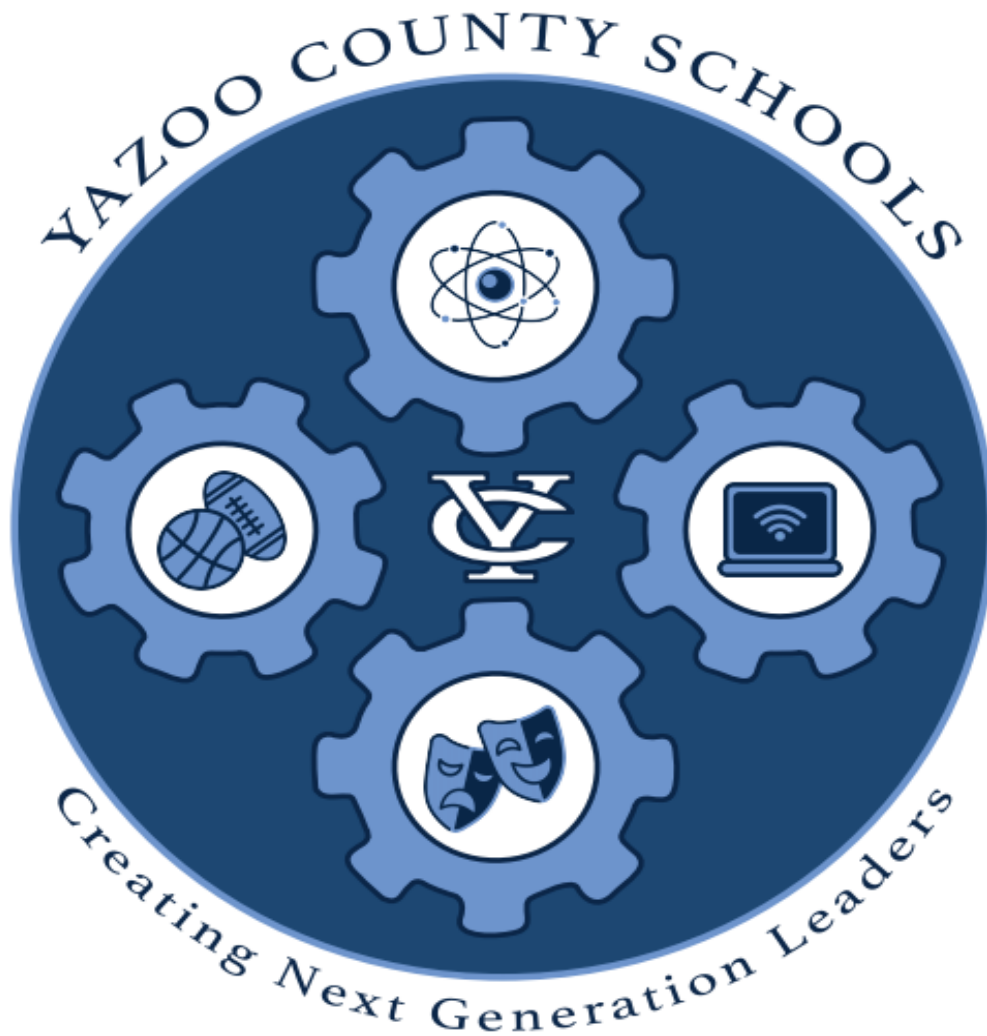


Yazoo County School District Employee Handbook



2023-2024
#YCSDNexGenLeaders

BOARD APPROVED
08.01.2023
YAZOO COUNTY SCHOOLS

APPLICABILITY OF STATUTE AND AMBIGUITIES:

All policies, procedures, and provisions of this employee handbook are subject to applicable state and federal statute. Applicable state and federal statute will prevail in all matters contained in this manual. In the event of any conflict or irregularity, the district reserves the right to clarify any ambiguities contained in this manual of policies and procedures.

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**Cumulative Listing and Appendix
of Forms Needed By Employees:**

- Form 1: Memo of Understanding for the 2022-2023 YCSD Employee Handbook;
- Form 2: Mississippi Professional Educator Growth Rubric
- Forms 3-7: New Employee Forms
 - Direct Deposit Form
 - W-4 (2019)
 - MS Employer’s Withholding Exemption Certificate
 - State of MS Health Insurance Plan Application for Coverage
 - State and School Employee’s Life Insurance Plan Application
- Form 8: Sick Leave Form
- Form 9: Personal Leave Form
- Form 10: Professional Development Request Checklist Form;
- Form 11: Professional Leave Form
- Form 12: Mileage Form for Reimbursement;
- Form 12: MTSS Academic Folder Lay-Out Reference
- Form 13: Field Trip Request Form
- Form 14: Parental Consent for Off-Campus Field Trip
- Form 15-20: Fixed Asset Forms
 - Add an Asset
 - Transfer an Asset
 - Assignment of Fixed Asset
 - Lost or Stolen Property Affidavit
 - Fixed Asset Assurance Form for Administrators;
 - Fixed Asset Assurance Form for Teachers and Other Employees;
- Form 21: Blank Requisition
- Form 22: Building and Grounds Checklist

- Form 23: Salary Schedule
- Form 24: Sample Letter of Reprimand
- Form 25: Educator Code of Ethics;
- Form 26: YCSD Grievance Form;
- Form 27: Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Form;
- Form 28: Waiver;
- Form 29: “Special Diet Form;” and
- Form 30: HIPPA Training Acknowledgement Form;

PREFACE

The purpose of the **YCSD Employee Handbook** is to convey information regarding one's job and District expectations. This handbook provides information regarding the policies and procedures of the Yazoo County School District. Please note that this handbook does not and cannot address every question/problem that may arise throughout the year. Any questions should be addressed, first, to one's immediate supervisor. Situations will arise which warrant exceptions to the policies and procedures. The Superintendent may grant these exceptions only when the facts call for such action. In the event a situation presents itself that one feel merits such action, the employee should meet with his/her immediate supervisor to present the factual information to him/her. These policies and procedures are intended to clarify and simplify the duties of those who serve the stakeholders of the Yazoo County School District. Unauthorized deviation, from these policies and procedures, will be dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. All policies and procedures of the Yazoo County School District are in accordance with federal and state statutes. Any changes, in this manual, made will be reflected in Yazoo County School District Policy Manual which can be found at www.yazoo.k12.ms.us under the top menu entitled, "Board."

