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INTRODUCTION

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

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. It is not intended to alter the at-will status of employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies. District policies and procedures can change at any time. 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. A **Policy Manual** is located on the World Wide Web at www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/009901. Copies of a specific policy are available from any administrative employee in the district who has access to the World Wide Web during normal working hours. Any individual is free to access the web site to review the most current Muleshoe ISD board policies.

Many policy codes are referenced within this handbook. At the end of this handbook is an Index of the Policy Codes. You can now access the Muleshoe ISD Policy Manual online. For more detailed information on any policy follow these steps:

1. www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/009901
2. Go to Policy code
3. Enter the code
4. Press Find Policy and you should be there.

MULESHOE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Muleshoe Independent School District is to graduate life-long learners and productive citizens by providing an instructional program and educational environment that develops the skills, attitudes and ethics necessary to meet the needs of a changing society.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2003-2004

- Goal 1:** Muleshoe ISD students and staff will demonstrate the character traits of respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship.
- Goal 2:** Muleshoe ISD will hire and retain quality personnel who will produce life-long learners as we comply with legislative mandates.
- Goal 3:** Muleshoe ISD will provide an appropriate TEKS curriculum to ensure student success.
- Goal 4:** Muleshoe ISD will be an exemplary district with 100% graduation rate.
- Goal 5:** Muleshoe ISD will create and maintain a positive environment in which families and community members are informed about school programs through effective communication.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Policies BA, BAA, BBA, BBB, BE, BEC, BED

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 curriculum, school taxes, annual budget, and employment of the superintendent and other professional staff, facilities, and expansions. The board has complete and final control over school matters within limits established by law and State Board of Education rules.

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the district to ensure a strong educational program for the district's children. Its seven elected members serve three year terms. Five members represent single-member districts and two members are elected at-large. The Board identifies needs and goals, develops policies, which govern the schools, levies taxes, and employs personnel. Trustees serve without compensation, must be registered voters, and must reside in the district.

Board members:

Nick Bamert, President	Cindy Purdy, Member
David Tipps, Vice President	Thurman Myers, Member
Bruce Barrett, Secretary	Curtis Shelburne, Member
Rene Torres, Member	

The superintendent

The Board of Trustees appointed Gene Sheets Superintendent of Schools in May 2000. He serves as chief Executive Officer of the District and is responsible for administering policy, providing instructional leadership, and overseeing day-to-day operation of the District.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Trustees of Muleshoe I.S.D. meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 514 West Avenue G. The Board may call special meetings or change the regular meeting, but written notice of the time, place, and agenda of each Board meeting is posted in the administration office and delivered to the media at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. (*Board Policy BE*).

All meetings are open to the public in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Law. The Board may go into executive session to discuss pending litigation, property acquisition, or personnel matters (Article 6252-17, Section 2 VATS). Under the following circumstances, Texas law also permits the board to go into a closed session: to discuss prospective gifts or donations, personnel issues including conferences with employees and employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or to consult with attorneys.

The public is always welcome at meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Muleshoe Independent School District. By watching and listening you will better understand how your school district

operates. There are two methods by which citizens may address the Board during their meeting. They are as follows:

Open forum

At the beginning of each regular meeting the Board provides fifteen minutes to hear individual comments to the Board. Open Forum presentations are limited to five minutes and may include any subject except personnel or other matters reserved for executive session. When several persons represent the same viewpoint, they are encouraged to designate a group spokesperson to speak up to five minutes. Persons wishing to participate in this portion of the meeting shall sign up as they arrive, indicating the topic about which they wish to speak (*Board Policy BED [Local]*).

Placing an item on the agenda

To have an item included on the agenda, a citizen submits a written request to the Superintendent's office no later than noon on Tuesday prior to the Board meeting. The request shall include the person's name, address, phone number, and a clear description of the topic to be included. The decision to place an item on the agenda will be based on the appropriateness of the subject, timeliness, and Board policy. The agenda is prepared by the Superintendent with the advice and consent of the President of the Board (*Board Policy BE [Local]*).

ADMINISTRATION

Gene Sheets	-	Superintendent	272-7404
Don Wood	-	Assistant Superintendent	272-7406
Trae McNeill	-	Business Manager	272-7400
Lisa Whalin	-	Assistant Business Manager	272-7400
Linda Lewis	-	Technology Coordinator	272-7318
Brian Arnold	-	Special Education Director	272-7321
Priscilla Mestas	-	Federal Programs Director	272-7322
Todd Newberry	-	Principal, Dillman Elementary	272-7382
Debbie Gallman	-	Principal, DeShazo Elementary	272-7365
David Dominguez	-	Principal, Watson Jr. High	272-7349
David Jenkins	-	Principal, Muleshoe High	272-7302

MULESHOE ISD

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2003-2004

Adopted 3/31/2003

August 12, 13, 14 -----	Staff Development Day
August 15 & 18-----	Teacher Preparation Day
August 19 -----	First Semester Begins
September 1 -----	Labor Day Holiday
September 26 -----	End First Six Weeks
October 13 -----	Holiday
November 7 -----	End Second Six Weeks
November 26-28 -----	Thanksgiving Holidays

December 19 -----	First Semester Ends
December 22-Jan. 2 -----	Christmas Holidays
January 5 -----	Teacher Preparation Day
January 6 -----	Second Semester begins
January 16 -----	Staff Development Day (comp.)
February 13 -----	Bad Weather Make Up Day #2
February 20 -----	End Fourth Six Weeks
February 24 -----	TAKS Testing Dates
March 3 -----	TAKS Grade 3 Reading
March 6 -----	Bad Weather Make Up Day #2
March 7 -----	Staff Development Day (comp.)
March 15-19 -----	Spring Break
April 8 -----	End Fifth Six Weeks
April 9 -----	Holiday
April 12 -----	Teacher Preparation Day (comp.)
April 27-29 -----	TAKS Testing Dates
May 14 -----	Bad Weather Make Up Day #1
May 27 -----	Second Semester Ends
May 28 -----	Teacher Preparation Day
May 28 -----	Graduation

Note: February 13 and May 14 will be bad weather make-up days. If 1 day of school is missed for bad weather, school will be held on May 14. If 2 days are missed, school will be held on both May 14 and February 13.

Six Weeks Reporting Periods for HS & JH

August 19 - September 26	28 days
September 29 - November 7	29 days
November 10 - December 19	<u>27 days</u>
First Semester	84 days
January 6 - February 20	32days
February 23 - April 8	29days
April 13 - May 27	<u>32 days</u>
Second Semester	93 days

HELPFUL CONTACTS

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department as listed below.

Central office hours

School year - 8:00 AM - 12:00 and 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Fridays, 4:00 PM
Summer hours - 8:00 AM - 12:00 and 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Central Office Personnel

Gene Sheets	Superintendent	272-7404
Jean Richardson	Secretary	272-7404
Don Wood	Assistant Superintendent	272-7406
Trae McNeill	Business Manager	272-7400
Lisa Whalin	Assistant Business Manager	272-7411
Debra Jennings	Payroll/Insurance	272-7402
Dana Rasco	Receptionist	272-7400
Linda Lewis	Technology Coordinator	272-7419
Mike Richardson	Assistant Technology Coordinator	272-7320
Cindy Magby	Technology Secretary	272-7318
Brian Arnold	Special Education Director	272-7321
Hettie Keller	Diagnostician	272-7327
Cindy Bessire	Diagnostician	272-7327
Connie James	Special Education Secretary	272-7323
Diana Rodriguez	Special Education Liaison	272-7324
Priscilla Mestas	Federal Programs Director	272-7322
Wanda Wiley	Federal Programs Secretary	272-7326
Margie Alarcon	Migrant Records Clerk	272-7325
Beatriz Olivas	Assistant Migrant Clerk	272-7325

EMPLOYMENT

Workload and work schedules

Policy DL

The work day

Staff members are responsible to report for duty at 7:45 a.m. and will be dismissed at 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Regular duty ends on Friday when students have cleared the grounds.

The need for on duty personnel and staff meetings may alter the start and/or ending schedule of the regular school day, which will compensate for the early release on Fridays.

Professional employees

Professional and administrative employees 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 required days of service and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

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

Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees

Support employees are employed at will and will be notified of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees are not exempt from overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor.

Equal employment opportunity

Policy DAA

The Muleshoe Independent School District does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, military status, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the bases of race, religion, sex, national origin, or age should contact the Assistant Superintendent. Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the bases of a disability should contact the Superintendent.

Employment Objectives

The Board establishes the following objective criteria for decisions regarding the hiring, dismissal, reassignment, promotion, and demotion of District personnel. These criteria are not rank-ordered and may be considered in whole or in part in making such decisions.

1. Academic or technical preparation, supported by transcripts.
2. Proper certification for grade level, subject, or assignment, including emergency permits and endorsements for specific subjects, programs, or positions.
3. Experience.
4. Recommendations and references.
5. Evaluations.
6. Suitability for the position and professional competence.
7. The needs of the District.

