

**2015-2016**

**Personnel Manual**

**McLeod Independent School District**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information to help employees better understand district policies and guidelines. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are included are sometimes summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to Cathy May, Superintendent.

This handbook is neither a contract, nor a substitute for the official district policy manual, nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of non-contract employees in any way. It is a guide to, and a brief explanation of, district policies. District policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall take the place of any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the district policy codes associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or contact the superintendent's office. District policy manuals are located in the superintendent's office and are available for review during office hours. The manuals are also found online at [www.mcleodisd.net](http://www.mcleodisd.net).

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

It is the policy of the McLeod ISD not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its vocational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The district will take steps to assure the lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

Information about rights or grievance procedures may be obtained by contacting the Title IX and Section 504 coordinator, Dena McCord, at 903-796-7181.

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK RECEIPT**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CAMPUS/DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Note: You have been given two copies of this form. Please sign and date this copy and return it to Mrs. Comer.

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK RECEIPT**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CAMPUS/DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Note: You have been given two copies of this form. Please sign and date this copy and keep it for your records.

## **DISTRICT INFORMATION**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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

Texas law grants the board of trustees the power to govern and oversee the management of the district's schools. The board is the policy making body within the district and has overall responsibility for the curriculum, local school taxes, adoption of the annual budget, employment of the superintendent and other professional staff, and school facilities. The board has complete and final control over school matters within limits established by state and federal law and regulations. The board of trustees is elected by voters of the district to represent the community's commitment to education of children in the district. McLeod board members are elected at-large for a three-year term. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the district.

Current Board Members are Don Blackwell, Raymond Pattillo, Paul Murdock, Scotty Prince, Chad Heldt, Charles McKnight, and Dustin Terry

The board usually meets the third Monday of each month. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted at the administration office 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 go into a closed session from which the public and others are excluded. Closed session may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real-property acquisition, certain personnel matters including employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or consulting with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

## **DISTRICT CONTACTS**

Superintendent:  
Cathy May

Principal:  
Jim Spurlin

Assistant Principal:  
Jennifer Lance

Technology Director:  
Brandon Prince

Special Programs Director:  
Karen Spurlin

Payroll:  
Brandi Parker

Business Manager:  
Brandi Parker

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

Policies DAA, DIA

The McLeod ISD does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, 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 an applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

Employees or applicants with questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any of the reasons listed above should contact Cathy May, Superintendent.

### **JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Policy DC

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis at the central administration building and on the district's web site.

### **EMPLOYMENT AFTER RETIREMENT**

POLICY DC

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Texas Teacher Retirement System, (TRS) may be employed in limited 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 Web Site ([www.trs.state.tx.us](http://www.trs.state.tx.us)).

## **CONTRACT AND NON-CONTRACT EMPLOYMENT**

Policies DC series

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

### **PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS**

Nurses and full time professional employees new to the district and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification must receive a probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after at least a two year lapse in district employment also may be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one year contracts. The probationary period for those who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district may not exceed one school year. For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three school years (i.e., three one-year contracts) with an optional fourth school year if the board determines it is doubtful whether a term or continuing contract should be given.

### **TERM CONTRACTS**

Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses will be placed on a term contract after successful completion of a probationary period. Campus principals and central office administrators are employed under multi-year term contracts. The terms and conditions of the contract are detailed in the contract and employment policies terms and conditions. All employees are to be given copies of their contract and employment policies.

### **NON-CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL & ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES**

Employees in professional and administrative positions not requiring SBEC certification are not employed by contract. Employment is not for any specific term and may be terminated at any time by the employee or the district.

### **PARAPROFESSIONAL AND AUXILIARY EMPLOYEES**

Support employees are employed at-will and will also be notified of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work time scheduled for their respective positions. Support employees are not exempt from overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their scheduled work times, without prior approval from their supervisor.

## **CERTIFICATION AND LICENSES**

Policies DBA, DF

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to Brandi Parker in a timely manner.

