. The policies highlighted in the handbook will be a helpful guide throughout the school year.

Fort Worth ISD has over 11,000 devoted employees who provide services to over 84,000 students. Our District collaborates with community members across the city and region to prepare ALL students for success in college, career, and community leadership. Our vision includes innovative learning for the future including 100 X 25 FWTX; a community-wide partnership with the goal of 100% of all Fort Worth ISD third graders reading on grade level by 2025.

For those of you who are new to our school District, I extend a personal welcome to you on behalf of the entire Fort Worth ISD family.

Best wishes for a successful 2019 – 2020 school year!

Sincerely,

Kent P. Scribner, Ph.D.
Board of Education

Jacinto “Cinto” Ramos, Jr........................................ Board President
Tobi Jackson.................................................................1st Vice President
Anael Luebanos...........................................................2nd Vice President
Quinton “Q” Philips......................................................Board Secretary
Carin “CJ” Evans..........................................................Member
Anne Darr........................................................................Member
Norman Robbins..........................................................Member
Ashley Paz.......................................................................Member

Kent P. Scribner, Ph.D.  Superintendent of Schools

District Leadership Team

Chief Academic Officer, Interim
Jerry Moore

Chief, Business & Finance
Elsie Schiro

Chief, District Operations
Art Cavazos

Chief, Policy & Planning
Karen Molinar

Chief, Secondary Schools
Cherie Washington

Chief, Elementary Schools
Raul Peña

Chief, Capital Projects
Capital Improvement Program
Vickie Burris

Chief, Human Capital Management and Legal Services
Cynthia Rincón

Chief, Equity & Excellence
Sherry Breed

Senior Communications Officer
Barbara Griffith

Director, External & Emergency Communications
Clint Bond
Introduction
The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year with FWISD. Not all District policies and procedures are included. Those that have been summarized. If you have difficulty accessing information in this handbook because of a disability, or have suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook, please contact the Employee Relations department via email at Emp.Relations@fwisd.org or phone 817-814-2790.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official District policy manual nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of District policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; changes to District policy and procedures shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the specific policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate District office. District policies can be accessed online at the District’s website on the Human Capital Management Division (HCM) webpage.

Legal and local Board Policies that relate to a particular topic are referenced in this Employee Handbook. Information on a subject is found in legal and/or local policies through the District’s Board Policies webpage. Additionally, each reference to a Board Policy is linked to the official policy so that employees may easily access the applicable policy.

District Information
The Fort Worth ISD is a multi-ethnic, urban school District with 84,000+ students and 11,000+ employees. The District has 148 campuses that serve all levels from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, including special populations.

Mission Statement and Goals
Policy AE
MISSION Preparing all students for success in college, career, and community leadership.

GOALS

1. 100% of third grade students read on grade level by 2025
2. Increase the number of students who exceed standards on the STAAR math test in middle school math
3. Increase the percentage of graduates who have met the criteria for post-secondary readiness
Board of Trustees
Policies BA, BB series, BD series, and BE series

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

The Board of Trustees is elected by the citizens of the District to represent the community’s commitment to a strong educational program for the District’s children. Board members are elected from nine single-member Districts and serve 4-year terms. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the District.

The Board usually meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm. Unless otherwise provided in the notice for a meeting, Board meetings shall be held at 2903 Shotts Street, Fort Worth. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the District website on the Board of Education web page at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a two-hour notice.

All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the Board to convene in a closed session from which the public and others are excluded for reasons allowable under the Texas Open Meetings Act. Scheduled Board Meetings this year are:
## BOARD OF EDUCATION

### 2019-2020 School Year

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting Type</th>
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<td>August 27, 2019</td>
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<td>September 10, 2019</td>
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<td>September 24, 2019</td>
<td>Regular Public Comment</td>
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<td>October 8, 2019</td>
<td>Regular Public Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 22, 2019</td>
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<td>November 5, 2019</td>
<td>Reserved for Work Session</td>
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<td>November 12, 2019</td>
<td>Regular Public Comment</td>
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<td>December 10, 2019</td>
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<td>January 28, 2020</td>
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<td>February 11, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 25, 2020</td>
<td>Regular Public Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 17, 2020</td>
<td>Reserved for Work Session</td>
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<td>March 24, 2020</td>
<td>Regular Public Comment</td>
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<td>April 14, 2020</td>
<td>Regular Public Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21, 2020</td>
<td>Reserved for Work Session</td>
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<td>April 28, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 12, 2020</td>
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<td>May 19, 2020</td>
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<td>May 26, 2020</td>
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<td>June 2, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 21, 2020</td>
<td>Regular Public Comment</td>
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School Calendar
There are four (4) calendars for the 2019-2020 school year on the following pages – (1) the traditional; (2) the Jo Kelly School; (3) Early College High School; and (4) the Alice Carlson Applied Learning Academy. Calendars are provided on the following pages, and may also be accessed on the District’s website at

https://www.fwisd.org/Page/2#calendar1/20190810/month
Helpful Contacts
From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department as listed below.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>817-814-2400</td>
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<td>Accounting</td>
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<td>Adult Education</td>
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<td>Athletics</td>
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<td>Benefits</td>
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<td>Bilingual/ESL</td>
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<td>Business and Finance</td>
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<td>- Payroll</td>
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<td>District Records</td>
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<td>Division of Technology</td>
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<td>Equity &amp; Excellence</td>
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<td>Health Services</td>
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<td>Help Desk</td>
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<td>Homebound/Hospital Program</td>
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<td>Human Capital Management</td>
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<td>- Central Calling Office/Substitute Calling System</td>
<td>817-814-2717</td>
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<td>817-814-2780</td>
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<td>- Employee Relations</td>
<td>817-814-2776</td>
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<td>- Transactional Team</td>
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<td>- Internal Audit (Fraud Hotline)</td>
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<td>Legal Services</td>
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<td>Natural Gas Leaks/Power Outages</td>
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<td>Nutrition Services</td>
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<td>Risk Management</td>
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<td>ROTC Headquarters</td>
<td>817-871-3256</td>
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<td>School Leadership</td>
<td>817-814-2310</td>
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<td>817-814-2350</td>
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<td>817-814-2680/817-814-2699</td>
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School Directory
For contact information regarding the District’s schools, please view the [District’s website](#).

Employment
Equal Employment Opportunity
Policies [DAA, DIA](#)

Fort Worth ISD does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Additionally, the District does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant’s job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, should contact Kevin Green, Title IX Coordinator, at 817-814-2000.

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of disability should contact Patricia Sutton, 504 Coordinator/Foster Care Liaison, at 817-814-2875.

All other concerns relating to discrimination for any of the reasons listed above should contact Cynthia Rincón, Title VII Coordinator, at 817-814-2724.