Employment requirements and restrictions

(See DBA)

Credentials

All teachers who are employed with emergency permits must satisfy TEA requirements for proper certification for the position in which they are employed within the time allotted by TEA.

All professional employees who have earned certificates or degrees of higher rank since the previous school year must file with the Superintendent:

1. An official college transcript showing highest degree earned and date conferred.
2. Valid certificate of higher rank.

Records

The District shall maintain current and complete personnel records of all employees.

In addition to records required by law and TEA regulations, professional and paraprofessional personnel of the District shall be required to have on file the following materials:

1. Birth certificate.
2. Withholding tax form W-4.

All records shall become the permanent property of the District and State of Texas to be used for the proper maintenance of personnel records for the individual as required by law.

Physical examination during employment

A physical examination may be required of any employee when the employee's condition interferes with the performance of regular duties.

The District may designate the physician to perform the examination and, in such case, shall pay the cost of examination.

Other requirements

Food service workers shall comply with health requirements established by city, county, and state health authorities. Bus drivers shall comply with legal requirements.

Communicable diseases

Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, measles, influenza, viral hepatitis-A (infectious), immunodeficiency virus (HIV infection) and AIDS, leprosy, and tuberculosis. Employees with communicable diseases, whether acute or chronic, shall be subject to the following provisions.

Confirmation

The information that an employee has a communicable disease shall be confirmed by one of the following methods:

1. The employee brings the information to the District's attention.
2. The employee confirms the information when asked.

3. If the Superintendent or designee has reason to believe that the employee has a communicable disease and is unable to perform the job or poses a threat to self or others, the employee may be asked to submit to a medical examination to determine whether the employee's physical condition interferes with the performance of regular duties or poses a threat to self or others. The results of such an examination are medical records in the possession of the examining physician. If the employee consents to have some or all of the results released to the District, the District shall maintain the confidentiality of the information. The Superintendent shall request the examining physician's advice regarding any restrictions in duties or necessary accommodations in duties based on the results of the examination. First aid and safety personnel may be informed to the extent necessary for them to provide emergency care.

Medical factors

The Superintendent or designee shall obtain medical advice from local health authorities or private physicians on:

1. The nature of the risk, i.e., how the disease is transmitted.
2. The duration of the risk, i.e., how long the employee will be infectious.
3. The severity of the risk, i.e., what is the potential harm to third parties.
4. The probabilities that the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm.
5. Whether the employee's condition interferes with the performance of regular duties. A physician who has performed a medical examination of the employee shall make this determination.

Qualified handicapped persons

If the Superintendent or designee determines that work restrictions, reassignment, or exclusion may be appropriate, the Superintendent or designee shall determine whether the employee is a "handicapped person." If it is determined that an employee is handicapped, the Superintendent or designee shall also determine if the employee is otherwise qualified for employment. With respect to employment, a "Qualified Handicapped person" is a handicapped person who, with reasonable accommodation can perform the essential functions of the job in question. (*See DBB for definitions*)

If it is determined that an employee is a "qualified handicapped person," the employee must be reasonably accommodated. Accommodation is not reasonable if it poses undue financial or administrative burdens or fundamental alterations in the nature of the job.

Modifications or reassignment

Whether an employee is handicapped or not, the Superintendent or designee, based on the medical information and the requirements of the job, shall determine what exclusion or modification in job duties or assignments are appropriate, if any.

Exclusion

An employee may be excluded from work if the Superintendent or designee, in accordance with this policy, determines that the employee poses a threat to his or her own health by remaining on the job, or the employee's physical condition interferes with the performance of regular duties.

The employee may present evidence to the Superintendent or designee on any information relevant to the employee's fitness to continue the performance of regular duties.

CONTRACT AND NON-CONTRACT EMPLOYMENT

Policies DC, DCA, DCB, DCC, DCD

State law requires the district to employ all full-time professional and administrative employees in positions requiring a certificate 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 non-renewal 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

All full-time, professional employees employed in positions requiring certification and nurses who are new to the district receive probationary contracts during their first year of employment. The probationary period for those who have been employed in public schools for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district is one year. For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three years, with an optional fourth year if the district has doubts about whether a term or continuing contract should be given.

Term contracts

Full-time teachers and professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses who have successfully completed the probationary period will be employed by term contract. Campus principals and central office administrators are employed under one year term contract. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract and employment policies.

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. At-will employees are paraprofessional and auxiliary personnel. (*DC Legal and Local, also DFBA, DFBB, DFBC*)

Reduction-in-force

Definitions used in this policy are as follows:

1. "Reduction in force (RIF)" means the dismissal of a teacher, administrator, or other professional employee before the end of a contract term for reasons of financial exigency or program change. Non-renewal of an employee's term contract is not a "reduction in force" as used in this policy.
2. "Financial exigency" means any decline in the Board's financial resources brought about by the decline in enrollment, cuts in funding, decline in tax revenues, or any other actions or events that create a need for the District to reduce financial expenditures of personnel.
3. "Program change" means any elimination, curtailment, or reorganization of a curriculum offering, program, or school operation because of a lack of student response to particular course offerings, legislative revisions to program funding, or a reorganization or consolidation of two or more individual schools or school districts.

General grounds for dismissal

Pursuant to a contract provision, a reduction in force may take place when the Board determines that a financial exigency or program change requires that the contract of one or more teachers, administrators, or other professional employees be terminated. Such a determination constitutes the necessary cause for dismissal.

Board determination

Reduction in force shall be made on a District wide basis rather than by campus. When a reduction in force is to be implemented, the Board shall first determine which employment areas shall be affected. The Superintendent shall confine his or her recommendations for personnel reductions to staff members and administrators assigned to the affected programs or employment areas.

Employment areas

A reduction in force may be implemented in one, several, or all employment areas. Employment areas shall be defined as:

1. Elementary grades, departments, or programs.
2. Secondary departments or programs.
3. Counseling programs.
4. Special programs, such as gifted and talented, bilingual, special education, compensatory education, and migrant education.
5. Library programs.
6. General Administration, i.e., administrators with District wide or multiple program responsibilities.
7. Other non-teaching professional staff.
8. Teachers on probationary status.
9. Professional employees holding temporary certificates or permits.
10. Other District wide programs.

Criteria for decisions

Using the following criteria, the Superintendent shall determine which particular employee shall be dismissed and shall submit the recommendation to the Board. These criteria are listed in order of importance. The Superintendent shall apply them sequentially to the selected employment areas until the number of staff reductions necessary has been identified. i.e., If all necessary reductions can be accomplished by applying the certification criteria, it is not necessary to apply the performance criteria, etc.

1. Certification: Appropriate certificate and/or endorsement for current or projected assignment.
2. Performance: Employee's effectiveness as reflected by a teacher's most recent available appraisal record or most recent written evaluations for other staff.
3. Seniority: Years of service in the District.
4. Professional Background: Professional education and work experience related to the current or projected assignment.

DFE Local

Job vacancy announcements

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are distributed on a regular basis and posted at the central administration building.

Alcohol and drug testing

Policy DHE

The purpose of alcohol and drug testing is to ensure safety and prevent accidents and injuries resulting from the misuse of alcohol and drugs by drivers of commercial motor vehicles. Any employee who is required to have a commercial driver's license (CDL) is subject to drug and alcohol testing. This includes all drivers who operate a motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more people, counting the driver; drivers of large vehicles; or drivers of vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials. Teachers, coaches, or other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements when they are driving.

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 when an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs returns to duty.

All employees 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 Assistant Superintendent.

Reassignments and transfers
Policy DK

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the superintendent. The principal at the receiving campus must approve campus reassignments. When reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or program changes, the superintendent has final placement authority. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be reassigned at any time. Employees who object to a reassignment may follow the district process for employee complaints as outlined in this handbook and district policy *DGBA (Local)*.

Employees with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. Teachers requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit their request by May 1 of the current year. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Superintendent's office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

Outside employment and tutoring
Policy DBF

Employees who wish to accept outside employment or engage in other activities for profit must submit a written request to their supervisor. Approval for outside employment will be determined by the superintendent and based on whether outside employment interferes with the duties of the regular assignment. Teachers are not allowed to privately tutor their students for pay, except during the summer months.

Performance evaluation
Policy DN, DNA, DNB

Evaluation of an employee's job performance should be a continual process that focuses on improvement. Muleshoe ISD will use the **Commissioners recommended Professional Development and Appraisal System**. 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 can also be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, have a performance conference with their supervisor, and get the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

**MULESHOE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
TEACHER APPRAISAL PROCESS AND CALENDAR
2003-2004**

The Commissioner's rules designate that each teacher will receive one (1) observation by one (1) appraiser during the school year.

Observations will be scheduled at a time mutually agreeable to both teacher and appraiser. The appraisal may be rescheduled if either party has a conflict.

A school district shall ensure that all teachers are provided with an orientation of the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) no later than the final day of the first three weeks of school and at least three weeks before the first observation.