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Yazoo County School District Employees,

I hope you have enjoyed an incredible summer and are ready to start a great 2023-24 year! Every year I find myself blessed beyond measure and excited for the chance to work with the students, faculty and staff and parents of this community. I want to take this moment to express my appreciation for each of you who serve our students. This is truly a calling.

The start of a new academic year brings with it a renewed sense of purpose and an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our students. Your dedication to the education profession is truly commendable, and it is through your hard work and commitment that we can create a nurturing and inspiring learning environment.

I encourage you to continue embracing innovation and exploring new ways to engage our students. The world is changing around us at such a rapid rate, our students will leave us prepared for this exciting new adventure because of your drive and determination to provide them the skills they need. Even though the future is uncertain our students are well prepared due to the great educators in their lives.

In closing remember that the eagle does not avoid the storms in life, rather it uses the storm to fly higher. No matter what we encounter in this year, use it to improve all those around you.

Have a GREAT 2023-24 School Year YCSD!

Ken Barron, Ed. D.
Superintendent Yazoo County Schools

Ken Barron, Ed. D.



SECTION I: Introduction



YAZOO COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Etta Saxton.....**District One**
Millicent Ledbetter (Secretary)**District Two**
Patsy Burrough.....**District Three**
Greg Moseley (President).....**District Four**
Wayne Allen**District Five**
Barry Bridgforth**School Board Attorney**

YAZOO COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

Beliefs

- We believe high quality, committed, and passionate teachers who embrace diversity are essential for student success.
- We believe change is inevitable, and we must adapt to meet the evolving needs of our students and community.
- We believe the success of every student requires nurturing the needs of the whole child.
- We believe positive relationships yield success.
- We believe shared beliefs and norms create an internally cohesive environment.
- We believe a safe, secure environment is foundational to learning.

Mission

Yazoo County School District exist to create next generation leaders who pursue purposeful, productive lives.

Goals of the Yazoo County School District

Goal One -- Student Achievement: We, along with the community, will provide opportunities for the success of each student by intentionally focusing on academic and extracurricular abilities and celebrating achievement.

Goal Two -- Safe and Orderly Climate: We will foster an environment that ensures confidence in the safety of the whole child within our school and community.

Goal Three -- Human Resources: We will recruit, develop, and retain a committed, passionate staff that positively impacts student learning.

Goal Four -- Operational Effectiveness: We will effectively and efficiently focus our resources to ensure equitable opportunities for all students and staff.



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SECTION II: Employment

Americans with Disabilities Act

Any person who believes that he/she or any class of individuals have been subjected to discrimination, as prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act, may file a complaint pursuant to the procedures set forth below, on his/her own behalf, on behalf of another person, or on behalf of handicapped persons as a class. Within ten (10) days of when a complainant knew or should have known of discriminatory conduct, a complaint shall be given in writing to the Section 504/ADA Coordinator. The complaint shall describe specifically the time, place and nature of, and the participants in the alleged discriminatory acts. The Section 504/ADA Coordinator shall, within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, conduct or cause to be conducted a thorough investigation including questioning of all parties involved in the complaint. A written record shall be made of the statements by all parties involved. After the investigation is complete, the Section 504/ADA Coordinator shall meet with the complaining party and give a full report of the findings.

Assignments of Personnel

The superintendent of schools shall have the power and authority to make assignments of all employees as provided in Sections 37-9-15 and 37-9-17 and to make reassignments of such employees from time to time to any area in which said employee has a valid certificate issued by the State of Mississippi Department of Education; provided, however, that upon request from the employee so transferred, such assignments shall be subject to review by the school board, S37-9-14 (s) (1987). The Contract of Employment with Mississippi Public School Districts for Assistant Superintendent, Principal, and Certificated Employee contain provisions that the employee agrees to reassignment during the school term to any area for which a valid license is held.

Paraprofessionals/Assistant Teachers

The utilization of paraprofessionals/assistant teachers shall be individually determined and shall require a detailed written recommendation by the principal and approval by the superintendent. The use of assistants will permit teachers more time to devote to instruction, more effective small grouping for instructional purposes, and greater individualized attention for meeting student needs. Paraprofessionals/Assistant teachers may **NOT have direct responsibility for or supervision of student instruction or activities** but shall be under the supervision of a licensed faculty member.

Child Abuse/Child Protection

The Yazoo County 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. Reports of child abuse or neglect--including the name and address of the child, family, mandated reporter, or any other identifying information in the report--shall remain confidential and shall not be public information. Any reporter, acting in good faith, shall be immune from any liability, civil, or criminal.

Classification of Employees

Employees are classified into two different categories -- that of **exempt employees** and **nonexempt**. Below one will find a description of each.

EXEMPT EMPLOYEES UNDER FLSA:

Certain employees are exempt from coverage under the FLSA and are not subject to compensation for overtime work. These exempt employees include the following: (1) executive; (2) administrative; and (3) licensed professional employees. Examples of licensed professional employees include the following: (1) teachers; (2) counselors; (3) supervisors; and (4) administrators.

Classified administrators are also exempt and include the following as examples: (1) the chief financial officer; (2) the director of finance; (3) the special services director; (4) the curriculum director; (5) the federal programs director; (6) the director of transportation; (7) the coordinator of pupil placement; (8) the coordinator and/or director of maintenance; (9) the network administrator; (10) the coordinator of construction; and (11) the security director. Supervisors, who are unsure, if an employee is exempt from coverage shall consult with the district's legal counsel for a legal opinion concerning the status of the employee in question.

