

**Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School  
District**

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**Employee Handbook  
2019-2020**

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August 2019

Dear Fellow Goose Creek CISD Employees:

As we gear up for the 2019-2020 school year, I hope you realize that you play an important role in the success of our district.

Our district theme this year is "Here, We Grow Giants," not only in recognition of the giant contributions our Goose Creek CISD employees make to this district, but also to acknowledge the giant accomplishments of our students, staff and alumni.

On behalf of the Goose Creek CISD Board of Trustees, I thank you for your commitment to this district. Have a great school year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Randal O'Brien  
Superintendent of Schools

## **Introduction**

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

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

# District Information

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## Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives

### *Policy AE*

In pursuit of academic excellence for every student, the District is committed to providing an outstanding education for every child by being a nurturing, innovative, and participatory organization that produces citizens who will be equipped to successfully meet the cultural, intellectual, and social challenges of a changing world.

## Board of Trustees

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

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

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the district to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the district's children. Board members are elected every other year and serve 4-year terms. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the district.

Current board members include:

- Agustin Loredó III, President
- Jessica Woods, Vice-President
- Ben Pape, Secretary
- Howard Sampson, Assistant Secretary
- Richard Clem, Board Member
- Tiffany Guy, Board Member
- Shae Cottar, Board Member

The board usually meets the 1st Monday of each month at 6:00pm. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the district website and at the Administration Building located at 4544 Interstate 10 East in Baytown, Texas, 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.

## **Administration**

Dr. Randal O'Brien- Superintendent

Dr. Anthony Price – Deputy Superintendent for Administrative Services

Dr. Melissa Duarte- Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

Eloy Chapa – Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

## **School Calendar**

The 2019-2020 Goose Creek CSD Instructional Calendar is located on the Goose Creek CISD website located at <http://www.gccisd.net/default.aspx?name=Employees.Home>.

## **Employment**

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### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

*Policies DAA, DIA*

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

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment should contact the district Title IX coordinator, Eloy Chapa ([eloy.chapa@gccisd.net](mailto:eloy.chapa@gccisd.net)) at 281-707-3539. Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should contact the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator, Holli Pharis ([holti.pharis@gccisd.net](mailto:holti.pharis@gccisd.net)) at 281-707-3325.

Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent at 281-707-3220.

### **Job Vacancy Announcements**

*Policy DC*

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

### **Employment after Retirement**

*Policy DC*

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed under certain circumstances on a full- or part-time basis without affecting their benefits, according to TRS rules and state law. Detailed information about employment after retirement is available in the TRS publication Employment After Retirement. Employees can



contact TRS for additional information by calling 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. Information is also available on the TRS Website ([www.trs.texas.gov](http://www.trs.texas.gov)).

## **Contract and Noncontract Employment**

### *Policy DC series*

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

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

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

**Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees.** Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as non-instructional administrators) are employed by a two-year contract term that is not subject to the provisions for nonrenewal or termination under the Texas Education Code.

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

## **Certification and Licenses**

### *Policies DBA, DF*

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to the **Human Resources** Department 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 renew or extend a temporary certificate, emergency certificate, probationary certificate, or permit. A contract may also be voided if SBEC suspends or revokes certification because of an individual's failure to comply with criminal history background checks. Contact the **Certification Officer** if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

## **Recertification of Employment Authorization**

### *Policy DC*

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

Employees whose immigration status, employment authorization, or employment authorization documents have expired must present new documents that show current employment authorization. Employees should file the necessary application or petition sufficiently in advance to ensure that they maintain continuous employment authorization or valid employment authorization documents. Contact **Human Resources**, if you have questions regarding reverification of employment authorization.

## **Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing**

### *Policy CQ, DHE*

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

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

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted when reasonable suspicion exists, at random, when an employee returns to duty after engaging in prohibited conduct, and as a follow-up measure. Testing may be conducted following accidents. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an

employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty.

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug policies and related educational material should contact the Human Resources Department.

## **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 Director of Athletics/Physical Education by the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of August.

## **Reassignments and Transfers**

*Policy DK*

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. An assignment change request must be completed electronically through the districts' Employee Service Center. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Human Resources office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

## **Workload and Work Schedules**

*Policies DEAB, DK, DL*

**Professional Employees.** Professional employees and academic administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10-, 11-, or 12-month basis, according to the work schedules set by the district. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work

schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

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

**Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees.** Support employees are employed at will and receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position. 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.

### Campus Employee Daily Time Schedules

Daily assigned time schedules for all employees shall be determined by the Superintendent or designee and principals. The chart below designates the minimal hour assignments for all contract employees. Principals can or may extend time for contract employees to attend meetings, cover duties or assignments as needed.

All paraprofessional campus employees work an eight-hour workday. In addition to the workday, they take a 30-minute duty-free lunch. The duty-free lunch is unpaid. The campus principal determines the assigned workday hours for paraprofessionals.