A certified employee's contract may be voided without due process and employment terminated if the individual does not hold a valid certificate or fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to 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 Brandi Parker if you have any questions regarding certification or license requirements.

## **SEARCHES AND ALCOHOL DRUG TESTING**

Policy DHE,CQ

Non investigatory searches in the workplace, including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinet, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purpose, may occur when an employee is not available. 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 investigatory searches 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, work areas, including district-owned computers, lockers, and private vehicles parked on the district worksite.

**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 when their duties include driving a commercial motor vehicle.

Drug testing may 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 a prohibited conduct; and as a follow-up measure. Testing may be conducted following accidents. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty.



All employees required to have a CDL, or who otherwise are subject to alcohol and drug testing, will receive a copy of the district's policy, the testing requirements, and detailed information on alcohol and drug abuse and the availability of assistance programs. Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug policies and related educational material should contact the superintendent.

### **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 the superintendent.

### **REASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS**

Policy DK

All personnel are subject to assignment by the superintendent. Campus reassignments must be approved by the receiving principal. The superintendent has placement authority for assignments made due to enrollment shifts or programs.

### **WORKLOAD AND WORK SCHEDULES**

Policies DEA, DEAB, DL, DK

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 yearly designating the work days for the staff. Notice of work schedules, including start and end dates and scheduled holidays, are distributed to all staff members yearly.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation and conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level, but must provide at least 450 minutes of time within a two week period on blocks of not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers are entitled to a duty free lunch period of at least 30 minutes daily. The district may require teachers to supervise students one day per week during these allotted times 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 for additional information.

### **BREAKS FOR EXPRESSION OF BREAST MILK**

Policies DEA, DEAB, DG

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

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

### **NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING QUALIFICATIONS**

Policies DK, DBA

In schools receiving Title I funds, the district is required by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to notify parents at the beginning of each school year that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. NCLB also requires that parents be notified if their child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

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 notification under NCLB 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 contact Brandi Parker.

### **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TUTORING**

Policy DBD

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

An employee shall disclose in writing to his or her immediate supervisor any private tutoring of District students for pay.

## **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, McLeod 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.

## **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

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. All district positions are classified as exempt or non-exempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries and are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as non-exempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time for overtime hours worked.

Salaries are reviewed annually and are set according to the budget amounts approved by the board of trustees. All employees will receive written notice of their pay and work schedules prior to the beginning of each school year. Classroom teachers, full time librarians, full time nurses, and full time counselors will be paid a salary 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 regular salary according to the district's extra duty pay schedule.

Employees should contact Brandi Parker for more information about the district's pay schedule or their own pay.

### **PAYCHECKS**

Employees are paid monthly. During the academic year, payroll checks will be placed in employees' school mail boxes. Paychecks will not be released to anyone other than the employee named on the paycheck without written permission from the employee. During summer break, payroll checks will be available on payday at the administration office, or will be mailed to employee's summer mailing address.

Payroll checks may also be deposited electronically in the employee's financial institution. Employees wishing to use this method should contact the payroll office. Paychecks will be issued no later than the fourth Friday of each month.

A copy of the schedule for pay dates for the 2014-2015 school year will be distributed with payroll packets.

### **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 Brandi Parker for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

### **PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Policy CFEA

Automatic payroll deductions for the Teacher Retirement System and the Internal Revenue Service are required. Employees who were hired in this district after 3-31-1986 must also have a Medicare tax deducted. Temporary and part-time employees not eligible for TRS may have social security taxes deducted. Other payroll deductions employees may elect are payments for health, dental, vision, life insurance, and various 403B deductions. Payroll deductions for professional organizations may also be deducted at the employee's request. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized leave.

### **OVERTIME COMPENSATION**

Policy DEA

The district compensates overtime hours worked for non-exempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only non-exempt (hourly employees and Para-professionals) are eligible for overtime pay. Non-exempt employees are not authorized beyond their scheduled work time without advance approval from their supervisor.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week and is not measured by the day or the employee's regular work schedule. Non-exempt employees who 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. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01 A.M. Sunday and ends the following Saturday at midnight.