COVERED EMPLOYEES UNDER FLSA:

All employees, in the job classifications listed below, are non-exempt employees and are therefore covered under the FLSA:

1. Secretaries;
2. Custodians;
3. Bookkeepers;
4. Receptionists;
5. Clerks;
6. Paraprofessional/Teacher's Assistant;
7. Bus Drivers;
8. Maintenance Personnel;
9. Security Guards; and
10. Food Service Workers.

Communicable Diseases

An employee, with a communicable disease, should remain at home until the disease is no longer a threat to others. Cases of communicable diseases that might pose a threat to the health of the school or community should be reported to the appropriate personnel. When concerned with a unique individual case, the welfare of all students and employees should be the prime consideration. Each individual case shall be resolved, in consultation, with the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Dismissal of Personnel (Cross Ref: Board Policy [GBK](#))

The causes for dismissal, of an employee, include the following:

- 1) Immoral Conduct;
- 2) Inefficiency/Neglect in Duties;

- 3) Not Being Cooperative with Supervisors;
- 4) Excessive Criticism or Disturbance of Employee Relationships;
- 5) Use of Intoxicants or Drugs During or Before the Workday;
- 6) Intemperance (ex. showing anger that is too extreme and not well-controlled or excessive behavior);
- 7) Physical or Mental Incapacity for Instructional Duties;
- 8) Connection with a Felony or Crime Involving Moral Turpitude;
- 9) Unethical Conduct Relating to an Educator/Student Relationship (Standard 4 of MS Educator Code of Ethics);
- 10) Excessive Absenteeism/Habitual Tardiness – The Interest and Welfare of the Students Being Paramount -- the District Reserves the Right to Terminate the Contract of any Teacher who is Excessively Absent, Except for Reasons According to FMLA Guidelines, During the Year. In the Event of Such Termination, the Teacher Shall be Entitled to **NO** Further Compensation Except the Salary Accrued to the Date of Termination;
- 11) Violation of Board Policies, Rules, and Regulations (including failure to properly implement the Bullying/Harassment Policy); and
- 12) Failure to Perform Assigned Responsibilities.

The Yazoo County School District abides by all provisions of the **School Employment Procedures Act and the Mississippi Code of Ethics**. All employees' conflicts will be dealt with individually as provided by law.

**Drug-Free Workplace
Use of Tobacco on Campus
(Cross Ref: Board Policy [GBRM](#))**

The Yazoo County School District's campus and buildings are SMOKE-FREE. No tobacco products shall be used in any public-school buildings, on buses, on campus or grounds, on recreational areas, athletic fields, nor other properties owned, used, or operated by the local school board.

Violators shall be subject to the following:

- 1) First Conviction: a warning is received;
- 2) Second Conviction: \$75 fine is imposed; and/or
- 3) All Subsequent Violations: a fine not to exceed \$150.00 is imposed.

Education Employment Procedures

On or before April 1 of each year, the principal of each school shall recommend, to the superintendent of the school district, the licensed employees, and non-instructional employees to be employed for the upcoming school year. If such recommendations meet with the approval of the superintendent, the superintendent shall recommend the employment of such licensed employees and non-instructional employees to the school board, and, unless good reason to the contrary exists, the board shall approve the employees so recommended. If, for any reason, the school board shall decline to approve any employee so recommended, additional recommendations, for the places to be filled, shall be made by the principal to the superintendent and then by the superintendent to the school board as provided

above. When the licensed employees have been recommended and approved, the superintendent of the district shall enter into a contract with such persons.

Supervision and Evaluation (Cross Ref: Board Policy [GDI](#))

The principal, of each school, is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of all local school personnel. It is the duty of the principal to document situations, either positive or negative, which reflect the quality of work being done by each employee. The purpose of supervision and evaluation is instructional improvement. Observations and evaluations will be conducted in accordance with adopted state policy, which includes the Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System. The Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System provides a reliable and valid system of performance assessments based on common standards to gauge teacher effectiveness, help track educational progress, identify areas of need, and improve performance throughout a teacher's career. The system is designed to improve student achievement by providing teachers with clear, specific, actionable, and timely feedback to inform continuous improvement. Evaluations of certified employees are submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education annually.

Employee Contact Information

The Yazoo County School District reserves the right to always have current contact information on each employee. Current contact information includes both, a current physical address, as well as a working phone number.

“At Will” Employment

All employees, other than professional employees, entering into a contract of employment with Yazoo County School District shall be considered an “at-will” employee. Professional employees shall include assistant superintendents, directors, principals, and other licensed employees. The personnel handbook is not and should not be construed as an expressed or implied contract of employment. “At-will” employees may have his/her employment terminated for egregious offenses or for repeated violations, which may be preceded by verbal and written warnings and/or suspensions of employment.

Employment Contracts

The superintendent shall enter into a contract with each licensed employee approved by the board. Such contract shall be in the form prescribed by the state board of education and in a manner specified by law. S37-9-23, S37-9-25, S37-9-43, S37-7-301 (p) **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, as cited above.

Professional Personnel Release from Contract

Any principal or licensed employee, in this school district, who is under contract to teach or perform other duties and who desires to be released from such contract shall make application in writing to the school board for release therefrom, in which the application should state the reasons for such release, and it shall be clearly stated. If the board acts favorably upon such application for release, such principal or licensed employee shall be released from his/her contract and said contract shall be null and void on the date specified in the school board's order of minutes. **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, S37-9-55.

Professional Personnel Breach of Contract

If any principal or licensed employee shall arbitrarily or willfully breach his/her contract and abandon his/her employment, without being released therefrom, the contract of such principal or licensed employee shall be null and void. By definition, to “abandon” one’s contract, means one party in a binding contract in a way that makes the original contract no longer valid. In addition, thereto, the licensed principal or other licensed employee may be suspended by the Mississippi State Board of Education for a period of one (1) school year as provided in Section 37-3-2(8), Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, upon the written recommendation of the majority of the members of the school board. **LEGAL REF:** Mississippi Code, S37-9-57 (1997).