Campus Level	Campus Administrators/Teachers	Students
High School – GCM, REL,RSS, SCTHS, and POINT	7:35 a.m. – 3:50 p.m.	8:25 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.
High School – Peter E. Hyland Center	7:35 a.m. – 3:50 p.m.	7:50 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.
High School – Impact ECHS	7:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Junior School	8:25 a.m. – 4:40 p.m.	9:05 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Elementary A - Alamo, Bowie, Clark, Carver, Highlands, Hopper Lamar, San Jacinto, Smith, Walker	7:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	7:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Elementary B - Austin, Bañuelos, Crockett, DeZavala, Harlem, Travis	7:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	8:00 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.

### Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk

*Policies DEAB, DG*

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

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

## **Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications**

*Policies DK, DBA*

In schools receiving Title I funds, the district is required by the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** to notify parents at the beginning of each school year that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. ESSA also requires that parents be notified if their child has been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements. Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate.

Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request. Employees who have questions about their certification status can call the Human Resources Department.

## **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 the district. Supervisors will consider outside employment on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it should be prohibited because of a conflict of interest.

## **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 an electronic 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, Goose Creek CISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from the Curriculum and Instruction Department.

## **Professional Growth/ Staff Meetings**

It is important that school employees attend scheduled district/ campus meetings on time and stay until the meetings are completed. If an absence from a meeting is unavoidable, or if it is necessary to arrive late or leave early, the person in charge of the meeting and the respective Principal should be given this information, prior to the beginning of the meeting.

## **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**

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### **Salaries, Wages, and Stipends**

*Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB*

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The district's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All district positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid semi-monthly salaries. They 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 or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek. Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time nurses, and full-time counselors will be paid

no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule.

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

### **Annual Verification of Compensation**

It is the responsibility of the employees to verify their salary and benefits information annually. This information is available through the TEAMS Employment Service Center. The TEAMS Employee Service Center will ask the employee to verify that the information is correct or submit a request for their information to be reviewed by Human Resources. The district will correct salary errors for the current school year only, if reported by November 1<sup>st</sup> for current employees or sixty (60) days after employment for new hires.

### **Paychecks and W-2 Forms**

All salary and hourly employees are paid semi-monthly. Paychecks and W-2 Forms will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check and W-2 Form.

An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated, and is available on the TEAMS Employee Service Center.

**GOOSE CREEK CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PAYROLL SCHEDULE  
2019 - 2020**

<b>START DATE</b>		<b>TIMECARDS APPROVED BY</b>	<b>PAY DAY</b>
06/01 - 06/14		JUN 17	JUL 03
06/15 - 06/28		JUL 01	JUL 19
06/29 - 07/12		JUL 15	AUG 02
07/13 - 07/26		JUL 29	AUG 20
07/27 - 08/09		AUG 12	SEP 04
08/10 - 08/23		AUG 26	SEP 20
08/24 - 09/06		SEP 09	OCT 04
09/07 - 09/27	3 wks	SEP 30	OCT 18
09/28 - 10/11		OCT 14	NOV 04
10/12 - 10/25		OCT 28	NOV 20
10/26 - 11/01	1 wk	NOV 04	DEC 04
11/02 - 11/22	3 wks	NOV 25	DEC 20
11/23 - 11/29	1 wk	DEC 02	JAN 03
11/30 - 12/20	3 wks	JAN 06	JAN 17
12/21 - 01/10	3 wks	JAN 13	FEB 04
01/11 - 01/24		JAN 27	FEB 20
01/25 - 02/07		FEB 10	MAR 04
02/08 - 02/21		FEB 24	MAR 20
02/22 - 03/13	3 wks	MAR 16	APR 03
03/14 - 04/03	3 wks	APR 06	APR 20
04/04 - 04/17		APR 20	MAY 04
04/18 - 05/01		MAY 04	MAY 20
05/02 - 05/15		MAY 18	JUN 04
05/16 - 05/29		JUN 01	JUN 19
05/30 - 06/12		JUN 15	JUL 03
06/13 - 06/26		JUN 29	JUL 20
06/27 - 07/10		JUL 13	AUG 04
07/11 - 07/24		JUL 27	AUG 20



## **Automatic Payroll Deposit**

Employees are required to have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of two weeks is necessary to activate this service. Contact the Payroll Department for more information regarding the automatic payroll deposit service.

Please note that your final pay **will be** electronically deposited into the account on file.

## **Payroll Deductions**

*Policy CFEA*

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

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)
- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- FICA Alternative (part-time employees who are not TRS eligible.)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable

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

## **Overtime Compensation**

*Policies DEAB, DEC*

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

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour workweek and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at Saturday and ends on Friday.

## **Comp Time**

Employees may be compensated for overtime with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay at a rate of time and a half. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees can accumulate up to 60 hours of comp time.

- If employee's comp time balance accumulates 60 or more hours, the payroll department will automatically pay down to 30 hours on the next paycheck.
- Any unused comp time as of June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, will be paid off according to payroll schedule.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- An employee may be required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

### *Policy DEE*

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

## **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 TRS 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 30 or more regularly scheduled hours per week

TRS retirees who are enrolled in TRS-Care (retiree health insurance program) are not eligible to participate in TRS-ActiveCare.

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

Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment. Employees should contact the Benefits Department for more information.

## **Supplemental Insurance Benefits**

### *Policy CRD*

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for GAP, Dental, Vision, Critical Illness, Cancer, Disability, Individual and Group Life, Identity Theft and Legal, Accident and Motor Club. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll

deduction.

