



**2023
2024**



MERIDIAN
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Employee Handbook

Employee Handbook

2023-2024



MERIDIAN

PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

1019 25th Avenue
Meridian, Mississippi 39301
www.mpsdk12.net

Meridian Public School District shall not discriminate in its policies and practices with respect to compensation, terms or conditions of employment on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, non-disqualifying physical or mental disability, national origin, veteran status, or any other basis covered by appropriate law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and need.

MPSD Motto:

Where Learners Become Leaders

MPSD Mission:

The mission of Meridian Public School District is to inspire and develop excellence in everyone.

MPSD Vision Statement:

Empowering learners to become leaders.

MPSD Board Goals:

- All schools will provide high-quality instruction that prepares all students for college and career readiness while achieving a successful or higher rating.
- All schools will maintain safe, attractive, and healthy learning environments.
- All schools will recruit and retain high-quality teachers and staff.
- All schools will create strong relationships with parents and the community.
- All schools will maintain a sound financial balance.

Board of Trustees:

President – Mrs. Sally Gray
Vice-President – Mrs. Beverly Pennington
Secretary – Mr. Ron Turner, Sr.
Member – Mrs. Gwendolyn Hardaway
Member - Ms. Kimberly Houston

Superintendent:

Dr. Amy J. Carter

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings, Faculty and Staff:

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year!! As an employee in the Meridian Public School District, you are among the best educators and support staff in the state. Each position in our district plays a critical role in the academic success of our students and professional accomplishments of all employees. As we begin a new school year, I challenge each of you to continue making Meridian schools the best educational experience our students have because each employee takes pride in a job well done. Simply stated, “Inspire excellence” each day as you greet students and families! It’s our goal to provide every student with an “A+” educational experience in each classroom, in every school, every day.

Please remember to use this guide as a “quick reference” to the policies and procedures for operations of the Meridian Public School District. This handbook contains information that will assist you in performing your job and inform you of district expectations. For additional information and a complete listing of the federal and state statutes and guidelines referred to in this handbook, consult the Meridian Public School District Board Policy Manual located online at www.mpsdk12.net.

Thank you for your commitment to the Meridian Public School District.

Always Believe in Blue

Dr. Amy J. Carter,
Superintendent

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence is then not an act, but a habit.” —Aristotle

MERIDIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Offices

Central Office
1019 25th Avenue
601-483-6271

Harris - Building A
3951 12th Street
Meridian, MS 39307

Elementary Schools

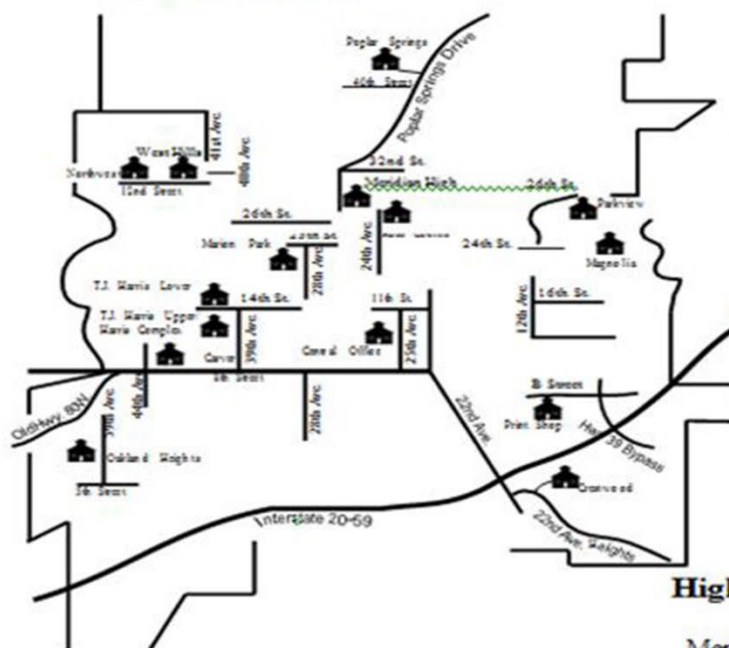
Crestwood
730 Crestwood Drive
601-484-4971

Harris Lower
3930 14th Street
601-484-4463

Parkview
1225 26th Street
601-484-4990

Poplar Springs
4101 27th Avenue
601-484-4450

West Hills
4100 32nd Street
601-484-4472



High School

Meridian High
2320 32nd Street
601-484-4439
MHS-9th Grade: 601-696-7295

Middle Schools

Magnolia
1350 24th Street
601-484-4060

Northwest
4400 32nd Street
601-484-4094

Ross Collins
2640 24th Avenue
601-483-3331

Marion Park School
2815 25th Street
601-484-4977



2023|24 Academic Calendar

Color Key: ■ Teachers Only ■ Holidays ■ 1st Day of School ■ 1st Day of 2nd Semester ■ Distance Learning Days

August 2023

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2023

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2023

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2023

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2023

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2024

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February 2024

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March 2024

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2024

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 2024

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

2023-24 Dates To Remember

◆ **Holidays:** All Schools and Offices Closed.
September 4: Labor Day
October 9-11: Fall Break, P/T Conf.: 10/11
November 20-24: Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 20-Jan. 2: Winter Break
Jan. 15: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Feb. 19: Presidents Day
Mar. 11-15: Spring Break
March 29, April 1: Easter Break, P/T Conf.: 4/1
May 27: Memorial Day

◆ **Teachers**
First Day: August 2, 2023
Last Day: May 24, 2024

◆ **Students**
First Day: August 8, 2023
Last Day: May 23, 2024
60% Day: December 19, 2023
60% Day: May 23, 2024

◆ **Distance Learning Days**
October 6, 2023
February 16, 2024

Further revisions to the school calendar will be decided in the best academic interests of students by the Superintendent/Board of Education. Please note: Testing dates are determined by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and will be published for students and parents once available. Calendar may be subject to change.

*Board Approved February 27, 2023

DISTRICT SUPPORT MEMBERS

Office of the Superintendent	Dr. Amy Carter	601-484-4915
Assistant Superintendent of Student Support	Dr. Rosalind Operton	601-484-4916
Assistant Superintendent of Academic Support	Dr. Phataasis O'Harrell	
Chief Financial Officer	Caroyln Davis	601-484-4904
Chief of Security	Sydney Coleman	601-482-4077
Director of Alternative Education	Theresa Chislom	601-484-4977
Director of Alternative Education (Elementary)	Dr. Carla Fleming	601-484-4463
Director of Alternative Education (Secondary)	Christopher Kennedy	601-484-3619
Director of Assessment	Steven Shadwick	601-483-5942
Director of Athletics	Dr. Cheyenne Trussell	601-482-1225
Director of Career Technology Education	Matthew Johnson	601-483-3331
Director of Curriculum	Janet Fortner	601-483-5854
Director of Federal Programs	Kelli Speed	601-484-4960
Director of Food Services	Louise McPhee	601-484-4928
Assistant Director of Food Services	Amanda Williams	601-512-0464
Director of Human Resources	Kimberly Kendrick	601-482-6499
Director of Operations and Warehouse	Clay Sims	601-484-4946
Assistant Director of Operations and Warehouse	Eric Smith	601-482-1752
Director of Public Relations	Matt Davis	601-484-1423
Director of Special Education	Fred Liddell	601-484-4963
Assistant Director of Special Education	Shirley Mosley	601-484-4963
Director of Student Support	Lavonda Germany	601-484-4916
Director of Technology	Tim Boutwell	601-484-4957
Director of Transportation	Jayson Chislom	601-484-4469

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Carver Elementary School (K-5th)

Amanda Shadwick, Principal
Belinda McCune, Assistant Principal
Victor White, Assistant Principal
Christina Goodwin, Secretary/Bookkeeper

900 44th Avenue

601-484-4482

Crestwood Elementary School (K-5th)

Dana Bell, Principal
Mable Moore, Assistant Principal
Tijwanna Bolar, Secretary/Bookkeeper

730 Crestwood Drive

601-484-4971

Parkview Elementary School (K-5th)

Shannon Thomas, Principal
TiJuana Frost, Assistant Principal
Aquanetta Johnson, Secretary/Bookkeeper

1225 26th Street

601-484-4990

Poplar Springs Elementary School (K-5th)

Yolanda Davis, Principal
Corey Boykin, Assistant Principal
Brenda Mitchell, Secretary/Bookkeeper

4101 27th Avenue

601-484-4450

TJ Harris Lower Elementary School (PK & Alt. Elementary)

Pamela Hudson, Principal
LaSonya Williams, Secretary/Bookkeeper

3930 14th Street

601-484-4463

West Hills Elementary School (K-5th)

Shannon Miller, Principal
Veronica Boler, Assistant Principal
Gail Lynch, Secretary/Bookkeeper

4100 32nd Street

601-484-4472

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Magnolia Middle School (6th -8th)

Sherrod Miller, Principal
Amy Grady, Assistant Principal
Clyde Owens, Assistant Principal
Barbara Bigbee, Secretary/Bookkeeper

1350 24th Street

601-484-4060

Northwest Middle School (6th - 8th)

Kimberly Parker-Pace, Principal
Nastasha McDonald, Assistant Principal
Fredrick Strickland Green, Assistant Principal

4400 32nd Street

601-484-4094

HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Meridian High School (9th - 12th)

Angela McQuarley, Principal

Dr. Tiffany Fisher, Associate Principal

Fred Delk, Assistant Principal

Kevin Gandy, Assistant Principal

Rufus Wright, Assistant Principal

Karen Burton, Assistant Principal

Patrina Johnson, Assistant Principal

2320 32nd Street

601-482-3191

Ross Collins Career and Technical

Matt Johnson, Director

Tawanda McClelland, Assistant Director

2640 24th Avenue

601-483-3331

Marion Park

Theresa Chisolm, Director

Chris Kennedy, Assistant Director

Dr. Carla Fleming, Assistant Director

2815 25th Street

601-484-4977

INTRODUCTION

Meridian Public School District provides this employee handbook to guide all licensed and non-licensed personnel in following all of its policies and procedures. These policies establish the rules which govern the employee and the employer. These policies and procedures are designed to foster the most efficient operation of the school system, covering conditions of employment, promotions, work schedules, leave policies, retirement, etc.

It is the responsibility of each employee to know and abide by the policies and procedures of the Meridian Public School District. It is the desire of the Board of Trustees that each person be fully cognizant of his/her responsibilities in the overall educational program of the district.

The MPSD employee handbook has been designed to serve as a quick reference for many issues relating to your employment with Meridian Public School District. The MPSD Policy Manual is the authority in cases of a disparity between the Manual and the Employee Handbook.

Being cognizant of and abiding by the policies and procedures related to your job is essential to having a successful school year. Please review this handbook carefully. If you need to refer to the handbook in the future, remember that the most recent version will be available on the MPSD website. In addition, the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Finance can provide assistance with questions relating to your employment and benefits.



Kimberly Kendrick,
Director of Human Resources
601-482-6499



Carolyn Davis,
Chief Financial Officer
601-484-4904



Dr. Amy Carter,
Superintendent
601-482-6271

Table of Contents

Section I: Employment

Americans with Disabilities Act	1
Assignment	1
Background Checks	2
Cell Phone/Texting/Social Media	2
Chain of Command.....	3
Changes in Employment Status	3
Transfers	4
Suspension	4
Dismissal for Cause – Certified	4
Retirement.....	5
Resignation	5
Termination.....	6
Reduction in Force.....	6
Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedures.....	7
Classified and Certified Personnel Hours and Duties.....	8
Confidentiality	9
Conflict of Interest	9
Donated Equipment	9
Donated Equipment	9
Donations and Contributions	9
Drug Free Workplace.....	10
Drug and Alcohol Testing.....	11
Emergency Weather Procedures	12
Employee Arrest	13
Employee Assistance Program.....	13
Employee Contact Information.....	13
Employee Conduct.....	13
Employee Identification.....	14
Employee Progressive Discipline	14
Equal Employment Opportunity	14
Evaluation	14
Fixed Assets Management	14
Fundraiser Requirements	15
Grievances.....	16
Harassment.....	16
Internet Acceptable Usage	18
Licensure/License Renewal	21
Missed Punches.....	22
News Media Contact.....	22
Outside Employment	23
Political Activity	23
Procurement Cards.....	23
Professional Dress.....	24
Purchase Orders Procedures	26
Purchasing Procedures	26
Tobacco Policy.....	27
Travel Authorization /Reimbursement.....	28
Section 504.....	28
Title IX.....	29
Violation of Policies	29
Weapons.....	29

Workplace Violence.....	30
-------------------------	----

Section II: Compensation

Compensation Guide.....	31
Direct Deposit and Salary	31
Deductions	31
Employee Salary Scale	32
Overtime for Employees	32

Section III: Employee Benefits

Cafeteria Plan.....	33
Cobra.....	33
Employee Assistance Program.....	33
Employee Health Insurance	34
General Liability Insurance.....	34
Workers' Compensation	34

Section IV: Paid Leave

Employee Leave Schedule.....	36
Sick Leave Guidelines	37
FMLA	38
Donating Leave.....	38
Vacation	39
Personal Leave.....	39
Professional Leave	40
Jury Duty.....	41
Leave Entitlement with Loss of Pay	41
Military Duty	41
Reserve or Guard Duty	41
Sabbatical Leave	41
Personal Travel	42

Section V: Instructional Procedures and Expectations

Attendance (Teachers)	43
Conferences.....	43
Discipline Guide	44
Duties /Responsibilities of Teachers.....	45
Copyright Material Use.....	49
Field Trips.....	49
English Language Learner Program (ELL)	49
Lesson Plans.....	50
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).....	51
Over –the-Counter Medications.....	51
Search and Seizure.....	52
Substitute Teachers	52
Staff/Student Relationships.....	53
Student Supervision	54
Suicide Prevention & Education Training	54
Technology work Orders	55
Virtual Instruction.....	55

Appendix A.....	Employee Assistance Program Flyer
Appendix B.....	Mississippi Code of Ethics for Educators
Appendix D.....	MPSD Complaint Form

Section I: Employment

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The American with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against “qualified individuals with disabilities”. The Meridian Public School District will not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities to the extent provided by law.

ASSIGNMENT

The administration may make changes that are in the best interest of the school district because of curricular or instructional needs, reduction in force at building or district level, request of the teacher, or other such factors as staff morale, personal problems, or other just reasons. Normal attrition shall be considered prior to any staff transfers. The administration may make staff transfer or reassignment effective during the current or upcoming school year. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBE.)**

Athletic coaches, equipment managers, athletic aides, assistants, and/or others who have athletic responsibilities shall be assigned duties by the athletic director with the approval of the Superintendent. All such persons shall be employed by the Board on an at-will basis with respect to such athletic duties.

The Superintendent, with the assistance of the athletic director and the approval of the Board, shall determine the duties and number of days per year to be worked by athletic personnel. Such determination shall be based on considerations of needs of the individual sports and of the time necessary to coach the activities or sports assigned.

All coaches shall work together to promote all sports. All coaches not directly responsible for the sport in season shall assist the responsible coach, upon request and within limits, established by the Superintendent.