Employee Discipline

For incompetence, neglect of duty, immoral conduct, intemperance, brutal treatment of a pupil, insubordination, or other good cause, the superintendent of this school district may dismiss or suspend any licensed employee. Before being removed or suspended, any licensed employee shall be notified of the charges against him/her, and he/she shall be advised that he/she is entitled to a public hearing upon said charges. In the event the continued presence of said employee on school premises poses a potential threat or danger to the health, safety, or general welfare of the students, or in the discretion of the superintendent, may interfere with or cause a disruption of normal school operations, the superintendent may immediately release said employee, of all duties, pending a hearing if one is requested by the employee. In the event a licensed employee is arrested, indicted, or otherwise charged with a felony, by a recognized law enforcement official, the continued presence of the licensed employee, on school premises, shall be deemed to constitute a disruption of normal school operations. The school board, upon a request for a hearing by the person so suspended or removed shall set a hearing and notify the employee in writing of the same. The date shall be set no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the request. The procedure for such hearing shall be as prescribed for hearings before this board or a hearing officer in Section 37-9-111. From the decision made at said hearing, any licensed employee shall be allowed an appeal to the chancery court in the same manner as appeals are authorized in Section 37-9-113. Any party aggrieved by the action of the chancery court may appeal to the Mississippi Supreme Court as provided by law. In the event that a licensed employee is immediately relieved of duties pending a hearing, as provided in this section, said employee shall be entitled to compensation for a period up to and including the date that the initial hearing is set by this school board, in the event that there is a request for such a hearing by the employee. In the event that an employee does not request a hearing within five (5) days of the date of the notice of discharge or suspension, it shall constitute a waiver of all rights by said employee and such discharge or suspension shall be effective on the date set out in the notice to the employee. S37-9-59 **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, as cited above.

Employment Transfers

Transfers of professional or licensed personnel, within the district, may be affected on a voluntary or involuntary basis. The following procedure shall be followed in making transfers of professional or licensed personnel:

Voluntary: After discussing the desire to transfer with the principal, the staff member must discuss the desire to transfer with the principal of the school to which the employee desires a transfer. If the

principals of each school affected by the transfer agree, a request for transfer shall be submitted to the superintendent. Based on the recommendation of both principals, the superintendent will give written notice to the person requesting the transfer as to the action taken. If the transfer is granted, the superintendent shall report the transfer to the board of education.

Involuntary: If an involuntary transfer is in the best interest of the district, in the opinion of the superintendent, the superintendent will discuss the need for the transfer with the immediate supervisor, of the person involved, and the principal of the school to which the individual would be transferred. The superintendent shall meet with the person involved, giving the reasons why the transfer is desirable. Non-compliance may result in loss of employment for the following year. The superintendent shall report the transfer to the board of education. Upon request from the employee so transferred, such assignments shall be subject to review by the school board. S37-9-14 Mississippi Code.

Equal Employment Opportunity

No person shall be denied employment, re-employment, or advancement on the basis of an individual's race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, height, weight, age, marital status, political beliefs, disability, or handicap which does not impair an individual's ability to perform adequately in that particular position or activity.

Additionally, the Board shall not discriminate, in its policies and practices with respect to compensation, terms or conditions of employment in addition to the ones specifically listed above, because of an individual's race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, height, weight, age, marital status, political beliefs, disability, or handicap which does not impair an individual's ability to perform adequately in that particular position or activity.

All applicants for employment shall be given equal consideration, and the position shall be awarded based on the needs of the district, the qualification(s) of the applicants, and recommendations, from the selected interview committee, of those applications at the time a vacancy occurs.

As provided under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, no person in the U.S. 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 receiving federal financial assistance.

Exit Surveys

Upon resignation of an employee of the Yazoo County School District, the employee will be asked to complete a survey in the form of a Likert Scale. Questions and statements will focus on leadership, support from leadership and/or administration, school culture, school environment, teacher and student morale, student achievement, reason(s) for leaving the school district, future plans, and demographic information. It is hoped that the data yielded from the exit survey will be a huge asset in retaining teachers and administrators in that the information yielded can help district leadership to revise and make changes that will improve student achievement, improve the culture and environment of the district, and serve to help to understand and improve upon the recruitment and retainment of teachers.

Garnishment or Levy
(Cross Ref: United States Department of Labor:
The Federal Wage Garnishment Law)

Each school system employee is expected to attend to his own personal business affairs. When a garnishment or levy is received in the superintendent's office, the employee will be notified. A release should then be secured prior to the issuance of the next paycheck. In the absence of a properly signed release, a maximum of twenty-five percent (25%) of the employee's net monthly salary will be withheld until the garnishment and court costs are satisfied. Such garnishments or levies are attached to the release and remain in the personal file of that teacher or staff member.

Personnel Records and Files

It is the responsibility, of the employee, to update or modify personal information due to a change in any of the following:

- 1) family status;
- 2) address;
- 3) beneficiary;
- 4) tax withholdings;
- 5) insurance; and/or
- 6) marriage status.

The superintendent shall develop and implement a comprehensive system of personnel records to include the following:

- 1) A personnel folder for each employee, licensed and classified, is to be maintained in perpetuity in the district administration office. Each folder shall contain the following: (a.) application for employment; (b) references of the employee; (c.) information relative to compensation; (d.) payroll deductions; (e.) evaluations; (f.) background checks; and (g.) other pertinent material. The personnel file, maintained in the district administration office, shall be the official personnel file of the employee. S37-9-14(k) Mississippi Code;
- 2) Performance ratings shall be considered confidential;
- 3) Personnel folders shall not be open for public inspection;
- 4) Each employee shall have the right, upon written request, to review his/her own personnel file and receive copies with the exception of confidential references; and
- 5) Protected health information, as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 shall be subject to the following "Notice of Privacy Practices".

Notice of Privacy Practices:

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.

PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY!

The Yazoo County School District is required, by law, to maintain the privacy of your health information and to provide you with notice of its legal duties and privacy practices with respect to

your health information. The district may receive health information from you. The district protects the privacy of your health information provided.