Job Vacancy Announcements
Policy [DC](#)

Job vacancies are posted at the Human Capital Management Division [webpage](#) and may be accessed by personal computer or using computers located in the lobby of the Human Capital Management Department at the FWISD administration building, 100 N. University Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76107.
Employment after Retirement
Policy DC

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

Contract and Noncontract Employment
Policy DC series

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

Probationary Contracts.
Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the District and employed in positions requiring Texas educator certification are employed under a Chapter 21 probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after a two-year lapse in District employment or employees who move to a position requiring a new class of certification are also employed under a Chapter 21 probationary contract.

Probationary contracts are for a term of one school year and may be renewed for two additional one year periods if the employee has less than five of the preceding eight years of employment under a public school Chapter 21 contract. Under certain circumstances, the District may elect to recommend and offer a fourth consecutive year of employment under a probationary contract. New employees who begin their assignment after the first day of instruction will be issued a Chapter 21 probationary contract for that year without credit toward the following school year's contract assignment.

Term Contracts. Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring Texas educator certification will be employed under a Chapter 21 term contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. The term contract will not be longer than one year for employees who are completing a Chapter 21 probationary contract with the District. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract.
Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees. Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as non-instructional administrators) are not employed by contract, unless allowed by Board policy and the Superintendent elects to offer the employee a non-Chapter 21 employment contract. Such contracts shall not be for longer than a one year term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the District.

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

Certification and Licenses

Policies DBA, DF

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to Human Capital Management prior to the expiration of their certification or license.

A certified employee’s contract may be voided and employment terminated through Board action if the individual does not maintain an active certificate or fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to renew or extend a temporary certificate, emergency certificate, probationary certificate, or permit. A contract may also be voided if SBEC suspends or revokes certification because of an individual’s failure to comply with criminal history background checks. Contact the Human Capital Management Division at 817-814-2717 if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

Recertification of Employment Authorization

Policy DC

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

Employees whose immigration status, employment authorization, or employment authorization documents have expired must present new documents that show current employment authorization. Employees should file the necessary application or petition sufficiently in advance to ensure that they maintain continuous employment authorization or valid employment authorization documents. Contact Human Capital Management staff at (817) 814-2717 if you have any questions regarding reverification of employment authorization.

Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing

Policy CQ, DHE
Non-investigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee’s desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. **Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places.** In addition, the District reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The District may search the employee, the employee’s personal items, and work areas including District-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on District premises or work sites or used in District business.

Department supervisors, principals, and other administrators, in consultation with the Office of Professional Standards, may remove an employee from duty and require testing for controlled substances and/or alcohol based upon reasonable suspicion.

Reasonable suspicion includes, but is not limited to:

1. The occurrence of an accident or incident that results in damage or loss of District property or injury to any employee;
2. Observations of appearance, behavior, speech, or body odors;
3. Reports or complaints from other employees or members of the public community about use of or impairment by alcohol or illegal/controlled substances.
4. Such observations, reports, or complaints must be immediately prior to, during, or immediately following the suspected employee’s work schedule.

Any employee whose conduct violates the District drug, alcohol, and controlled substance prohibitions of this policy shall be recommended for termination for any of the following violations:

1. Refusing or failing to submit to a required test for alcohol or controlled substances.
2. Providing an adulterated, diluted, or substituted specimen on an alcohol or controlled substance test.
3. Testing positive for alcohol at a concentration of 0.02 or greater in a post-accident, random, or reasonable suspicion test.
4. Testing positive for controlled substances in a post-accident, random, or reasonable suspicion test.

FWISD has established an alcohol/controlled substances testing program to help prevent accidents and injuries resulting from the misuse of alcohol/controlled substances by District employees who drive District vehicles and school buses as required by federal/state law. The primary purpose of the testing program is to deter misuse of alcohol/controlled substances and to prevent impaired employees from performing safety-sensitive functions. Drug testing may be conducted before an individual assumes job duties and required for certain positions in the District prior to the first day of employment. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted as follows:

- At random for safety sensitive positions;
- When reasonable suspicion of misuse or abuse exists;
- When an employee returns to duty after engaging in prohibited conduct;
• As a follow-up measure;
• Immediately following accidents;
• Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted when an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol/drugs returns to duty;
• For Pre-employment; and when a bus driver has been absent 30 days or longer, they must be retested.

Failure to follow this policy can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug testing policies and related educational material should contact the Office of Professional Standards at 817-814-1880.

**Health Safety Training**

Policies [DBA, DMA](#)

Certain employees who are involved in physical activities for students must maintain and submit to the District proof of current certification or training in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), concussion, and extracurricular athletic activity safety. Certification or documentation of training must be issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, University Interscholastic League, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to Georgi Roberts, Director of Health and Physical Education, annually. For any question, contact Ms. Roberts at (817) 814-2598.
School nurses and employees with regular contact with students must complete a Texas Education Agency approved, online training regarding seizure disorder awareness, recognition, and related first aid.

**Reassignments and Transfers**  
*Policy DK*

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a voluntary transfer to another campus or department pursuant to the District’s Voluntary Transfer guidelines under Board Policy DK (LOCAL). All voluntary transfer requests will be coordinated by Human Capital Management.

**Workload and Work Schedules**  
*Policies DEAB, DK, DL*

**Professional Employees.** Professional employees and academic administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10-, 11-, or 12-month basis, according to the work schedules set by the District. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Work calendars are distributed each school year through the District weekly email, *Inside FWISD*, and are also available on the District’s website.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation including conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The District may require teachers to supervise students during lunch one day a week when no other personnel are available.

**Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees.** Support employees are employed at will and receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not
authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. See Overtime Compensation on page 23 for additional information.

**Note:** Campus based personnel working hours are set forth in the *Bulletin One* District Publication.

### Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk

*Policies DEAB, DG*

The District supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk.

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

In accordance with Federal Law and Board Policy, the following guidelines are provided to assist Supervisors in facilitating lactation accommodations:

- Private room with lock, separate from bathrooms and meeting room
- Close proximity to employee’s work area
- Privacy from co-workers and public view, free from intrusion
- Equipped with chairs, electrical outlets and table
- Access to hygienic nearby storage and a clean water source

Supervisors shall not deny any lactation accommodation requests prior to consultation with the staff in the Employee Relations Department. The District prohibits discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation against any District employee who chooses to express breast milk for their infant child.

### Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications

*Policies DK, DBA*

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

Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate. This notice is not required if parental notice under ESSA is sent. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request. Employees who have
questions about their certification status can call Certification in Human Capital Management at 817-814-2717.

**Outside Employment and Tutoring**

*Policy DBD*

Prohibiting outside employment is related to the legitimate interest of the Board that public school employees devote their professional energies and efforts to the education of children. Consequently, the full-time position and related shall take precedence over any other occupational interest of the employee. While “approval” for outside employment is not required, employees who wish to accept outside employment or engage in activities for profit must be dedicated primarily to the school system. Outside employment activities will be the responsibility of the employee.