Employees should contact the Benefits Office for more information.

### **Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)**

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

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

### **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

*Policy CRE*

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from the Texas Association of School Boards Risk Management Fund.

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

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to their Supervisor. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code.

### **Unemployment Compensation Insurance**

*Policy CRF*

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

### **Teacher Retirement**

*Policy DEG*

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

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

## Leaves and Absences

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### *Policies 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 call the Benefits Department for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the district.

If a position requires a substitute, only half or whole day increments may be used. If the position does not require a substitute, ¼ hour increments may be used. However, if an employee is taking intermittent family and medical leave, leave shall be recorded in one-hour increments. When possible, earned comp time shall be used before any available paid state and local leave. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

- Local Sick Leave
- State Sick Leave
- State Personal Leave

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

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

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, or son-or daughter-in-law, stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.
- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law.
- Grandparents and grandchild
- Any person residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death.

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

**Medical Certification.** Any employee who is absent more than 3 days because of a personal or family illness must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee’s fitness to return to work.

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

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

## **Paid Leave**

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The following leave types are all paid leave: Vacation, State Personal, State Sick, Local Sick, and Sick Bank. Once an employee has used all available paid leave, the employee will be docked their daily or hourly rate according to the payroll schedule.

## **Vacation**

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### *Vacation*

Twelve- month employees of the District shall be eligible for vacation each year with pay. Employees shall earn vacation days based on the number of days employed and the years of service with the District. Vacation days begin to accrue from the first day of employment.

Twelve- month employees with less than 10 years of service in the District shall earn vacation days at the rate of .0417 days of vacation for each day of employment within the period July 1 through June 30.

Twelve- month employees with 10 to 19 years of service in the District shall earn vacation days at the rate of .0625 days of vacation for each day of employment within the period July 1 through June 30.

Twelve- month employees with 20 or more years of service in the District shall earn vacation day at the rate of .0833 days of vacation for each day of employment with the period July 1 through June 30.

In computing the vacation days earned, an employee shall receive a full day of vacation for each fractional day at or above .05.

A maximum of 5 days of vacation may be carried forward to the following fiscal year (July 1- June 30). Therefore, on July 1st, employees with more than 5 unused vacation days will lose the excess days.

Those employed after July 1 of a school year shall earn a prorated share of vacation time based on the above formula.

Maintenance, Transportation, and Operations employees now receiving three and four weeks of vacation, and those eligible to receive three and four weeks during the 1989-90 school year will be “grandfathered” under the previous policy. Personnel “grandfathered” at three weeks of vacation will be eligible for four weeks of vacation with their twentieth year of service.

Vacation day request for one to three days must be submitted to and approved by the immediate supervisor with at least three days’ notice. Vacation request for four or more days should be submitted for approval at least two weeks in advance. Only two weeks of vacation may be taken at one time. No vacations may be taken after the last day of a GCCISD Summer Hours Workweek and the first week of school unless there are extenuating circumstances. Exceptions must be approved by the Superintendent.

### **State Personal Leave**

State law entitles all employees to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is available for use at the beginning of the year. A day of personal leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee’s usual assignment. State personal leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. Personal leave may be used for two general purposes: nondiscretionary and discretionary. Discretionary personal leave may not be taken for more than two consecutive days. Use of personal leave on any specific day is subject to approval of the supervisor.

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

**Discretionary.** Leave taken at an employee’s discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor 3 days in advance of the anticipated absence and may not exceed two consecutive days. Personal leave days are limited to 5 per semester. The effect of the employee’s absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor.

**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 half or whole day increments if the position requires a substitute, 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 Sick Leave**

All employees shall earn additional workdays of local sick leave as described in policy DEC (Local). Employees who are hired after the beginning of the school year, or leave before the end of the school year, shall earn a prorated number of sick leave days. Local sick leave shall accumulate without limit.

## **Sick Leave Bank**

As described in District policy, the Sick Leave Bank (SLB) is a pool of local sick leave days established on a voluntary basis by full-time District staff members and those employed specifically for half-time positions to be used by any member of the SLB who suffers a personal illness/injury and who have exhausted all available paid leave. Sick Leave shall run concurrently with FMLA or TDL leave, if applicable.

Only those employees who have donated leave days, and opted to join SLB are eligible for such leave. Employees shall have an opportunity each school year to join the SLB.

A CSLB member may be granted up to 15 days for a serious illness or injury involving a spouse or children. Bank members may request additional days after the initial fifteen days for a serious catastrophic illness or injury involving a spouse or children. Consideration and granting of additional days shall be contingent on the number of days available to the bank from employees leaving the District. Additional days granted may not exceed 45 days for a total of 60 days.

The number of CSLB leave days granted in any one school year will not exceed the remaining number of duty days a CSLB member is scheduled to work in that school year according to the District calendar for his or her position.