The law permits the district to disclose your health information for the following purposes:

- 1) The district may disclose health information to the health plan sponsor or for other claims purposes;
- 2) The district may disclose health information, as necessary, to comply with worker's compensation laws or claims;
- 3) The district may disclose health information to you;
- 4) The district may disclose health information to appropriate persons for public safety in order to prevent or lessen a serious or imminent threat to the health or safety of a particular person or the general public; and
- 5) The district may disclose health information in the course of a legal or judicial proceedings.

When the District May NOT Use or Disclose Your Health Information:

Except as described in the "Notice of Privacy Practices," the district will not use or disclose your health information without your written authorization. If you do authorize the district to use or disclose your health information for another purpose, you may revoke your authorization in writing at any time.

Your Health Information Rights:

You have the right to request restriction on certain uses and disclosures of your health information. The district is not required to agree to the restriction that you requested. You have the right to inspect and copy your health information. You have the right to request that the district amend your health information that is incorrect and incomplete. You have a right to receive an accounting of disclosures of your health information made by the district, except that the district does not have to account for disclosures described in the following:

- 1) Part 1 (Health Plan Sponsors);
- 2) Part 2 (Worker's Compensation); and
- 3) Part 3 (Health Information Provided to You).

You have a right to a paper copy of the "Notice of Privacy Practices."

Changes to the Notice of Privacy Practices:

The district reserves the right to amend this Notice of Privacy Practices at any time in the future, and to make the new provisions effective for all information that it maintains, including information that was received prior to the date of such amendment. Until such amendment is made, the district is required by law to comply with this Notice. Personnel records shall be exempt from the provisions of the Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983. **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, S37-9-14 (q) (1987), 37-9-16 (k) (1987), 25-1-100 (l) (1983), 37-7-301 (l) (1987).

Reduction in Force (Cross Ref: Board Policies [GBKA](#), [GBKAR](#))

The Board of Education has the responsibility for providing and maintaining quality schools within the district. In order to carry out its responsibility, the board may participate in the following:

- (1) abolish or combine job positions;
- (2) reduce the length of the work year with a concomitant 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 consider the following reasons for such a reduction in force:

1. Enrollment Declines;
2. Financial Decline/Reduction;
3. Educational Program(s) Elimination; and
4. Priority Need for Human, Material, and Financial Resources.

The primary objective of the board, when reducing the work force, 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 making final determinations regarding, “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, of the employee, by certification;
- 3) Experience, professional training, length of service within the district and current work assignment;
- 4) Quality of performance including the proven ability to accomplish the educational mission of the school district;
- 5) Executive abilities of the employee;
- 6) Employee attendance and discipline history; and
- 7) Skills and licensure in the area(s) where the district has instructional and/or supervisory needs.

Staff Relationships

The Yazoo County School District’s vision and mission are to provide the best 21st century educational experience for students – ultimately **“Creating Next Generation Leaders!”** Therefore, all employees should work together to accomplish this singular goal, without personal agendas or bias. It is the expectation, that each staff member, behave professionally at all times, be respectful and courteous to one another and others, uphold the policies of the district, and work diligently toward meeting the district goals.



SECTION III: **Compensation**

Arrangement for Substitutes

When the services of a substitute teacher are required, for whatever reason, the teacher should notify the principal at the earliest possible moment -- the day before if practicable. Teachers are to call his/her principals no later than 7:00 a.m. on the day of absence. The principal is responsible for obtaining substitute teachers. The teacher should have available for the substitute a class roll, lesson plans, keys, discipline plans, or any other materials and equipment the substitute teacher would need to carry out the daily assignment. In the event a teacher will be absent for an extended period of time, the district should be notified in writing and a substitute may be employed for the term of the extended illness.

Compulsory Deductions

The superintendent shall deduct and withhold from the wages of all employees the following:

- 1) the amount of federal income tax required by federal law [26 USCA 3401-3402];
- 2) the amount of social security and medicare tax required by federal law [26 USCA 3101-3102 MS Code '25-11-3, et seq.];
- 3) the amount of contributions to PERS [MS Code '25-11-123 (f) (1994)]; and
- 4) state income tax.

Contracts

The superintendent shall enter into a contract with each licensed employee approved by the board. Such contract shall be in the form prescribed by the Mississippi State Board of Education and in a manner specified by law. S37-9-23; S37-9-25; S37-9-43; S37-7-301 (p) LEGAL REF.: Mississippi Code (as cited above).

Direct Deposit (BOARD POLICY DJC)

The Yazoo County School Board has a mandatory direct deposit for all employees. A completed direct deposit form attached with a voided personal check must be submitted to the Payroll Officer for any new staff member who has not completed this process.

State Board Policy on Teaching Experience/Salary (Cross Ref: Board Policy GBA; HB 347)

The level of professional training, of each teacher to be used, in establishing the salary allotment for the teachers for each year shall be determined by the type of valid teacher's license issued to those teachers on/or before October 1 of the current school year. (37-19-7) The term "year of teaching experience" shall mean nine (9) months of actual teaching in the public or private elementary and/or secondary schools and shall also include nine (9) months of actual teaching at postsecondary institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) or the equivalent regional accrediting body for degree-granting postsecondary institutions.

In no case shall more than one (1) year of teaching experience be given for all services in one (1) calendar or school year. In determining a teacher's experience, no deduction shall be made because of the temporary absence of the teacher, because of illness or other good cause, and the teacher shall be given credit, therefore. Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, the State Board of Education fixed a number of days, not to exceed forty-five (45) consecutive school days, during which a teacher may not be under contract of employment during any school year and still be considered to have been in full-time employment for a regular scholastic term. If a teacher exceeds the number of days established by the State Board of Education that a teacher may not be under contract but may still be employed, that teacher shall not be credited with a year of teaching experience. (37-151-5) Two parts of a year may be added together in determining a year's experience.