Athletic-related duties are non-instructional and supplementary to the teaching contract. Therefore, athletic-related positions are not subject to the School Employment Procedures Act. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRCA.)**

BACKGROUND CHECKS

The employment background screening process shall be conducted on any individual recommended for employment in the Meridian Public School District.

The employment background screening process shall include not less than:

- Reference checks made with the applicant's most recent supervisors.
- A criminal records background check of felony and misdemeanor convictions.
- A child abuse check with the child abuse registry.
- Fingerprinting with checks made at the state level and the national criminal history level. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBD.)**

CELL PHONE USE/TEXTING/SOCIAL MEDIA

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

An administrator may decide to implement guidelines that allow for the limited use of electronic devices. These guidelines may address the use of cell phones during planning time and after dismissal of students. They may also address emergency needs or other extenuating circumstances. All employees of Meridian Public School District are prohibited from providing personal wireless telephone information and from text messaging a single student at any time. Contacts through group messaging Apps like Groupme or Remind 101 are permitted as long as only groups are being contacted. Use of bluetooth devices are prohibited while in the presence of students.

TEXTING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

All employees, faculty, and staff shall observe the following while participating in any social media websites or applications: Access of social media websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited.

1. Employees, faculty, and staff shall not friend students on any social media platforms.
2. Employees, faculty, and staff shall not give social media passwords to students.
3. Employees, faculty, and staff are solely responsible for the security of their social media accounts.
4. Employees, faculty, and staff are solely responsible for the content that is posted on their social media accounts at all times.
5. Employees, faculty, and staff shall NEVER use their personal social media accounts in any way purporting to be or speaking for the Meridian Public School District.

Fraternization via the internet between employees, faculty or staff and students is prohibited and in violation of standards of the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics.

Communications with both students and parents shall be done in person, over telephone, through standard mail, and/or through email. Social media shall never be used and is not an appropriate form of communication.

Violation of any of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of educational websites, since educational sites are used solely for educational purposes.

When inappropriate use of computers and/or websites is discovered, the technology director will download the offensive material and promptly take proper action. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GABBA.)**

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The effective operation of schools in the district requires an organizational structure, effective administrative leadership at every level of responsibility, decision-making at the point in the structure where the decision can most effectively be made, and effective communication between individuals affected by decisions made.

Each employee of the Meridian Public School District, except the board attorney, shall be responsible to the Board of Trustees through the superintendent. All personnel shall refer matters requiring administrative action to the administrator immediately in charge of the area in which the problem arises. Administrators shall refer such matters to the next higher authority when necessary. All matters to be submitted to the board shall first be brought before the superintendent for investigation. If the matter requires board action, the superintendent shall present them to the board **(MPSD Policy CC and CD)**.

CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT STATUS

The administration may make changes that are in the best interest of the school district because of curricular or instructional needs, reduction in force at building or district level, request of the teacher, or other such factors as staff morale, personal problems, or other just reasons. Normal attrition shall be considered prior to any staff transfers. The administration may make staff transfer or reassignment effective during the current or upcoming school year. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBE.)**

VOLUNTARY TRANSFER

Certified Employees

Any teacher who wishes to change to another building, grade level, or subject assignment shall make written notification to the building principal or immediate supervisor. Requests for transfer may be made in Frontline Central and placed on file with the Director of Human Resources at

any time. Except in rare circumstances, voluntary transfers are approved and made effective only at the beginning of a new contractual year. Such transfers must have the approval of the releasing and receiving administrators and the Director of Human Resources. Transfers involving a teacher on an improvement plan require approval of the Superintendent. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBE.)**

Classified Employees

A classified employee who wants to apply for a transfer within the system should submit a transfer request form in Frontline Central and submit it to the immediate supervisor who will forward the request to the Human Resources Department.

INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER

Certified Employees

The Superintendent may transfer certified personnel, based on experience and training, from one position and/or school, to another within the same position/classification. Staff transfers will be made effective during the current or the upcoming school year as determined by the administration and as the situation requires. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBE.)**

Classified Employees

The Superintendent may transfer classified personnel, based on experience and training, from one position and/or school, to another, as needed. When future vacancies occur, first consideration will be given to the staff member who was involved in the involuntary transfer if they apply. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBE.)**

SUSPENSION—ALL EMPLOYEES

The Superintendent or designee may suspend employees under their supervision for failure to comply with school policies and procedures or reasonable requests of the administration. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBK.)**

DISMISSAL FOR CAUSE—CERTIFIED

State law gives the Superintendent the authority to suspend or remove a staff member for the following reasons:

1. incompetence;
2. neglect of duty;
3. immoral conduct;
4. intemperance;
5. brutal treatment of a pupil; and/or
6. other good cause.

Before being removed or suspended, the staff member shall receive written notification of the charges. The staff member is entitled to request a public hearing within five (5) working days of the notification. The hearing must be held from five (5) to thirty (30) days from the time of the request. If the employee does not request a hearing within five (5) days after being notified, the decision of the Superintendent is final. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBK.)**

RETIREMENT

Any employee anticipating retirement during or at the end of the school fiscal year should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Notify the principal or supervisor in writing of his/her intent to retire.
2. Complete a Resignation/Termination form indicating his/her retirement, which he/she will need to sign. Principal will submit the form to Human Resources, along with the letter of retirement.
3. His/her retirement request will go before the Board of Trustees for approval. Following approval, the payroll office will contact him/her to complete PERS Form 9A SRVC (Pre-Application for Service Retirement Benefits).
4. After PERS receives his/her Form 9A from the payroll office, they will mail him/her an Estimate of Benefits letter and will assign a case manager.
5. If he/she is planning on participating in the MPSD Retirement Reception, he/she will need to contact Shannon Kimbriel at 601-484-5177.

To ensure that your retirement package is processed in a timely manner, please begin your retirement process at least three months in advance of your desired date of retirement. Failure to do so will result in a delay of retirement benefits. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBQ.)**

RESIGNATIONS

The MPSD Board of Education empowers the Superintendent, as agent of the Board, to accept on its behalf letters of resignation from any school district employee, providing that such resignation is in writing, dated, signed, and specifies the date upon which the resignation is to be effective.

Receipt of such a letter of resignation by the Superintendent shall constitute acceptance of such resignation by the Board of Education and may release the employee and the district from any and all further contractual obligations beyond the effective date of the resignation, provided that a suitable replacement for the position can be employed. The Superintendent shall also be empowered to refuse an employee's resignation, when such refusal is in the best interest of the school district.

Any resignation received by the Superintendent is irrevocable. A licensed employee who leaves the district without having fulfilled his/her contractual obligations and who has not obtained written acceptance of his/her resignation from the Superintendent will be considered to be in breach of his/her contract and may have his/her license revoked. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policies GBO and GBQ.)**

RESIGNATION PROCEDURES

Resignations must be mailed to the Superintendent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or personally delivered to the Superintendent's office with an acknowledgement of receipt inscribed on the face of the letter of resignation.

Upon receipt of a letter of resignation, the Superintendent shall notify the employee in writing as to whether or not the employee's resignation is accepted. This notification shall be sent to the employee by certified mail, return receipt requested, or personally delivered to the employee with an acknowledgement of receipt by the employee inscribed on the face of the letter of acceptance or denial of the resignation. The employee shall be given one copy of the acknowledged acceptance or denial of the resignation, and the Superintendent shall keep one copy of the acknowledged acceptance or denial of the resignation.

All letters of resignation and acceptance or denial of resignations shall become a permanent part of the employee's personnel file.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

There are three methods of termination of employment:

1. Retirement—Give written notice to principal or supervisor two months in advance of retirement date.
2. Resignation—Resignations must be mailed to the superintendent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or personally delivered to the superintendent's office and an acknowledgment of receipt must be inscribed on the face of the letter of resignation.
3. Dismissal.

REDUCTION IN FORCE—ALL EMPLOYEES

In order to carry out the responsibility of providing and maintaining quality schools in the district, the Board may: (1) abolish or combine job positions, (2) reduce the length of the work year with a reduction in salary (the same to be in no event less than 187 days per contract year), (3) reduce administrative supplements, and/or (4) reduce the number of employees. Initially, staff reduction will be accomplished by attrition.

When reducing the number of licensed employees, the Board will take into account the following reasons for such reduction in force:

1. enrollment declines;
2. financial decline/reduction;
3. educational program(s) elimination; and/or
4. priority need for human, material, and financial resources.

The primary objective of reducing the workforce will be the maintenance of a fair and balanced educational program consistent with the needs of the students and the functions and responsibilities of the school district. When deciding reduction in force, the Board will consider the following factors, not necessarily in the order listed:

1. Criticality of the position to the mission, goals, and objectives of the school district.
2. Subject area(s) and advanced degrees by certification.
3. Experience, professional training, length of service within the district, and work assignment.
4. Quality of performance, including the proven ability to accomplish the educational mission of the school district.
5. Executive ability.

6. Employee attendance and discipline history.
7. Skills and licensure in the area(s) where the district has instructional and/or supervisory needs.

When it is necessary to reduce the number of staff positions because of a decrease in budget or student population, the following factors will be considered:

1. Length of service in the school district by job classification district-wide.
2. Affirmative action guidelines (most recently employed will not be the first to be laid off if the employment was due to affirmative action).
3. Job performance.
4. Qualifications for the job.
5. Value of employees to the continuing programs.

A staff member who is dismissed because of terminating a position shall have his/her name placed on a preferred list for reemployment for a period of one year. Whenever possible, staff members to be affected will be notified in writing by June 1. When it is necessary to reduce the number of staff members, the last person hired system-wide (in the targeted area of certification) will not be offered a contract. Staff members not reemployed will be considered for vacancies for which they are certified/qualified, but there will be no guarantee of reemployment if transfer or reassignment is not possible. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBKAR.)**

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING PROCEDURES

The Meridian Public School District Board of Education recognizes its legal and ethical obligation in the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. Where there is “reasonable cause” to suspect a child has been abused and/or neglected or threatened with abuse as defined in MS Code 93-21-3 or 97-5-23 school personnel, as mandated reporters, shall act in accordance with the state laws and report incidents to the Mississippi State Department of Human Services or its successors, or other such duly constituted authorities. Persons making reports are protected by law from civil liability if they act in good faith. It is not necessary that you have absolute proof before reporting. It is the responsibility of Child Protective Services to investigate.

REPORTING ABUSE TO SOCIAL SERVICES

This information is needed:

1. Name and address of child and parents or caretaker
2. Date of birth
3. Nature of child’s injury
4. Identity and address of perpetrator, if known
5. Any other pertinent information
6. Names and dates of births of other children in the home

REPORTING WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

- a. Inform the principal of your findings.
- b. If abuse is suspected, a report must be made to Child Protective Services by the principal, counselor/social worker, school nurse, or teacher.

STEPS TO FOLLOW AFTER SUSPECTING ABUSE

- a. Take the child to a private place and let the child tell you about the suspected abuse. Do not interrogate the child. Avoid leading questions. Ask open-ended questions (i.e., What happened next?)
- b. Try to remain calm and non-judgmental.
- c. Let the child know that you believe his/her story.
- d. Reassure the child.
- e. Respect the privacy of the child. Do not tell other people who do not need to know.
- f. Explain to the child what will happen next (i.e., tell them you will call someone who will help them).

CLASSIFIED AND CERTIFIED PERSONNEL HOURS AND DUTIES
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Certified Employees

The normal working day is an 8-hour day. Principals may adjust the arrival and departure time to accommodate bus routes. Teachers are expected to comply with sign-in procedures, duty hours, and payroll procedures. Teachers will remain at school throughout the school day unless granted permission to leave by the principal. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRB.)**

Classified Employees

Classified employees work 40 hours per week, but shifts may vary depending upon the job. The work week begins 1 second after midnight on Saturday and goes through midnight on Friday. Work weeks that exceed 40 hours must be approved by the Superintendent. Work days are set by the calendar and adopted annually by the school district. All employees are expected to comply with the work schedules set up for their particular areas. An employee can be compensated for overtime hours at the rate of 1 1/2 hours off for 1 hour of overtime work. Time off must be cleared in advance with the immediate supervisor and the Superintendent of Education. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GCRAA.)**

CONFIDENTIALITY

The district shall operate in compliance with Family Education Rights and Privacy Act for 1974 (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) regarding student information and records. These laws establish the guidelines by which schools, districts, and other education agencies disclose student records. School officials with a “legitimate educational interest” in any student information can have access to the educational records without specific consent of parents or guardians. However, the misuse or improper disclosure of confidential information by school officials or a third party is strictly prohibited. Electronic access to student information will be limited to job-duty specifications of each employee. At no time should this information be printed, transferred, or shared under conditions other than those stipulated in FERPA.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employees of the Meridian Public School District shall not have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of a conflict with duties and responsibilities of employment with the District. **No staff member shall engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property. Employees of MPSD may not sell products or engage in any fund raising activities without authorization from the building principal. This restriction applies to both certified and non certified staff. (For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GAG.)**

DONATED EQUIPMENT

The donation of a fixed asset to the school district must be properly processed in accordance with Board Policy. The administrator/supervisor notifies the Fixed Asset Coordinator of the donated asset and the value assessment for acknowledgement and approval by the Board. Once accepted and approved by the Board, the Fixed Assets Coordinator should affix a property tag to the item at its location and enter the addition to the property record. The item shall be valued at estimated fair market value and marked as “donation” in the property record.

DONATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

All donations and contributions are considered public funds and will be accounted as public funds. Donations and/or contributions in the amount of \$500 or greater should be formally submitted with the Proposed Gift to School Form to the Superintendent for acknowledgement and acceptance. It is permissible for a donation or contribution less than \$500 to be receipted by the local school. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy DFK.)**

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

District employees are hereby notified that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance, except as authorized by law from the prescription of a physician, in the workplaces of this school district are prohibited. School officials will cooperate fully with law enforcement in the prosecution of drug violations occurring in the workplace. Violators will be subject to suspension or dismissal, which may lead to suspension or revocation of the certificate of a certified employee (Mississippi Code 37-3-2).

Pursuant to the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, school employees under federal programs which are funded directly to this school district by a federal agency, as a condition of employment, shall:

1. Abide by the terms of the statement above; and
2. Notify school officials of any criminal statute conviction no later than five days after such conviction.

Alcohol

Employees shall not use or possess alcoholic beverages during regular or extended working hours or on school property. Additionally, no employee shall report to work with alcoholic beverages in his/her system. Employees violating this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment.

Drugs

For the purpose of this policy, “illegal drugs” shall mean the possession, transfer, use and/or sale of those substances which are prohibited by state and/or federal law, and prescription drugs which are possessed, transferred, used, or sold by any person to whom such drugs have not been prescribed by a physician or dentist for that use. The use, possession, or presence of illegal drugs in the school system by school employees while on the job or on school property is prohibited and is a dischargeable offense. Employees who sell, traffic in, or otherwise dispense illegal drugs while on the job or on school property are subject to immediate termination of employment.

Off-the-job illegal drug use or involvement may adversely affect an employee’s health and job performance and can jeopardize the safety of the abusing employee, other employees, the public, or school property. As such, off-the-job use or involvement with illegal drugs is prohibited and is a proper cause for administrative or disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment. Prescription drugs and/or non-prescription drugs causing drowsiness or loss of coordination shall not be taken during work hours or prior to reporting to work, where effects of the drugs adversely influence one’s job performance, unless prior approval is received from the school administration. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRL.)**

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The following are rules representing the district's policy concerning substance abuse.