A District employee shall not accept outside employment or compensation that could reasonably impair the employee’s independence of judgment in the performance of his or her duties. Also, no full-time employee of the District shall engage in any occupation during their work year that is incompatible or presents a conflict of interest with their employment with the District.

If a conflict of interest or incompatibility exists, or if it’s determined that such employment interferes with the duties and proper performance of an employee’s regular assignment, the activity will be denied. In this case, continuation of outside employment shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment with the District. An employee shall not perform any personal work during regular business hours, except while on approved personal leave. The use of any District facilities or property, equipment or resources for personal business or gain is strictly prohibited.

**Outside Professional Services**

Professional personnel such as teachers, counselors, coaches, etc. shall not privately tutor students for pay or provide other services to students for pay at the campus to which the employee is assigned, except:

1. During the summer months, or
2. For District-sponsored initiatives such as mentoring, tutoring programs, or athletic clinics as approved by the University Interscholastic League (UIL), when school is not in regular session.

Written approval must be obtained from the employee’s department supervisor or campus principal.

**Performance Evaluation**

*Policy DN series*

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

**Employee Involvement**

*Policies BQA, BQB*

At both the campus and District levels, Fort Worth ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the District. As part of the District’s planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on District- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from the employee’s department offices.

**Staff Development**

*Policy DMA*

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the District. Staff development for instructional personnel is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, addressed in the campus improvement plan, and approved by a campus-level advisory committee. Staff development for non-instructional personnel is designed to meet specific licensing requirements (e.g., bus drivers) and continued employee skill development. Individuals holding renewable SBEC certificates are responsible for obtaining the required training hours and maintaining appropriate documentation.

**Compensation and Benefits**

**Salaries, Wages, and Stipends**

*Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB*

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The District’s pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All District positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Employees must work a minimum of 90 days per year and receive “Meets Expectations” or better on annual evaluations to be eligible for any Board approved pay increases the following school year.

All employees will receive written notice of their work schedules before the start of each school year. Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time nurses, and full-time counselors will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according
to the District’s extra-duty pay schedule. Employees may contact the Compensation Department at 817-814-2080 for information regarding the District’s pay schedules or their own pay.

**Paychecks**

All professional and salaried employees are paid monthly. Transportation and Child Nutrition employees who work ten months each year are paid every two weeks. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the District employee named on the check without the employee’s written authorization.

The schedule of pay dates for the 2019-2020 school year listed on the next page.

**MONTHLY PAYROLL SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2019-2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAYROLL CLOSES</th>
<th>PAYROLL DATA DUE BY 12 p.m. in the following District timekeeping systems</th>
<th>PAYDAY</th>
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Automatic Payroll Deposit
Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of one month is necessary to activate this service. Contact the Payroll Department at 817-814-2180 for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll Deductions
Policy CFEA

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

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or Social Security employee contributions
- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable
- Other Legal Garnishments

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

Overtime Compensation
Policies DEAB, DEC

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

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

Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour workweek and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours. Employees will be compensated for overtime (i.e., hours physically beyond the 40 hour workweek) at rate of time-and-a-half of their regular hourly rate of pay, with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees can accumulate up to 60 hours of comp time.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
Use of comp time may be at the employee’s request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor’s direction.

An employee may be required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).

Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

At the District’s option, nonexempt employees may receive compensatory time off, rather than overtime pay, for overtime work.

**Travel Expense Reimbursement**

*Policy DEE*

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee’s supervisor, budget owner, and a member of the Superintendent’s Leadership team must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the District. Employees must submit receipts, to the extent possible, to be reimbursed for allowable expenses other than mileage.

Employees who travel within the Dallas/Fort Worth area on behalf of the district using a personal vehicle may request mileage reimbursement if they do not receive an auto allowance. Completed and signed mileage reimbursement forms are due in the Accounting Department no later than the 15th monthly for the prior month’s travel. Failure to comply with the due date will forfeit your mileage request being paid. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

**Health, Dental, and Life Insurance**

*Policy CRD*

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

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

TRS retirees who are enrolled in TRS-Care (retiree health insurance program) are not eligible to participate in TRS-ActiveCare. The District’s contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the Board of trustees. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, prices, and eligibility requirements are available to all employees at the FWISD Employee Benefits Portal.
The health insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31 of each year. New employees must enroll online at www.mybenefitshub.com/fortworthisd within the first 31 calendar days of employment. Current employees can make changes to their insurance coverage if they experience a qualifying life event. Please contact the Employee Benefits Office at benefits@fwisd.org or 817-814-2240 for more information. At the employee’s discretion, health insurance may begin on: (1) the first day the employee is actively at work or (2) the first day of the calendar month following the date the employee is actively at work.

Supplemental Insurance Benefits
Policy CRD

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for dental, vision, life, disability, cancer, accident and medical transport. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact the Employee Benefits office at benefits@fwisd.org or 817-814-2240 for more information.

Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e. health savings plan for employees who enroll in the a TRS-ActiveCare plan, TRS-ActiveCare 1 HD plan, dental plans, vision plans, flexible spending accounts, 403(b) and 457(b).

New employees must accept or decline these benefits within 31 calendar days of the first day of employment or for a special enrollment qualifying event. All current employees must accept or decline this benefit on an annual basis and during the annual open enrollment period.

Workers’ Compensation Insurance
Policy CRE

The District, in accordance with state law, provides workers’ compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related injury or have a work related illness.

Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case. All work-related accidents, injuries and illnesses should be reported immediately to the Employee’s Supervisor, Human Capital Management at 817-814-2790 and The District’s Workers Comp Specialist at 817-814-2250.
Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See Workers’ Compensation Benefits, page 37, for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

**Unemployment Compensation Insurance**  
*Policy CRF*

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact the Texas Workforce Commission at 800-939-6631.

**Teacher Retirement**

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

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify Employee Relations Department as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the web ([www.trs.texas.gov](http://www.trs.texas.gov)).

**Leaves and Absences**  
*Policies DEC, DECA, DECB*

The District offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This section summarizes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an period of more than ten (10) work days should contact the Employee Relations Department at 817-814-2790 or Emp.Relations@fwisd.org for information about applicable leave benefits and requirements for communicating with the District the status of their absence from duty. Employees whose absence from duty results in a reduction of pay should contact the Benefits Department to discuss options to submit required co-payments for any elected benefits normally deducted from the employee’s paycheck.

Paid leave must be used in half or full day increments. Employees should consult Board Policy DEC (LOCAL) to review their options to select which type of leave accrual they may use for an
absence from duty. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

- Local Sick
- State Personal
- Vacation

Employees must follow District and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification.

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

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.
- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law
- Grandparent, spouse’s grandparent, and grandchild

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

**Medical Certification.** Any employee, who is absent more than 10 days because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee’s fitness to return to work.

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

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Employees, on an approved leave of absence other than family and medical leave, may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid by the District as they were prior to the leave. Otherwise, the District does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave.
Under TRS-Active Care rules, an employee is no longer eligible for insurance through the District after six months of unpaid leave other than FMLA leave. If an employee’s unpaid leave extends for more than six months, the District will provide the employee with notice of COBRA rights.