Hours Worked – Duty Time

Each employee, subject to FLSA, shall be paid in accordance with all hours worked for the district. Compensable time includes all time that an employee is required to be on duty and working. Breaks, waiting time, and meal periods that are frequently interrupted by calls to duty are hours worked and are compensable. Employees who do not have such times included in their total workday shall have such times uninterrupted and shall not engage in work for the district during these periods except for a rare and infrequent emergency. In no case shall a supervisor schedule an employee, subject to FLSA, to work more than 40 hours per workweek. Supervisors shall establish all duty times, and employees are expected to adhere to those times. Supervisors may only make modifications in duty times. Employees are not allowed to schedule their own overtime. If an employee feels that overtime is needed to complete specific work, then the employee is to seek approval from the supervisor, as well as from the superintendent, before engaging in the work.

Leaving School

Teachers are expected to conduct personal business during non-school hours. Teachers are never to leave campus during working hours, without the knowledge and/or permission of the building principal. Each school office has a place to sign-out and sign back-in (and vice versa) upon leaving or returning to campus. **Please Note:** “Signing out” does **NOT** constitute permission to leave campus – permission **MUST** be gained from the school principal and/or assistant principal.

Length of Workday

(Cross Ref: BOARD POLICY [GBRB](#))

A contract day is **7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Faculty and staff are expected to “sign-in” each morning and be present, at their assigned duty posts at a time designated, by the school principal, in that buses arrive, at each school site, with variance.

Teachers are required to remain at school every day **until 3:30 p.m. or 4:00 p.m.** if needed. Teachers should be available for conferences during planning periods or in the afternoons after school. Also, professional staff development may be scheduled after school on some days.

All teachers and administrators are subject to call for special duty on Saturday or other times when the best interests of the Yazoo County School District may be served. The stated school hours are not to be interpreted as being limited to classroom activities, or the length of a teacher’s day.

Minimum Wage

All employees, subject to the FLSA, shall be paid not less than the current minimum wage as issued through the U.S. Department of Labor.

Overtime/SRO and SSO Only

The FLSA requires that overtime must be paid to non-exempt employees in the form of monetary compensation at the rate of 1.5 times the regular hourly rate of pay for the number of hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Employees must be given approval from their immediate supervisor, as

well as, the superintendent to work overtime. Because of ballgames and other job-related responsibilities, SRO's and SSO's may be granted permission to work overtime.

Overtime Payment

The FLSA requires that overtime must be paid to non-exempt employees in the form of monetary compensation at the rate of 1.5 times the regular hourly rate of pay for the number of hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Employees must be given approval from their immediate supervisor, as well as the superintendent, to work overtime.

Salary Scale

(See Appendix (back of manual) prior to the forms section)

Time Clock Procedures (Hourly Employees)

Hourly Paid Employee Guidelines for Time and Attendance:

The workweek for Yazoo County School District begins on Sunday Morning at 12:00 a.m. and ends Saturday at midnight. Each employee, subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act, shall be paid for all hours worked. Compensable time includes all time that an employee is required to be on duty. Each employee is required to take a 30-minute uninterrupted meal period. Exceptions to taking the 30-minute meal period may be allowed if requested by the supervisor. Employees are expected to work all scheduled hours each week. Employees are to arrive and depart at the times specified by their supervisor. If time worked does not equal scheduled hours for the week, the employee could apply either sick or personal leave, if applicable. Employees may not make up for any lost time by working late or starting work early unless approved beforehand by their supervisor.

Please see the Employee Handbook section on overtime payment for further explanation.

Missed clock punches will result in the following disciplinary actions:

- First Occurrence**—Verbal Warning;
- Second Occurrence**—Written Warning;
- Third Occurrence**—Written Notice of 1 hour (suspension) with docked pay;
- Fourth Occurrence**—Written Notice of (1) day suspension without pay; and/or
- Fifth Occurrence**—Review of record with Superintendent with the further suspension and/or termination.

For each 45-day period in which no incident occurs, an incident from the previous 45 days will be removed from the employee's file/record. The following ladder will be in effect for substitutes (other than substitute teachers) that have missed clock punches as well:

- First Occurrence**—Verbal Warning;
- Second Occurrence**—Written Warning;

- ❑ **Third Occurrence**—Written warning that no pay will be given on day of missed punch; and/or
- ❑ **Fourth Occurrence**—Review of record with Superintendent with possibility of being removed from the sub list.

Wage Payment Schedule

All employees shall be paid through a single monthly payroll with electronic settlement of payroll checks secured through direct deposit of net pay on the last working day of each month. 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. Nothing in this section shall be construed to entitle any employee to payment of salary or wages when no work has been performed. MS Code 37-9-39.

All contractual and hourly personnel, in the Yazoo County School District, will be paid on the last working day of each month. The superintendent, principal, licensed or non-instructional employee, who completes the entire scholastic year, shall be entitled to payment for the full number of monthly payments provided by the contract without regard to his/her activity at the time when his/her services are not required by the school district. Employees will receive an electronic pay statement each pay period via the Active Resources Employee Portal. It is the responsibility of the employee to verify payment amounts and deductions for appropriate taxes, insurances, and contributions. It is also the responsibility of the employee to check and monitor deducted leave for accuracy. If the employee determines that he/she has a discrepancy, for the business office and/or CFO to address the alleged discrepancy, it must be within one pay period's range. If greater than the time frame of one pay period, whether accurate or not, will be left as is. If an employee is underpaid, the error will be corrected, and the employee's pay will be made whole. In the event an employee is overpaid, the employee will be obligated to repay the district. The payroll manager will work with employees to set up a payment plan for repayment of an overage.

Wage Scales

Employees may refer to the Yazoo County School District Wage Scale, through the District's Human Resources Office, for current wage information. Wages are payable in 12 monthly installments which are issued on the last working day of each calendar month from the district office (Exception: December checks are issued on the day faculty and students are dismissed for Christmas holidays). The wages, sick leave, and personal leave days for all staff members, who are employed part-time or less than a full year, shall be prorated based on the percentage of time worked during the school year. In order for licensed employees to receive a full salary adjustment based on a new certificate or new level of certificate, the employee must submit the new certificate/license to the Human Resources Office on or before the first day of October for any changes in the salary scale to be effective during the current contractual year. The Yazoo County School District Policy adheres to the minimum wage, overtime pay, record keeping requirements, as well as the child labor restrictions, in compliance with the Standards of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of the United States.