Employees may be compensated for overtime hours worked at the rate of one and one half times their hourly rate of pay or with compensatory time off plus direct pay. The following applies to non-exempt employees.

1. Employees can accumulate up to 60 hours of comp time.
2. Compensatory time must be used in the year it is earned.
3. Use of Comp time may be at the employee's request with approval from their supervisor, or at the supervisor's direction.
4. An employee may be required to use compensatory time before using available leave.
5. Weekly time records will be maintained on all non-exempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

## **TRAVEL EXPENSE AND/OR REIMBURSEMENT**

### **Policy DEE**

Employees will be reimbursed for mileage and expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the district. Receipts must be submitted in order to be reimbursed for expenses other than mileage.

Expenses will not be reimbursed in the following situations:

1. The trip was not approved by the supervisor and the superintendent.
2. Auto expenses will not be paid when the employee drives his/her personal vehicle on a trip when a school automobile was available.

## **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 ten or more regularly scheduled hours per week are not eligible to participate in TRS-ActiveCare.

TRS retirees who are enrolled in TRS-Care (retiree health insurance program)

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment each year. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee costs, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees should contact Brandi Parker.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE BENEFITS**

#### **Policy CRD**

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for dental, vision, disability, cancer, accident, and voluntary life. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact Brandi Parker for more information.

### **CAFETERIA PLAN BENEFITS (Section 125)**

Employees may be eligible to participate in Section 125 cafeteria plans and under IRS regulations must accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pre-tax basis. A third party administrator handles these plans. Employees should contact the payroll office for information.

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

### **WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

#### **Policy CRE**

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers compensation coverage to all employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from Claims Administrative Services. Benefits are paid to employees who suffer a work related illness or accident. Specific benefits are prescribed by law dependent on the circumstances of each case. All work related accidents and injuries should be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor. Supervisor must immediately report illness or accident to Brandi Parker. Those employees who are unable to work due to a work related injury will be notified by the payroll office of their rights and responsibilities under Texas labor laws.

### **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

#### **Policy CRF**

Employees who are laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled school breaks or in the summer months if they have a contract or reasonable assurance of returning to work the following school year. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact Brandi Parker.

### **TEACHER RETIREMENT**

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

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify Brandi Parker 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.state.tx.us](http://www.trs.state.tx.us)). See page XX for information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

### **LEAVES AND ABSENCES**

Policy DEC, DECA, DECB

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

### **USE OF LEAVE:**

Leave must be used in ½ day increments. However, if an employee is taking intermittent family and medical leave, leave shall be recorded in one-hour increments. 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:

1. Local
2. State

Employees must follow district approved procedures to request any leave of absence and must complete the appropriate leave request form.

**Medical Certification:** An employee who is absent for more than 5 days because of a personal or family illness is required to submit a medical certification form from a qualified health care provider confirming the dates of the illness, and in case of illness of the employee, the employee's fitness to return to work.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits 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 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 may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated as Family Medical Leave Act will have the district's portion of theirs paid as if they were working. Otherwise, the district does not make benefit contributions for employees who are on unpaid leave.

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

## **PERSONAL LEAVE**

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

- **DISCRETIONARY LEAVE**



This type of personal leave is taken at an employee's discretion and can be scheduled in advance. Employees wishing to take discretionary leave must submit a written request to their supervisor a minimum of three days in advance of the leave date. The district has a limited number of substitutes, and no more personal leave will be granted than can be covered with substitutes. The effect of the employee's absence on district operations will also be taken into account. Discretionary leave may not be taken on the first or the last day of the semester, the day prior to and immediately preceding a holiday, or during STAAR testing periods. Discretionary leave in most instances is limited to a maximum of ten per cent of a campus being absent on a given day.

- **NON-DISCRETIONARY LEAVE**

This type leave is to be used for personal or family illnesses, emergencies, or death in the immediate family. It requires little or no advance planning and may be used in the same manner as state sick leave.