**Personal Leave**

*Policy DEC*

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

**Unscheduled Paid Time Off (PTO).** Leave taken for personal or family illness, family emergency, a death in the family, or active military service is considered nondiscretionary leave. Reasons for this type of leave allow very little, if any, advance planning. Nondiscretionary may be used in the same manner as state sick leave. For leave that is not taken at the employee’s discretion, the employee must notify the supervisor as soon as possible and report the absence in the District’s automated absence reporting system.

**Scheduled PTO.** Leave taken at an employee’s discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor three days in advance of the anticipated absence. Supervisors may deny discretionary leave requests on critical work days (i.e. first day of school), or on days when ten percent of staff in the same or similar position have already scheduled absences on the same day(s) requested.

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

**State Sick Leave**

*Policy DEC*

State sick leave accumulated before 1995 is available for use and may be transferred to other school Districts in Texas. State sick leave can be used in half or whole day increments, except when coordinated with family and medical leave taken on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis, or when coordinated with workers’ compensation benefits.
State sick leave may be used for the following reasons only:
- Employee illness
- Illness in the employee’s immediate family
- Family emergency (i.e., natural disasters or life-threatening situations)
- Death in the immediate family
- Active military service

Local Leave
Policy DEC

Local leave applies to all District employees (not substitute or temporary) who have contributed to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). Local leave is earned at a minimum rate of one-half day per month (full-time). Employees in positions that normally require ten months of service earn five days each year; employees in positions normally requiring 11 months of service earn six days each year; employees in positions normally requiring 12 months of service earn seven days each year. The District does not limit the number of local leave days employees may accumulate.

An employee shall not earn any local leave when he or she is on unpaid status. An employee using full or proportionate paid leave shall be considered to be in paid status.

District local sick leave may be used for the following reasons only:
- Employee’s illness or injury
- Child care following birth or adoption of an employee’s child or placement of the child with employee
- Illness in the employee’s immediate family
- Death in the immediate family

Local Personal Leave
Policy DEC (REGULATOIN)

Each Full-time District employee in a position normally requiring 240 or more workdays per year will earn paid local personal leave.

Each employee serving as a division chief, associate superintendent, assistant superintendent, or general counsel will earn 20 vacation days per fiscal year. The number of vacation days earned by other eligible employees will be based on the number of years of completed service, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Completed District Service</th>
<th>Local Personal Leave Days Earned Per Fiscal Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10 years</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 years</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An employee will not earn any local personal leave days when he or she is in unpaid status. An employee who terminates employment before the end of the fiscal year will be required to refund the value of one day of pay for each day of unearned vacation taken. An employee’s use of vacation days will be subject to approval from the employee’s immediate supervisor. Vacation leave will be recorded in half-day increments for all eligible employees.

**Sick Leave Program**

**Policy DEC**

Sick Leave Program is a pool of local sick leave days contributed by the school District and separating employees to be used by full-time employees (not temporary or regular substitutes) who suffer a qualifying incapacitating personal illness, accident, or qualifying family member’s terminal illness and have exhausted use of all of their available leave days. Membership in the program is automatic.

To qualify for benefits of the program, a catastrophic illness or injury must result in the employee’s temporary incapacity to perform his/her job function for an extended period. A catastrophic illness or accident is a condition defined as life threatening, not a mere passing disorder or ailment. The illness requires treatment by a physician, hospitalization, emergency room treatment or outpatient treatment at a hospital. Examples of illnesses which may qualify for the benefits include but are not limited to:

- Cancer
- Heart Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Stroke
- Organ transplants
- Muscular dystrophy

Family member terminal illness is limited to the spouse and dependent children under eighteen (18) years of age. For purposes of the Sick Leave Program, “child” refers to a son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis. This benefit is limited to one employee in a family and only when there is no other family member at home to care for the terminally ill person. For information about the Sick Leave Program see the annual brochure: [https://www.fwisd.org/Page/2639](https://www.fwisd.org/Page/2639).

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions**

**Policy DECA**

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

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

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

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

The District requires employees to use accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave.

**Benefits and Protections**

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

**Eligibility Requirements**

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

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

**Requesting Leave**

Employees must give 30-days’ advance notice of the need for FMLA leave whenever possible. If it is not possible to give 30-days’ notice, an employee, or the employee’s authorized family member if the employee is unable, must contact the Employee Relations Department at 817-814-2790 as soon as possible to submit an application for extended medical leave. Medical certification for the leave must be submitted on the relevant U.S. Department of Labor documents within ten (10) business days of the first day of absence. Required documents are available on the [Employee Relations web page](#). Employees do not have to share a medical
diagnosis but must provide enough information to the District so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection.

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

Employees requesting leave are required to do the following:

- Provide medical certification from a qualified health care provider supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or an immediate family member:
  - Spouse
  - Child (the term child does not include children over the age of 18 unless they are incapable of self-care due to a physical or mental disability), or
  - Parent (term parent does not include “in-law”)
- Provide second or third medical opinions and periodic re-certification for the need for leave, when requested
- Provide periodic reports during the leave regarding the status and intent to return to work
- Provide medical certification from a qualified health care provider of the employee’s ability to return to work at the conclusion of the leave
- Provide medical certification of the need for family military leave

Employees requiring family and medical leave should contact the Employee Relations Department for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations and, if able, should report to the Employee Relations Department of Human Capital Management to complete required paperwork prior to beginning an absence protected under the Family Medical Leave Act.

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

**Employer Responsibilities**

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

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

**Enforcement**
Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information contact:
www.wagehour.dol.gov

Local Family and Medical Leave Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period from September 1 through August 31 annually.

Use of Paid Leave. FMLA leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, compensatory time, assault leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The District will designate the leave as FMLA leave, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

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

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

Fitness for Duty. An employee that takes FMLA leave due to the employee’s own serious health condition shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification from the health care provider. If certification of the employee’s ability to perform essential job function is required, the District shall provide a list of essential job functions (e.g., job description) to the employee with the FMLA leave designation notice to share with the health care provider.

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

In certain cases, instructional employees desiring to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue on family and medical leave until the end of the semester. The additional time off is not counted against the employee’s FMLA leave entitlement, and the District will maintain the employees group health insurance and reinstate the employee at the end of the leave according the procedures outlined in policy (see DECA (LEGAL)).
**Failure to Return.** If, at the expiration of FMLA leave, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the District may require the employee to reimburse the District’s share of insurance premiums paid during any portion of FMLA leave when the employee was on unpaid leave. If the employee fails to return to work for a reason beyond the employee’s control, such as a continuing personal or family serious health condition or a spouse being unexpectedly transferred more than 75 miles from the District, the District may not require the employee to reimburse the District’s share of premiums paid.