Work Times

In order to comply with the regulations issued by the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor and in keeping with the regulations of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Yazoo County School District keeps weekly wage and hour reports on all non-certified personnel, regardless of the hours worked on the position held. Contracted employees (administrators, teachers, etc.) are exempt from FLSA requirements regarding payment of overtime, although time and attendance records are kept on file.

Work Week

The workday shall be set within the legal parameters, with consideration of the instruction and activity schedules, established by the principal. Every effort shall be made to provide a uniform workday for employees where this is practical and consistent with the safe and efficient administration of the school. Professional employees shall be on duty the number of days shown on the face of their current employment contract less and except those days granted by the board for illness, personal business, earned vacation, and emergencies.

LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY:

- 1) The number of hours of actual teaching which shall constitute a school day shall be determined and fixed by the board of trustees of the school district at not less than five and one-half (5-1/2) hours ('37-13-67).
- 2) Elementary, junior high, and senior high-school teachers are expected to be on duty at his/her respective schools by 7:30 a.m. each day.
- 3) Except when carrying out assignments of the principal, teachers are expected to remain at school or on duty during the designated hours. It is expected that all teachers remain at school Monday through Thursday until 4:00 p.m. and Friday until 3:30 p.m.
- 4) Time is provided, at the end of each school day, for instructional preparation, planning, and conferences.
- 5) Principals are expected to be on duty from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day.



SECTION IV:

Employee

Benefits

Cafeteria Plan-Insurance

All employees have the opportunity to take health insurance and have all or part of the premium paid by the state. If one chooses "Select Coverage," there will be additional charges above what the state pays. This charge applies to Horizon and Legacy employees. A "Horizon" employee is an employee that was hired after January 1, 2006. A "Legacy" employee is an employee that was hired prior to January 1, 2006. Effective January 1, 2019, Legacy employees will begin paying \$20.00 per month for Select Coverage. Horizon employees will pay \$39.00 for Select Coverage.

Note: The Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) requires the school district to offer employees, and their families, a continuation coverage at group rates, that otherwise would have been forfeited, under certain situations that result in loss of group medical coverage. An employee, spouse, and dependent children are entitled to 18 months of continuous coverage if the qualifying event is due to a termination or reduction of hours. Any other qualifying event allows the beneficiary 36 months of coverage. A beneficiary loses his/her cobra coverage when the following situations occur:

- 1) when the premium for coverage is not paid;
- 2) the date the employer terminates group health coverage;
- 3) becomes covered under another group plan; and/or
- 4) date qualified for Medicare benefits.

All employees have the opportunity to take life insurance at the rate of 18 cents per thousand dollars of coverage. (9 cents paid by district/9 cents paid by employee).

COBRA

Upon certain qualifying events that are defined by federal law, employees, spouses, and dependent children may continue coverage in the group health insurance plan. Employees who face discontinuation of their group health insurance should contact the Human Resources Department for information concerning eligibility and requirements for coverage.

Compensation

Compensation, for all certified and non-certified employees, shall be paid over twelve (12) months, regardless of the time period worked. For workers who are not exempted from the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act, wages will be determined based on hours worked at the appropriate hourly rate, but payment of wages will be spread over twelve (12) months. Payment for overtime hours worked will be made as soon as practicable after the overtime is worked. Substitutes shall be paid as earned.

Medical Insurance

The Yazoo County School District provides life insurance and health care benefits to its eligible employees and their eligible dependents through the State Employees Life and Health Insurance Plan

(the "Life and Health Plan.") Premiums for the Life and Health Plans shall be paid in accordance with state law and Mississippi Department of Education State Board Policy.

The Life and Health Plan is subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, as amended ("HIPAA"). The Life and Health Plan is required by HIPAA to take reasonable steps to ensure the privacy of the individually identifiable health information of the district's employees, and their dependents, who are covered under the Life and Health Plan. For this purpose, the Life and Health Plan has adopted HIPAA Privacy Policies and Procedures.

The Board acknowledges, that its employees who use or disclose individually identifiable health information in the course of their duties related to the district's health care benefits (in connection with the Life and Health Plan), are required to comply with the Health Plan's HIPAA Privacy Policies and Procedures, copies of which are made available, by the district, to all such employees. The Board further acknowledges that HIPAA privacy training is required for all such employees, and the Life and Health Plan and the Board shall make resources available for such training.

Retirement Benefits-PERS (Cross Ref: Board Policy [CGO](#))

By state law, teachers are required to become members of the Public Employees Retirement System. Each member contributes 9% of his/her monthly salary. The school district contributes 17.4% beginning July 1, 2019. All information about employee retirement is available through the PERS system at 429 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. You may call them at 1-800-444-PERS. Your request must be submitted in writing.

Voluntary Benefits

Additional voluntary (employee paid) benefits are available through payroll deduction and endorsed by the district and include:

- 1) supplemental life;
- 2) cancer;
- 3) dental;
- 4) disability;
- 5) vision;
- 6) accident; and/or
- 7) medical GAP insurance programs.

Information on these programs is available through the District's Human Resources Department.

403(b) Plan

Eligible employees, of the YCSD, may participate in 403(b) plans offered through the district. Participation is optional and allows for tax deferral on savings in accordance with established IRS guidelines.



SECTION V: Paid Leave

Calculation of Leave Day

One (1) day of leave, under this policy, shall consist of the actual working day of each individual employee. That is, whether the employee works 3 hours per day or 8 hours per day, the absence will be counted as one (1) full leave day. This calculation could be altered, at the discretion of the Superintendent, in the event that the district works four 10-hour days during the summer. An absence of those days would equal 1.25 days of leave.