Each school district shall establish a calendar for the appraisal of teachers. The appraisal period for each teacher must include all of the days of a teacher's contract. Observations during the appraisal period must be conducted during the required days of instruction for students during one school year. The appraisal period shall:

- (1) exclude the first three weeks of instruction;
- (2) shall prohibit observations on the last day of instruction before any official school holiday or on any other day deemed inappropriate by the school district board of trustees; and
- (3) shall indicate a period for summative annual conferences, which ends no later than 15 working days before the last day of instruction for students.

No Appraisal Prior to September 9, 2003.

NO observations

October 10
November 24
December 18
January 15
February 11
March 12
April 7
May 13

The last day for a summative conference is May 5, 2004.

Section I of the Teacher Self Report form is due to the Supervisor on September 9, 2003.

Section II and III of the Teacher Self-Report Form shall be presented to the principal at least two weeks prior to the summative annual conference. The entire TSR document will be kept by the supervisor until at least after the summative conference of the following year.

2003-2004 Certified Appraisers for MISD:

Gene Sheets	Debbie Gallman	Dave Jenkins
Don Wood	David Dominguez	Vince Erdman
Dave McNeill	Todd Newberry	Priscilla Mestas

Teachers requesting second appraisals must request the appraisal in writing to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction within ten (10) working days of receiving: (1) a written observation summary with which they disagree; (2) a written summative annual appraisal report with which the teacher disagrees.

The Assistant Superintendent will assign a second appraiser from the school district's approved list of appraisers. The teacher and second appraiser will mutually agree upon a time for a scheduled observation and appraisal. The domain scores from the second appraiser shall be averaged with the domain scores from the first appraisal with each counting 50%.

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

Policy BQA, BQB

At both the campus and district levels, Muleshoe ISD offers opportunities for involvement in matters that affect employees. As part of the district's decision-making process, employees may either be asked or 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 office of the Superintendent.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the district. Staff development is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, and developed and approved by district- and campus-level advisory committees.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salaries, wages, and stipends

Policy DEA

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and a pay structure established for each position. 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 and administrative employees are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as nonexempt and are paid based on hourly wages or provided compensatory time for each overtime hour worked.

Salaries and wages are reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted according to the budgeted amounts approved by the board. All employees will receive written notice of their pay and work schedules before the start of each school year. Classroom teachers and librarians will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule.

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

All district employees are paid monthly. During the school year, paychecks are delivered to each campus or to the bank as instructed by you. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization. During summer breaks, paychecks will be direct deposited, mailed or picked up, per your instructions.

An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated.

PAYROLL CALENDAR 2003-2004

ABSENCE FROM DUTY

CUTOFF DATES (4:00 P.M.)	DAYS WORKED	PAY DATES
08-07-03	14	08-20-03
09-05-03	21	09-22-03
10-07-03	23	10-20-03
11-07-03	17	11-20-03
12-05-03	15	12-19-03
01-07-04	20	01-20-04
02-06-04	19	02-20-04
03-04-04*	18	03-12-04
04-07-04	21	04-16-04
05-07-04	19	05-20-04
06-07-04	00	06-18-04
07-07-04	<u>00</u>	07-20-04
	187	

*March has an early cutoff for teachers and TAs due to spring break. Hourly employees cutoff will be the 6th.

NOTE: DAYS WORKED ARE CALCULATED ON A MONTHLY BASIS.

Automatic payroll deposit

The district offers employees automatic payroll deposit. A notification prior to the seventh (7th) of any month is necessary to activate this service. Contact the Payroll Clerk for more information about the district's payroll direct deposit service.

Payroll deductions

Policy CFEA

Automatic payroll deductions for the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and federal income tax are required for all full-time employees. Medicare tax deductions are required for all

employees hired after March 31, 1986. Temporary and part-time employees who are not eligible for TRS membership must have their deferred compensation contributions deducted.

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, vision insurance, annuities, and the Texas Tomorrow Fund. For deductions of associational dues, contact the payroll clerk.

Overtime compensation

Policy DEA

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. All employees are classified as exempt or nonexempt for purposes of overtime compensation. Professional and administrative employees are ineligible for overtime compensation. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees and some 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.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours weekly and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Employees who must work beyond their normal schedule but less than 40 hours per week will be compensated in straight-time pay or compensatory time off. Employees must work more than 40 total hours in a week to earn overtime compensation.

For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. Sunday and ends at 12:00 p.m. Saturday. Employees may be compensated for overtime with compensatory time off or direct pay at time-and-a-half rates. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees can accumulate up to 240 hours of compensatory time.
- Compensatory time earned must be used according to a schedule that is mutually agreeable to the employee and supervisor.
- Weekly time sheets will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

BENEFITS

Health, dental, and life insurance

Group health insurance coverage is available to employees who are full time. The board of trustees determines the district's contribution to employee insurance premiums annually. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, prices, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet called TRS- ActiveCare.

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. New employees must complete enrollment forms within the first month of employment. Current employees can make changes in

their insurance coverage prior to the beginning of each school year. Employees should contact the Payroll and Benefits Clerk for more information.

Supplemental insurance benefits

Policy CRG

At their own expense, employees can enroll in supplemental insurance programs. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact the Payroll and Benefits Clerk 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., accidental death and dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, dental, and additional term life 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 and 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. Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case. All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the Payroll and Benefits Clerk. Employees who are unable to work due to 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 under the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. 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 Payroll and Benefits Clerk.

Teacher retirement
Policy CFEA

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

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify the Payroll and Benefits Clerk as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits are available the Payroll and Benefits Clerk. Additional inquiries should be addressed to: Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-397-6400.

Other benefit programs

- Tax-sheltered annuities
- Free athletic passes
- Employee assistance programs

LEAVES AND ABSENCES
Policy DEC

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 have personal needs that will require long leaves of absence should call the Payroll and Benefits Clerk for counseling about leave options, continuation of benefits, and communicating with the district.

Employees who take an unpaid leave of absence may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. The district for employees on leave, authorized under the Family and Medical Leave Act, will pay health care benefits as they were when they were working. The district does not make benefit contributions for employees who are not on active payroll status.

Employees must follow district and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate leave request form. Any employee who is absent more than 5 consecutive 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 fitness to return to work.

Personal and local sick leave is earned on an annual basis. Leave is available for the employee's use. If an employee leaves the district before the end of the work year, the cost of any unearned leave days shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

Personal leave

State law requires that all employees receive up to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is earned at a rate of one day per month. A day of earned personal leave is equivalent to an assigned workday. There is no limit on the accumulation of state personal leave, and it can be transferred to other Texas school districts. There are two types of personal leave: non-discretionary and discretionary.

Non-discretionary Leave that is taken for personal or family illness, emergency, or a death in the family is considered non-discretionary leave. This type of leave allows very little or no advance planning and will be granted to employees in the same manner as sick leave.

Discretionary Leave that is taken at an employee's discretion and that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a notice of the request 3 days in advance of the anticipated absence to his or her principal or supervisor. Discretionary personal leave will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis and will be subject to the following limitations:

Sick leave

Previously accumulated state sick leave is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. Sick leave can be used only in 1/2-day increments except when coordinated with family and medical leave taken on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis and workers' compensation benefits. If an employee uses more sick leave than he or she has earned, the cost of unearned sick leave will be deducted from the employee's next paycheck.

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

(DEC Legal)

Sick Leave Pool

A sick leave pool may be established for voluntary donations of local leave days by District staff to assist a fellow employee whose state and local sick and personal leave has been exhausted, but is still absent from duty for any reason approved by state and local policy.

Eligibility: All full-time employees who accumulate personal leave days would be eligible to participate. Written certification from a physician is required before a pool is established.

Establishment: A request for the establishment of a sick leave pool shall be made in writing to the appropriate administrator or designee. Pooling may be requested when an employee has exhausted his or her state and local sick and personal leave. When such a request is made, the Superintendent or designee shall notify all district employees in a timely manner. Employees wishing to contribute to the pool shall sign the notice and return it to the central office. Employees

wishing to contribute to the pool shall sign the notice and return it to the central office. Each employee's donation shall be limited to four days per year. If more days are donated than are needed, a lottery system shall be used to determine which employees' days shall be used. A maximum of 25 days may be contributed to a sick leave pool. If the employee in need is still unable to return to work, another request for a sick leave pool may be initiated. A maximum of four requests per year may be made.

Cessation of Pool: The sick leave pool ceases to exist when:

1. The employee returns to work full time.
2. The employee reaches the maximum number of days allowed under this policy.
3. All days contributed have been used.
4. The school year ends.
5. The employee resigns.

Unused sick leave pool days shall revert to the employees who donated them.

Local leave
(DEC Local)

Temporary disability

Certified employees. The purpose of temporary disability leave is to provide job protection to full-time educators who cannot work for an extended period of time because of a mental or physical disability of a temporary nature. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability. A full-time educator may voluntarily request to be placed on temporary disability leave or be placed on leave involuntarily.

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. The leave request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days. If disabilities leave is not approved, the employee must return to work or be subject to termination procedures.

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

When an employee is ready to return to work, the Superintendent and Supervisor should be notified at least 30 days in advance. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able to do the job. Professional employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned as soon as an appropriate position is available. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, professional employees will be reinstated at the beginning of the following school year.