1. All employees are prohibited from being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty or on district premises. All employees are prohibited from using illegal drugs, or prescription medication for which they do not have a proper prescription.
2. The use, sale, possession, transfer, or purchase of illegal drugs, non-prescription drugs, medical marijuana, or controlled substances while on district property or while performing district business is strictly prohibited and is cause for immediate termination. Such action will be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials.
3. No alcoholic beverage will be brought or consumed on district premises.
4. No prescription drug will be brought on district premises by any person other than the person for whom the drug is prescribed. Prescription drugs will be used only in the manner, combination, and quantity prescribed.
5. The district is not prohibited from establishing or enforcing a drug-testing policy under the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act. The district is not required to permit, accommodate, or allow the use of medical cannabis, or to modify any job/working conditions of any employee who engages in the medical use of medical cannabis or who for any reason seeks to engage in the medical use of medical cannabis.
6. The district is not prohibited from taking an adverse employment action against an employee, up to and including termination, as a result, in whole or in part, of that individual's use of medical cannabis, regardless of the individual's impairment or lack of impairment resulting from the medical use of cannabis.
7. Any employee whose off-duty use of alcohol, illegal, or non-prescription drugs results in excessive absenteeism, tardiness, poor work, or an accident will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRM-2.)**

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

1. Effective July 1, 2013, Meridian Public School District will begin conducting pre-employment testing and reasonable suspicion testing of all personnel, in addition to random testing of bus drivers.
2. An employee will be allowed to provide notice to the Meridian Public School District of current or recently-used prescription or non-prescription drugs prior to the time of the test.
3. Random testing of bus drivers will be implemented using a neutral selection basis. Meridian Public School District will not waive the selection of any employee chosen pursuant to the random selection procedures.
4. Reasonable suspicion is defined under this policy as the belief by Meridian Public School District that an employee is using or has used drugs or alcohol in violation of Meridian

Public School District's policy. Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, among other things:

- i. Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug use and/or the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug;
 - ii. Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at work, absenteeism, tardiness, or deterioration in work performance;
 - iii. A report of drug use provided by reliable and credible sources and which has been independently corroborated;
 - iv. Evidence that an individual has tampered with a drug and alcohol test during his employment with the current employer;
 - v. Information that an employee has caused or contributed to an accident while at work; and
 - vi. Evidence that an employee is involved in the use, possession, sale, solicitation, or transfer of drugs while working, while on school premises, or while operating one of the school's vehicles, its machinery, or its equipment.
 - b. If there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is using or has used drugs or consumed alcohol in violation of Meridian Public School District's policy, that employee will be required to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test. The Superintendent (or in his or her absence, an appointed replacement) must approve in advance all reasonable suspicion testing. If the test result is confirmed positive for drugs or alcohol in violation of Meridian Public School District's drug and alcohol policy, the employee will be subject to immediate termination of his or her employment with the district.
5. Any employee who refuses to take a drug and alcohol test will be subject to discipline, up to and including, immediate termination of employment.
 6. The following are drugs for which the district may test: alcohol, opiates, amphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP), marijuana, and cocaine.
 7. An employee who receives a positive confirmation drug and alcohol test result may contest the accuracy of the result or explain the results within ten days of the date of such result by filing a written statement with the Superintendent. An employee, at his or her own cost, also may request that the specimen be retested at a certified laboratory of his or her own choosing.
 8. An employee who receives a positive confirmation test result and who fails to present a satisfactory contest or explanation to such result, or a contrary result from a certified laboratory of the employee's own choosing, will be subject to discipline, up to and including, termination. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRM-2.)**

EMERGENCY WEATHER PROCEDURES

It may become necessary for the Superintendent of Education to cancel school or dismiss school early due to an emergency situation. Announcements will be made over radio/television stations and social media outlets should school be canceled or released early due to weather or other emergencies.

EMPLOYEE ARREST

An employee who is arrested or charged with a felony or misdemeanor is required to notify his or her immediate supervisor and the Director of Human Resources as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours. Failure to report such incidents may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MPSD has contracted with Weems Mental Health Center in a program for the benefit of you, your spouse, and dependent children. These services include outpatient mental health therapy for children and adults (individual, marriage, and family counseling) and medication evaluation and monitoring. Outpatient and residential substance abuse treatment at Weems LifeCare is also included. This program is provided at no cost to you. All services are strictly confidential, meaning that Weems will not disclose any information to the district, your co-workers, or your family without your consent. You may access these services via email or phone.

Weems Community Mental Health Center

www.weemsmh.com

601-483-4821

or

1-800-803-0245

SEE APPENDIX A: EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FLIER

EMPLOYEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Each faculty and staff member must have on file with the building principal or department administrator and Frontline Central, his or her current phone number, an emergency phone number, and current home address. Any change must be reported immediately in Frontline Central. All notices required by statute, regulation or policy will be sent to the address on file.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employees of the Meridian Public School District are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively on the school district and the community, thus promoting a positive environment for teaching, learning, and student well-being.

The dignity of students and of the educational environment shall be maintained at all times. Unseemly dress, conduct, or the use of abusive, foul, or profane language in the presence of students is expressly prohibited and will not be tolerated. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GAB.)**

SEE APPENDIX B: MISSISSIPPI CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION

All Meridian Public School district employees can be identified using the identification badges provided by the district office. These badges should be worn in plain sight.

EMPLOYEE PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Meridian Public School District's employees are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, integrity, and performance. Disciplinary action should be progressive in nature so that MPSD imposes the least severe action necessary to improve undesirable behavior and moves to increasingly severe measures only if the problem is not improved. When properly administered, progressive discipline will benefit both administrators and employees.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Meridian Public School District shall not discriminate in its policies and practices with respect to compensation, terms or conditions of employment on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, non-disqualifying physical or mental disability, national origin, veteran status, or any other basis covered by appropriate law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and need. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GAAA.)**

The following office has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the nondiscrimination policies of the Meridian Public School District:

Kimberly Kendrick
Director of Human Resources
1019 25th Ave, Meridian, MS 39301
601-484-4910

EVALUATION

All certified employees of MPSD will be evaluated yearly. Employees may check with their immediate supervisors for information in the evaluation guidelines. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policies GBI.)**

FIXED ASSETS MANAGEMENT

The Meridian Public School District Board of Education establishes and maintains a fixed asset record and inventory control system for all capital assets located within the school district. All employees are expected to care and maintain district properties in their charge.

Standard of Care and Liability for Missing Property

1. All employees that are assigned areas of responsibility under the plan shall exercise reasonable care to ensure that the fixed assets of the district are properly accounted for.
2. While it is recognized that public employees are not insurers of school property, all employees charged with areas of responsibility under the plan shall be financially responsible for losses which might occur to the district as a result of the failure to reasonably perform the custodial duties assigned to the employee under the plan.
3. All employees of the district have a duty of due care and diligence to protect and preserve all fixed assets and other property of the district. Any employee guilty of gross negligence or misconduct that results in the destruction, theft, or other loss of property of the district shall be responsible for providing replacement of the property or adequate compensation for the loss, as may be determined by the School Board.

Enforcement

1. Employees may be held financially responsible for all district equipment, furniture, or other fixed assets assigned to their custody.
2. Principals may be held financially responsible for all district equipment, furniture, fixtures, or other fixed assets assigned to their schools.
3. Administrative heads/directors may be held financially responsible for all district equipment, furniture, fixtures, or other fixed asset assigned to their departments or designated under their control.
4. All employees shall report any lost/stolen/destroyed items immediately to campus police for proper investigation. The fixed asset assistant at said location will compile all reports with retirement form and send them to the district office.
5. The School Board will be presented with a report, and a decision will be made if the item is to be charged to custodian/principal, or if it was no fault of the custodian/principal and no action necessary, other than removing the item from inventory.
6. Cost of lost/stolen/destroyed item will be determined by original cost minus depreciation and will comply with GASB 34 (D-31, DIDA).
7. If item is to be charged, the custodian/principal will have up to three months to repay for lost/stolen/destroyed item. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy DPC.)**

FUNDRAISER REQUIREMENTS

The Superintendent shall permit fund raising activities that are deemed appropriate or beneficial to the official or extracurricular programs of the district. The Board authorizes the Superintendent or his designee to approve all fund raising activities. All fund raising activities shall be treated as activity funds **(Policy DK)**. When a school, an activity, or a club sponsors a fundraiser, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Whether initiated by the school, PTO, or any other organization, fundraisers require the Superintendent's approval via a Fundraiser Request Form.
2. The activity/club sponsor shall complete the proposal (Fundraiser Activity Form located in Frontline) and submit it to the Chief Fiscal Officer for approval.

3. The activity/club sponsor will be assigned the responsibility of supervising the fundraiser and reporting the results.
4. Funds may be spent only for the sole purpose intended and stated on the fundraiser request form.
5. After the fundraiser activity is completed, a report of funds raised/profit should be reported.

Fundraising activities conducted or authorized by the Superintendent for school pictures, the rental of caps and gowns or the sale of graduation invitations for which the school receives a commission, rebate, or a fee shall contain a disclosure statement advising that a portion of the proceeds of the sale or rental shall be contributed to the student activity fund. At a minimum, the statement must read **"NOTICE: This sale is being conducted as a fundraising event. A portion of the sale price will be contributed to the local Activity Fund."**

GRIEVANCES

Grievance procedures are available to every employee of MPSD and are addressed to regular administrative procedures.

The School Board encourages individual staff members to settle grievances informally, if at all possible. In a situation where a staff member is concerned about the application of Board policies and administrative practices or relationships with other school employees, the staff member should consult the administrative or supervisory person to whom he/she is immediately responsible.

In a situation where the staff member feels he/she cannot discuss the problem with the immediate supervisor or administrator, or when a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the staff member is required to follow the grievance procedure outlined in Board Policy.

The procedures included in the process clearly outline the proceedings and the responsibilities of the complainant and the district. No grievance will be considered unless it is initiated and advanced through the process in the specified time limit. The written grievance must state the specific nature of the grievance and the resolution requested. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GAE, GAEA and GAE-R)**

SEE APPENDIX D: GRIEVANCE FORM

HARASSMENT

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is an anti-discrimination law that states no person in the United States, on the basis of sex, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving

federal financial assistance. The policy of this board forbids discrimination against any employee or applicant for employment on the basis of sex. The board of education will not tolerate sexual harassment activity by any of its employees. This policy similarly applies to non-employee volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities.

The Meridian Public School District has appointed an employee to serve as the Title IX Coordinator for the district. This person is authorized to coordinate the district's compliance efforts under this law. Because this policy is not amended each time the Title IX Coordinator changes, please contact the superintendent, the federal programs director, or any principal to request the name and contact information of the current Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is also identified with specificity in the district's student handbook, faculty handbook, and on the district website.

REPORTING

Any person may report sex discrimination or sexual harassment regardless of whether the person is the alleged victim. These reports may be made in person, by mail, by telephone, or email to the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in receipt by the Title IX Coordinator. For K-12 educational institutions, actual notice of sexual harassment is notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment made to any employee.

Consistent with Title IX, a school must respond when:

1. The school has actual knowledge of sexual harassment;
2. That occurred within the school's education program or activity;
3. Against a person in the United States.

Nothing in this policy or any other policy impedes or precludes a student, the student's parents, a school employee, or school officials from directly reporting to law enforcement officials any behavior that constitutes a violation of criminal law or any applicable laws.

It is prohibited to knowingly make a false discrimination, harassment, or retaliation report or provide false information in an investigation. Individuals who knowingly file a false or misleading complaint alleging harassment, discrimination or retaliation or provide false information in an investigation are subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.

RETALIATION

The Meridian Public School District encourages reporting all incidents of discrimination or harassment. Retaliation is prohibited against any person for the purpose of interfering with Title IX rights or because the person participated, or refused to participate, in any manner in a proceeding under Title IX regulations. The district must keep confidential the identity of a person who complains of or reports sexual harassment, including parties and witnesses, except as permitted by law to carry out the purpose of the regulations. 34 C.F.R. § 106.71

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participation in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy

and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will subject an individual to disciplinary action. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBR.)**

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USAGE

Scope

The following procedures apply to all staff and students and covers all MPSD computer equipment, including any desktop or laptop computers provided to staff, the computer network, and any computer software licensed to MPSD.

Appropriate Use

MPSD expects everyone to exercise good judgment and use the technology in a professional manner. Your use of the equipment is expected to be related to the district's goal of educating students and/or conducting school business. MPSD recognizes, however, that some personal use is inevitable and that incidental and occasional personal use that is infrequent or brief in duration is permitted, so long as it occurs on personal time, does not interfere with district business, and is not otherwise prohibited by district policy or procedures.

Use of District Software

District software is licensed to MPSD by a large number of vendors and may have specific license restrictions regarding copying or using a particular program. Users of district software must obtain permission from MPSD Technology Department prior to copying or loading district software onto any computer, whether the computer is privately-owned or is a district computer.

Use of Non-District Software

Prior to loading non-district software onto district computers (including laptops and desktops), a user must receive permission from the MPSD Technology Department. All software must be legally licensed by the user prior to loading onto district equipment. The unauthorized use of and/or copying of software is illegal.

Personal Devices

Use of personally-owned equipment by staff will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Users must first notify the Technology Department of such anticipated use. Any device that accesses the district network must be approved by the Technology Department and meet minimum standards with regards to anti-virus and spyware protection prior to use. This includes, but is not limited to, personal computers, notebooks, laptops, music players, Internet-capable phones, and other devices. MPSD and its employees will not be held liable for any damage to personally-owned equipment used on the network. Users will assume all risks associated with the use of the MPSD network. MPSD Technology Department will not be responsible for the upkeep or maintenance of personal devices used on the network.

MPSD INTERNET TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE

Personal Safety

1. Users will not disclose, use, disseminate, or divulge personal and/or private information about himself/herself, minors, or any others, including personal identification such as, but not limited to, credit card information, social security numbers, telephone numbers, and addresses.
2. Users will immediately report to MPSD authorities any attempt by other Internet users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal conduct.

Illegal activity

1. User agrees not to access, transmit, or retransmit any materials in furtherance of any illegal act or conspiracy to commit any illegal act in violation of United States, Mississippi, local government, or MPSD policies or regulations.
2. Users shall not access, transmit or retransmit copyrighted materials (including plagiarism), threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, material protected by trade secret, and/or any other material that is inappropriate to minors.
3. Users shall not access, transmit, or retransmit any material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by devices including, but not limited to, the use of firearms, explosives, fireworks, smoke bombs, incendiary devices, or other similar materials.
4. Users shall not use the network for any illegal activity including, but not limited to, unauthorized access including hacking.
5. Users shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
6. Users shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that harasses another person or causes distress to another person. This is to include cyberbullying.