- **LEAVE PRORATION.**

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

### **STATE SICK LEAVE**

State Sick Leave accumulated before 1995 is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. State sick leave can be used only in ½ 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**

Local leave is granted to all employees at the rate of 5 non-accumulating days per year. Employees will be compensated at the end of the school year at the rate of twenty-five dollars for each day of local leave not used. Local leave may be used for personal leave, state sick leave and extended leave. It may also be used for well-baby care within the first year after birth, adoption or placement of a child.

### **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

The district shall provide three leave days of paid bereavement leave, per occurrence, for absences related to a death in the employee's immediate family. The employee shall be required to submit appropriate documentation with administrative regulations.

### **EXTENDED SICK LEAVE**

After all state and local leave days have been exhausted, an employee shall be granted a maximum of 30 days of extended sick leave for use in case of the illness or disability of the employee, including a pregnancy-related disability or the illness or disability of the employee's child, spouse, or parent. A written request for extended sick leave must be accompanied by medical certification of the illness or injury. The average daily rate of pay of a substitute for the employee's position shall be deducted for each day of extended sick leave taken, whether or not a substitute is employed.

### **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE**

**Basic Leave Entitlement:** The FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

**Military Family Leave Entitlements:** An eligible employee whose spouse, son, daughter or parent is on covered active duty or called to covered active duty status may use his or her 12-week leave entitlements to address certain qualifying exigencies., Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness; or (2) a veteran who

was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.

**Benefits and Protections:** During FML leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FML, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FML cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

**Eligibility Requirements:** Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months (special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees), and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

**Definition of Serious Health Condition:** A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

**Use of Leave:** An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

**Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave:** Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FML. In order to use paid leave for FML, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

**Employee Responsibilities:** Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FML when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible,

the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

**Employer Responsibilities:** Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA, the employer must notify the employee.

**Unlawful Acts by Employers:** The FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right protected under the FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to the FMLA.

**Enforcement:** An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor 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 which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

**Local Family and Medical Leave provisions:** Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period beginning on the first duty day of the school year.

**Use of paid leave:** FMLA 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, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

**Combined leave for spouses:** Spouses who are both 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 12 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 employees.

**District contact:** Employees that require FML or have questions should contact Brandi Parker for details on eligibility, requirements and limitations.

### **TEMPORARY DISABILITY LEAVE**

All full-time employees shall be 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. The maximum length of temporary disability leave for certified full-time employees shall be 180 calendar days. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability. Approved leave can be no longer than 180 days.

Employees must request to be placed on 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.

An employee may be placed on temporary disability leave by the superintendent on an involuntary basis. The employee may dispute the action and request a hearing before the McLeod Board of Trustees. The employee will be given the opportunity to present evidence of his/her fitness for duty.

An employee, prior to returning to work, should notify their immediate supervisor thirty days in advance of their return, when possible. The return to work notice must be accompanied by a health care provider's statement confirming the employee is able to resume regular duties. Certified employees returning from long term leave will be assigned to their previous position 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 employees will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS**

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

## **ASSAULT LEAVE**

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to an employee who is injured as a result of a physical assault during the performance of his/her job. An injury is treated as an assault if the person causing the injury could be prosecuted for assault or could not be prosecuted only because that person's age or mental capacity renders the person non-responsible for purposes of criminal liability.

An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take all the leave time medically necessary (up to two years) to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. At the request of the employee, the district will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

## **JURY DUTY**

Employees will receive jury duty leave with pay. Documentation of the service must be presented.

## **OTHER COURT APPEARANCES**

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

## **MILITARY LEAVE**

**Paid leave for military service.** An employee who is a member of any unit of the National Guard or any branch of the reserves component of the United States Armed Forces will be granted a paid leave of absence without any loss of leave for authorized training or duty orders. Paid military leave is limited to fifteen days each fiscal year. In

addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service.