Family and medical leave

Employees who work in a district where there are at least 50 employees within a 75 mile radius, have been employed by the district for at least 12 months, and have worked at least 1,250 hours during that time are eligible for family and medical leave. Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year between September 1 and August 31 for the following reasons:

- The birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
- To care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition
- An employee's serious health condition

A husband and wife who are both employed by the district are subject to limits in the amount of leave that they can take to care for a parent with a serious health condition or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child.

Eligible employees are entitled to continue their health care benefits under the same terms and conditions as when they were on the job and are entitled to return to their previous job or an equivalent job at the end of their leave. Under some circumstances, teachers who are able to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue their leave until the end of the semester.

Family and medical leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave. Accumulated leave will be used as family and medical leave, except in the case of employees who are receiving workers' compensation wage benefits.

In some circumstances, employees may take family and medical leave in blocks of time or by reducing their normal weekly or daily work schedule. Intermittent leave may be taken under the following circumstances:

- To allow an employee to care for a seriously ill spouse, child, or parent
- When an employee requires medical treatment for a serious illness
- When an employee is seriously ill and unable to work
- When an employee becomes a parent or has a foster child placed in his or her home

When the need for family and medical leave is foreseeable, employees who want to use it must provide 30-day advance notice of their need. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must contact the Superintendent and Supervisor as soon as possible. Employees may be required to provide the following:

- Medical certification from a qualified health care provider supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or an immediate family member
- Second or third medical opinions and periodic re-certification of the need for leave
- Periodic reports during the leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work
- Medical certification from a qualified health care provider at the conclusion of leave of an employee's ability to perform the essential job functions

Employees requiring family and medical leave should contact the Payroll and Benefits Clerk for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Workers' compensation benefits

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related injury may use sick leave or any other leave benefit in conjunction with workers' compensation while recovering, except when the leave is classified as family and medical leave. While on workers' compensation leave, the district will pay the difference between the weekly income benefit and the employee's regular salary and charge available leave proportionately.

Assault leave

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to anyone who is injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. 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. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave or counted against the employee's family and medical leave entitlement, and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits.

Jury duty

Employees will receive leave with pay and without loss of accumulated leave for jury duty. Employees must present documentation of the service and may retain any compensation they receive.

Other court appearances

Employees will be granted paid leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding. Absences for court appearances related to an employee's personal business must be taken as personal leave or leave without pay (if no personal leave is available). Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

Military leave

Paid leave for military service: Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, or reserves component of the armed forces will be granted a paid leave of absence without loss of any accumulated leave for authorized training or duty orders. Paid military leave will not exceed 15 days per year.

Re-employment after state military leave: Employees who leave the district to enter into active duty with the Texas National Guard or Texas State Guard may return to employment if they are honorably discharged or released within five years. Employees who wish to return to the district will be re-employed in the same position they previously held or reassigned to a position of similar

seniority, status, and pay, provided they are still qualified to perform the required duties of the position. Application for reemployment and evidence of honorable discharge or release must be submitted to the Superintendent of school within 90 days of discharge or separation.

Re-employment after federal military leave: Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be re-employed in the position they would have held if employment had not been interrupted or reassigned to an equivalent or similar position provided they are still 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 to Superintendent of school.

Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage for a period not to exceed 18 months. Employees should contact the central office for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

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 Elementary & Secondary Teacher of the Year and recognition of years of service in 5-year increments.

DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout the school year, the central 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:

- district details* - Newsletter after Board meeting
- Forum Notes - Newsletter after District Forum Meeting
- Employee Assistance Newsletter
- Safety Newsletter

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

Policy DGBA

In an effort to hear and resolve employee complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted an orderly process that all employees must follow when bringing formal complaints and grievances except in the case of sexual harassment complaints. Employees are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time.

The formal grievance 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 grievance procedures are exhausted, employees can bring grievances to the board of trustees. For ease of reference, the district's policy concerning the process of bringing complaints and grievances is reprinted as follows:
(see *DGBA (Local)*)

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 and property of students and co-workers and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and co-workers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor as early as possible (preferably in advance) in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, and tardiness may be cause for disciplinary action.
- Know and comply with department and district procedures and policies.
- 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.

Employees who wish to express criticism shall do so with their immediate supervisors. (*See DGBA*) All employees, as public servants, must follow the *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*, which is reprinted below:

Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

The Texas educator should strive to create an atmosphere that will nurture to fulfillment the potential of each student.

The educator is responsible for standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, parents, and the community.

The Code is intended to govern the profession and the Professional Practices Commission shall determine interpretations of the Code. The educator who conducts his affairs with conscientious concern will exemplify the highest standards of professional commitment.

Principle I: Professional Ethical Conduct

The Texas educator should endeavor to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, demonstrating personal integrity, and exemplifying honesty.

1. The educator shall not intentionally misrepresent official policies of the school district or educational institution and shall clearly distinguish those views from personal attitudes and opinions.
2. The educator shall honestly account for all funds committed to his charge and shall conduct his financial business with integrity.
3. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
4. The educator shall accept no gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair or appear to impair professional judgment.
5. The educator shall not offer any favor, service, or thing of value to obtain special advantage.
6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Principle II: Professional Practices and Performance

The Texas educator, after qualifying in a manner established by law or regulation, shall assume responsibilities for professional teaching practices and professional performance and shall continually strive to demonstrate competence.

1. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications and shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment.
2. The educator shall possess mental health, physical stamina, and social prudence necessary to perform the duties of his professional assignment.
3. The educator shall organize instruction that seeks to accomplish objectives related to learning.
4. The educator shall continue professional growth.
5. The educator shall comply with written local school board policies, Texas Education Agency regulations, and applicable state laws.

Principle III: Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.

1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
2. The educator shall not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and legal statutes regarding dismissal, evaluation, and employment practices.
4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities.
5. The educator shall not discriminate against, coerce, or harass a colleague on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, handicap, or marital status.
6. The educator shall not intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of any professional right or privilege.
7. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

8. The educator shall have the academic freedom to teach as a professional privilege, and no educator shall interfere with such privilege except as required by state and/or federal law.

Principle IV: Ethical Conduct toward Students

The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, should measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his potential as an effective citizen.

1. The educator shall deal considerately and justly with each student and shall seek to resolve problems including discipline according to law and school board policy.
2. The educator shall not intentionally expose the student to disparagement.
3. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. The educator shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.
5. The educator shall endeavor to present facts without distortion.
6. The educator shall not unfairly 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, sex, handicap, national origin, or marital status.
7. The educator shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning or deny the student access to varying points of view.

Principle V: Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community

The Texas educator, in fulfilling citizenship responsibilities in the community, should cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

1. The educator shall make reasonable effort to communicate to parents, information which should be revealed in the interest of the student.
2. The educator shall endeavor to understand community cultures, and relate the home environment of students to the school.
3. The educator shall manifest a positive role in school public relations.

Dress and grooming

The dress and grooming of District employees shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for their assignments, and in accordance with any additional standards established by their supervisors and approved by the Superintendent.

Sexual harassment

Policies DHC, FNCJ, FFG

Within the past few years, litigation regarding sexual harassment and sexual abuse adds urgency to the District's prohibition against all such behavior. It is also imperative that those who interact

with students be aware of their responsibility to respond immediately and appropriately to allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of students. Policies regarding sexual harassment are at *DHC (LEGAL)* and *(LOCAL)* and *FNCL (LEGAL)* and *(LOCAL)*; on harassment of other sorts, at *DHB (LOCAL)* and *FNCL (LOCAL)*.

Employee-to-employee. Sexual harassment of a coworker is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct under the following conditions:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions.
- The conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise work environment.

Employees who believe that they have been subject to sexual harassment are encouraged to come forward with complaints and should inform their principal, supervisor, or the assistant superintendent. Employees must follow the procedures outlined in this handbook for filing a complaint except when it would require presenting a complaint to the alleged harasser. The district will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment and take appropriate disciplinary action.

Employee-to-student. Sexual harassment of students by employees is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment of students includes any welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other oral, written, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. Romantic relationships between district employees and students are strictly prohibited. Other prohibited conduct includes the following:

- Engaging in sexually oriented conversations for the purpose of personal sexual gratification
- Telephoning students at home or elsewhere and engaging in inappropriate social relationships
- Engaging in physical contact that would reasonably be construed as sexual in nature
- Enticing or threatening students to get them to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for grades or other school-related benefits

Sexual abuse of a student by an employee violates a student's constitutional right to bodily integrity. Sexual abuse may include, but is not limited to, fondling, sexual assault, or sexual intercourse.

Employees who suspect a student is being sexually harassed or abused by another employee are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal. All allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a student will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. Conduct that may be characterized as known or suspected child abuse will also be reported to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. Employees with questions or concerns relating to the alleged sexual harassment of a student should contact the campus principal.

Student's rights and responsibilities:

Sexual harassment/sexual abuse – DHC, FNCJ (Exhibit)

Notice of Parent and Student Rights

Questions and answers

What is the District policy concerning sexual misconduct?