System Resource Limits

1. Users shall only use the MPSD system for educational and career-development activities and limited, high-quality, self-discovery activities as approved by MPSD administration for a limited amount of time per week.
2. Users agree not to download large files unless it is absolutely necessary. If absolutely necessary to download large files, the user agrees to download the files at the time when the system is not being heavily used.
3. Users agree not to post chain letters or engage in “spamming” (that is, sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people).
4. Users agree to immediately notify their teacher or other school administrator should the users access inappropriate information. This will assist protecting users against a claim of intentional violation of this policy.

User Rights

1. The Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to a school newspaper, and, therefore, MPSD may restrict user rights to free speech for valid educational reasons. Users shall have the responsibility to use computer resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. The only exception will be for academic research by a staff member with the approval of school administration.

2. Users should not expect files stored on school-based computers to remain private. Authorized staff may periodically inspect folders and logs of network usage. This information may be retained and reviewed. Routine review and maintenance of the system may indicate that the user has violated this policy, district policy(ies), municipal law, state law, or federal law.
3. MPSD will fully cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the user's Internet account.

Network Etiquette

1. Be polite. Do not write or send abusive messages to others.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
3. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users (e.g., downloading huge files during prime time, sending mass email messages, annoying other users using the Instant message function).
4. All communications and information accessible via the network should not be assumed to be private property.

Reliability

1. MPSD makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing.
2. MPSD will not be responsible for any damages suffered by the user, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions.
3. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the risk of the user.
4. MPSD denies responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through Internet services.
5. MPSD is not responsible for student access to what may be deemed as inappropriate material available on the Internet.

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

Privacy

District computers, the Internet, and use of email are not inherently secure or private. For example, the content of an email message, including attachments, is most analogous to a letter or official memo rather than a telephone call, since a record of the contents of the email may be preserved by the sender, recipient, any parties to whom the email may be forwarded, or by the email system itself. It is important to remember that once an email message is sent, the sender has no control over where it may be forwarded and deleting a message from the user's computer system does not necessarily delete it from the district computer system. In some cases, emails have also been treated as public records in response to a public records disclosure request. Likewise, files, such as Internet "cookies", may be created and stored on a computer without the user's knowledge. Users are urged to be caretakers of their own privacy and to not store sensitive or personal information on MPSD computers. The district may need to access, monitor, or review electronic data stored on district computers, including email and Internet usage records.

While the district respects the privacy of its staff, the district also reserves the right to monitor and review electronic information in order to analyze the use of systems or compliance with policies, conduct audits, review performance or conduct, obtain information, or for any other reason. MPSD reserves the right to disclose any electronic message or file to law enforcement officials or any other entity the district deems necessary, for example, in response to a document production request made in a lawsuit involving the district or by a third party against the user or pursuant to a public records disclosure request.

Consequences for Failure to Follow Terms and Conditions of Internet Use Policy

There will be consequences for any user who fails to follow MPSD guidelines and policies. The consequences may include paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion, termination, or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy and state or federal law. At the discretion of MPSD, law enforcement authorities may be involved and any violations of state and/or federal law may result in criminal or civil prosecution. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy IJB.)**

LICENSURE/LICENSE RENEWAL

The Mississippi State Department of Education has mandated that each certified employee will be responsible for his or her individual certificate renewal plan. Teachers have five years from the time their certification is issued to complete requirements, including CEUs (Continuing Education Units) and graduate coursework for renewal.

Teachers are expected to keep track of their recertification documents and enter their CEUs in ELMS (Educator Licensure Management Systems). Questions should be directed to the Mississippi SDE Office of Teacher Certification at 601-359-2778. All certified employees must create an ELMS account for submission of CEUs.

Teachers with a B.S. or equivalent degree must earn 10 CEUs in content area or job/skill-related area or 3 semester hours in a college course in content area or job/skill-related area (examples: computer technology, cooperative learning, methodology, etc.) and 3 additional semester hours or 5 CEUs in content area or job/skill-related area.

Teachers with a Master's degree or higher must earn 3 semester hours in content or job/skill-related area or 5 CEUs in content area or job/skill-related area. Administrators should refer to the handbook for information involving recertification.

CHANGES IN LICENSE CLASS LEVELS (A, AA, AAA, AAAA):

Class A = Bachelor's Degree

Class AA = Master's Degree

Class AAA = Educational Specialist

Class AAAA = Doctorate

Should you earn an advanced degree during the year, it is your responsibility to submit all required documents to MDE so that your teaching license can be revised.

To receive your pay increase associated with a teaching license change in class level, you must:

- Send a copy of your updated license to HR

- Send HR an official transcript of your recently-earned degree as reflected on your license

Once HR has the license and official transcripts, any pay increase based on changes in class level must first be Board approved. Following Board approval, your contract pay amount will be adjusted, and you'll be notified when it is ready for your signature.

MISSED PUNCHES

Certified Employees

All MPSD employees are expected to clock in everyday. Certified employees clock in each day to verify attendance. School clerical staff will check punches each morning. Any missed punch should be accompanied by a leave form if you are not reporting to work. Repeated tardiness or failure to clock in may result in further disciplinary action.

Non-Exempt Employees

In accordance with Federal Wage and Hour requirements, all time worked by (non-exempt) hourly employees must be accurately captured and reported. Daily work time for non-exempt (hourly) employees will be captured using an automated time and attendance system.

- Non-exempt (hourly) employees are required to scan in and out for personal errands and are required to take daily lunch breaks of at least 30 minutes.
- When an employee fails to accurately scan his/her time into the system, a Missed Punch Report will be completed immediately via Frontline Central and submitted to his/her supervisor/administrator. The Missed Punch Report will be either approved or denied by the administrator and then forwarded to Central Office personnel for correction. Requests to Central Office to correct missed punches must be submitted within 5 business days or the request will be denied.
- Missed Punch Forms must be filled out completely. It must include the correct date of incident, correct time, and administrator's signature.
- Payroll clerks at each location must run time sheets for their employees on Monday of each week for the previous week. This will ensure that all missed punches are addressed promptly.
- Per the Superintendent, payroll clerks will run time sheets on Thursdays to check for any employee who may be approaching overtime for the week. This will give administrators a "real-time" view of an employee's time and allow for better overtime management. Employees will be sent home when they reach their scheduled weekly hours if overtime has not been previously approved by the Superintendent.
- Any missed punch should be accompanied by a leave form if you are not reporting to work. Repeated tardiness or failure to clock in may result in further disciplinary action.

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT

Contact with radio, television, or newspapers should be made with the permission of the administration according to the established guidelines. The building-level administrator and

public relations director should be notified. No student may have contact with the media during the school day without approval of the administrator or parents' permission. No employee should speak on behalf of MPSD without the expressed permission of the Superintendent or designee.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees shall not engage in any outside employment which will interfere with the effectiveness of assigned duties, would compromise or embarrass the school system, or would, in any way, conflict with assigned duties. Employees shall not be employed or involved in any private or other public business during the hours necessary to fulfill their contractual responsibilities, nor will the employee use district materials, supplies, or property for outside employment. **(For more information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRG.)**

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

The Board recognizes the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in political activity. The Board also recognizes that school property and school time should not be used for political purposes, except as provided for in policies pertaining to the use of school buildings by civic and political organizations.

Nothing in this handbook should be interpreted as prohibiting employees from conducting appropriate activities which encourage students to become involved in the political processes of the party of the student's choice or as independents, nor does it prohibit the use of political figures as resource persons in the classroom. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GAHB.)**

PROCUREMENT CARDS

Classroom supply funds shall not be expended for administrative purposes. Licensed teachers who are assigned to an instructional area of work as defined by the department and are not a federally funded teacher, will receive a procurement card.

Procurement cards shall be issued at the beginning of the school year and shall be issued in equal amounts per teacher determined by the total number of qualifying personnel and the current state appropriation for classroom supplies with the Education Enhancement Fund. Such cards will expire on a predetermined date at the end of each school year.

All classroom teachers shall utilize these funds in a manner that addresses individual classroom needs and supports the overall goals of the school regarding supplies, instructional materials, equipment, computers or computer software under the provisions of this subparagraph, including the type, quantity, and quality of such supplies, materials, and equipment.

Classroom supply funds allocated shall supplement, not replace, other local and state funds available for the same purposes. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy DJEAB.)**

PROFESSIONAL DRESS

Personal appearance plays a great part in an employee's success in his/her professional position. Each employee of the Meridian Public School District shall be expected to give proper attention to his/her personal appearance as required by work responsibilities. A professional appropriate dress influences the way staff interacts with students and positively affects the general environment. Each employee of the Meridian Public School District will contribute to the formation of a positive, professional public image by maintaining high standards of personal appearance through appropriate dress and grooming, regardless of job category.

Guidelines

1. Employee identification tags are required to be worn and visible at all times.
2. Hair must be clean, neat, and well-groomed.
3. Patches, decorations, slogans, designs, symbols, tags, marks, or advertisements of beer, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, or similar items or displays and/or expressions of obscenities, sexual references, or similar references deemed detrimental and disruptive to the operation of the school, education, discipline, health, or welfare of students are prohibited. Clothing that has any type of drawing or words that would be vulgar, profane, suggestive, or advertising an affiliation with drugs, alcohol, violence, or gang-related activities is prohibited.
5. Nothing should be worn to acknowledge political issues or clubs, etc.
6. Employees who are furnished uniforms must wear them at all times.
7. All male administrators should wear long sleeve shirts and ties.
8. Warm-ups, jogging suits, wind suits and/or sweat suits, and other athletic apparel are not permissible, except for physical education, gym, and dance teachers.
9. Coaches and physical education personnel may wear loose-fitting shorts of no more than three inches above the knee during their physical education hours. Shorts are prohibited for all other employees.
10. Spirit Days: The principal may designate no more than one day per week as "school spirit/blue jean day." On special days or for special events/circumstances, such as Red Ribbon Week, homecoming, and testing days, the principal may designate special attire except for safety officers.
11. Graphic t-shirts other than school spirit shirts are prohibited.
12. In the event you are providing virtual instruction, professional dress remains an expectation of MPSD employees.

Nothing in the employee Dress Policy shall be constituted to preempt the authority of the principal or supervisor. To act contrary to statements contained herein based on his/her opinion, an employee is attempting to use this policy to disrupt the educational process or the safe and orderly climate of the school. If the employee's supervisor determines the employee is inappropriately dressed, the employee shall take the steps necessary to correct the dress.

Pants	Tops	Skirts/ Dresses	Shoes	Accessories
Pants/trousers must have a hem or cuff. No cut-offs, cut-outs, and/or ragged edges are permitted.	Shirts/blouses shall not expose the midriff or back. Sleeveless shirts/blouses must fit the employee appropriately.	No mini-skirts, halter tops, backless, strapless, and/or cut-out/see-through dresses shall be permitted.	Footwear must be worn at all times and should be appropriate for safe participation in all job-related activities.	Noisy, distracting jewelry/accessories that could cause a safety hazard may not be worn.
Pants must be sized appropriately. No hip-huggers that reveal flesh are allowed. Pants must not be excessively tight or sagging.	Casual T-shirts (faded, sheer, out of shape or inappropriately sized) are not allowed. Graphic T-shirts are not allowed unless school spirit wear.	Tights/leggings are only permitted when worn under a knee-length dress.	Shoes traditionally worn around the home (slippers, house shoes, or beach slippers) or to the beach (flip-flop/shower shoe design or thongs) are not permitted.	No hats are allowed in the building unless part of the employee's uniform or religious headgear required to be worn by the employee's religion.
No jeans or overalls of any color or fabric are permitted, except on such days as designated by the principal	Tank tops and spaghetti strap garments are prohibited when worn as a single garment.	Dresses and skirts should be knee length.	Tennis shoes that are clean and in good condition may be worn.	
	Shirts or blouses must be tucked in unless designed to be worn outside or of an appropriate length so as not to expose the midriff at any time.			In keeping with professional decorum, earrings may be worn by female employees only, and ears are the only exposed areas of the body on which pierced jewelry may be worn.

PURCHASE ORDER PROCEDURES

1. Purchase Requisition must be completed (vendor/description/cost).
2. Employees must sign requisition and submit to the school-site secretary.
3. Requisition presented to administrator for approval/non-approval.
4. School-site secretary requests order through district accounting software to the Central Office—Office of Purchasing.
5. Vendor to be notified through a Purchase Order **only** to deliver items to the district.
6. District warehouse will deliver orders to the school site.

PURCHASING PROCEDURES

All purchases of goods, services, equipment, and materials for which the school district will be responsible for payment must be made on an official purchase order, properly approved and executed as directed by state purchasing law procedures. All purchases will be made under provisions of the appropriate sections of the Mississippi Code, 1972, as amended.

Purchasing should be based on careful planning for both short and long range needs for materials, equipment, supplies and services. All purchases of supplies and equipment will be made by the use of a purchase order signed by the purchasing agent and will be substantiated by a requisition recommended by the teacher/staff and approved by the appropriate supervisor/school administrator. Without a purchase order, no one is authorized to make any purchase or to charge any purchases to the District.

REQUISITIONS

- a. Include a clear concise description of articles requested, quantities, pricing, and budget account.
- b. Indicate catalog number of each item, school or department, date and recommended vendor
- c. Requisitions should list items of a like nature which can be purchased from a single vendor.
- d. Completed requisition forms should be turned into your school/department office for the proper signatures and uploaded to Integrity for processing.

- e. The administrator/supervisor must, after careful analysis on needs and budget, forward approved requisitions via Integrity to the Business Office.
- f. Disapproved requisitions will be returned to the originating source.
- g. Purchase orders will be issued by the Business Office and signed by the Purchasing agent(s). The original purchase order will be forwarded to the school/department office requesting goods or services for verification.
- h. Merchandise ordered will be shipped to the central warehouse or work location of the person ordering goods or service.
- I. Upon Receipt of order, merchandise must be inspected and a receiving report completed and returned to Accounts Payable.
- j. The person requesting the purchase order will be held directly responsible for verifying that all merchandise has been received and any discrepancies addressed.

Requisitions with a value of \$5,000 but not over \$50,000 must have two (2) written quotes. Any purchase over \$50,000 shall be advertised for bids.

No person is authorized to pick up, receive, or receipt any material, supply or service for the Meridian Public School District unless proper authority as stated in this section has been followed.

No substitutions or changes in quantity shall be authorized by anyone other than the purchasing agent.

Failure to adhere to this policy shall result in the employee assuming personal liability for payment of the claim.

TOBACCO POLICY

The use of tobacco products on educational property is prohibited. “Tobacco products” means any substance that contains tobacco including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, smoking tobacco, or smokeless tobacco.

“Educational property” means any public school building or bus, public school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used, or operated by any local school board, school, or director for the administrator of any public educational institution or during a school-related activity; provided, however, that the term “educational property” shall not include any sixteenth section school land or lien land on which is not located a public school building, public school campus, public school recreational area, or public school athletic field. Employees in violation of these policies will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRM.)**

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION/REIMBURSEMENT

1. MPSD—Pre-Authorization Voucher and Leave Request Form must be completed.
2. Required Documentation:
 - Registration form
 - Lodging confirmation
 - Plane information
3. If driving out of state, MapQuest can be used to determine round trip mileage.
4. Meals allowance listed on Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration website.
5. Meal reimbursement applies for overnight travel only.
6. To obtain reimbursement, the packet must be returned to Central Office—Accounts Payable.