#### Contributing to the Bank

Contributions to the Sick Leave Bank shall be made according to the following provisions:

1. All full-time employees of the District who have sick leave benefits are eligible for initial membership in the Sick Leave Bank.
2. To be a member of the SLB for one school year, an employee shall contribute a minimum of two-days of local sick leave on initial enrollment. Membership in the SLB is carried forward from one year to the next. In subsequent years, members shall be required to make a one-day contribution at the beginning of each calendar year in order to continue their membership in the SLB. New employees may join the SLB within 30 days of employment.
3. Sick leave days contributed to the SLB not used in a school year shall be carried over from one school year to the next.
4. No SLB member shall be required, for purposes of maintaining status in the SLB, to contribute more sick leave days than other members. However, the SLBC shall have the authority to request additional days from current members if needed. If a current member does not donate to the emergency request, his/her ability to use the SLB is NOT affected.
5. Eligible employees who do not initially elect to join the SLB shall annually be offered the opportunity to join the SLB before the annual open enrollment period.
6. A CSLB member who is separating from employment may donate accrued local sick leave at the time of separation.

## **Unpaid Leave**

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

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

**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 entitlement 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 service member 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.\*

**\*The FMLA definitions of “serious injury or illness” for current service members and veterans are distinct from the FMLA definition of “serious health condition”.**

**Benefits and Protections.** During FML, 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\*, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

\*Special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

**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 FMLA. In order to use paid leave for FML, employees must comply with the district's normal paid leave policies.

**Employee Responsibilities.** Employees must provide 30-day advance notice of the need to take FML-when the need is foreseeable. When 30-day 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 FML 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 the FMLA. If they are eligible, 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 FML and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FML, 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.

*FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300 (a) may require additional disclosures.*

For additional information:

1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627

[www.wagehour.dol.gov](http://www.wagehour.dol.gov)

Local Family and Medical Leave Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period **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 employed by the district are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FMLA to care for a parent with a serious health condition; or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

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

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

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

**District Contact.** Employees that require FMLA or have questions should contact the Benefits Department for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## **Temporary Disability Leave**

Any full-time employee shall be eligible for temporary disability leave. The maximum length of temporary disability leave shall be 180 calendar days. [See DBB(LOCAL) for temporary disability leave placement and DEC(LEGAL) for return to active duty.]

An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee as a request for temporary disability leave.

## **Return to Work/Modified Duty Program**

The district offers a Return to Work / Modified Duty Program to transition employees back to work with restrictions. Any employee who has been off work due to a injury or illness under FMLA, TDL, or WC, and has been released to return to work with restrictions is eligible for this program. Any employee who falls in this category should contact the Benefits Department for instructions. The Benefits Department will work with supervisors on accommodating requested restrictions and assist with employees returning to work. All approved accommodations will be subject to 2 week increments not to exceed 60 days.

## **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

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

## **Assault Leave**

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

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

## **Bereavement Leave**

Approved leave for death in the immediate family shall be for not more than three workdays for each occurrence, subject to the approval of the supervisor/principal and shall not be deducted from state or local sick days.

The term “immediate family” is defined as:

1. Spouse.
2. Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands *in loco parentis*.
3. Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands *in loco parentis* to the employee.
4. Sibling, stepsibling, sibling-in-law.
5. Grandparent and grandchild.
6. Any person in the employee’s household at the time of illness or death.

For purposes of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the definitions of spouse, parent, son or daughter, and next of kin are found in DECA(LEGAL).

## **Jury Duty**

The district provides paid leave to employees who are summoned to jury duty. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides. An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and may be required to provide the district a copy of the summons to document the need for leave.

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

## **Compliance with a Subpoena**

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

## **Truancy Court Appearance**

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

## **Religious Observance**

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

## **Military Leave**

**Paid Leave for Military Service.** Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to paid leave when engaged in authorized training or duty ordered by proper authority. Paid military leave is limited to 15 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.

**Reemployment after Military Leave.** Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. To be eligible for reemployment, employees must provide notice of their obligation or intent to perform military service, provide evidence of honorable discharge or release, and submit an application for reemployment within the time specified by law to the Human Resources Department. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

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

## **Employee Relations and Communications**

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### **Employee Recognition and Appreciation**

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the district. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the district newsletter, and through special events and activities. Recognition and appreciation activities also include awards for years of service.

### **District Communications**

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

The Journal- Issued every 6 weeks (sign up on our website to receive it automatically.)  
The Goose Call- Our District Blog (sign up on our website to receive it automatically.)  
Facebook- Goose Creed CISD  
Twitter- @GCCISD  
The Goose Creek CISD website- [www.gccisd.net](http://www.gccisd.net)

# Complaints and Grievances

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## *Policy DGBA*

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

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees. For ease of reference, the district's policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints can be found on the district website, Human Resources page

# Employee Conduct and Welfare

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## **Standards of Conduct**

### *Policy DH*

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

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

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

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

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

### **Statement of Purpose**

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

### **Professional 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, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Standard 1.11** The educator shall not intentionally 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 be under the influence of alcohol or 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 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 a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

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

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

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

**Standard 3.8** The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student

relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

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

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

## **EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF DRESS**

An employee's dress and grooming shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment, and in accordance with the standards below. To further the expectation of an optimal learning and educational environment, where the public is welcome, employees are to dress with professionalism.

The standard of dress has been established to

- Reflect the high standards of the community, adhering to good taste, modesty, and dignity;
- Create an atmosphere of respect for authority, set a positive role model for the students, promote safety, and encourage proper personal hygiene and grooming; and
- Promote a consistent standard of dress and grooming.