Every student has the right to attend District schools and school-related activities free from all forms of discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment.

The District encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the public schools.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment of a student **by an employee** includes any welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal (oral or written), physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. It also includes such activities as engaging in sexually oriented conversations for purposes of personal sexual gratification, telephoning a student at home or elsewhere to solicit inappropriate social relationships, physical contact that would be reasonably construed as sexual in nature, and enticing or threatening a student to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for grades or other school-related benefit.

Sexual harassment of a student **by another student** includes unwanted and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, whether by word, gesture, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors.

What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse is defined as "illegal sex acts performed against a minor...." It may include, but is not limited, to fondling, sexual assault, or sexual intercourse. Sexual abuse is a form of child abuse that must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

What laws address sexual harassment of students?

Sexual harassment of students may constitute discrimination on the basis of sex and is prohibited by Title IX (the federal law prohibiting gender-based discrimination by schools that receive federal funds).

Will I be informed if my child has been sexually harassed or sexually abused at school?

The District will notify parents of students involved in sexual harassment by students when the allegations are not minor or of any incident regarding sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee. Notification may be by telephone, letter, or personal conference.

What will the District do when it learns of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a student?

When a principal or the school administrator receives a report that a student is being sexually harassed or abused, he or she will initiate an investigation and take prompt action to intervene.

If a District employee is found to have sexually harassed or abused a student, that employee will be disciplined. Disciplinary action may range from a warning to termination of employment.

If a student is found to have sexually harassed or abused another student, the offender will be disciplined. The District will consider the full range of disciplinary options, up to and including expulsion, according to the nature of the offense.

What do I do if I am concerned that my child has been sexually harassed or sexually abused at school?

A student or parent who has a complaint alleging sexual harassment by other students(s) or sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee may request a conference with the principal, the principal's designee, or the District's Title IX coordinator. The conference will be scheduled and held as soon as possible but within five school days. The principal or Title IX coordinator will coordinate an investigation, which ordinarily will be completed within ten school days. The parent will be informed if extenuating circumstances delay the investigation. Oral complaints should be reduced to writing to assist in the District's investigation.

A complaint may also be filed separately with the Office of Civil Rights:

Regional Director
Office of Civil Rights, Region VI
1200 Main Tower Building, Room 1935
Dallas, Texas 75202
(214) 767-3959

Who is the Title IX coordinator and how do I contact that person?

The Title IX coordinator for the District is:
Name : Don Wood
Position: Assistant Superintendent
Address: 514 W. Avenue G, Muleshoe, 79347
Telephone: (806) 272-7406

The Title IX coordinator is a District employee who has the responsibility to assure District compliance with the requirements of Title IX. The coordinator will investigate or oversee an investigation of a complaint alleging violations of Title IX.

The District has adopted complaint procedures for handling Title IX complaints, which may be obtained from the principal or Title IX coordinator. The parent or other advisor throughout the complaint process may accompany the student.

Will my complaint be confidential?

To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be treated in a confidential manner. Limited disclosure may be necessary in order to complete a thorough investigation.

What if I am not satisfied by the District's resolution of my complaint?

If the parent is not satisfied with the District's initial response to the complaint, he or she has ten school days to request a conference with the Superintendent or designee, who will schedule and hold a conference. Prior to or at the conference, the parent must submit a written complaint that contains: a statement of the complaint; any evidence to support the complaint; the resolution sought; the student's and/or parent's signature; and the date of the conference with the principal.

If the parent considers the resolution unsatisfactory, he or she may present the complaint to the Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting. The Board will hear the complaint in closed meeting, unless otherwise required by the Texas Open Meetings Act. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board will decide what action it deems appropriate.

Prohibited conduct

Employees shall not engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment. The District shall investigate all allegations of such harassment and shall take appropriate disciplinary action against employees found to engage in such harassment.

Complaint procedure

An employee who believes he or she has been or is being subjected to any form of sexual harassment as defined above shall bring the matter to the attention of the principal or immediate supervisor, in accordance with the District's grievance policy [*see DGBA(L)*]. However, no procedure or step in that policy shall have the effect of requiring the employee alleging such harassment to present the matter to a person who is the subject of the complaint.

Drug-abuse prevention

Policies DH, DI

Muleshoe ISD is committed to maintaining a drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of illegal drugs in the workplace. 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 on drug abuse and drug-free schools see *DH (Local)*.

Reporting suspected child abuse

Policy FFG

All employees are required by state law to immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. Teachers and other professional staff are required to file a report with a law enforcement agency or Child Protective Services within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. 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. Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should report their concerns to the campus principal.

Reportable diseases, injuries, and child abuse

Child abuse will be reported through appropriate agencies designated for reporting (i.e. Department of Human Resources, National Child Abuse Hotline.) The health program will serve as liaison to reporting agencies as needed by the school staff concerning any of the reportable areas. (See School Health Program for Muleshoe Schools)

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.

Safety

Policy CK

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 requirement:

- 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.

Due to circuit surges which disrupt the technology services, the following items will not be allowed in the classroom: microwave ovens, refrigerators, and personal space heaters. The building principal shall designate areas in which these items are permitted.

For safety reasons, wick-burning candles will not be allowed to be burned in the building.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the Assistant Superintendent.

Tobacco use

Policies DH, GKA, FNCD

The law on all district-owned property prohibits smoking or using tobacco products. 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 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.

Possession of firearms and weapons

Policies FNCG, GKA

Employees, visitors, and students are prohibited from bringing firearms, illegal knives, or other weapons onto school premises or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisors or call (806) 272-7404 immediately.

Visitors in the workplace

Policy GKC

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

Copyrighted materials

Policy EFE

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of 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.). Rented videotapes are to be used in the classroom for educational purposes only. Duplication or backups of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Computer use and data management

Policy CQ

The district's electronic communications system, including its network access to the Internet, is to be used for administrative and instructional purposes only. The use of the computer for writing personal e-mails and playing computer games shall occur outside of the instructional day. Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications systems are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees and students who are authorized to use the systems are required to abide by the provisions of the district's communications systems policy and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Technology Coordinator.

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 piece of district property. A copy of the district's management plan is kept in the Superintendent's office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Pest control treatment
Policy CLB

Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a district building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located at the building office/bulletin board. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Bad weather closing

Policy CKC

The district bad weather phone message number is **272-SNOW (7669)**. The district may close schools for a full day or part of a day 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 or to release students early, the following radio and television stations will be notified by school officials:

Channel 6 Muleshoe 272-3990	KMUL Radio Muleshoe 272-4273	KGNC Amarillo 355-6742	KMAC TV28 Lubbock 745-2828
KLBK TV13 Lubbock 745-2345	KCBDTV11 Lubbock 744-1414	KCLV Clovis 505/ 763-4401	

Emergencies

Policy CKC

All employees should be familiar with the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Fire, tornado, and other emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with evacuation procedures. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all district buildings. Employees should know the location of the extinguishers nearest their place of work and how to use them.

Purchasing procedures

Policy CH

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

Proper procedures for preparing and processing purchase orders - 2003-2004

1. All school purchases, either on activity or budget, must be authorized prior to purchase by your supervisor. Only in an emergency will other procedures be accepted. If these procedures are not followed, the purchase will be considered a personal purchase and the purchaser will be responsible for assuming the debt and clearing the account.
2. If an emergency should arise, and the money has been budgeted or activity money is available, and approval has been given to order, the order may be telephoned to vendor. The vendor must be given the purchase order number to be used and instructed to use this number on all invoices, statements, and correspondence relative to that purchase. With the use of this emergency method the purchase order should be typed immediately, Confirmation Only noted on the body of the purchase order and forwarded to the Business Office that same day. Vendors should be able to furnish the correct price for purchase order completion at the time the order is placed.
3. When merchandise is received, please check immediately to see if all items ordered are received and undamaged. At that time please indicate on part 7 of the purchase order: "Payment is requested, merchandise is received, date, and sign (no initials please)." Return this part 7 with any correspondence relative to that purchase to bookkeeping for payment. We will make payment when authorization is received and a correct invoice is received from the vendor. Please be assured payment is not made until these items are in our files.
4. Only accounts that will be assumed for payment by the District, either on budget or activity, will be carried only as Muleshoe ISD. Any accounts created otherwise will not be considered a debt of the district but a debt of the person creating that account. Please do not give vendors other instructions.
5. All Purchase orders must be assigned to the company that will be invoicing for the merchandise. They cannot be assigned to the sales representative regardless of other instructions. No exceptions please.
6. Purchases and Purchase Orders for Activity Funds are also handled in the Business Office. The same procedures for activity purchases and budget purchases are governed by these procedures and meet the audit requirements.
7. Personnel making orders for personal merchandise should not involve the school either by name or address when making their order. Please keep personal business personal and the school business at school.
8. If you should preview merchandise, do so only on purchase order. Again, in emergency, give vendor instructions that order is for preview and to use your purchase order number on all correspondence. Also you should have prior approval for making this order.