**Re-employment after military leave.** Employees who leave the district to enter the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active state military duty (Texas National Guard or Texas State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to their former position they would have held if employment had not been interrupted by military service will be allowed to do so or will be assigned to an equal or similar position provided the employee can be qualified to perform the duties of the job. To be eligible for re-employment, an employee must provide notice of their obligation or intent to perform military service, provide proof of honorable discharge or release and submit an application for employment to the district. In most cases, the length of military service cannot exceed five years, and the employee must apply for reemployment within the period of time specified in law.

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Employees who perform service in the military may elect to continue their plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed twenty-four months. Employees should contact the Superintendent for details on eligibility, requirements and limitations.

## **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION**

Efforts are made throughout the academic year to recognize employees who make special contributions to the district. Recognition and appreciation activities are highlighted at the employee appreciation banquet.

### **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

#### Policy DGBA

The district attempts to hear and resolve employee complaints in a timely manner at the lowest administrative level possible. An orderly process has been developed for employees to follow when bringing a grievance or complaint. The district's policy may be found at [www.mcleodisd.net](http://www.mcleodisd.net). Click on McLeod ISD Board Policy, enter "DGBA".

## **EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WELFARE**

### **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

#### Policy DH

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit and to serve the best interests of the district. The following standards of conduct must be observed by all employees:

1. Respect the rights of fellow workers and students and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and fellow workers.
2. Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
3. Notify supervisor in advance or as early as possible in the event of absences or lateness to duty. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, or lateness and failure to follow procedures relating to absences from duty will cause disciplinary action to be taken against an employee.
4. Know and comply with district and campus policies and procedures.
5. Observe all safety rules and regulations and report unsafe conditions to their supervisor immediately.
6. Use district time, funds, and property for 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 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 the superintendent knew of the incident. See Reports to the Texas Education Agency for additional information.

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

## **Texas Educators' Code of Ethics**

### **Purpose and Scope**

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

### **Enforceable Standards**

#### **1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance**

Standard 1.1 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas



Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 1.13 The educator shall not consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

## 2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 3. Ethical Conduct toward Students

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard 3.9 The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging or other social network communication.

Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

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

### **EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE:**

The district dress code is as follows:

Professional attire: Monday thru Thursday

Men: Denim – No holes, not tight fitting  
Slacks - Dockers Style, Dress Slacks  
Shirts with a collar, sweaters  
Dress shoes, dress boots

Women: Denim – no holes, not tight fitting  
Dresses  
Skirts, dress slacks, dress capris (Made like slacks)  
Sweaters or blouses  
Dress shoes; dress sandals; decorated, nice flip flops

Friday: McLeod logo shirts or McLeod t-shirts  
Appropriate tennis shoes

Attire Not Allowed-Monday thru Friday

Overalls, sweat pants, thin, plain rubber flip flops, athletic sandals, crocs-rubber shoes, non-McLeod logo tee shirts, yoga pants, shorts (any length or style), sleeveless shirts or dresses. Earrings may be worn only in the earlobes, no tattoos may be visible, and no tight clothing of any style may be worn.

### **DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION**

Policies DH, DIA

Employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other employees 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.

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 may be located on the McLeod ISD web site at [www.mcleodisd.net](http://www.mcleodisd.net). Click on McLeod ISD, School Board, Board Policy On-Line. Enter "DIA".

### **HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS**

Policies DF, DH, FFG, FFH

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. All allegations of prohibited harassment or abuse 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 Reporting suspected child abuse, page 26 & 27, and Bullying, page 42, for additional information. The definition of solicitation of a romantic relationship is in DF (legal) and FFH (local) as well as policies DH and FFG, at [www.mcleodis.net](http://www.mcleodis.net), School Board Policy On-Line.