Required documentation:

- Approved packet with all attachments
- Hotel receipt
- Baggage/Parking receipts

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. According to these laws, a person with a disability is defined as anyone who

- has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working;
- has a record of such impairment; or
- is regarded as having such an impairment.

The Meridian Public School District acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504 to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practice in the school district.

Under Section 504, the school district has the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the student is determined to be eligible under 504, to afford access to appropriate education services.

To provide Meridian Public School employees and students with an avenue for review of a grievance, a Section 504 coordinator has been designated:

504 Coordinator
Fred Liddell
Director of Special Education
601-484-4963

TITLE IX

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity offered at Meridian Public School District as set forth under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Title IX Coordinator (Employees)
Kimberly Kendrick
Director of Human Resources
601-483-6271

Title IX Coordinator (Students)
Lavonda Germany
Director of Student Support
601-484-4917

VIOLATION OF POLICIES

The policies developed by the Board and administrative regulations established to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system.

Administrators are responsible for informing subordinates of existing policies and regulations and for seeing that they are implemented in the spirit intended. Continuous disregard for Board policy and administrative regulations may be interpreted as insubordination and/or willful neglect of duty and may result in termination of employment with Meridian Public School District.

WEAPONS

The possession of any weapon on school premises or at any school-related activity by any employee of the district, including those employees having a license or permit for possession of a firearm pursuant to Miss. Code Section 45-9-101 and/or Section 97-37-7, unless an exception under the law applies, is prohibited. Employees in violation of this policy shall be disciplined accordingly, including possible termination of employment.

It is the responsibility of every employee to report to his/her principal or immediate supervisor or the person responsible for supervising a school-related activity or event any knowledge of the possession of a weapon on school premises or at any school-related activity or event by any employee of the district. Appropriate steps shall then be taken to carry out the intent of this policy, including notification to police officials, so that employees in possession of weapons are promptly removed from school premises or school-related activities or events and/or are refused admittance to school premises, buildings, activities or events. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBEN.)**

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Meridian Public Schools desires to maintain a work environment that is safe and secure. Threats, threatening behavior, or any acts of violence against employees, students or other individuals on the premises will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination and/or criminal prosecution.

Any person engaging in violent behavior, such as making substantial threats, intentionally hitting, kicking or striking a person or property on MPSD premises may be removed from the premises as quickly as possible and may be required to remain away from the premises pending investigation of the incident.

All individuals who apply for or obtain a protective or restraining order that lists school sites as being protected areas must provide to the principal or supervisor a copy of the petition and declarations used to seek the order, a copy of any temporary protective or restraining order that is granted and a copy of any protective or restraining order that is made permanent.

Section II: Compensation

COMPENSATION GUIDE

Certified Employees

Nine months of actual teaching in a state-accredited public or private school is equal to a year's teaching experience. Certified employees must complete all contractual agreements before the last salary payment is received. Parts of a year may be combined to grant a full year of teaching credit, but summer school teaching will not be allowed toward computing teaching experience. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBA.)**

All certified employees (except those specified by Board policy) will be paid an annual salary in 12 equal, monthly installments based on the current salary scale.

Classified Staff

Compensation for classified staff is set according to the current salary schedule. Starting July 1, 2023, all classified employees will receive compensation in 12 monthly installments.

DIRECT DEPOSIT AND SALARY

DIRECT DEPOSIT

All district personnel shall be paid through a single monthly payroll with electronic settlement of payroll checks secured through direct deposit of net pay. Any school employee whose employment ends during a school term, regardless of the reason(s) the employment ended, shall be paid salary or wages only for that portion of the school term that the employee actually worked. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policies DJC and GBA.)**

DEDUCTIONS

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Compulsory deductions include:

1. federal withholding tax;
2. state withholding tax;
3. social security tax ;
4. state retirement (PERS): Retirement benefits are paid each pay period. The district pays 17.40% based on the employee's gross pay and the employee contributes 9.0% of the gross pay;
5. bankruptcies and garnishments (when warranted);
6. child support payments; and/or
7. tax levies.

Optional deductions include:

1. Hospitalization Group Insurance;
2. Dental Group Insurance;
3. Cancer/Intensive Care/Life Insurance;
4. Tax Sheltered Annuity;
5. Salary Protection Plan;
6. United Way;
7. Meridian Mutual Federal Credit Union;
8. Mississippi Deferred Compensation Plan;
9. Child Care/Cafeteria Plan;
10. Medical Reimbursement/Cafeteria Plan; and/or
11. Vision Insurance.

SALARY SCHEDULE

Certified Employees

All certified employees (except those specified by Board policy) will be paid an annual salary in 12 equal, monthly installments based on the current salary scale. (Copies of the salary scale may be obtained from the MPSD website.)

Classified Staff

Compensation for classified staff is set according to the current salary schedule. Starting July 1, 2023, all classified employees will receive compensation in 12 monthly installments.

OVERTIME FOR EMPLOYEES

Certified

It is the policy of the district that compensation for overtime work will be paid in the form of compensatory time off. Compensatory time shall be awarded on the basis of ½ hour for each hour of overtime worked. An employee will not be permitted to accumulate more than 240 compensatory time hours (160 regular hours). An employee must take the compensatory time when it is agreeable with his/her supervisor. However, the supervisor's consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Classified

For employees paid on an hourly rate, the overtime will be based on that hourly rate. For employees paid on a salaried basis, the monthly salary will be reduced to its weekly hourly rate, from which overtime compensation will be calculated. Employees shall be paid for each and every hour worked. For those employees working 2 or more jobs for the district, overtime pay shall be calculated on the basis of a blended hourly rate on all jobs worked, calculated by dividing the total amount of remuneration received in a work week by the total hours worked in that work week. The employee shall be paid one-half of the blended hourly rate times the number of hours worked over 40.

Section III: Employee Benefits

CAFETERIA PLAN

Meridian Public School District offers a Section 125 Plan (a.k.a. Cafeteria Plan) through American Fidelity to all employees. American Fidelity provides ongoing support to employees throughout the year as needed. A Section 125 Administration Guide is available to all employees on the American Fidelity website.

COBRA

In the event that employment ceases due to termination, layoff, other change in employment status, or qualifying event, employees will be offered the opportunity to continue, on a temporary basis, their group health care coverage under the state's group health coverage plan.

The qualifying event requirement is satisfied if the event is:

1. The death of a covered employee.
2. The termination (other than by reason of the employee's gross misconduct) or a reduction of hours of a covered employee's employment.
3. The divorce or legal separation of a covered employee from the employee's spouse.
4. A covered employee becoming entitled to Medicare benefits under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act.
5. A dependent child ceases to be a dependent child of the covered employee under the generally applicable requirements of the plan and a loss of coverage occurs.

COBRA Coverage is available:

- Up to 18 months for covered employees, as well as their spouses and their dependents, when workers otherwise would lose coverage because of a termination or reduction of hours.
- Up to 29 months is available to employees who are determined to have been disabled at any time during the first 60 days of COBRA coverage and applies as well to the disabled employee's non-disabled qualified beneficiaries.
- Up to 36 months for spouses and dependents facing a loss of employer-provided coverage due to an employee's death, a divorce or legal separation, or certain other "qualifying events."

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MPSD provides the Weems Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as an employment benefit that covers employees, their spouses and dependent children. The services provided through the program are: outpatient mental health therapy, medication evaluation and management and substance abuse treatment programs at any location of Weems Community Mental Health Center. Offices are located in Clarke, Jasper, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Scott and

Smith counties. You do not have to live in one of the counties with a Weems office. Simply being an employee entitles you, your spouse and dependent children to this benefit.

The Employee Assistance Program means you, your spouse and dependent children can receive help with stress, anxiety, depression, other emotional or behavioral issues as well as treatment for alcohol or substance abuse. There is NO CHARGE to you to use the Weems services. There is NO LIMIT on the number of outpatient mental health services you or the covered family members may use. (Note: Day treatment, psychosocial rehabilitation programs, case management and court-ordered programs are not included.)

Your use of the EAP is strictly confidential and your name is not given to your employer UNLESS you have failed a drug or alcohol screen or had a mandatory referral from your supervisor. In that case, limited information will be released after you sign a release form.

To schedule an appointment through the Employee Assistance Program, please call the EAP coordinator at 601-483-4821 or toll-free: 1-800-803-0245. Appointments are scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please tell the receptionist that you are enrolled in the Employee Assistance Program. If you have an after-hours emergency, call toll-free: 1-800-803-0245.

If you have any questions about the program, contact the Employee Assistance Coordinator at 800-803-0245 or 601-483-4821.

EAP covers dependent children up to age 18; up to age 21, if enrolled full-time in school.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE

All full-time employees and bus drivers may participate in the insurance program for school employees funded by the State of Mississippi.

GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

MPSD carries general liability insurance coverage for the protection of its employees in the responsible performance of their assigned professional duties.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

It is the goal of Meridian Public Schools to provide a safe working environment for all staff. Employees should comply with all occupational safety, health policies and standards. However, should an accident resulting in on the job injury occur, the first report of the injury must be completed as soon as possible following any necessary medical treatment. (Failure to report an accident or injury may jeopardize an employee's eligibility for Workers' Compensation benefits.)

The Principal/Supervisor must then report the incident to the Workers' Compensation Coordinator (Angela Dove).

No compensation will be allowed for an injury, illness or death due to willful misconduct, intentional self-inflicted injury, intoxication, or willful failure or refusal to use prescribed safety devices or failure to comply with prescribed safety procedures. Payment of benefits, medical bills, and compensation will be made in accordance with applicable Workers' Compensation laws of the State of Mississippi.

If an employee suffers an occupational injury or illness, the following steps should be taken:

- Any necessary first-aid treatment should be administered.
- When physically able, the employee should immediately report the injury or illness to the Principal/Supervisor.
- Both the employee and the Supervisor/Principal must complete a "Mississippi First Report on Injury" within 24 hours of the incident.
- Any employee involved in a job-related injury will be required to take a post accident drug/alcohol screening.

Return to Work Policy

It is the policy of Meridian Public Schools to assist employees injured at work to receive appropriate medical care and return to work as soon as possible within medical restrictions. This will support the employee's sense of job security and help the employee to return quickly to his or her pre-injury lifestyle. It will also help MPSD maintain productivity and reduce workers' compensation costs.

Our early return to work program provides opportunities for an employee who is injured on the job to return to work at full duty. If the injured worker is not physically capable of returning to full duty, the program provides opportunities to temporarily perform his or her regular job with modifications or, when available, to perform alternate temporary work that meets the injured worker's physical capabilities.

In order for this program to be successful, all injuries must be reported immediately or as soon as medically possible. We will assist you with immediate transportation from work to the medical facility. Your supervisor will report the injury to the district claims coordinator, Angela Dove, 601-484-4923. Following medical treatment, we ask that you report your medical status to your supervisor and district claims coordinator. If you are unable to return to your normal duties, we will attempt to provide a position with modified duties, if applicable. The modified duty position will comply with the medical provider's job restrictions.

This return to work policy covers all employees. It is the responsibility of all employees to understand and follow the guidelines outlined in this policy. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRHA.)**

SECTION IV: PAID LEAVE

EMPLOYEE LEAVE SCHEDULE

LENGTH OF CONTRACT	SICK DAYS	PERSONAL DAYS		VACATION DAYS
		CERTIFIED	CLASSIFIED	
235 Day Contract				
Less than 5 year	10	4	2	10
5 to 10 years	11	4	2	10
10 to 15 years	11	4	2	11
15 to 20 years	11	4	2	12
20 to 25 years	11	4	2	13
25 to 30 years	11	4	2	14
30 years +	11	4	2	15
220-222 Day Contract				
Less than 5 years	9	4	2	0
5 to 10 years	10	4	2	0
10 to 15 years	10	4	3	0
15 to 20 years	10	4	4	0
20 to 25 years	10	4	4	0
25 to 30 years	10	4	4	0
194 & 199 & 204 & 207 & 209 & 210 & 212 & 217 Day Contract				
Less than 5 years	8	4	2	0
5 to 10 years	9	4	2	0
10 to 15 years	9	4	3	0
15 to 20 years	9	4	4	0
20 to 25 years	9	4	4	0
25 to 30 years	9	4	4	0
187 & 198 Day Contract				
Less than 5 years	7	2	2	0
5 to 10 years	8	2	2	0
10 to 15 years	8	2	3	0
15 to 20 years	8	2	4	0
20 to 25 years	8	2	4	0
25 to 30 years	8	2	4	0

Note: 1 indicates the first year of employment. Example: 1-5 years means first through the fifth year of employment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Any employee who has been absent for any reason must complete a leave form and report that absence to his/her principal or supervisor or he/she will lose full payment for unreported absences. For the purpose of determining sick leave entitlement while employed by MPSD, experience accrued only in MPSD will be considered. (See Employee Leave Chart above.) Up to five (5) days of the annual leave allowance (personal and vacation leave) shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to the employee as sick leave in unlimited numbers. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRI.)**

Leave must be approved by the superintendent, assistant superintendent, or director. Leave for school employees must be approved by the principal. Professional leave must directly support the school/district objectives. Any leave except sick leave is to be requested and approved **two weeks in advance** of the dates requested. Leave requests after the leave has been taken may not be approved.

SICK LEAVE GUIDELINES

Leave may be granted to an employee in cases of death of mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, mother-in-law, father-in-law, child, grandchild, grandparents, blood relative dependent as defined by IRS, or foster parents. In addition, the Superintendent has the discretionary authority to grant leave after the death of a friend of the family or relative not considered a part of the immediate family. Absence for death in the immediate family or for extenuating circumstances will be deducted from the employee's sick leave.

The Staff Absence Report will be used to report absences and must show the relationship between the school employee and the family member whose illness or death was the reason for the absence.

Any employee claiming an absence by reason of illness may be required to substantiate the illness through a doctor's statement. Such absences include the following:

1. Absences on the first or last day of a contract period.
2. Absences of 5 days or more (not necessarily consecutive).
3. Absences for less than a full day.

No teacher shall be absent from duties more than a total of forty-five (45) days and still receive a year of teaching experience.

Falsifying statements or reasons for absence shall result in any or all of the following:

1. Full loss of pay for the period of absence.
2. Entry on personnel record.
3. Termination of employment. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRI.)**

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

Employees who have been employed with MPSD for at least 12 months and have worked 1250 hours in the immediate past 12 months are eligible for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for certain circumstances. (See Employee Rights and Responsibilities below for more details.) He/she will be required to use any available paid sick, vacation, and/or other leave during his/her FMLA absence. This means that he/she will receive paid leave, and the leave will also be considered protected FMLA leave and counted against FMLA leave entitlement. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRIA.)**

DONATING LEAVE

Any employee of the Meridian Public School District may donate a portion of his or her unused accumulated personal leave or sick leave to another employee of the Meridian Public School district who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness or who has a member of his or her immediate family suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with the following:

1. The employee donating the leave (the "donor employee") shall designate the employee who is to receive the leave (the "recipient employee") and the amount of unused accumulated personal leave and sick leave that is to be donated, and shall notify the school district superintendent or his designee of his or her designation.
2. The maximum amount of unused accumulated personal leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed a number of days that would leave the donor employee with fewer than seven (7) days of personal leave remaining, and the maximum amount of unused accumulated sick leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the unused accumulated sick leave of the donor employee.
3. An employee must have exhausted all of his or her available leave before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee. Eligibility for donated leave shall be based upon review and approval by the donor employee's supervisor.
4. Before an employee may receive donated leave, he or she must provide the school district superintendent or his designee with a physician's statement that states that the illness meets the catastrophic criteria established under this section, the beginning date of the catastrophic injury or illness, a description of the injury or illness, and a prognosis for recovery and the anticipated date that the recipient employee will be able to return to work.
5. Before an employee may receive donated leave, the superintendent of education of the school district shall appoint a review committee to approve or disapprove the said donations of leave, including the determination that the illness is catastrophic within the meaning of this section.
6. If the total amount of leave that is donated to any employee is not used by the recipient employee, the whole days of donated leave shall be returned to the donor employees on a pro rata basis, based on the ratio of the number of days of leave donated by each donor employee to the total number of days of leave donated by all donor employees.

7. Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement.

For the purpose of this policy:

1. "Catastrophic injury or illness" means a life-threatening injury or illness of an employee or a member of an employee's immediate family that totally incapacitates the employee from work, as verified by a licensed physician, and forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee, resulting in the loss of compensation from the local school district for the employee.
2. Conditions that are short-term in nature, including, but not limited to, common illnesses such as influenza and the measles, and common injuries, are not catastrophic. Chronic illnesses or injuries, such as cancer or major surgery, that result in intermittent absences from work and that are long-term in nature and require long recuperation periods may be considered catastrophic.

(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GADF.)

VACATION

Only employees on 235-day contracts are eligible for vacation days. Vacation days start at 10 and increase with years of service as shown on the following chart. (For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRI.)

PERSONAL LEAVE

ABSENCES REQUIRING PRIOR APPROVAL OR ARRANGEMENT

Each licensed employee at the beginning of each school year shall be credited with a minimum personal leave allowance, with pay, of two (2) days for absences caused by personal reasons during that school year. Certified employees working 205 or more days shall be credited with personal leave allowance with pay, of four (4) for absences caused by personal reasons during the year. Except as otherwise listed below, such personal leave shall not be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday, or a day after a holiday. Notwithstanding the restrictions listed above on the use of personal leave, a licensed employee may use personal leave as follows:

- a. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if:
 - on the applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee is being deployed for military service.
 - an employee of a school district has either a minimum of ten (10) years experience as an employee of that school district or a minimum of thirty (30) days

of unused accumulated leave that has been earned while employed in that school district.

- on the applicable day, the employee has been summoned to appear for jury duty or as a witness in court.
- on the applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee dies or funeral services are held. Any personal leave days taken shall be taken as described in Section 37-7-307 of the Mississippi Code. No additional bereavement leave is created by Section 37-7-307.

b. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, no personal leave will be granted during state testing, at an employee's school site, unless approved by the Superintendent as an extenuating circumstance. (For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRL.)

PERSONAL LEAVE PROCEDURES

1. Staff members will submit a leave request form in Frontline Central to principal or supervisor at least five (5) days in advance of the absence.
2. Staff members are notified of availability and permission or refusal.
3. When an emergency situation makes prior approval impossible, verbal approval may be given by the principal or supervisor. Upon return to work, the request form must be submitted.
4. Only the Superintendent of Education can approve personal leave the day before or after a holiday or on the first and last day of school for employees with fewer than 10 years with MPSD.
5. Employees with 10 years or more of employment with MPSD can take a personal day before or after a holiday—Superintendent's approval not necessary.
6. Unused vacation/personal leave accumulated by employees in excess of the maximum five (5) days which may be carried over from one year to the next may be converted to sick leave.

NOTE: Non-emergency leave may be denied when all personal days have been used, on the day before or after a holiday, or when 10% of the building staff is absent which would hinder optimum functioning of the educational process and/or work progress.

Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, no personal leave will be granted during state testing, at an employee's school site, unless approved by the Superintendent as an extenuating circumstance. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRL.)**

<h3>PROFESSIONAL LEAVE</h3>

Follow the same procedure as for personal leave, noting the reason for the professional absence on the form.

Professional Development Limits:

Teachers—3 days per year .

Assistant Principals/Lead Teachers—4 days per year.

Principals—5 days per year.

Central Office Administrators—6 days per year.

Cabinet Members—10 days per year.

These days do not include district-, state-, or federally-mandated PD.

P.D. limits for principals, central office administrators, and cabinet members do not include off-contract time or summer time.

JURY DUTY

Absences for jury duty will not affect personal leave benefits.

Employees must submit a staff absence in Frontline Central and send to the principal or supervisor with a copy of the “letter of attendance” from the court notating the days actually served by the employee. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRI.)**

LEAVE ENTITLEMENT WITH LOSS OF PAY

An employee who has used all sick days, but requires additional leave for personal or family illness, will receive up to ten additional days of leave at a reduced rate of pay. The current daily rate of substitute pay will be deducted for certified employees and one-third of the regular daily pay for classified employees. A written statement from the doctor must accompany the absentee report and state the reason for absence. After 10 days, any subsequent absences will result in loss of full pay.

MILITARY DUTY

Employees may be granted a leave of absence to fulfill military requirements, such as being activated through a reserve unit. This leave is granted by prior approval of the Superintendent and is taken for up to one year and without pay. Requests for military leave should be received by March 1 prior to the absence or immediately upon notification. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRID.)**

RESERVE OR GUARD DUTY

If an employee is called to short-term reserve or guard duty, no deductions will be made from the employee’s salary, accumulated sick leave, or vacation time.

SABBATICAL LEAVE

An employee may be granted sabbatical leave for one school year without pay (after six (6) years of continuous employment with MPSD) for the following:

1. Advanced degree work.
2. Educational travel.
3. Employment to improve teaching competencies.

March 1 is the deadline for applying to leave or return to MPSD. The year of sabbatical leave does not count toward retirement.

PERSONAL TRAVEL

Staff members may not be excused for personal travel other than personal leave on days school is in session, except in special cases of unusual opportunity and with advance approval. Deductions will be made at the employee's full rate of pay.

SECTION V: Instructional Procedures and Expectations

ATTENDANCE (TEACHER)

All staff members are to report as scheduled by the principal and sign in immediately. If you are going to be absent due to illness, notify the principal or person designated by him or her as soon as possible.

Staff members who are late must contact the principal's office in order for arrangements to be made to cover their duties until they arrive. Excessive tardiness may result in consequences including, but not limited to, a conference with the principal, a written reprimand, and/or suspension. The following action will be taken to address excessive tardiness each nine weeks.

Except in case of emergency, and with approval of the principal, teachers are expected to remain on the school grounds from check-in until check-out time and to remain in their classrooms during class sessions or on their duty posts for the entire assigned time. The principal of each school will set duty hours.

CONFERENCES

Meridian Public School District policy encourages open communication in all areas. Frequent conferences open many doors and create a well-rounded educational atmosphere. Five major categories of conferences and the corresponding guidelines are listed below:

Principal-Teacher Conference: Principal-teacher conferences will be held at the discretion of the principal or upon the request of the teacher. The principal will maintain a record of the conference.

Principal-Student Conference: The principal is the final school authority in matters pertaining to students. Each student request or problem should be treated with respect and as being important to students.

Teacher-Parent Conference: It is the teacher's responsibility to take the initiative for scheduling a parent conference. The principal will determine the procedures and time. When a parent calls the office and requests a conference with a particular teacher, the teacher will confirm the scheduled conference according to procedures specified by the principal. The teacher will keep records of all conferences.

Teacher-Student Conference: Direct, open communication with students is conducive for appropriate student behavior and progress. Teachers should keep a record of the conferences. The principal or assistant principal will be present at any teacher-parent or teacher-student conference if it is requested, and if he/she is given sufficient advance notice.

Teacher-Teacher Conference: Teachers (staff) are encouraged to cooperate directly on matters of mutual constructive nature. Keep the principal informed.

A Guide for Effectively Addressing Parent Issues

Listen

- Allow the parent to share their concerns without interrupting
- Try to understand what caused the parent to be upset or concerned
- Empathize with the parent to view the situation from their perspective
- Acknowledge the parent's feelings

Acknowledge

- Acknowledge the inconvenience or disappointment of the issue
- Express regret for what the parent may be feeling
- If the problem is not school-related, explain what actions may be taken. Offer support.

Problem Solve

- Avoid arguing
- Ask probing and clarifying questions to understand what is causing the problem
- Repeat the parent's concerns back to him/her for clarification and understanding
- Explain the facts
- Emphasize what you can do over what you can't do
- Attempt to respond to the parent's issue or handle their request during the encounter

If unable to solve the parent's issue:

- Personally contact someone who can assist the parent, if able
- Refer the parent to someone in the office, if necessary
- Take ownership by ensuring parent follow-up. Check back in with the parent to ensure the issue has been resolved
- Explain the benefit to the parent for actions taken
- Exercise emotional control
- Avoid defensiveness
- Separate the problem from the parent's emotion

DISCIPLINE GUIDE

A. Teachers should:

1. Be fair and consistent. Treat each student equally.
2. Be empathetic, accentuate the positive, and avoid the negative.
3. Be thoroughly prepared for all classes and have ample work for all students.
4. Let your classroom reflect positive qualities.
5. Be professional in demeanor and maintain a sense of humor.
6. Admit your errors and apologize if you make the mistake of treating a student unjustly.
7. Let the students assist in establishing a minimum number of classroom rules and help the students understand why they are necessary.
8. Correct students to prevent minor problems from growing into larger ones.
9. Be considered on duty while on campus or at school functions.
10. Speak in a respectful, well-modulated manner.

B. Teachers should not:

1. Punish the entire class for the misbehavior of a few.
2. Argue with a student.
3. Embarrass a student.
4. Refuse to consider mitigating circumstances.
5. Compare students with one another.

6. Become overly friendly and familiar with students.
7. Repeatedly show favoritism to certain students.
8. Challenge students to repeat an undesirable act or get yourself in a position of “do it or else.”
9. Administer unusual punishments.
10. Punish by leaving a student alone in a classroom, hall, or any unsupervised area.
11. Punish by requiring a student to write lines.
12. Make physical contact in an attempt to discipline. Do not place your hands on students in anger.

DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS

WHAT ARE NON-NEGOTIABLES?

Non-negotiables are the things we will not negotiate on. They follow our values and principles and define not only what we will and won't accept from others, but also what we will and won't accept from ourselves. They are unwavering expectations. The expectations below were used to develop MPSD's Non-Negotiables Checklist for Principals.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

We will have consistent expectations regarding formal student responses during classroom instruction:

- ☐ Expect students to speak in complete sentences and write in complete sentences, using capitalization and punctuation.
- ☐ Avoid slang (text talk) in speech and writing.

We will build positive learning environments with high expectations for ALL students:

- ☐ Cultivate a growth mindset: “With work, it will be easier. I may struggle from time to time but it's not due to my ability – it means I need to work on it.”
- ☐ Teach students to apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.
(Social-Emotional Learning)
- ☐ Show students they are valued by establishing caring relationships. Every student should be known by name and interests, seen daily, heard daily, and valued daily.
- ☐ Support students and promote self-regulation vs. enabling/over-helping.
- ☐ Be proactive (preteach to misconceptions) vs. reactive (reteaching after failure).
- ☐ Provide ongoing building-level support for new teachers: training from CIA, district technology, behavior support personnel.
- ☐ Get to know students through prior data so intentional scaffolding and intervention can be provided to prevent failure, not respond to failure: cumulative records, prior MAAP, IEPs, etc.

We will set-up our classrooms appropriately:

- ☐ Have space/arrange seating for (1) small group teacher-guided instruction, (2) partner/cooperative work, and (3) independent practice/testing.

- ☐ Designate wall space for expectations, anchor charts, word wall (grade 3+), sound wall (K-2nd), and a data wall.

We will ensure safe environments conducive to high levels of teaching and learning:

- ☐ Create and monitor a space for teacher voice and input.
- ☐ Engage in PLCs based on DuFour's four questions and use MPSD's Planning Support Tool for district-approved HQIM.
- ☐ Monitor PLCs, implementation after trainings, next steps based on observation feedback, and student achievement data in order to provide support matched to needs.
- ☐ Protect instructional time.
- ☐ Plan, practice, and be prepared in the event of a crisis.

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

We will teach using MPSD-approved curriculum and monitor fidelity of implementation:

- ☐ Use of district-approved high quality instructional materials for tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3.
- ☐ Beginning with the end in mind to create standards-based assessments and select graded work that will be used to effectively inform teaching and learning.
- ☐ Collaboration with sped teachers regarding where students will struggle and what the likely misconceptions will be, then preparing on the front-end for necessary adaptations: visual, audio, small group, reducing #, etc.
- ☐ Tier 1 lesson plans that are aligned to state standards, assessments, and pacing guides.
- ☐ Tier 2 interventions that are matched to student's deficits, elevate focus on ESSENTIAL state standards, and delivered as intended.
- ☐ Tier 3 interventions that are matched to student's deficits, elevate focus on ESSENTIAL state standards, and delivered as prescribed by TST on the student's Tier 3 intervention documentation.
- ☐ Including literacy strategies, graphic organizers, and technology integration as appropriate in weekly lesson planning and implementation.
- ☐ Follow MPSD PLCs protocol, ensuring assessments are constructed prior to teaching and data is used to guide instruction.
- ☐ Student use of anchor charts that include "tips and traps" for essential standards. Students should be taught to use them during small group, partner/cooperative work, or independent practice /testing.
- ☐ Preparing for instruction, not merely planning.

EXPECTATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION in a Standard-Based Classroom

We will provide teaching and learning activities that reflect a shared understanding of what students should know, do, and understand and will be built around a common framework for instruction that consists of:

- ☐ An agenda clearly visible for students that follows the MPSD Instructional Routine and includes the following:
 - Standards /learning targets written in student-friendly language
 - Bellringer
 - Whole Group Activities
 - Check for Understanding after Whole Group Lesson
 - Small Group Activities
 - Closure
- ☐ Tier 1 Lesson plans that follow the MPSD Instructional Routine and are available in classrooms and include all components and follow MPSD's Instructional Models, bellringer to closure. Plans

must be submitted on time, reflect HQIM, personalized based on data (not a “cookie-cutter” plan for the grade), and include sped adaptations. Assessments should be attached to lesson plans.