These guidelines will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they address the standards of the community and the District. Using the following guidelines, site administrators have the final decision to enforce acceptable employee dress and grooming standards.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

Employees are to wear clothing that is neat and clean. Employees are not to wear clothing that is tight, revealing, torn, tattered, dirty, excessively faded, containing visual or written content, other than authorized district attire, or which is actually or potentially disruptive to the school environment. Sweat suits, jogging/wind suits, overalls, or denim jeans of any color may not be worn.

Jewelry/accessories that could cause a safety hazard may not be worn. In keeping with

professional decorum, earrings may be worn by female employees only, and ears are the only exposed areas of the body on which pierced jewelry may be worn. Tattoos must be covered with an appropriate, non-distracting covering

Footwear must be worn at all times. Shoes traditionally worn around the home (i.e., slippers or house shoes) or to the beach (i.e., rubber flip-flops or rubber croc style shoes) are not permitted. Tennis/athletic shoes that are clean and in good condition may be worn.

Head Coverings such as broad-brimmed or wide-brimmed hats, bucket hats, legionnaire hats may be permitted during outdoor activities on field days, field trips, designated days and other related outdoor extracurricular activities.

Sunglasses that are 100% UV protective may be worn outside during field days, field trips or other outdoor extracurricular activities.

Employees may bring sunscreen to work without a physician's note or prescription. Note: SPF 30 broad-spectrum sunscreen is recommended. Employees will be encouraged to apply and re-apply their own sunscreen as necessary during outdoor activities including field trips and extracurricular activities.

The site administrator may designate up to one day per week as "school spirit" day. On that particular day, it is permissible to wear an approved shirt with school logo with solid color wind suits or jeans. On special days/events (i.e., Western Day and Red Ribbon Week, etc.) the site administrator may also designate special attire. This special attire must adhere to general dress code guidelines. The site administrator will determine dress for work days and site-based staff development days.

## **CLASSROOM AND CAMPUS GUIDELINES**

### **Women**

Women are to wear dresses, skirts, dress or business casual slacks, or business-appropriate Capri pants with a business or business casual blouse or jacket. Sweaters or turtlenecks may be worn. Shorts and cargo style pants may not be worn. Women's skirts/dresses are to be no shorter than slightly above the knee, and slits, flaps, or openings in skirts/dresses may not be more than fingertip length. Seasonal/decorated shirts and blouses may be worn. Tank tops, backless apparel, midriffs, tops with fewer than two straps, sleeveless tops or tops that are revealing (low cut or transparent), or see through are not acceptable. Spandex or garments that are tightly form fitting are not permitted. Unnatural colored hair is not permitted.

### **Men**

Men are to wear dress or business casual slacks. Shirts with collars, sweaters, or turtlenecks are to be worn. Socks must be worn with shoes. Shorts and cargo style pants may not be worn. Male administrators have the option of wearing a tie or a sports coat/jacket while on duty during regular school hours. Tank tops, sleeveless shirts or shirts that are worn in a revealing (unbuttoned, transparent, or low cut) manner are not acceptable.

Hair must be well groomed and not extend below the base of the neck. Men are permitted facial hair if neatly trimmed and moderate in style. All facial hair, however, must be fully

established by the start of the school year or upon return from school breaks.

## **VIOLATIONS**

Violation of the above Employee Standard of Dress will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

## **DRESS CODE FOR NON-CAMPUS/CLASSROOM AREAS**

### **Physical Education/Athletics**

Physical Education teachers are expected to wear clothes appropriate for teaching physical education. Collared or crew neck shirts (with sleeves) with shorts no shorter than mid-thigh, coordinated warm-ups or wind suits, and athletic shoes may be worn. Spandex or garments that are too tight are not permitted. Caps/visors/sunglasses may be worn while on duty outside the school building.

### **Guidelines for Personnel Serving in Dual Role (Classroom and Physical Education Teacher/Coach during the school day):**

Coaches who begin their workday as classroom instructors should report to duty dressed according to guidelines for teachers. Coaches may change their dress to "Physical Education/Athletics" guidelines during periods assigned to physical education/athletic classes.

Coaches assigned to a physical education/athletics class during the day who begin the workday in the classroom and then must return to the classroom after teaching the physical education/athletics class will be allowed the option of completing the school day in coordinated warm-ups or wind suits and athletic shoes.

Coaches who begin the workday in physical education/athletics class will be allowed to begin the day in attire listed under physical education/athletics guidelines but will be expected to change into dress guidelines for classroom teachers for their initial daily classroom assignment. After the initial classroom assignment, a coach who returns to physical education/athletic class will be allowed to follow guidelines listed in the second statement above.

### **Technology Support Technicians**

Due to the nature of their work, technology support technicians may wear jeans that are neat and clean and have no tears, holes or frayed edges.

## **Identification Badges**

All Employees- full-time, part-time, substitute, or temporary- must wear their official GCCISD ID badge while on District property, on duty, or while representing GCCISD off District property. Wearing of ID badges during extracurricular events is voluntary unless the employee is on duty.