**District Contact.** Employees that require FMLA leave or have questions should contact Employee Relations Department at 817-814-2790 or visit the department in person for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

**Military Leave, i.e. Qualifying Exigency Leave/ Military Caregiver Leave**

*Policy* [DEC, DECA, DECB]

In the case of military caregiver leave, an eligible employee’s FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a total of 26 workweeks of leave during a “single 12-month period.” The “single 12-month period” is measured forward from the date an employee’s first FMLA leave to care for the covered service member begins, regardless of the method used by a District to determine the 12-month period for other FMLA leaves. During the “single 12-month period,” an eligible employee’s FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of FMLA leave for any qualifying reason. 29 C.F.R. 825.200(f), (g) Spouses who are employed by the same District may be limited to a combined total of 26 weeks of FMLA leave during the “single 12-month period” if leave is taken as military caregiver leave, for the birth of a son or daughter, for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition. 29 C.F.R. 825.127(e)(3)

For more information on this leave, please contact the Employee Relations Department at 817-814-2790.

**Local Pregnancy and/or Parenting Leave**

District employees (except substitute or temporary) are granted up to six (6) consecutive calendar weeks of local pregnancy and/or parenting leave. Compensation is without pay except to theextent the employee has vacation, state personal leave, and/or District local leave available. After one year of service to the District, if the employee does not have a sufficient number of leave days to cover the absence, the employee is eligible for sub-dock pay granted at their daily rate less the cost of appropriate substitute pay for up to four (4) consecutive calendar weeks.
Employees must have exhausted all available leave days before being eligible for sub-dock pay. The combination of state personal leave, vacation, District sick leave days and days subsidized at sub-dock pay shall not exceed six (6) consecutive calendar weeks. The employee shall report all leave taken to the automated absence reporting system as well as notify the principal, immediate supervisor or appropriate designee. Contact the Employee Relations Department in Human Capital Management for the application procedure. Employees requesting Local Pregnancy and/or Parenting leave must come in person to the Employee Relations section of Human Capital Management to complete required paperwork prior to beginning a Local Pregnancy and/or Parenting leave.

Local Pregnancy and/or Parenting leave runs concurrent with FML leave. Under FMLA, eligible employees may take up to 12 work weeks off during the District’s fiscal year. FMLA leave is without pay, except to the extent that an employee has leave days available. For more information on this leave, please contact the Employee Relations Department at 817-814-2790.

Temporary Disability Leave
Policy DEC, DBB

Certified Employees. Any District employee (other than a substitute or temporary employee) is eligible for temporary disability leave. Temporary disability leave must be taken as a continuous block of time. It may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability. Disabilities caused by or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, childbirth, and recovery therefrom shall be treated the same as any other disability.

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

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

When an employee is ready to return to work, the employee shall notify the Employee Relations department in writing at least 30 calendar days prior to the anticipated return to work date. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician’s statement confirming that the employee is able to resume regular duties. Certified employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned if an appropriate position is available. If an appropriate position is not available, the employee may be assigned to another campus, subject to the approval of the campus principal. If a position is not available before the
end of the school year, the employee will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at
the beginning of the following school year.

**Regular Leave of Absence**

*Policy DEC*

A District employee (not substitute or temporary) may be granted leave for up to one year, or
the remainder of a duty year, after completion of three years of service in the District. The
Superintendent or designee may give consideration to a leave of absence request to employees
who have completed less than three years. This leave may be granted only if the employee is not
eligible for any other leave.

**Reasons for Regular Leave of Absence:**

- Serious illness of the employee;
- Serious illness of the employee’s immediate family;
- Child care;
- Personal hardship (facts justifying the request shall be submitted);
- Study in an institution of higher learning (verification of acceptance required);
- Extensive travel that may be considered of equal educational value to training or research
  in an institution of higher learning;
- Special service related to education at an approved college or university, Texas Education
  Agency, governmental agencies, exchange teaching, recognized professional
  organizations, Peace Corps, Job Corps, or elective office.

Applications for a Regular Leave of Absence for the beginning of the following school year must be made in writing to the Employee Relations Department by May 1st of each year. Exceptions to the May 1st deadline in case of emergencies or extenuating circumstances may be requested in writing to the Employee Relations Department. Employees wishing to return to regular employment must notify the Employee Relations Department in writing not later than 45 days prior to the first day of instruction for the following school year. Notice of intent to return does not guarantee employment. The employee shall be assigned or reassigned subject to availability of a position for which the employee is qualified.

Failure to provide the notice of intent to return to work by the 45th day may result in a recommendation for termination or non-renewal of employment in accordance with appropriate Board Policies. A Regular Leave of Absence may only be granted only once in a seven (7) year span. Exceptions to this timeframe can be approved solely by the Superintendent.
Workers’ Compensation Benefits
Policy CRE

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

An employee receiving workers’ compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use available, partial-day increments of sick leave or any other paid leave benefits to make up the difference between wage benefits and pre-injury or illness wages. While an employee is receiving workers’ compensation wage benefits, the District will charge available leave proportionately if the employee elects to do so. Employees who elect to use available leave along with workers’ compensation wage benefits will receive an amount equal to the employee’s regular salary.

Assault Leave
Policy DEC

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to an employee who is injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An incident involving an assault is a work-related injury and should be reported at once to the principal or immediate supervisor.

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

An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take leave time medically necessary for up to two years from the date of the assault to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. Assault leave runs concurrently with any FML and TDL for which an employee is eligible. At the written request of an employee, the District will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. Within ten working days of the request, the employee must also provide medical certification indicating the amount of time off necessary to recuperate from physical injuries sustained as a result of the assault. In the event of prolonged absences, a physician’s medical report must be provided to the Human Capital Management department whenever the employee’s restriction from duty is extended beyond the initial end date reported by the health care provider. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave and must be coordinated with workers’ compensation benefits. Upon investigation of the assault incident the District may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee’s accrued paid leave. The employee’s pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

Bereavement Leave
Policy DEC
District employees (except substitute or temporary) are eligible for bereavement leave. Employees may use up to five (5) workdays per occurrence, subject to the District’s approval. Two (2) days shall be permitted at no loss of state or local leave. If an employee has no leave available at the time of a death in the employee’s immediate family, the District will grant the employee a maximum of three additional days of bereavement leave for which the District will deduct the daily rate of an appropriate substitute, whether or not a substitute is employed.

Appropriate documentation must be provided for all bereavement leave. The documentation must establish the relationship between the employee and the deceased and will be kept on file by the principal or designee or immediate supervisor or designee, with a copy sent to the Payroll department.

For Bereavement Leave purposes, immediate family is defined as the employee’s:
- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.
- Parent, stepparent, current parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, current brother- or sister-in-law
- Grandparent, grandchild, spouse’s grandparent

**Jury Duty**
Policy [DEC](#)

Absences due to compliance with a summons to jury duty, including service on a grand jury, shall be fully compensated by the District and shall not be deducted from the employee’s pay or leave balance. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides. An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and may be required to provide the District a copy of the summons to document the need for leave.