9. If staff is given approval for a local purchase for budget or activity, have the ticket signed and department or activity indicated immediately. If the purchase is to be done with a purchase order the purchase order number should be noted immediately and the purchase order processed that same day and sent to the Business Office. Please do not hold the purchase order for the monthly statements from the vendor as this creates a terrible backlog in the Business Office in reconciling monthly statements and delays vendor payments.

If you have other suggestions or ideas for providing an auditable accounting method of expenditures we welcome your suggestions. Please be reminded that we are only attempting to account for your budget and merchandise.

Travel expense reimbursement
Policy DEE

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and the Business Office must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule authorized by the board of trustees and the Internal Revenue Service. Employees must submit receipts to be reimbursed for expenses other than mileage. The District rate for mileage is \$.29 per mile.

TRAVEL EXPENSES

For the 2003-04 school year the reimbursement amounts when traveling on school business are as listed below.

HOTEL - \$75.00 per day. Any exceptions must be approved in advance.

MEALS - \$25.00 per day (Gratuities are not included)

Breakfast - \$7.00 Lunch - \$8.00 Dinner -\$10.00

 **Meals reimbursed for day trips will be considered a fringe benefit and will be included on your W-2 as untaxed income unless it is a business meal and you provide documentation to the business office.

MILAGE – (use of personal car when a school car is not available) - \$.29 per mile.

If air travel to the destination is less expensive, the amount reimbursed for mileage will be limited to the cost of the round trip airline ticket at the best available fare.

 Refer to the District Mileage Chart.

*****You are encouraged to use a school vehicle if at all possible.**

DISTRICT MILEAGE CHART
(round trip mileage)

Abilene Texas	452.4 miles
Amarillo Texas	199.4 miles
Arlington Texas	734.4 miles
Austin Texas	877.4 miles
Brenham Texas	1009.2 miles
Brownfield Texas	170.2 miles
Canyon Texas	163.8 miles
Clovis New Mexico	61.6 miles
Dallas Texas	770.2 miles
Denver City Texas	179.2 miles
Dimmitt Texas	87. 2 miles
Friona Texas	58.6 miles
Fort Worth Texas	709 miles
Houston Texas	1155.4 miles
Idalou Texas	152 miles
Lazbuddie Texas	36 miles
Levelland Texas	111 miles
Littlefield Texas	63 miles
Lubbock Texas	135.4 miles
Midland Texas	350.6 miles
New Deal Texas	132.2 miles
Odessa Texas	344 miles
Plainview Texas	117.6 miles
Portales New Mexico	70 miles
San Antonio Texas	901.8 miles
Seminole Texas	220.2 miles
Shallowater Texas	112 miles
Slaton Texas	168.4 miles
Sudan Texas	31.6 miles
Tulia Texas	150.2 miles

RECAP OF ESTIMATED EXPENSES

	DRAW CK #	ACTUAL*ALLOWABLE
LODGING	_____	_____
(Allowable: \$75.00 local)		
(Allowable: \$55.00 federal)		
MEALS:	_____	_____
(Allowable: \$25.00 a day)		
(\$7-breakfast,\$8-lunch,\$10-dinner)		
MILEAGE	_____	_____
(Allowable: \$.29 a mile)		
TRANSPORTATION	_____	_____
(Taxi, bus, car rental etc.)		
AIR FARE	_____	_____
(Only if paid to you)		
PARKING	_____	_____
REGISTRATION	_____	_____
OTHER	_____	_____
TOTAL	_____	_____
DIFFERENCE	_____	
Employee Signature	_____	
Principal's Signature	_____	

*Actual expenses are not to exceed the allowable limits.
*Actual expenses need to have receipts attached for verification.

IF YOUR ACTUAL EXPENSES EXCEED THE ESTIMATE YOU WILL NEED TO FILL THIS IN AND ATTACH THIS FORM TO A STATEMENT AND RETURN TO THE BUSINESS OFFICE.

Name and address changes

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

Personnel records

Policy GBA

Most district records including personnel records are public information and must be released upon request. A limited amount of personal information may be withheld. Employees may choose not to allow public access to or have the following information included in a staff directory by submitting a written request to the Superintendent's office:

Address

Phone number

Social Security number

Information that reveals whether they have family members

Building use

Policy GKD

The Superintendent's secretary is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact the Superintendent's secretary to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

Fund Raising Policy

All employees who are coaches or sponsors of any school team or organization must get prior approval from the building principal and the superintendent (or his designee) before a fund raising activity can begin. Forms can be acquired from the building principal to request the fund raiser. It is recommended that all fund raising activities occur outside the instructional time and solicitation not be conducted in the school buildings.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Resignations

Policy DFE

Contract employees. Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the Superintendent of schools. Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the board of trustees. Resignation without the consent of the board may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification.

The superintendent will notify the Texas Commissioner of Education when an employee resigns and reasonable evidence exists to indicate that the employee has engaged in any of the acts listed below.

Non-contract employees. Non-contract employees may resign their positions at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the Superintendent 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 non-renewal of contract employees

Policies DFAA, DFAB, DFBA, DFBB, DFBC, DFCA, DFCC, DFD

Employees on probationary, or term contracts can be dismissed during the school year or non-renewed at the end of the year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. 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 time lines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or non-renewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to an employee. Information on the time lines and procedures can be found in the DF policies that are provided to employees in the back of this manual or in the current policy manual located on the World Wide Web at www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/009901 or a specific policy can be requested from any administrative employee that has access to the World Wide Web or at the Central Administration Building located at 514 West Avenue G, Muleshoe TX.

Dismissal of non-contract employees

Policy DCD

Non-contract 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, religion, sex, national origin, disability, military status, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Non-contract employees who are dismissed have the right to a grievance hearing before the board. To present a grievance, the employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook.

Exit interviews and procedures

Policy DC

Exit interviews will be scheduled for all employees leaving the district. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at this time. Separating employees are asked to provide the district with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the district with feedback on their employment experience.

All district keys, books, property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment. The district may withhold the cost of any items not returned from the final paycheck.

Reports to the commissioner
Policy DF

The dismissal or resignation of a certified employee will be reported to the Texas Commissioner of Education if there is reasonable evidence that the employee's conduct involves the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other illegal conduct with a minor
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of school property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position
- Committing a crime on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

INSTRUCTIONAL INFORMATION

- A. Dillman Elementary School
Grades Pre-K - 2
- B. Mary DeShazo Elementary
Grades 3-4-5
- C. Watson Junior High School
Grades 6-7-8
- D. Muleshoe High School
Grades 9-12

STUDENT ISSUES

Equal educational opportunities
Policy FB

The Muleshoe Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, 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 on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, or age should be directed to the campus principal. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should also be directed to campus principal.

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:

1. Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes.
2. The student (if 18 or older)
3. School officials with legitimate educational interests

Materials that are not considered educational records and do not have to be made available to a parent or student include teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher.

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

Parent and student complaints

Policy FNG

In an effort to hear and resolve parent and student complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted orderly processes for handling complaints on different issues. Any campus office or 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 teachers or the appropriate administrator at any time. Parents and students with complaints that cannot be resolved 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. Once all administrative complaint procedures are exhausted, parents and students can bring complaints to the board of trustees.

Administering medication to students

Policy FFAC

Only designated employees can administer medication to students. A student who must take medicine during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the prescription 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.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Policies in the FN series and FO series

Students are expected to follow the campus rules, classroom rules, and rules listed in the Student Code of Conduct and student handbook. Teachers and administrators are responsible for taking disciplinary action based on a range of discipline management procedures 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.

Teachers must file a written report with the principal or another appropriate administrator when they have knowledge that a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct. The principal or administrator will send a copy of this report to the student's parents within 24 hours.

Campus discipline person

The campus discipline person(s) on each campus shall be the principal.

Duties shall include the authority to:

1. Assess and implement the campus discipline management program.
2. Remove a student from campus for emergency reasons.
3. Refer students to school-community guidance centers, if available.
4. Remove students to alternative education programs.
5. Suspend a student for a maximum of three school days for each incident. The number of days in a semester is not limited.

General guidelines

When imposing discipline, District personnel shall adhere to the following general guidelines:

1. Discipline shall be administered when necessary to protect students, school employees, or property and maintain essential order and discipline.
2. Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case.

Factors to consider shall include:

- a. The seriousness of the offense.
- b. The student's age.
- c. The frequency of misconduct.
- d. The student's attitude.
- e. The potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment.

Discipline management techniques

Discipline management techniques used when students violate the code of conduct shall include:

1. Counseling by teachers, special services, or administrative personnel.

2. Parent-teacher conferences.
3. Cooling-off or time-out.
4. Behavioral contracts.
5. Assigned school duties other than class tasks.
6. Verbal correction.
7. Withdrawal of privileges, including participation in extracurricular activities and honorary positions.
8. Sending the student to the office or other assigned area.
9. Detention. (*See FOC*)
10. Corporal punishment. (*See FOB*)
11. Probation.
12. Rewards or demerits.
13. Referral to outside agency or authority.
14. Temporary confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
15. Removal to an alternative education program. (*See FOA*)

Parent-teacher conferences

A teacher or other school employee may request a conference with a student's parents whenever the teacher or employee perceives the need for parental cooperation in enforcing the student code of conduct.