*The official GCCISD ID badge should be worn only by the individual to whom it was issued*

### **Damaged or Misplaced ID badges**

Employees shall immediately report the loss of an ID badge to Human Resources to request a duplicate. Replacement badges due to damage or legal name change will be provided by the District, however you must present the damaged badge to Human Resources at the time of replacement. If the badge is misplaced or lost, a replacement fee of \$5.00 will be incurred by the employee.

### **Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

*Policies DH, DIA*

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

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

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is reprinted below:

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/591?filter=DIA>

### **Harassment of Students**

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

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law.

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is reprinted below:

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/591?filter=DHB>

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

*Policies DG, DHB, FFG, GRA*

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §26.001, to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services (CPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Alleged abuse or neglect involving a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child (including a teacher) must be reported to CPS.

- 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, elderly person, or person with a disability.

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

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the district is prohibited from 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 report suspected child abuse may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

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

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

## **Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children**

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

## **Reporting Crime**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Technology Resources**

### *Policy CQ*

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

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

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

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

### **District Issued Technology Resources**

Goose Creek CISD allows certain employees to utilize different District-owned technology resources (laptops, tablets, cell phones, etc). Use of a District-owned technology resources is a privilege, not a right. With this privilege comes responsibility. Participating employees are responsible at all times for the proper use of the technology resource. Failure to comply with the guidelines set forth may result in suspension of access, termination of privileges, adverse employment action, and/or other disciplinary or legal action consistent with District policies and applicable law. Use of the District's technology resources shall not be considered private. Designated District staff shall be authorized to monitor the District's technology resources at any time to ensure appropriate use.

1. Employees are responsible for the content stored on the technology device. Users may download personal content to the device as long as it meets the expectations set forth in Board Policy, Employee Handbook, Administrative Guidelines and other legal or district requirements. Any personal content on District technology resources shall not be considered private and may be monitored or accessed to ensure appropriate use of the device(s).
2. The technology device must be secured with a passcode/password at all times. Incidents or suspected incidents of unauthorized access and/or disclosure of confidential data are to be immediately reported to the campus principal or immediate supervisor and the Technology Department.
3. Goose Creek CISD reserves the right to remotely wipe, without notice, all data from the technology device if confidential data is suspected to be at risk of disclosure, the Operating System is suspected to have been breached, or a violation of Board Policy or the Employee Handbook. Costs incurred by an employee for personal content on the District device will not be recoverable. For example: if an App is downloaded that is determined to contain inappropriate content (sexually explicit, obscene, etc.) and the device is wiped/reset, the employee will not be reimbursed for any personal purchased App.
4. Users will not change or remove (or attempt to change or remove) security features on the technology device. "Jailbreaking" is not allowed.
5. User must take reasonable measures to safeguard the device from damage, loss or theft such as using the district provided protective case. Users must immediately report damage, loss, or theft of the technology device to the campus principal or immediate supervisor, and file a police report where appropriate. Users are responsible for the cost



- of replacing lost or damaged technology resources and associated accessories, such as power cords.
6. When requested by the District, or upon separation of employment, the participating employee agrees to return the technology device, case, charger, and any other District-issued accessories to their campus principal or immediate supervisor in the same condition it was issued, less reasonable wear.
  7. If a user fails to return the technology device, case, charger, and any other accessories upon request or upon separation from employment, the employee hereby consents to the District deducting from his or her final paycheck the cost of replacing the technology resource and related accessories. As a means of reference, as of May 2017, iPad cost is \$300.00, power adaptor and cable is \$35.00, and case is \$47.87. This cost is subject to change as equipment costs change.
  8. The assigned technology device remains the property of Goose Creek CISD at all times, including while being used or possessed by the participating employee. This includes any technology items that may have been purchased through grants, donations, sponsorships, gifts, or other District-related activities, such as Classwish.org, Donorpages.com, or Donorschoose.org.
  9. If a user is issued a district cell phone, the phone must be turned on and kept with you at all times when on duty or on call. Otherwise the device must be securely stored.

## **Personal Use of Electronic Communications**

### *Policy DH*

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic 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:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the district's computers, network, or equipment.

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

## **USER RESPONSIBILITY**

The individual in whose name a system account is issued will be responsible at all times for its proper use. If inappropriate use or activity is witnessed it should be reported to a supervisor. User accounts and passwords are not to be shared or disclosed to any other individual. Inappropriate use of personal computing and electronic communication may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **FILTERING**

District computers will provide a best effort at filtering access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors, as defined by the federal Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

As agents of the District, employees shall have limited rights to work they create using the District's electronic communications system. The District shall retain the right to use any product created in the scope of a person's employment even when the author is no longer an employee of the District.

## **DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY**

The District shall not be liable for user's inappropriate use of electronic communication resources or violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, users' mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. The District shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the internet.

## **EMAIL RETENTION**

Each user must make provisions to retain documents and messages in accordance with the district's records retention policy, CPC Legal and Local. Each user is responsible for using the proper records retention practices. The district's email system is a communication system and is not intended to be the primary records retention repository.