An employee must report back to work as soon as they are released from jury duty or court proceeding, if four or more hours remain in the workday and the absence is not for an employee’s personal business. A copy of the release from jury duty or documentation of time spent at the court may be required.

**Compliance with a Subpoena**
Policy [DEC](#)

Employees will be paid while on leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding and will not be required to use personal leave. Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court
appearances (e.g., copy of the jury summons or subpoena) and will be allowed to retain any compensation received. Employees must report back to duty upon release if four or more hours are left in the workday. Absences for court appearances related to an employee’s personal business, including both civil and criminal court proceedings, must be taken as personal leave or leave without pay if no personal leave is available.

**Truancy Court Appearances**

*Policy DEC*

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

**Religious Observance**

*Policy DEC*

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

**Military Leave**

*Policy DEC, DECB*

**Paid Leave for Military Service.** Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to paid leave when engaged in authorized training or duty orders by proper authority. The employee must notify his or her principal or designee or immediate supervisor by presenting a copy of the order, directive notice, or other documents requiring the employee’s absence from work. Paid military leave is limited to 15 days each fiscal year; October 1st through September 30th. In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service.

**Reemployment after Military Leave.** Employees who leave the District to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the District will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. The employee is entitled to return to the same employment held when ordered to active duty or training. To be eligible for reemployment, employees must provide notice of their obligation or intent to perform military service, provide
evidence of honorable discharge or release, and submit a written application for reemployment
to the Human Capital Management Department within 90 days of discharger or release. The
length of the federal military service cannot exceed five years in order to be eligible for
reemployment.

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Employees who perform service in the uniformed services
may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24
months. Employees should contact the Benefits Department at 817-814-2240 for details on
eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

# Employee Relations and Communications

## Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra
effort to contribute to the success of the District. Employees are recognized at Board meetings,
in the District newsletter, and through special events and activities. Recognition and appreciation
activities also include the Annual Report, which recognizes students, teachers, and faculty
members who excel in their area. The District’s Employee Services team in Human Capital
Management facilitates the annual employee recognition and appreciation program in
collaboration with District and community stakeholder input.

# District Communications

Throughout the school year, the Communications Department publishes newsletters, brochures,
fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. These publications offer
employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements. They include the following:

- *The FWISD Newsletter, which provides monthly updates on developments within FWISD.*
- *The Inside FWISD blog posts, which provide more frequent news updates on issues
  surrounding the education system as a whole.*

The District’s primary method of communication with the employee base, in addition to the
phone system, is through the Microsoft Office Outlook Email System. To use the email system,
an employee must have access to a computer and be issued an email account and user ID.
Through this system the District distributes information to employees regarding important
issues, concerns, administrative regulations, changes in policies and procedures, and other
relevant news. Employees who have an active email account are responsible to review District-
wide communications on a regular basis.

**Important:** When an employee is set up with an email address, a signature, as approved by the
District’s Superintendent is required for all emails and must contain the employee’s name, title,
department, phone number, email, address and website address. The District distributes
information to the media via the Communications Department. All information must be
processed through and approved by the Communications Department before being released to
the media.
Complaints and Grievances
Policy DGBA

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

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the Board of Trustees. For ease of reference, the District’s policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints is found here.

Employees who wish to submit a formal complaint as permitted under Board Policy DGBA (LOCAL) should submit the complaint to the Employee Relations Department. Information for submitting complaints is available on the Human Capital Management webpage.

Employee Conduct and Welfare
Standards of Conduct
Policy DH

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

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

All District employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, District policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a District investigation may result in disciplinary action, including termination.
Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day after the superintendent knew of the incident. See Reports to the Texas Education Agency, page 57 for additional information.

The Educators’ Code of Ethics, adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification, which all District employees must adhere to, is accessible online.

**Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

Policies **DH, DIA**

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

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

The District’s policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation may be accessed online.

**Harassment of Students**

Policies **DH, DHB, FFG, FFH, FFI**

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and District employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate District official immediately. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student’s parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See the sections titled Reporting Suspected Child Abuse, page 45 and Bullying, page 63 in this document for additional information.

The District’s policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is may be accessed online.
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Policies DG, FFG, GRA

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §261.001, to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services (CPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility) within 48 hours (two calendar days) of the event that led to the suspicion. Alleged abuse or neglect involving a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child (including a teacher) must be reported to CPS. Employees are also required to make a report if they have cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or person with a disability.

Reports to Child Protective Services may be submitted online or through the Texas Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

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

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

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agency. Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer’s request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children

The District has established a plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at the District’s Emergency Procedures Manual. As an employee,
it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or maltreated. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child’s mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Maltreatment is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in the section Reporting Suspected Child Abuse.

**Reporting Crime**

*Policy DG*

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

**Technology Resources**

*Policy CQ*

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

- Imposes no tangible cost to the District.
- Does not unduly burden the District’s computer or network resources
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student’s academic performance

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

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the District’s acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Instructional Technology Department at 817-814-3100.

**Personal Use of Electronic Communications**

*Policy CQ, DH*

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

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

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

- The employee may not set up or update the employee’s personal social network page(s) using the District’s computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct District business.
- The employee shall not use the District’s logo or other copyrighted material of the District without express, written consent.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on District business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee’s immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
  - Confidentiality of student records [See Policy FL]
  - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law [See Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]
  - Confidentiality of District records, including educator evaluations and private e-mail addresses. [See Policy GBA]
  - Copyright law [See Policy CY]
  - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system. [See Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]
See *Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents*, below, for regulations on employee communication with students.

**Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents**

*Policy DH*

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

An employee is not subject to provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee’s child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student’s parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

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

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

- **Electronic media** includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing Web sites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn). Electronic Media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and Web-based applications.

- **Communicate** means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee’s personal social network page or a blog) is not a communication: however, the employee may be subject to District regulations on personal electronic communications. See *Personal Use of Electronic Media*, above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not a communication.
Certified or licensed employee means a person employed in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, licensed therapists, and athletic trainers.

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

- The employee will abide by the standards established in the Educators’ Code of Ethics.
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the District unless a specific exception is noted below.
- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:
  - The employee shall include at least one of the student’s parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message.
  - The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message.
  - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee’s district e-mail address.
- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page (“professional page”) for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee’s professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics including:
  - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
  - Copyright law [Policy CY]
Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DHB]

- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.
- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the District’s record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in an improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

Criminal History Background Checks
Policy DBAA

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

Employee Arrests and Convictions
Policy DBAA, DH

Regardless of whether an event occurs within or outside of an employee’s work calendar year, an employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor and the Office of Professional Standards within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony, and any of the other offenses listed below:

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

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit
- Theft
- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor
- Crimes involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance
- Felonies involving driving while intoxicated (DWI)
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Family Code 261.001

If an educator is arrested or criminally charged, the Superintendent is also required to report the educator’s criminal history to the Division of Investigations at TEA if the District did not learn of the arrest or charge through the Fingerprint-based Clearing House of Texas (F.A.C.T).

**Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention Policy DH**

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

An employee shall not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances during working hours while at school or at school-related activities during or outside of usual working hours:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.
4. Any other intoxicant or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug. An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered “under the influence” of a controlled substance.

Employees who violate this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions may include:
1. referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs;
2. referral to employee assistance programs;
3. Termination from employment with the District; and
4. Referral to appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution.

As a condition of employment, an employee shall: abide by these terms; and notify the Superintendent, in writing, if the employee is convicted for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace. The employee must provide the notice in accordance with DH(LOCAL).

**Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use**

*Policies DH, FNCD, GKA*

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

**Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

*Policy CAA*

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

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the District
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other District assets including employee time
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of District financial transactions
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of District information or activities
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the District
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the District, except as otherwise permitted by law or District policy
- Inappropriately destroying, removing, or using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state, or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or District policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the District
• Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards

Reporting Suspected Medicaid Fraud

District employees are required to adhere to all Federal, State, and local laws governing the rendering of Medicaid-eligible services being submitted for billing. Some of the most important of these laws are the federal False Claims Act, the Texas Medicaid Fraud Prevention Law (TMFPL), and the Texas False Claims Act (TFCA) which impose liabilities punishable by fines, up to and including imprisonment. The federal False Claims Act [31 U.S.C. § § 3729-3733] establishes civil penalties for knowingly submitting false and fraudulent claims to the government for payment. Prohibited practices include, but not limited to:

• Making, conspiring, or using a false record or statement to obtain payment from a false claim
• Soliciting, receiving, or offering payment (cash or in kind gift) for referring an individual for service arranged for payment under a Federal health care program [Anti-Kickback Statute Section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act]
• Billing Texas’s Medicaid program for services not rendered
• Submitting a claim for a service rendered by a person not licensed to provide that service
• Submitting a claim for a service that has not been approved and defined as a part of a student’s care

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission Inspector General (IG) is responsible for investigating Medicaid waste, abuse, and fraud in Texas health and human services programs. To report suspected Medicaid fraud or abuse, please contact the IG Integrity Line at 1-800-436-6184 or visit their website at https://oig.hhsc.texas.gov. Additional information is available on the Texas Office of Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit website at www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/divisions/law-enforcement/medicaid-fraud-control-unit.

Employee Protections

The federal False Claims Act provides protections for individuals that report suspected fraudulent Medicaid billing practices. District employees are protected against discrimination, retaliation, and harassment for their lawful participation in the disclosure, or refusal to participate in fraudulent claim activity.

Conflict of Interest

Policy CB, DBD

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

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

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

**Gifts and Favors**  
*Policy DBD*

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

**Copyrighted Materials**  
*Policy CY*

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

**Associations and Political Activities**  
*Policy DGA*

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

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

The District encourages personal participation in the political process, including voting. Employees who need to be absent from work to vote during the early voting period or on Election Day must communicate with their immediate supervisor prior to the absence.
Charitable Contributions
Policy DG

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

Safety
Policy CK series

The District has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. See Emergencies on page 57 for additional information.

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the Department of Safety and Security at 817-814-2680.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons
Policies DH, FNCG, GKA

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a
handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other District provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the District’s weapons policy should report it immediately to their supervisor and Safety & Security, 817-814-2699.

**Visitors in the Workplace**

*Policy GKC*

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

**Asbestos Management Plan**

*Policy CKA*

The District is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for each school. A copy of the District’s management plan is kept in the Environmental Services Department and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

**Pest Control Treatment**

*Policies CLB, DI*

Employees are prohibited from applying any pesticide or herbicide without appropriate training and prior approval of the integrated pest management (IPM) coordinator. Any application of pesticide or herbicide must be done in a manner prescribed by law and the District’s integrated pest management program. Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a District building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are to be made available in an area of common access. In addition, individual employees may request in writing to be notified of pesticide applications. An employee who requests individualized notice will be notified by telephone, written, or electric means. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

**General Procedures**

**Bad Weather Closing**

*Policy CKC*

The District may close schools because of bad weather or emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the
District’s facilities. It is every employee’s responsibility to monitor the District web site, phone app, social media sites (Facebook, Twitter) and listen to local radio or television news whenever announcements are imminent regarding emergencies in the schools. Mobile app and web site posting, social media announcements and local radio and television stations will be notified of the decision to close or delay opening school. This notification of the media will be accomplished by persons assigned by the superintendent. When it becomes necessary to release students early, District officials will notify principals who in turn will notify campus staff. The District will also send appropriate notification to parents.

**Emergencies**

*Policies CKC, CKD*

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

**Purchasing Procedures**

*Policy CH*

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the Purchasing Department on an official District purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the District can be made without a PO number. The District will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the District’s business office. Contact the Purchasing Department at 817-814-2205 for additional information on purchasing procedures.

**Name and Address Changes**

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. The home address, home telephone number, beneficiary and emergency contact, must be changed in “Employee Self-Serve” portal. An employee must submit a name change request through the District’s Name Change Request Form.

**Personnel Records**

*Policy DBA, GBA*
Most District records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. In most cases, an employee’s personal e-mail is confidential and may not be released without the employee’s permission. Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

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

The choice to not allow public access to this information or change an existing choice may be made at any time by submitting a written request to the Employee Records Department. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information may be released to the public until a request to withhold the information is submitted or another exception for release of information under law applies. An employee is responsible for notifying the district if he or she is subject to any exception for disclosure of personal or confidential information. A request made after the initial 14 day period will not apply to any open records request made before the request.

**Facility Use**  
*Policies DGA, GKD*

Employees who wish to use District facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. The District’s Operations Department is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact Purchasing Department staff at 817-814-2064 to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.
Separation of Employment
Resignations
Policy DFE

**Contract Employees.** Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received at least 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the Human Capital Management Department. Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the superintendent or the Board of trustees. Resignation without consent may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of an educator’s resignation following an alleged incident of misconduct for any of the misconduct listed in the section *Reports to Texas Education Agency* on page 57. The superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee resigns and reasonable evidence exists to indicate that the employee has engaged in any of the same acts.

**Noncontract Employees.** Noncontract employees may resign their position at any time by submitting a resignation Form-100 to the Employee Relations Department in Human Capital Management. Per Board Policy DFE (Local), employees shall give reasonable notice and shall include in the resignation a statement of the reasons for resigning. Generally, reasonable notice is two weeks.

**Pay Schedule for Resigning Employees.** Employees separating employment at the end of the school year will be paid off at the end of the month of the last day of employment if they have completed a Resignation Form-100 prior to the 15th of that same month. If the employee was scheduled to work less than 240 days, the employee will receive multiple deposits in the month of separation (i.e. if an employee separates in June, three payments will be received in June for normal earnings payments traditionally received in June, July, and August). Because multiple payments will be issued, the employee will be taxed on the normal monthly taxable income.