Serious offenses

FNC

Serious offenses are defined as:

1. Assaulting a teacher or other individual. (*See FNCH*)
2. Committing arson.
3. Possessing a prohibited weapon. (*See FNCG*)
4. The use, gift, sale, delivery, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, other controlled substances, dangerous drugs, and abusable glue or volatile chemicals. (*See FNCF*)
5. Engaging in conduct that constitutes felony criminal mischief.
6. Vandalism. (*See FNCB*)
7. Robbery or theft.
8. Extortion, coercion, or blackmail.
9. Aggressive, disruptive action or group demonstration that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with school activities. (*See FNCI*)
10. Verbal abuse, i.e. name-calling, racial or ethnic slurs, or derogatory statements that may disrupt the school environment or incite violence.
11. Hazing. (*See FNCC*)
12. Insubordination.
13. Exhibiting disrespect or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward teachers or other employees.
14. Fighting.
15. Defacing property.
16. Threat to others.

17. Smoking
18. Any other conduct that disrupts the school environment or educational process.

Minor offenses

Any violation of the code of conduct that is not listed as a serious offense is considered a minor offense.

Persistent offenses

The District defines "persistent" to be two or more violations of the code of conduct in general or repeated occurrences of the same violation.

Physical restraint

Any District employee may, within the scope of the employee's duties, use and apply physical restraint to a student if the employee reasonably believes restraint is necessary in order to:

1. Protect a person, including the person using physical restraint, from physical injury.
2. Obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object.
3. Protect property from serious damage.
4. Remove a student refusing a lawful command of a school employee from a specific location, including a classroom or other school property, in order to restore order or to impose disciplinary measures.
5. Restrain an irrational student.

Suspension and removal to alternative education programs

Authority

The Board delegates the authority to suspend or remove students to alternative education programs to the principal.

Informal hearing

Before suspending or removing a student to an alternative education program, the person authorized to suspend or remove shall hold an informal hearing at which:

1. The student is advised of the conduct with which he or she is charged.
2. The student is given the opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident.

Removal to AEP

The District shall provide the following alternative education programs:

1. In School Suspension (ISS) off campus.
2. Alternative Educational Placement (AEP) off campus.

Appeal (FNG [L])

If the outcome of the conference with principal is not to the student's or parent's satisfaction or the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee. The request must be filed within seven days following receipt of a response or, if no response is received, within seven days of the response deadline. The Superintendent or designee shall hold the conference within seven days after receiving the request.

If the outcome of the conference with the Superintendent or designee is not to the student's or parent's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may submit to the Superintendent or designee a request to place the matter on the agenda of a future Board meeting. The request shall be in writing and must be filed within seven days of the response or, if no response is received, within seven days of the response deadline.

Corporal punishment guidelines

Corporal punishment shall be limited to spanking or paddling the student, and shall be administered only in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The student shall be told of the reason corporal punishment is being administered.
2. Corporal punishment may be administered by the school principal or assistant principal.
3. The instrument to be used in administering corporal punishment shall be approved by the principal or a designee.
4. When corporal punishment is administered, it shall be done in the presence of one other District professional employee and shall take place in a designated place out of view of other students.

Disciplinary record

A disciplinary record shall be maintained and shall contain the name of the student, the type of misconduct, any previous disciplinary actions, the type of corporal punishment administered, the name of the person administering the punishment, the names of witnesses present, and the date and time of punishment.

Detention

Teacher's authority

For minor infractions of the code of conduct or other policies and regulations, teachers may detain students after hours. Before assigning students to detention, the teacher shall inform the student of the conduct that allegedly constitutes the violation, and the student shall be given an opportunity to explain his version of the incident.

Notice to parents

When after school detention is used, notice shall first be given to the student's parents to inform the parent of the reason for the detention and permit arrangements for the necessary transportation of the student. Except in the case of a student who is 18 years of age or older, the detention shall not

begin until the parents have been notified. The student's parents, if the student is a minor, may be required to provide transportation when the student has been assigned to detention.

Staff supervision

All students detained for disciplinary purposes shall be under the direct supervision of the teacher or another member of the professional staff. The principal shall be responsible for seeing that the time that the student spends for disciplinary purposes is used constructively for educational purposes.

Expulsions authority

Due process

The Board delegates the authority to expel students to the Superintendent. The person(s) authorized to expel students shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate due process procedures are followed when imposing an expulsion.

Appeals

Request for a Board review of a decision to expel a student shall be made in writing to the Superintendent within three school days after receipt of the written decision. The Superintendent shall provide the parent written notice of the date, time, and place of the review within five days of the receipt of the appeal request. The review shall be scheduled in accordance with the time lines set out in FNG.

The Board shall review the record of the due process hearing on the expulsion. The Board may also hear a statement from the student or parent(s) and from the Superintendent.

The Board shall base its decision on evidence reflected in the record and any statements made by the parties at the review and shall inform the student in writing of its decision within 15 days of the meeting.

Sanctions

Expelled students are prohibited from being on school grounds or attending school related extracurricular activities during the period of expulsion. No academic credit shall be earned for work missed during the period of expulsion.

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Special Programs

The guidance and counseling program shall provide the means of helping individual students understand and use wisely the educational, vocational, and personal opportunities they have and can develop. These programs shall be designed and developed to offer systematic assistance to aid all students in achieving satisfactory adjustment to school and to life. The goal of the guidance

and counseling process shall be to provide whatever help students need in developing interests and aptitudes, setting goals and plans, and meeting personal, social, and educational problems.

Guidance services shall be coordinated with the regular instructional program so that they contribute to a unified educational program. The guidance program shall operate with central coordination and shall be a cooperative project of the entire professional staff. Teachers shall utilize opportunities in the classroom, in extracurricular activities, and in contacts with parent(s)/guardian(s) to achieve guidance objectives. Qualified counselors shall be employed to supervise the standardized testing program and to provide personal, academic, and vocational guidance to students who need such services.

Implementation

The Superintendent shall implement the guidance and counseling program. Staff, facilities, and materials shall be provided that ensure an adequate program for student appraisal and diagnosis, as well as for consultation with teachers in developing teaching strategies.

Tutorial programs

Any student may attend tutorial sessions voluntarily. Students who are failing courses in subject areas for which tutorials are offered shall be required to attend those tutorials. Those students who choose not to attend tutorials shall be advised of the consequences of failing the course(s). (*See EHBC*)

Parental involvement Title I

To ensure parent involvement in Title I programs, the District shall inform the parents of participating students of specific instructional objectives for the student and solicit parent suggestions in program planning, development, and operation. The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with representative parents of participating students, shall be responsible for the development of written policies addressing involvement of parents in Title I programs. These policies shall be made available to all participants and shall be subject to continuing review and revision.

Remedial and compensatory education eligibility

The following students shall be eligible to participate in remedial and compensatory programs and services provided by the District:

1. Pre-kindergarten students eligible to be served by the required pre-kindergarten program. (*See FDA*)
2. Students in grades K-8 being served by one or more alternatives to social promotion provided by the District. (*See EIE*)
3. Students who have been identified as being at risk of dropping out of school. (*See EHBC and EIE*)
4. Students who failed to master any portion of the most recently administered TAAS test.

Programs and services

All instructional programs and services provided to eligible pre-kindergarten students, provided as alternatives to social promotion, or provided to meet the academic needs of at-risk students shall be considered part of the District's remedial and compensatory program.

The District shall also provide non-instructional services to students who are eligible for alternatives to social promotion or who are otherwise at risk. These services may include additional counseling and transportation for after-school tutorial programs. *(See EHBC)*

Coordinating revenue sources

The Superintendent shall ensure that state compensatory education funds are coordinated with Chapter I and other federal funds and with other state and local revenues to support the delivery of remedial and compensatory programs and services. In coordinating revenue sources, the Superintendent or designee shall consider using state compensatory funds for the following purposes:

1. Purchasing supplementary instructional materials for use in remedial and compensatory classes.
2. Reducing the class size for remedial and compensatory classes.
3. Providing additional time for planning coordinated instruction between regular and remedial/compensatory instruction by reducing teaching load.
4. Planning and delivering parent involvement programs.
5. Providing in service to all teachers on varieties of student learning styles and instructional techniques appropriate to each.
6. Providing released time for financial incentives for teachers to adapt regular curriculum to various learning styles.

Role of Campus Improvement Plans

The Board shall ensure that remedial and compensatory programs are available to all eligible students, but shall also direct funds to campuses according to goals and objectives for improved student achievement established in campus improvement plans.

Testing programs

Purposes

Standardized tests shall be administered at intervals determined by the instructional staff to accomplish the following purposes:

1. Diagnose specific skill deficiencies for individual students. *(See also EHBD)*
2. Provide information that can be used to plan instructional activities that capitalize on individual student strengths.
3. Provide teachers with data to use in evaluating the effectiveness of their planning and teaching strategies.