- The retention requirement associated with any document is determined by its content, not the method of delivery.
- The responsibility of retaining an internally created and distributed document (or message) most often falls on the author – not the recipients.
- Employees who receive messages from outside the district are responsible for proper records retention of those messages.
- Email that has been requested in a subpoena or public information request must be retained until the request has been addressed, even if the retention period has expired.

The content and function of an email message determines the retention period for that message. All email sent or received by an agency is considered a state record. Therefore, all email messages must be retained or disposed of according to the agency's retention schedule. Email systems must meet the retention requirements found in Texas Administrative Code 6.94(e).

Email generally falls into several common record series categories. These are:

**1. Administrative Correspondence. 1.1.007** – Incoming/outgoing and internal correspondence, in any format pertaining to the formulation, planning, implementation, interpretation, modification, or redefinition of the programs, services, or projects of any agency and the administrative regulations, policies and standards that govern them. Subject to archival review. Retention: 3 years.

2. General Correspondence. 1.1.008 – Non-administrative incoming/outgoing and internal correspondence, in any media, pertaining to or arising from the routine operations of the policies, programs, services, or projects of an agency. Retention: 1 year.

3. Transitory Information. 1.1.057 – Records of temporary usefulness that are not as integral part of a records series of an agency, that are not regularly filed within as agency’s recordkeeping system, and that are required only for a limited period of time for the completion of an action by an official or employee of the agency or in the preparation of an on-going records series. Transitory records are not essential to the fulfillment of statutory obligations or to the documentation of agency functions. Examples of transitory information are routine messages such as internal meeting notices, routine slips, incoming letters that add nothing of substance to enclosures; and similar routine information used for communication, but not for the documentation, of a specific agency transaction. Retention: After the purpose of record has been fulfilled.

### **PERSONAL USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

While operating District-owned vehicles or power equipment, employees may not use personal electronic communication devices.

### **CONNECTING TO THE DISTRICT WIRELESS NETWORK WITH PERSONAL DEVICES**

Connecting to the District’s wireless network with personal technology devices, such as laptops and tablets is allowed only for educational purposes and with the Principal and or Supervisor’s approval. The district’s technology staff will not be allowed to work on personal equipment. Using broadband Internet service or any other ability to connect to the Internet outside of the district’s internet filtering or wide area network is prohibited. Teachers and staff must use the district’s visitor wireless network and abide by all guidelines included in this handbook.

### **SENSITIVE INFORMATION CONTROL WITH REMOVABLE DEVICES and PUBLIC CLOUD STORAGE**

Employees will not download, save, copy, or export any sensitive information out of any GCCISD computer system unless it is completely necessary and with the Principal or immediate supervisors’ approval. Sensitive information will not be emailed or saved to portable storage devices such as cd/dvd, floppy disk, portable flash drives, etc or copied to public cloud service providers such as dropbox.com, box.com, etc. Sensitive information on a district laptop or tablet must be encrypted to prevent information theft. It is the user’s responsibility to immediately notify the district’s technology department if any sensitive information is lost or stolen.

### **Networked Communication Systems**

Networked communication systems such as Instant Messaging, Online Chat, Video Conferencing and Web-exing, are real-time network communication systems and are primarily available for instructional and administrative purposes. Information shared using these systems should be transitory in nature, as documented under Email Retention Transitory Information 1.1.057.

## **Recordings in the Workplace**

School employees are prohibited from making video or audio recordings of students, unless they have the advance permission of the campus administrator to do so for a permissible reason. While this is not illegal to secretly record workplace discussions or meetings with adults, the district prohibits this practice unless the employee has the advance consent of the other(s) who are present and/or being recorded. Because it is unprofessional and disruptive to district operations, the Texas Commissioner of Education has stated that secretly recording such conversations may be good cause for termination of employment.

## **Use of Security Cameras**

The District utilizes security cameras and video recording devices at the school campuses and other District facilities. These are located in cafeterias, hallways, classrooms, designated areas, entryways, buses, and parking areas. Information provided by reviewing the videotapes will be utilized, as needed, to help maintain a safe and orderly environment. The District may view recordings to aid in the investigation of employee misconduct and violations of Board Policy, Employee Handbook, Administrative Guidelines and other legal or district requirements.

## **Electronic Communications between Employee, Students, and Parents**

### *Policy DH*

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may 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:

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

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

- *Electronic media* includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant

messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Web logs (blogs), 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:

- 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 that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
  - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee’s district e-mail address.
- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page (“professional page”) for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee’s professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 9p.m. and 5a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with

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

## **Business Use of Electronic Media**

If an employee adds a picture to District electronic media, the picture must be a professional photo of the employee.

## **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)
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the SBEC rules

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

## **Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention**

*Policies DH, DI*

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

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/591?filter=DH>

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/591?filter=DI>

## **Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use**

*Policies DH, FNCD GKA*

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



## **Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

### *Policy CAA*

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

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

## **Conflict of Interest**

### *Policy CB, DBD*

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

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

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information

## **Gifts and Favors**

### *Policy DBD*

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

training, or instructional materials such as maps or worksheets that convey information to students or contribute to the learning process.

## **Copyrighted Materials**

### *Policy EFE*

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

## **Associations and Political Activities**

### *Policy DGA*

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

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

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

## **Charitable Contributions**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Safety**

### *Policy CK series*

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

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

*Policies DH, FNCG, GKA*

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisor or call GCCISD Police immediately.