- ☐ A separate lesson plan for tier 2 interventions for students placed in tier 2 using the district’s decision-making protocol: submitted on time, reflect HQIM, complete and personalized based on data (not a “cookie-cutter” plan for all student groups), and include a plan for tier 2 progress monitoring (every other week).
- ☐ Collaboration between gened and sped for pre-planned adaptations and co-teaching, noted in plans.
- ☐ Shared response to student needs between gened and sped: pre-teaching and reteaching, evident in gened and resource plans. We teach students, not gened and sped students.
- ☐ A lesson plan for resource classrooms.
- ☐ Use of question stems that mirror assessments during instruction.
- ☐ Intentional use of engagement strategies and monitoring of student engagement.
- ☐ Intentional, consistent use of “checks for understanding” throughout lessons to guide next steps for instruction (scaffolding or addressing misconception, not lowering the expectation)
- ☐ Classroom displays of the following:
 - ✓ Expectations
 - ✓ Anchor Charts
 - ✓ Word Wall (or Sound Wall, K-2)
 - ✓ Data Wall
- ☐ Maximizing instructional time with bell-to-bell instruction and no down-time.
 - Students should not be allowed out of the classroom for any reason within the first and last __ minutes of the period.
 - Distribution of supplies, transitions between activities, etc. do not delay or disrupt instructional time.
- ☐ Proactive monitoring of student behavior to maximize engagement and outcomes.
- ☐ Adaptations to guarantee access to grade-level instruction: visual, audio, teacher-led small group, other scaffolding.
- ☐ Informally (and formally) checking for understanding to make necessary adjustments to instruction. This includes effective questioning, monitoring student work, etc.
- ☐ Meaningful feedback provided to teachers to improve teaching and learning...
 - using the Classroom Support Tool for tier 1.
 - using the separate WIN template plan for tier 2 intervention and enrichment.
 - using Tier intervention documentation, as prescribed by TST.
- ☐ Compliance walks, based on MPSD’s monthly focus.
- ☐ Monitoring technology for instructional purposes;
- ☐ Monitoring fidelity of Morning Meeting.
- ☐ Celebrating implementation successes, progress to goals, goals met/exceeded, etc.
- ☐ Analyzing intervention progress during TST meetings.
- ☐ Using mid-point and benchmark assessment results to monitor growth.
- ☐ Analyzing/monitoring growth on universal screeners.
- ☐ Monitoring fidelity of tier 3 intervention

EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT

We will provide evidence-based behavioral support to improve academic outcomes for students:

- ☐ School-wide implementation of PBIS and Leader in Me in Tier 1.

- ☐ Tier 2 support for behavior.
- ☐ TSTs that meet on the “whole child”, not behavior and academics separately.

ASSESSMENT EXPECTATIONS

We will monitor the progress of our students and school in tier 1 by:

- ☐ Setting SMART goals and tracking progress to goals at the school and class levels.
- ☐ Developing common assessments that are explicitly aligned to standards so standards mastery and progress can be monitored between district assessments.
- ☐ Administering benchmark assessments.
- ☐ Identifying students who are not meeting standards, meeting standards, or exceeding standards after each assessment.
- ☐ Adjusting instruction based on assessment results (differentiation).
- ☐ Analyzing data.
 - Tier 2 monthly in PLCs or 1:1 (school discretion)
 - Tier 3 monthly via TST
 - PLCs after classroom assessments, benchmarks, and universal screening for reteach/retest planning
 - Gradebook for previous week’s graded work.
- ☐ Maintaining a data folder/binder/online platform that includes the following information:
 - ✓ School goals (School Data Tracker)
 - ✓ Class goals (Class Data Tracker)
 - ✓ Student’s previous year data and current year mid-point and benchmark data
 - ✓ Response to BMA Data / Standards Analysis
 - ✓ SPED Tracking Form
- ☐ Monitoring use of technology for assessment purposes.

We will monitor the progress of our students and school in tier 2 by:

- ☐ Reviewing/weighing in on tier placement using MPSD’s Decision-Making Protocol.
- ☐ Using data to identify deficits and addressing multiple skills/standards, primarily focusing on essential standards taught within the current or preceding terms. Using the Flowchart for Digging Deeper to ensure interventions are matched to deficits.
 - ☐ Engaging in tier 2 progress monitoring talks; this may be 1:1 during planning times, during a scheduled PLC for tier 2 monitoring, etc.
 - ☐ Analyzing mid-point and benchmark assessment scores to guide interventions and monitor growth.
 - ☐ Analyzing/monitoring growth on universal screeners.
 - ☐ Monitoring fidelity of tier 2 interventions: time, frequency, resources, explicit instruction, progress monitoring, adjustments.

We will monitor the progress of our students and school in tier 3 by:

- ☐ Using the Flowchart for Digging Deeper to ensure interventions are matched to deficits.

EXPECTATIONS FOR GRADING and COMMUNICATION

We will inform our students and parents about the student’s academic progress by:

- ☐ Consistently entering grades into ____ (at least __ grades per week).

- ☐ Goal setting with students.
- ☐ Having student/ parent conferences at least once per ____.
- ☐ Notifying parents of tier 2 placement and keeping them updated.
- ☐ Formally inviting parents to TST meetings and following up if they were not in attendance.
- ☐ Monitoring attendance, behavior, etc. via MPSD's Early Warning System and partnering with parents.

We will support our teachers with by:

- ☐ Providing meaningful feedback after classroom observations (at least __ per ____)
- ☐ Conducting data talks after mid-point and benchmark assessments, including standards performance and student performance levels/growth (Performance Levels at Benchmarks; Does Not Meet, Meets, or Exceeds Expectation after Mid-Points).
- ☐ Conducting monthly walkthroughs to identify trends and allocate support to needs via professional development, consults, collaboration, and/or coaching.
- ☐ Providing support in PLCs for tier 1 and tier 2 planning, tier 1 and tier 2 data analysis and problem-solving, and preparation.

COPYRIGHT MATERIAL USE

It is the intent of the Meridian Public School District's Board of Education to adhere to the provisions of current copyright laws and congressional guidelines. Infringement of copyright is both illegal and unethical and, therefore, contrary to the school district's policy. It is also the policy of the Meridian Public School District to adhere to the provisions of the copyright laws in the areas of microcomputer software. The principal at each school is responsible for establishing practices that will enforce district copyright policy at the school level.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips request forms must be submitted to the building principal for approval before being sent to the appropriate elementary or secondary administrator for approval. Overnight field trips must be approved by the School Board.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PROGRAM (ELL)

Philosophy:

The Meridian Public School District recognizes the need and the requirement to provide ELL students with linguistic and academic instruction and support services to develop English language proficiency such that, over time, they progress through school at a rate commensurate with their native-English speaking peers. To ensure educational efforts are consistent district-wide, the following requirements will be met:

- Language minority children will be allowed to attend school, regardless of their ability to produce a birth certificate, social security number, or immigration document.
- Language minority children will be placed within one year of their age-appropriate grade level.

- Language minority children will not fail a subject or be retained in a grade because they do not speak English.

Identification

The Home Language Survey will be completed at the time of school enrollment to identify the students who qualify for ELL Program Services. Students identified by this survey as in need of ELL services will be assessed for placement in the ELL program.

Assessment

ELL students will be tested for English language proficiency within the first week to ten days following initial identification. This assessment will reveal individual student's strengths and weaknesses in order to plan the student's academic placement. This assessment will include four areas of language: understanding, speaking, reading, and writing in order to ensure the student's language needs are properly identified and addressed. Prior to placement, parents will be notified, through a form of communication they can understand, of the student's placement in the ELL program, the parent's right to visit the program, and the parent's right to withdraw the student from the program. As a part of exiting the ELL program, students will be assessed on functional abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Since no single instrument can provide all the information needed to place and exit students from ELL, multiple measures will be used.

Programming Pullout

Programming services will be provided for ELL students. This service requires the student to be pulled out of the regular classroom for special instruction in English. An itinerant teacher will provide pullout instruction for individual students or small groups of students as is dictated by the number of students and scheduling feasibility. Programming will address the four areas of language: understanding, speaking, reading, and writing.

Grading

Strict adherence to a "letter" grading system is often inappropriate for ELL students. In order to ensure consistency of grading between teachers and/or schools and to ensure ELL students do not fail due to English proficiency, the policy for grading ELL students in the Meridian Public School District will be "Pass" or "Fail." A "Pass" will be equal to a 70% for ELL students determined to be less than proficient in a subject or course due to English proficiency. These students must be ELL program students, and the teacher may award a "Pass" with approval of the principal only. NO FAILING GRADES MAY BE GIVEN DURING THE ELL'S PROGRESS FROM LEVEL 1—ENTERING THROUGH LEVEL 3—DEVELOPING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY.

LESSON PLANS

- A. Teachers will prepare and submit lesson plans the week prior to instruction. If a teacher assistant is assigned, the plan will include activities for the teacher assistant.
- B. For each class, the lesson plan will include objectives, procedures, materials, assessment, and assignments.
- C. Lesson plans should be placed on the teacher's desk in the substitute folder at the end of the day (except the day that the lesson plans are submitted to the principal for review).

- D. The teacher should provide the substitute with a neighboring teacher who is familiar with the class routine.
- E. Lesson plans for day one and forward should reflect grade-level standards/frameworks.
- F. Lesson plans should reflect continued instruction during the week of nine week exams.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports integrates Response to Intervention (RtI) for academics and RtI for behavior into a unified model that recognizes the reciprocal influence academic performance and social/emotional/behavior have on each other. The main goal of the MTSS to be prevention oriented by knowing which students need support and implementing supports as early as possible each school year. Interventions will be evidence-based and targeted to the student's needs. Progress monitoring data will be used to determine when to make changes in instruction.

TEACHER SUPPORT TEAMS (TST) The Mississippi Department of Education shall require every school district to follow the instructional model which consists of three (3) tiers of instruction:

- Tier I: Quality classroom instruction based on Mississippi College-and-Career-Readiness Standards and Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks
- Tier II: Focused supplemental instruction
- Tier III: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students. If strategies at Tier 1 and Tier 2 are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the Teacher Support Team (TST). On those occasions that the Teacher Student Team (TST) interventions are not successful, the procedures for assisting students considered at-risk of academic failure will be followed. This committee will recommend improvements and/or forward the referral to the MET. This Board of Education approved procedure is provided to principals, who chairs the TST, and is published in the District Policies and Procedures Manual.
- It is the policy of the Meridian Public School District that the referral of a student to the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) will begin the State of Mississippi's process for determining the eligibility of a student for special services. Under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) students should only be considered after appropriate instructional variations and interventions have been implemented in the regular classroom and the student continues to be "at risk," or if the student is obviously disabled. Teachers must conduct probes and submit results according to the timelines dictated by the Teacher Support Team.

Over-the-Counter Medication

School personnel will not administer prescription medicine to a student unless the student's physician authorizes school personnel to administer the medicine and the parents/guardians have signed the Indemnity Agreement associated with this policy. The parents/guardians are responsible for obtaining a statement from the physician authorizing school personnel to administer the medicine. The statement should include:

1. Student's name
2. Diagnosis
3. Name of medicine
4. Method of administration
5. Time/s to administer the medicine
6. Amount of medicine
7. Date to discontinue or review administration of medicine
8. Physician's signature
9. Date

The parents/guardians are responsible for getting the medicine to the school. All medicine must be in a proper container with a label from the pharmacy which states the following:

1. Student's name
2. Name of medicine
3. Method of administration
4. Time/s to administer the medicine
5. Prescription number
6. Name of pharmacy
7. Date filled

(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy JGCD.)

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

When a principal or his/her designee has probable cause or reasonable suspicion, that school official has a legal right and responsibility to search personal belongings, desks, persons, cell phones, and/or vehicles for any item specifically prohibited by School Board policy. A witness should be present during any search. It is not necessary to give prior warning of a search.

The school official should seek cooperation from the student if a search is to be made of his person, requesting, for instance, that the contents of a purse or pocket be placed on a table for inspection.

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not of right. The interior of a vehicle driven by a student on the school premises may be searched if the school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal, unauthorized contraband items are contained inside.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

A. When the regular classroom teacher must be absent, it is the responsibility of the principal or his/her designee to obtain a substitute teacher. The principal or his/her designee must be notified as soon as possible when the teacher is to be absent.

B. Classroom teachers shall not contact a substitute teacher.

C. All substitute teachers will be obtained from an outside approved agency by the Meridian Public School District.

D. Classroom teachers will maintain a substitute teacher file which remains in the classroom at all times. The file must contain any information that might be needed by a substitute in the classroom (schedule, class roll, plans for instruction, current duty assignment, etc.). (For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GBRJ.)

STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

It is the policy of the MPSD Board of Education to prohibit any sexual relationship, contact, or sexually nuanced behavior or communication between a staff member and a student while the student is enrolled in the school system. The prohibition extends to students of the opposite sex or the same sex as the staff member and applies, regardless of whether the student or the staff member is the initiator of the behavior and whether or not the student welcomes or reciprocates the attention.

Staff Guidelines for Non-Fraternization

Staff members are expected to use good judgment in their relationships with students both inside and outside of the school context including, but not limited to, the following guidelines:

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school and/or staff.
2. Staff members shall not exchange gifts with students.
3. Staff-sponsored parties, at which students are in attendance, unless they are a part of the school's extracurricular program and are properly supervised, are prohibited.
4. Staff members shall not fraternize, written or verbally, with students except on matters that pertain to school-related issues.
5. Staff members shall not text students nor participate in any student blogs.
6. Staff members shall not associate with students at any time in any situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
7. Staff members shall not date students. Sexual relations with students, regardless of age and/or consent, are prohibited and will result in dismissal and criminal prosecution.
8. Staff members shall not use insults or sarcasm against students as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.
9. Staff members shall maintain a reasonable standard of care for the supervision, control, and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.
10. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
11. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.
12. Staff members shall not attempt to counsel, assess, diagnose or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships but instead, should refer the student to appropriate school personnel or agency for assistance, pursuant to law and Board policy.
13. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family background. **(For additional information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GABB.)**

STUDENT SUPERVISION

To the extent reasonably possible, all students should be supervised at all times throughout the school day from arrival on campus until departure at the end of the day. Nothing herein removes the discretion allowed to principals, teachers, resource officers and administrators to implement this policy.

1. Staff will be on duty during the school day to see all students as they arrive and leave campus, either by bus, car, or on foot. If you are assigned a duty post and are unable to be there, you must notify your immediate supervisor in advance so a replacement can be assigned to cover your post.
2. Staff will be on duty in the hallway and teachers will be standing at the doorway of their classroom; observing the students as they enter the classroom.
3. Students will only be allowed out of class for emergency or valid reasons. Usually only one student shall be allowed to leave the classroom at a time. All students will be required to carry a hall pass when they are given permission to leave for an emergency or valid reason. Exception: elementary campuses may routinely allow students to leave in pairs, but students must carry a note with them from the teacher.
4. During class periods staff will be assigned to be in hallways checking to ensure that all students not in class have hall passes and are going where they are supposed to be. Students who are caught without a pass shall be escorted back to their class and reported to a school administrator. **Middle and High Schools only.**
5. All staff will be posted so as they are able to supervise the entire playground area.
6. At dismissal when the bell rings, staff will be on their assigned duty posts to supervise a safe and orderly departure from the building, the grounds, bus loading area, parent pickup area and student driver parking lot.

SUICIDE PREVENTION EDUCATION TRAINING

The Board of Trustees of the Meridian Public School District recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. It is the policy of this school district that in-service training on suicide prevention education will be conducted for all newly employed school district employees.

The board establishes this policy in an effort to take positive steps toward reducing student suicide through:

1. **Prevention.** To provide in-service training to all newly employed school district employees with information about the recognition of the signs of suicidal behavior; including, but not limited to, early identification and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts along with steps for reporting students who they believe to be at an elevated risk for suicide.
2. **Intervention.** To take affirmative action when an immediate referral is warranted, such as when a student verbalizes about suicide, presents overt risk factors such as aggression

or intoxication, the act of self-harm occurs, or a student self-refers and to understand the emergency procedures when a referral is made and to provide support for students.