### **DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS**

Policy DH

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

### **REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

Policies DF, DG, DH, FFG, GRA

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services, or appropriate state agency

within forty eight hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Abuse is defined by SBEC and includes the following acts or omissions:

- Mental or emotional injury to a student or minor that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning, or psychological functioning;
- Causing or permitting a student or minor to be in a situation in which the student or minor sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning or psychological functioning;
- Physical injury that results in substantial harm to a student or minor, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the student or minor, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given and excluding an accident or reasonable discipline; or
- Sexual conduct harmful to a student's or minor's mental, emotional or physical welfare

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 or disabled person.

Reports may be made to a local office or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-5400). 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 retaliating against an employee who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

An employee's failure to make the required report may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. In addition, a certified employee who fails to report may face disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educator's 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. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state 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 child sexual abuse, which may be accessed at [www.mcleodisd.net](http://www.mcleodisd.net). 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. 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. 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 to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Employees are required to follow the procedures described above in *reporting suspected child abuse*.

### **REPORTING CRIME**

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

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

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

Employees are required to abide by the district's accepted use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to follow the guidelines may result in suspension of access or termination of computer use privileges and may lead to disciplinary action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact Brandon Prince.

## **PERSONAL USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

### Policy DH

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Web logs (wikis), 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.

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:

1. The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the district's computers, network, or equipment.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. The employee shall not use the district's logo or other copyrighted material of the district without express, written consent.

5. 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 students records (See Policy FL)
- Confidentiality of health or personal 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 *Use of Electronic Media with Students*, below, for regulations on employee communication with students through electronic media.

## **USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA WITH STUDENTS**

### **Policy DH**

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may communicate through electronic media with students who are currently enrolled in the district. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. All other employees are prohibited from communicating with students who are enrolled in the district through electronic media.

An employee is not subject to these provisions 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:

1. The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol;
2. The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school;
3. The parent understands that the employee's communications with the student are excepted from district regulation; and
4. 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 are forms of social media, such as text 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* 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 uses electronic media to communicate with students shall observe the following:

1. The employee may use any form of electronic media **except** text messaging. 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 tha the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
  - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee’s district email address.
2. 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).

3. 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.
4. The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 9.00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
5. The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
6. 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 (Police CY)
  - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. (See Policy DF)
  - 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.

## **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 DH**

An employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor 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 or DUI).
  - Acts constituting abuse or neglect under SBEC rules.

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.

## **ALCOHOL AND DRUG PREVENTION**

Policies DH, DI

The district is committed to maintaining a drug free work place and will not tolerate the use of illegal drugs on campus. Employees shall not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act while at school or at school related activities during or outside of regular work hours.

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drugs as defined by law including, but not limited to, marijuana, narcotic drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, depressants, amphetamines, or barbiturates.
2. Alcohol and alcoholic beverages.
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or chemical substance for inhaling.

4. Any other intoxicant or mood, mind or behavior altering drugs.

An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered under the influence of a controlled substance.

The district's policy may be located on the McLeod ISD web site at [www.mcleodisd.net](http://www.mcleodisd.net). Click on McLeod ISD, School Board, Board Policy On-Line. Enter "DH".

### **TOBACCO PRODUCTS and E-CIGARETTE USE**

Policies DH, GKA, FNCD

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 includes 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 inappropriately using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or district policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the district

- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

### **Policies 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
- Nonschool 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 all provisions of copyright laws 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 or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the terms 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 club, group, committee, organization, or association. Employees may join or refuse to join any professional organization or association.

The employment status of an individual will not be affected by either the membership or the lack of membership in any employee organization that exists for dealing with employers concerning grievances, or any labor disputes concerning wages, hours of employment, or working conditions.

Use of district resources, including work time, for political activities is prohibited.

## **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. 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.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact Brandi Parker.

## **POSSESSION OF FIREARMS AND WEAPONS**

Policy 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. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisors or call the Admin office immediately.

## **VISITORS IN THE WORKPLACE**

Policy GKC

All visitors must enter any district facility through the main gate and sign in or report to the district administration offices. Authorized visitors will be logged in and either directed or shown to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized visitor on campus should immediately escort the visitor to the administration office or contact their supervisor immediately concerning the visitor. Authorized visitors will be issued a pass stating the date, time, and location of their visit.