SB 1566 of the 85<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the Texas Legislature prohibits districts from placing restrictions on the transportation or storage of a handgun, firearm, or ammunition by a person who holds a license to carry a handgun. Storage or transportation in a privately owned or leased vehicle is permissible as long as the item(s) are not in plain view. The Federal Gun Free School Zone Act also requires items to be properly stored and unloaded.

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

*Policy GKC*

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

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

*Policy CKA*

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

## **Pest Control Treatment**

*Policies CLB, DI*

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

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

## **General Procedures**

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### **Bad Weather Closing**

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

KPRC Television Channel 2	KXLN Channel 45 (Spanish)
KHOU Television Channel 11	KTRH Radio 740 AM
KTRK Television Channel 13	KSBJ Radio 89.3 FM
KRIV Television Channel 26	KHJZ Radio 95.7
KHWB Television Channel 39	KXXY Radio 1320 AM (Spanish)
KTMD Channel 48 (Spanish)	KWWJ Radio 1360 AM (Baytown)

### **Emergencies**

*Policies CKC, CKD*

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

### **Purchasing Procedures**

*Policy CH*

The purchasing department is responsible for the administration and organization of the district's procurement activities in accordance with state law and board policy CH (LEGAL & LOCAL) may be found in its entirety on the GCCISD website. All district purchase commitments shall be made on a properly drawn and fully executed purchase order. District employees shall not be permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the district's purchasing department. Further, the use of the district's tax-exempt status is prohibited for personal use. Additional information regarding the purchasing process may be obtained by contacting the [purchasing department](#) or by visiting the [district's purchasing website](#).

## **Name and Address Changes**

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

### **Personnel Records**

*Policy DBA, GBA*

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
- Personal e-mail address

The choice to not allow public access to this information or change an existing choice may be made at any time by updating the privacy information electronically in TEAMS. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request electronically in TEAMS. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public.

### **Facility Use**

*Policies DGA, GKD*

Employees who wish to use district facilities after school hours, for campus sponsored events, must enter their event through the established School Dude program. They should contact their campus administrator for these procedures.

Employees who wish to use district facilities after school hours, for non-campus sponsored events, must follow established procedures in Administrative Guidelines. Faculty and/or Staff may not represent an external client/organization in order to circumvent the facility rental rules, regulations, and related fees. Contact the Facilities Management Department to obtain information on the rules, regulations, and related fees that apply to the rental.

## **Termination of Employment**

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### **Resignations**

*Policy DFE*

**Contract Employees.** Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if the resignation is submitted electronically ([www.gccisd.net](http://www.gccisd.net), Human Resources) at least 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year.

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

Under Senate Bill 7, campus principal must inform the superintendent, who will then 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*.

**Noncontract Employees.** Noncontract employees may resign their position at any time. An electronic resignation ([www.gccisd.net](http://www.gccisd.net), Human Resources) should be submitted to the Human Resources Department at least two weeks prior to the effective date. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so.

### **Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees**

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

Employees on probationary, term, and continuing contracts can be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Employees on probationary or term contracts can be 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 notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The timelines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or nonrenewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to an employee. Advance notification requirements do not apply when a contract employee is dismissed for failing to obtain or maintain appropriate certification or when the employee's certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the DF series policies that are provided to employees or are available on line.

### **Dismissal of Noncontract Employees**

*Policy DCD*

Noncontract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Noncontract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process that can be found on the district website, Human Resources page when pursuing the grievance.

### **Exit Interviews and Procedures**

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

\*\*An individual's network account will be disabled the day following the employee's last day of employment. If the employee has any personal electronic records they need to make copies of them before their account is disabled.

## **Reports to Texas Education Agency**

*Policy DF, DHB*

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 form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other unlawful conduct with a student or a minor. Senate Bill 7 also applies to the following:

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

The superintendent is also required to notify TEA when a certified employee resigns and there is evidence the 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 arrests, detentions, indictments, criminal information, convictions, deferred adjudications, and probations in any state or federal jurisdiction that is obtained by a means other than the Fingerprint-based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT)

## **Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding**

The district is required to report the 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

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## Equal Educational Opportunities

*Policies FB, FFH*

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

Questions or concerns about discrimination of students based on any of the reasons listed above should be directed to Student Services Department.

## Student Records

*Policy FL*

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

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

The student handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the Student Services Department for assistance.

## Parent and Student Complaints

*Policy FNG*

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

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



## **Administering Medication to Students**

*Policy FFAC*

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

## **Dietary Supplements**

*Policies DH, FFAC*

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

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

*Policy FFAC*

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

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

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

## **Student Conduct and Discipline**

*Policies in the FN series and FO series*

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

## **Student Attendance**

### *Policy FEB*

Teachers and staff should be familiar with the district's policies and procedures for attendance accounting. These procedures require minor students to have parental consent before they are allowed to leave campus. When absent from school, the student upon returning to school, must send a written note within three days to explain the nature of 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 and cyber bullying to the Campus Principal. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and can be found by clicking here:

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/591?filter=FFI>

## **Hazing**

### *Policy FNCC*

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

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