3. **Postvention.** To respond to suicide or suicide attempt, utilizing the district's crisis response, documentation, and reporting procedures.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the school district shall conduct, every two (2) years, refresher training on mental health and suicide prevention for all school employees and personnel, including all cafeteria workers, custodians, teachers, and administrators. This training shall be in connection with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. The district shall report completion of the training to the State Department of Education. **(For more information, refer to MPSD Board Policy GADAC.)**

TECHNOLOGY WORK ORDERS

All requests for technology assistance must be submitted via email to TechnologyTechnology. Tickets will be assigned to the appropriate technician and prioritized.

VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION

Employees of Meridian Public School District are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively on the school district and the community, thus promoting a positive learning environment for teaching, learning, and student well being.

The dignity of students and of the educational environment shall be maintained at all times. Unseemingly dress, conduct, or the use of abusive, foul, or profane language in the presence of students is expressly prohibited and will not be tolerated in person or virtually.

Appendix

Appendix A: Employee Assistance Program Flier

Appendix B: Mississippi Code of Ethics for Educators

Appendix C: MPSD Complaint Form

Weems Employee Assistance Program

Your employer provides the Weems Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as an employment benefit that covers employees, their spouses and dependent children.* The services provided through the program are: outpatient mental health therapy, medication evaluation and management and substance abuse treatment programs at any location of Weems Community Mental Health Center. Offices are located in Clarke, Jasper, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Scott and Smith counties. You do not have to live in one of the counties with a Weems office. Simply being an employee entitles you, your spouse and dependent children* to this benefit.

The Employee Assistance Program means you, your spouse and dependent children* can receive help with stress, anxiety, depression, other emotional or behavioral issues as well as treatment for alcohol or substance abuse. There is NO CHARGE to you to use the Weems services. There is NO LIMIT on the number of outpatient mental health services you or the covered family members may use. (*Note: Day treatment, psychosocial rehabilitation programs, case management and court-ordered programs are not included.*)

Your use of the EAP is strictly confidential and your name is not given to your employer UNLESS you have failed a drug or alcohol screen or had a mandatory referral from your supervisor. In that case, limited information will be released **after you sign a release** form.

To schedule an appointment through the Employee Assistance Program, please call the EAP coordinator at 601-483-4821 or toll-free: 1-800-803-0245. Appointments are scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. **Please tell the receptionist that you are enrolled in the Employee Assistance Program.** If you have an after-hours emergency, call toll-free: 1-800-803-0245.

If you have any questions about the program, contact the Employee Assistance Coordinator at 800-803-0245 or 601-483-4821.

* EAP covers dependent children up to age 18; up to age 21, if enrolled full-time in school.

Services for Adults

- Evaluation and diagnosis of emotional, mental health and substance abuse issues
- Outpatient counseling (individual, marital, family) with a mental health therapist
- Medication evaluation and monitoring
- Assessment for substance use disorders for men and women over age 18
- Intensive Outpatient Program (10-week alcohol and drug treatment program)
- Weems LifeCare 30-day residential treatment program for substance abuse (For more information on LifeCare, visit www.lifecarerecoverycenter.com)

Services for Children & Adolescents

- Evaluation and diagnosis of emotional, behavioral and mental health issues
- Medication evaluation and monitoring
- Outpatient counseling (individual and family)
- Individual and/or group substance abuse prevention and early intervention programs
- Parent education classes
- Parent Resource Library

Additional Services

- Specially trained critical incident team to provide on-site counseling in the event of workplace/school violence, natural disaster or other traumatic event
- **www.weemsmh.com web site:** describes services, provides links to resources on mental health and news about seminars and other events
- Quick, free, confidential online screenings: Depression, anxiety, mood disorders, post-traumatic stress syndrome, alcohol use, eating disorders all at www.weemsmh.com

Weems Community Mental Health Center

1415 College Drive
Meridian, MS
601-483-4821
800-803-0245

www.lifecarerecoverycenter.com
www.weemsmh.com

Weems Community Mental Health Center

Employee Assistance Program

Frequently Asked Questions: _____

Q. What is the Employee Assistance Program?

A. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit provided by your employer. The Employee Assistance Program means you and your dependent children (up to age 18; up to 21, if enrolled full-time in school) can receive help with stress, anxiety, depression and other emotional or behavioral issues as well as treatment for alcohol or substance abuse. There is **NO CHARGE** to you to use the covered Weems services. There is **NO LIMIT** on the number of visits you or your covered family members may have for outpatient mental health therapy, medication evaluation and management and substance use disorder treatment programs. You may use the services provided by Weems Community Mental Health Center at any of our offices, which are located in Clarke, Jasper, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Scott and Smith counties.

Q. What services are covered by the Employee Assistance Program?

A. The EAP covers unlimited visits for outpatient mental health counseling for individuals as well as marriage and family therapy. It includes medication evaluation and monitoring with the medical staff. Substance abuse treatment programs for adolescents and adults are also covered.

Q. What services are NOT covered?

A. Psychological testing is not included. Prescription medications, day treatment programs, psychosocial rehabilitation programs, case management and court-ordered programs are **not** covered. Services not provided by Weems are not covered. These include laboratory tests, medical detox and inpatient psychiatric hospitalization.

Q. Do I have to notify my employer when I use the program?

A. NO, you do not have to inform your employer to use the EAP program. Visits do not have to be pre-authorized in any way. Your use of the EAP program is **strictly confidential** and your name is not given to your employer UNLESS you have failed a drug or alcohol test or had a mandatory referral. In that case, limited information will be released with the employer **after you sign a release** form.

Q. How do I use the program?

A. To schedule an appointment, simply call 601-483-4821 or 1-800-803-0245 (toll-free). *Please tell the receptionist that you are covered by the Employee Assistance Program and the name of the company for which you work.* Appointments are scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. You may use the services of any Weems office, so you may also schedule appointments directly with your local Weems office, if that is more convenient. If you have an after-hours emergency, call 601-483-4821 or 1-800-803-0245. A trained mental health professional is always on call.

Q. What are some of the reasons people use the Employee Assistance Program?

A. More than 7,000 employees, plus their covered dependents, are eligible to use the EAP program, so the reasons people choose the program vary tremendously. Most often, individuals use the program when they are having difficulty coping with daily roles due to stress, anxiety, depression, anger, relationship problems or grief. In general, most adults come for a brief course of therapy, generally 3 to 8 sessions (but there is no limit on the number of sessions). In addition, children are often referred due to emotional or behavioral problems at home or at school. Substance abuse treatment is also a benefit that is widely used. Men and women over age 18 may have a substance abuse assessment and be referred to residential treatment at Weems LifeCare or the Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP). In some cases, individuals must complete medical detoxification before entering treatment at Weems. (Medical detox is not covered by the Employee Assistance Program.)

Q. What if I would like more information?

A. If you have any questions about the Employee Assistance Program, contact the EAP coordinator at 601-483-4821 or 1-800-803-0245 (toll-free).

Standard 8: Remunerative Conduct

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

- 8.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
 - Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.
- 8.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body
 - Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
 - The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. (This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.)

Standard 9: Maintenance of Confidentiality

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

- 9.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a legitimate purpose or is required by law
 - Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.
- 9.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information family status/income and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
 - Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school board or state directions for the use of tests
 - Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 10: Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment

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

10. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the school board
 - Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

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

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

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

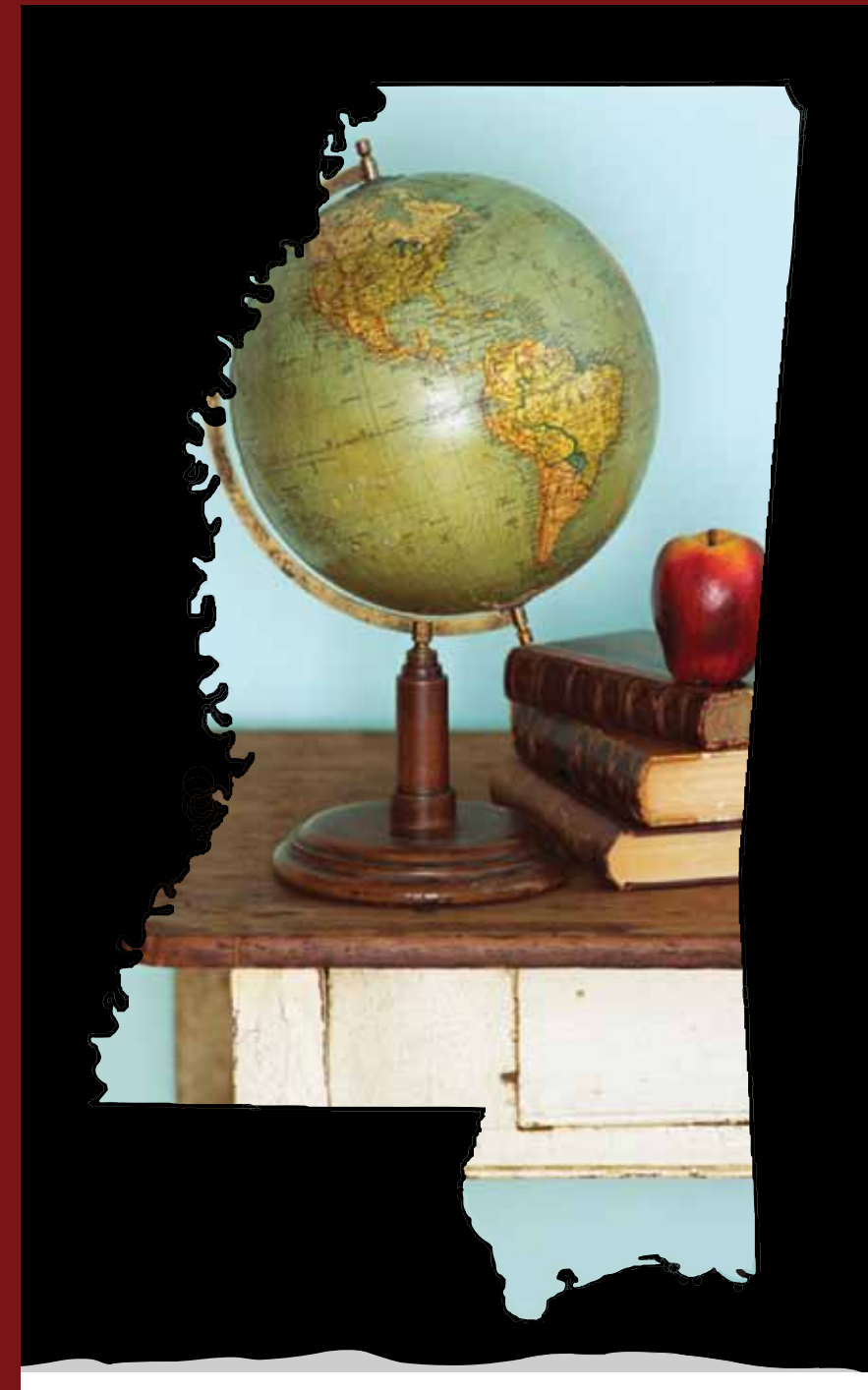
Any educator or administrator license may be revoked or suspended for engaging in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4). Superintendents shall report to the Mississippi Department of Education license holders who engage in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student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



For more information:
Mississippi Department of Education
359 North West Street
Jackson, MS 39201
601-359-3513
www.mde.k12.ms.us



MISSISSIPPI EDUCATOR



CODE OF ETHICS

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

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

- 1.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
 - b. Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment
 - c. Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning
 - d. Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner
 - e. Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter and pedagogical practices
 - f. Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establish appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children.
- 1.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Harassment of colleagues
 - b. Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
 - c. Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity
 - d. Physical altercations
 - e. Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

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

- 2.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
 - b. Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
 - c. Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.
- 2.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following:
 - 1. employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
 - 2. information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
 - 3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
 - 4. reasons for absences or leave
 - 5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
 - b. Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

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

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

Standard 4: Educator/Student Relationships

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

- 4.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy, and encouragement for students.
 - b. Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students
 - c. Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement
 - d. Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.
- 4.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Committing any act of child abuse
 - b. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
 - c. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
 - d. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
 - e. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
 - f. Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationship with students.

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

- 1. sexual jokes
- 2. sexual remarks
- 3. sexual kidding or teasing
- 4. sexual innuendo
- 5. pressure for dates or sexual favors
- 6. inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing or grabbing
- 7. rape
- 8. threats of physical harm
- 9. sexual assault
- 10. electronic communication such as texting
- 11. invitation to social networking
- 12. remarks about a student’s body
- 13. consensual sex.

Standard 5: Educator/Collegial Relationships

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

- 5. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- a. Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
- b. Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
- c. Interfering with a colleague’s exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities
- d. Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or family status
- e. Using coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues.

Standard 6: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

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

- 6.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice.
- 6.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
 - b. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages. A school-related activity includes but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc. which involve students.
 - c. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented using tobacco.

Standard 7: Public Funds and Property

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

- 7.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds
 - b. Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.
- 7.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Knowingly misappropriating, diverting or using funds, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain
 - b. Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents or any school-related function
 - c. Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
 - d. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
 - e. Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

MPSD Complaint and/or Grievance Form			
Complainant			Date
Home Address		City	State
Home Phone		Date of disagreement	
<p>The disagreement involving the work situation because the complainant(s) believes that an injustice has been done because of:</p> <p>(circle one of the following)</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <p><i>(Policies dictated by law are not included in this application)</i></p> </div> <div style="width: 65%;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a lack of a policy 2. a policy is unfair 3. a deviation from or misapplication of a policy 4. interpretation of a policy 5. non-compliance with state or federal law 6. Other _____ </div> </div>			
Where and when did the incident/disagreement occur?			
Describe details of the incident as clearly as possible. Attach additional pages as necessary.			
Did anyone witness the incident?	Yes	No	If yes, name the witness(es):
What was your reaction to the incident?			
How do you feel this grievance should be resolved?			
I assert that all of the information presented is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge. _____ <i>Signature of complainant</i>			Date:

**Central Administrative Office
1019 25th Avenue
601-483-6271**

**Pre-K Academy
3930 14th Street
Phone 601-484-4463**

**Magnolia Middle School
1350 24th Street
Phone 601-484-4060**

**Carver Elementary
900 44th Avenue
601-484-4482**

**Northwest Middle School
4400 32nd Street
Phone 601-484-4094**

**Crestwood Elementary
730 Crestwood Drive
Phone 601-484-4971**

**Meridian High School
2320 32nd Street
Phone 601-482-3191**

**Parkview Elementary
1225 26th Street
Phone 601-484-4990**

**Ninth Grade Academy
2320 32nd Street
Phone 601-696-7295**

**Poplar Springs Elementary
4101 27th Avenue
Phone 601-484-4450**

**Ross Collins Career & Technical Center
2640 24th Avenue
Phone 601-483-3331**

**West Hills Elementary
4100 32nd Street
Phone 601-484-4472**

**Marion Park School
2815 25th Street
Phone 601-484-4977**



MERIDIAN
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