4. Assess student achievement and provide objective data for evaluation and reporting student progress.
5. Assess aspects of the instructional program, providing information that can be used in planning program improvements. (*See EK (LOCAL)*)
6. To meet with state testing requirements such as the K-2 diagnostic reading test.

Records

All information derived from the testing program shall be used in a manner consistent with professional standards. Records of all testing shall be maintained as part of the students' permanent record(s). (*See FL*) The guidance and counseling staff periodically shall evaluate the testing program to ensure the adequacy and proper use of the program.

Types

Achievement, aptitude, interest, ability, diagnostic, and readiness tests shall be included in the testing program. Tests such as the PSAT/NMSQT, the SAT, the ACT, and the Advance Placement Test of the College Entrance Examination shall be administered to students who register for them and pay the necessary fees. Other diagnostic test may include results from the PLAN, CTBS, End of Course and many other standardized tests.

Reports

The Superintendent shall report to the Board at least annually the results of student achievement on standardized tests compared with students in other districts, statewide and nationwide. The Superintendent shall include in the report explanations for areas in which District students are deficient and shall submit recommendations for correcting those deficiencies.

GED Test

An official General Educational Development testing center shall be located at one or more District high schools. In accordance with State Board rules, the District shall maintain test records permanently and provide storage for restricted test materials and a suitable place for administering the test. A certified counselor shall serve as chief examiner. Annually the Superintendent or chief examiner shall report to the Board concerning the center, including the number of tests administered and the fees received for administering the test.

Student teachers

The principal must interview student teachers personally. The Superintendent and the principal of the school to which the student teacher is to be assigned shall approve placement of all student teachers.

The Superintendent may dismiss student teachers that fail to abide by District policies, rules, and administrative regulations, at any time during the course of the teacher education program.

The person in charge of the teacher education program shall coordinate this program with institutions of higher learning and shall be responsible, in a joint effort with such institutions, for in

service training programs for the student teachers. The Superintendent must sign all contracts for such programs.

The complete program of student teaching shall be under the direction and control of the Superintendent. No student teacher shall be permitted to administer corporal punishment.

Academic Achievement

Grading relation to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

The District shall determine instructional objectives that relate to the essential knowledge and skills for grade level subjects or courses. These objectives shall address the skills needed for successful performance in the next grade or next course in a sequence of courses.

Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so that the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the designated District objectives. The student's mastery level shall be a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course.

Attendance

Students shall be permitted to make up assignments and tests after an absence [*See FDD (L)*]

Students shall receive credit for satisfactory make-up work after an absence, including absences as a result of suspension, but shall receive a zero for any assignment or test not made up within the allotted time.

Grading Policy

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period all campuses shall provide a notice of progress to the parent or guardian of a student whose grade average in any class is lower than 70 or whose grade average is deemed borderline.

Progress reports to parents

All handicapped students shall receive report cards each six. The teacher assigned to instruct the student as determined by the ARD committee should give grades.

Kindergarten

Achievement or progress in kindergarten shall be reported as S, I and U.

Grades 1-12

In grades 1-12 the District shall report grades to parents as numerical grades on a 100 points scale. If actual number grade is lower than 50, the District shall record a 50.

Homework policy: Philosophy and general expectations

The staff and administration of the Muleshoe Independent School District believe that homework is an integral part of the learning process. It is an opportunity for students to practice the skills and concepts being taught during the regular class time and gives the student time to practice on an individual basis.

The time a student spends on homework per night should average about 10 times the student's grade level. For example, a third grade student should spend approximately 30 minutes each night on homework, and twelfth grade student should spend approximately 120 minutes on homework each night. Kindergarten should expect about 10 minutes of homework two or three times a week. Time may also vary according to the types of assignments (research paper, projects, etc.).

Teachers are encouraged to be aware of special events in the school and community and adjust homework accordingly. Homework is never to be given as a punishment.

Homework is to be modified to meet the needs of individual students, is to be purposeful, and should follow guided and independent practice at school. The amount of homework assigned should be the minimal amount needed to show understanding of the concept or skill. Homework is to be checked in class by students (not other students) or by the teacher and students should receive immediate feedback.

Kinds of homework will vary according to grade level and subject but could include: studying for tests, oral/silent reading, practicing facts, special projects, research papers, writing, working math problems, experiments, interviews, collecting materials. All assignments are to be satisfactorily completed on time. Students generally have some time in class in which to either start or complete assignments.

Students are expected to come to class prepared daily and teachers will follow the school's disciplinary plan with students who do not complete homework assignments. Teachers may ask students to stay in at recess or after school (with parent permission) to complete homework assignments. Homework, guided practice or independent practice will be graded. The report card grade will be derived from homework, class assignment, major projects and tests. Grades below 50 will be recorded as a 50 and averaged with other grades.

Six weeks and Semester Grades

As a general rule, teachers should have, at a minimum, 10 homework and/or daily grades per six weeks. A minimum of two tests should be administered every six weeks (major project grades may substitute for one test grade). One test grade should not count for more than 20% of a six weeks grade.

Failure to complete homework by class time will result in a 10-point drop in the grade if it is completed by the next school day. After that timeline the student will receive a grade of zero (0) or an appropriate grade determined by the teacher.

Semester Exams will comprise 20% of the semester grade. 80% of the semester grade will be comprised of the six weeks grade.

Failure to complete homework may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Promotion, Retention, and Placement

Classification of students

After the 9th grade, students are classified according to the number of units (credits) earned toward graduation. Classification is as follows:

<u>units/credits earned</u>	<u>classification</u>
0-4.5	9th - Freshman
5-9.5	10th - Sophomore
10-14.5	11th - Junior
15-above	12th - Senior

Award of credit or grade

Students who, through no fault of their own, are not enrolled for an entire grading period, semester, or course, shall be provided opportunities to earn credit for the semester or course or a grade for the grading period. Teachers shall take into consideration the students' particular circumstances in determining appropriate opportunities, which shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Testing (advanced placement or mastery tests) to verify mastery of essential elements.
2. Tutorial sessions for students who enroll late to catch up on essential elements already covered in the class.
3. Early final examinations.
4. Individualized work for students, such as migrant students, who must withdraw early, to work ahead and ensure exposure to and mastery of essential elements.

Retention Grades K-8

Students in grades K-8 who fail to meet achievement standards for promotion may be required to repeat the grade level, within the limitations established by law. Kindergarten students may be retained with parent permission. (*See EIE*)

Campus committee Grades 1-5 No Child Left Behind.

The goal of the SSI is to support on-grade-level academic achievement for every student. This depends greatly on schools, parents, and community members working in partnership to meet individual student needs. This manual is designed to support school personnel in the implementation of the grade placement committees required in law:

In addition to local policy relating to grade advancement, student in grades 3, 5 and 8 shall demonstrate proficiency in the subjects required by TEC §28.0211(a), in order to advance

to the next grade. Demonstrated proficiency is defined under this section as meeting the passing standard on the appropriate assessment instruments specified by §101.2003(a) of this title (relating to Grade Advancement Testing Requirements) or on a state-approved alternate assessment authorized in §101.2011 of this title (relating to Alternate Assessment). A student who does not demonstrate proficiency as described in this section may only advance to the next grade if the student's Grade Placement Committee, as specified in §101.2007 of this title (relating to Role of Grade Placement Committee), determines by unanimous decision, in accordance with the standards for promotion established by the local school board, that the student is likely to perform at grade level at the end of the next year given additional accelerated instruction.

A campus promotion-retention committee composed of the principal and representatives from each grade level or department shall determine, on the basis of students' individual strengths and weaknesses, the remedial and compensatory strategies to be used for students who fail to be promoted, or are not retained, but who are otherwise considered to be "at risk" for academic reasons.

Exit provision

The committee shall monitor the process of at-risk students to assess their readiness to be instructed in the regular program without remedial and compensatory strategies.

Alternatives to social promotion

Remedial and compensatory strategies used as alternatives to social promotion include:

1. Tutorials (*See EHBC*)
2. Summer School (*See EHBC*)
3. Basic classes
4. Classroom grouping
5. Peer tutoring (*See EHBC*)
6. Cross grade-level instruction
7. Enrichment classes
8. Computer-assisted instruction
9. Classroom centers.
10. Learning resource centers
11. Variable schedule
12. Reading improvement classes
13. Title I programs (*See EHBD*)
14. Continuous progress classes
15. Required enrollment in TAKS remediation classes
16. Placing the student in the next grade provided that:
 - a. The student's overall achievement level is not significantly lower than other students at that grade, so that placement in a class shall not disrupt or overly complicate instruction for other students or the teacher.

- b. The student is receiving other remedial or compensatory instruction, such as re-teaching essential elements not mastered and other instructional strategies listed above, for the subjects in which achievement is significantly below grade level.

Grades 9-12

Any of the remedial and compensatory strategies listed above, as well as correspondence courses, are also available for use in grades 9-12 with students identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

Graduation requirements

Specific course requirements are contained in the MHS Student Handbook.

WAIVERS

The District is operating under one waiver approved by TEA for the 2003-04 school year.

Muleshoe ISD is operating under a Staff Development Waiver for 3 days under a general waiver and an extra one (1) day for specific Staff Development.