**Health Coverage.** If an employee separates employment with Fort Worth ISD after the last day of instruction for the current school year and is covered under TRS ActiveCare health insurance, the employee may extend the health coverage through August of the same year. For the health coverage through TRS-ActiveCare to continue through July and/or August of the current plan year upon separation of employment, the employee will need to complete the Request for Continuation of TRS-ActiveCare Health Plan Coverage form in the Benefits Office. If this form is not completed in the Benefits Office, the employee’s health coverage will end at the end of the month of the last working day or separation date, whichever is later.

**All Other Benefits.** All other benefits will end at the end of the month of the last working day or separation date, whichever is later (i.e. Dental, Vision, Disability, Cancer, Life, Dependent Life,
Long Term Care, Health Savings Account, Flexible Medical Spending Account, Flexible Dependent Care Spending Account, etc.).

**Flexible Spending Accounts.** Employees may request reimbursement for qualified expenses incurred up to the separation effective date. Employees have 90 days from the separation effective date to submit receipts for reimbursement for qualified expenses.

For assistance or for other questions regarding benefits after separation of employment, please contact the Benefits department at (817) 814-2240.

**Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Chapter 21 Contract Employees**  
*Policies DF Series*

Employees on Chapter 21 probationary, term, and continuing contracts may be proposed for termination during the contract term according to the procedures outlined in District policies and Texas Education Code. Employees on term contracts can be non-renewed at the end of the contract term, and employees on probationary contracts may be terminated at the end of the contract term. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay, or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. Probationary contracts terminated at the end of a contract period are final and may not be appealed. The timelines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or nonrenewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to an employee.

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

**Dismissal of Noncontract Employees**  
*Policy DCD*

FWISD adheres to the common-law doctrine of at-will employment. The District may dismiss at-will employees with or without notice, and with or without cause. However, the District is committed to dealing with its employees fairly and ethically while maintaining efficiency and productivity. Further, it is unlawful for the District to dismiss any employee for reasons based on race, religion, national origin, disability, sex, military status, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights.

Employees involuntarily terminated, demoted, or suspended without pay by the District may, within ten working days, appeal the action by following the timelines and procedures found in Board Policy DCD (Local).
At-will employees who are absent from the workplace for four (4) consecutive workdays, without authorized leave or proof of incapacity, shall thereby be deemed to have effectively abandoned his or her position with the District and will be terminated. Once documented, accepted and processed, the termination may not be withdrawn without consent of the Board of Trustees or its designee. The employee and the employees’ supervisor will be notified by the Chief of Human Capital Management or designee of the termination by conduct and its effective date.

**Exit Interviews and Procedures**

*Policy DC*

An exit survey that provides the District with feedback on the employment experience is provided to all employees leaving the District. Information on the continuation of benefits and records request(s) will be provided at this time. Employees leaving the District are required to maintain a current mailing address and phone number by contacting the Office of Employee Records at 817-814-2760. Employees may also update a current mailing address through the MUNIS Employee Self Serve portal. All District keys, books, property, including intellectual and electronically maintained records and property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

**Reports to Texas Education Agency**

*Policy DF, DHB*

The voluntary or involuntary separation of a certified employee from the District must be reported to the Division of Investigations at TEA by the superintendent if there is evidence that the employee was involved in any of the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other unlawful conduct with a student or a minor
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual contact or a romantic relationship with a student or minor
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of District or school property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit for the purpose of promotion or additional compensation
- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on District property or at a school-sponsored event

The reporting requirements above are in addition to the superintendent’s ongoing duty to notify TEA when a certified employee or an applicant for certification has a reported criminal history. “Reported criminal history” means any formal criminal justice system charges and dispositions including arrests, detentions, indictments, criminal information, convictions, deferred adjudications, and probations in any state or federal jurisdiction that is obtained by a means other than the Fingerprint-based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT).
Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding
The District is required to report the separation of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance to the court and the individual receiving the support (Texas Family Code §§8.210, 158.211). Notice of the following must be sent to the court and support recipient from the Payroll Department:

- Separation of employment not later than the seventh day after the date of separation
- Employee’s last known address
- Name and address of the employee’s new employer, if known

Student Issues
Equal Educational Opportunities
Policies FB, FFH

Fort Worth ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to Kevin Greene, the District Title IX coordinator. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Patricia Sutton the District ADA/Section 504 coordinator. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to School Leadership.

Student Records
Policy FL

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

- Parents: Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights
- The student: The rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A District is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student’s records before this time.
- School officials with legitimate educational interests
The Student Handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the campus principal for assistance.

Parent and Student Complaints
Policy FNG

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

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

Administering Medication to Students
Policy FFAC

Only designated employees may administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. Exceptions apply to the self-administration of asthma medication, medication for anaphylaxis (e.g., EpiPen®), and medication for diabetes management, if the medication is self-administered in accordance with District policy and procedures. A student who must take medication during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine in its original, properly labeled container. Contact the principal or school nurse for information on procedures to follow.

Employees authorized by the Superintendent or designee may administer to students:

1. Prescription medication in accordance with legal requirements. [See FFAC(LEGAL)] A written request by a physician or other health-care professional with authority to write prescriptions shall be required.

2. Nonprescription medication, upon a parent’s written request, when properly labeled and in the original container. A written request by a physician or other health-care professional with authority to write prescriptions shall be required.

3. Herbal substances or dietary supplements found in the Physicians’ Desk Reference, with a written request from a physician and the parent, that are provided by the parent and only if required by the individualized education program or Section 504 plan of a student with disabilities.

Dietary Supplements
Policies DH, FFAC
District employees are prohibited by state law from selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to a student. In addition, employees may not endorse or suggest the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

**Psychotropic Drugs**

*Policy FFAC*

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance. District employees are prohibited by state law from doing the following:

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

**Student Conduct and Discipline**

*Policies in the FN series and FO series*

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

**Student Attendance**

*Policy FEB*

Teachers and staff should be familiar with the District’s policies and procedures for attendance accounting. These procedures require minor students to have parental consent before they are allowed to leave campus. When absent from school, a student who returns to school must comply with the District’s Attendance Policy and provide proper documentation (See Board Policy FEA (LEGAL) for required documentation excusing student absences). These requirements are addressed in campus training and in the Student Handbook. Contact the campus principal for additional information.

**Bullying**

*Policy FFI*
Bullying is defined by §TEC 37.0832. All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying, including cyber bullying, as soon as possible to the campus principal or designee. The District’s policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students. Procedures for reporting a bullying incident and investigation of reports of bullying of District students are included in the Regulations to Board Policy FFI. For procedures regarding transfer of a student who is a victim of bullying or who engaged in bullying, see Board Policy FDB.

**Hazing**

*Policy FNCC*

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