## **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

## Policy CKA

The district is committed to providing a safe environment for students and employees. An accredited asbestos management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for the district facilities. A copy of the management plan is available for inspection during regular school hours in the superintendent's office.

## **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 the Administrative offices. In addition, individual employees may request in writing to be notified of pesticide applications. An employee who requests individualized notice will be notified by telephone, written or electronic means. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES**

### **BAD WEATHER CLOSING**

The district may choose to close schools due to bad weather or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the superintendent will make the decision to cancel school as early as possible. Shreveport television stations and radio stations in Atlanta and Vivian will be notified.

On occasion, it may become necessary to release students from school during the regular school day. In such cases, the media will be immediately notified. A calling system will also be used to notify employees and students of cancellation, late starts, or early closures.

### **EMERGENCIES**

Policies CKC, CKD

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to a medical emergency and the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with safety and evacuation procedures. Automatic external defibrillators are available for all of our campuses. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all district buildings. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use.

### **PURCHASING PRODEDURES**

POLICY CH

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the business office through the computer purchase order system. All purchase orders (PO) must be submitted by the

department supervisor. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the district can be made without a purchase order (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 business office for additional information on purchasing procedures.

### **NAME AND ADDRESS CHANGES**

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the business office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. Forms to process a change in personal information can be obtained from the business office.

### **PERSONNEL RECORDS**

Policy GBA,DBA

Most district records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

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

The choice to not allow public access to this information may be done at any time by submitting a written request to the business office. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public upon request.

### **BUILDING USE**

Policies DGA, GKD

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

### **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

Instructional staff members should contact Mrs. Comer at (870)691-2130 when they are going to be absent. Calls are to be made either before 8:30 p.m. or after 5:30 a.m. If contact is being made after 7:15 a.m. employees should contact the administration



office. Preparations for the days' classroom assignments must be available for a substitute teacher to use during the absence. Teachers should contact their principal for additional details.

### **USE OF VIDEO TAPE AND CDS**

Material that is shown to students is to be obtained from the school library or through Region 8 ESC. No other material is to be shown to students without permission from the campus principal.

### **EXTRA DUTIES**

All staff members are subject to being assigned extra duties such as class or club sponsorship. Extra duty may also be assigned to staff members during the regular school day or on days when school is not in session such as sporting events, graduation, etc. when deemed necessary by the school administration.

### **TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

#### **RESIGNATIONS**

Policy DFE

Contract employees. Contract employees may resign their positions without penalty at the end of the school year if written notice is given at least 45 days prior to the first day of instruction of the following year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the superintendent. Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the superintendent or board of trustees. Resignation without consent may result in disciplinary action by the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC).

The superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee resigns and reasonable evidence exists to indicate that the employee has engaged in any of the acts listed in Reports to the Texas Education Agency on page 38-39.

Non-contract employees may resign their positions at any time. A written notice should be submitted to the superintendent at least two weeks prior to the date of the resignation.

#### **DISMISSAL OR NON-RENEWAL OF CONTRACT EMPLOYEES**

Policies DFAA, DFAB, DFBA, DFBB, DFD, DFF, DFFA, DFFB, DFFC

Employees on probationary and term contracts can be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Employees on probationary or term contracts can be non-renewed 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 a notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The time lines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or nonrenewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to the 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 time lines and procedures can be found in the DF policies that are provided to employees or in the district policy manual located in the superintendent's office.

## **DISMISSAL OF NON-CONTRACT EMPLOYEES**

### Policy DCD

Non-contract employees are employed at-will and may be terminated without notice or a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, military status, or any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Non-contract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The employee must follow the district process outlined in the district board policy manual when pursuing the grievance.

## **EXIT INTERVIEWS AND PROCEDURES**

### Policies DC and CY

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

## **REPORTS TO TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY**

### Policy DF

The dismissal of a certified employee must be reported to the Division of Investigations at TEA whenever the termination is based on evidence that the employee was involved in any of the following.

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

The superintendent is also required to notify TEA when a certified employee resigns and there is evidence that they educator engaged in the conduct listed above.

The reporting requirements above are in addition to the superintendent's ongoing duty to notify TEA when a certified employee has a reported criminal history. "Reported criminal history" means any formal criminal justice system charges and dispositions including arrest, detentions, indictments, criminal information, convictions, deferred adjudications, and probations in any state or federal jurisdiction.

### **REPORT CONCERNING COURT-ORDERED WITHHOLDING**

The district is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance 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:

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

### **STUDENT ISSUES**

#### **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Policies FB, FFH

The McLeod ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, 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 of students on many of the bases listed above should be directed to Cathy May, Superintendent.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

Policy FL

Student Records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized use or inspection. Confidentiality of student records must be maintained. The following persons may have access to individual student records.

1. 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.
2. 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.

3. 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 Administration Office for assistance.

## **PARENT AND STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

### **Policy FNG**

In an effort to hear and resolve parent and student complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted orderly processes for handling complaints on different issues. Any campus office or the superintendent's office can provide parents and students 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 medication 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. Before any medication can be administered to students during school hours, a parent or guardian of the student must complete the medication information forms provided by the district which includes a signed request concerning the dispensing of the medication. Any medication administered to students must be in its properly labeled original container.

## **DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS**

### **Policies DH, FFAC**

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

## **PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS**

### **Policy FFAC**

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

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

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

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

Policies in the FN series and FO series

Students are expected to follow the classroom rules, campus rules and rules listed in the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. Teachers and administrators are responsible for using discipline methods according to the Student Code of Conduct based upon a range of discipline management procedures adopted by the district. Other employees who have concerns about a particular student's conduct should contact the classroom teacher or campus principal.

Teachers are required to file a written report with the campus principal or appropriate administrator when they have knowledge that a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IS NOT TO BE USED AS A DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT TOOL AT MCLEOD ISD.**

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Policy FEB

Teachers and staff should be familiar with the district's policies and procedures for attendance accounting. These procedures require minor students to have parental consent before they are allowed to leave campus. When absent from school, the student, upon returning to school, must bring a note signed by a parent or physician that describes the reason for the absence. These requirements are addressed in campus training and in the student handbook. Contact the campus principal for additional information.

## **BULLYING**

Policy FFI

All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying to their campus principal. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and can be accessed through the district's website.

## **HAZING**

### **Policy FNCC**

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

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are to be of educational value. All trips must be approved by the campus principal and the superintendent. Transportation requests must be completed and turned in to the superintendent well in advance of the trip. Transportation for trips is limited and is assigned on a first come/first serve basis.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is assigned only when it has a legitimate purpose and must always reinforce instruction. It must be graded according to the district grading policy. Homework may not be used as a form of punishment.

## **GRADING POLICIES**

The grading policies of the district have been devised to provide an equitable means to reward students for achievement and to provide a positive learning environment.

### **High School and Middle School Policies**

The academic grade is divided into two equal parts.

Part 1: Homework and daily work---- 50 percent

Part 2: Test Grades---- 50 per cent

#### **Component Definitions/Explanations**

Homework and daily work— at least two grades per week in each grading period.

Tests--- at least two grades each three weeks in each grading period.

#### **Semester Grade Computations**

The two quarter grades will be averaged to determine the semester average.

### **Elementary Grading Policy**

#### **Components**

The academic grade is divided into two equal parts.

Part 1: Homework and daily work---- 50 percent

Part 2: Test Grades---- 50 per cent

#### **Component Definitions/Explanations**

Homework and daily work— at least two grades per week in each grading period.  
Tests--- at least two grades each three weeks in each grading period.

#### Semester Grade Computations

The two quarter grades will be averaged to determine the semester average.

#### Elementary and Secondary Grading Scale

A----- 90-100

B----- 80-89

C----- 70-79

F----- 69 and below