Donated Leave Policy (Cross Ref: Board Policy [GADE](#))

Any employee, of the Yazoo County School District, may donate a portion of his/her unused accumulated sick leave to another employee of the Yazoo County 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:

- A. The employee donating the sick leave (the "donor employee") shall designate the employee who is to receive the sick leave (the "recipient employee") and the amount of unused accumulated sick leave that is to be donated, and shall notify the superintendent or his/her designee of his/her designation;
- B. The maximum amount of unused accumulated sick 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 sick 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;
- C. An employee must have exhausted all of his/her available leave before he/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;
- D. Before an employee may receive donated leave, he/she must provide the 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;
- E. Before an employee may receive donated leave, the superintendent 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;
- F. 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; and
- G. 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. 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.

- 2) **"Immediate family"** means spouse, parent of, stepparent, sibling, child, or stepchild.

Family Medical Leave Act

FMLA requires covered employers such as the Yazoo County School District ("School District") to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees during a 12-month period for the following reasons:

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

For purposes of FMLA, the School District has chosen a fiscal-year method for determining the 12-month period during which an employee is entitled to FMLA leave, as described in this policy. Each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave entitlement would be the balance of the 12 weeks which has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months.

Military Family Leave Entitlements

Eligible employees, with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or called to active-duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation, may use his/her 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings. FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Benefits and Protections

During FMLA leave, the School District will maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

Eligibility Requirements

Employees are eligible if they have worked for the School District for at least one year for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months.

Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave

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

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

Employees may choose or the School District may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days-notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures. Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the School District if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities

The School District will inform employees who are requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are **NOT** eligible, the School District will provide a

reason for the ineligibility. The School District will inform the employee if the leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the School District determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the School District must notify the employee.

Prohibited Acts

FMLA prohibits employers from interfering with, restraining, or denying the exercise of any right provided under FMLA; discharging or discriminating against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

Extended Leave

Employees may petition the YCSD to request an extension of non-working employee status for additional time off work, said extension to be considered based on the facts to each employee's medical issue. The extension must be requested prior to the expiration of the FMLA leave time. The maximum time for extension of a non-working employee status, shall be 12 weeks. If approved, the employee shall reimburse the YCSD for all insurance premiums incurred during the additional leave time. Upon return to work, the employee, at the sole discretion of the Superintendent of Education, will be returned to work at the same job held by the employee prior to the FMLA leave or shall be reassigned to another location with the YCSD. The employee must provide certification from his/her health care provider, or a family member's health care provider as to: (a) the date that the condition commenced; (b) the duration; and (c) the necessity for the employee's inability to perform his/her job functions. Where doubt exists, as to certification, the school district, as its own expense, may designate a second health care provider (other than a school district employee) to provide a second opinion... with the opinion of a third health care provider, if necessary, to be binding.

Extended Leave (Certified Staff)

Once the employee has exhausted available leave, a deduction in the amount of \$90.00 per day shall be made from the employee's pay for the next ten (10) days, regardless of the number of days the employee is contracted to serve during that contract year. Days used in excess of the amounts set forth above shall result in a deduction of the employee's daily rate of pay.

Extended Leave (Classified Staff)

Employees will be provided with 10 days extended leave each year above the accumulated days as shown above. Extended leave absences will be deducted.

Jury Duty

Service on juries is a responsibility of citizenship. Therefore, employees summoned and serving on juries will not be required to reimburse the district pay for that service and will not have a personal or sick leave day deducted from their total accrued leave. To avoid a deduction from leave or from one's salary, the employee must present and provide a copy of the jury duty excuse, signed by the judge or a copy of the pay stub from the courts, as evidence of jury duty. The date(s) served must be included on either of the documents submitted. The absence will be coded a jury duty.

Sick Leave Policy

The administration realizes that it may be necessary for an employee to be absent; therefore, please see the charts below for an explanation of paid leave.

PERSONAL DAYS ALLOWANCE FOR CERTIFIED LICENSED EMPLOYEES:

Years of Experience	187 Days	188-Over Days
0-10	3	4
11 Years or More	4	5

PERSONAL DAYS ALLOWANCE FOR

NON-LICENSED EMPLOYEES:

187 Days	188-Over Days
2	3

SICK LEAVE FOR PROFESSIONAL/LICENSED STAFF:

Years of Experience	187 Days	188-200 Days	201-220 Days	221-Over Days
0-10 Years	11	12	13	14
11 Years or More	13	14	15	16

SICK LEAVE FOR NON-LICENSED AND HOURLY PAID EMPLOYEES:

187 Days	188-200 Days	201-220 Days	221-Over Days
7	8	9	10

The accumulation of sick-leave days is unlimited and the personal leave days may accumulate to five. Unused personal leave days (above 5) shall be converted to sick leave days at the end of each fiscal year.

SICK AND PERSONAL LEAVE PROCEDURES

A teacher is encouraged to let the principal know as soon as possible when he/she will be absent from school. If, in any event, there is a situation that arises that does not allow any advance notice, the teacher will need to contact the building administrator in charge of substitutes as soon as he/she

possibly can. Upon returning to school, teacher(s) must come, by the office, and sign the absence sheet verifying the information for payroll purposes.

Except in cases of emergency, the principal shall be notified at least 48 hours prior to any personal leave needs. In case of pregnancy, prolonged illness, or major surgery, employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA, if eligible. When a 30-day notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice, as soon as practicable, so a suitable substitute may be contacted. The employee must give the date the leave is to begin and the date it is to terminate. An employee who qualifies and is covered under FMLA will have up to 12-weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period.

Any employee who is not covered under FMLA and the incapacity is in excess of thirty (30) school days; the principal will make recommendations to the superintendent whether or not to terminate his/her employment. Once an employee has exhausted his/her FMLA leave and return to work is indefinite, the district has no requirement to hold the position, unless there is a reasonable accommodation.

The following steps are required for approval of emergency leave. As soon as the need for major surgery is established, pregnancy determined, or lengthy illness is diagnosed, the teacher will advise, in writing, the principal of the intent to request leave, along with a letter from the physician verifying the following:

- 1) the need for emergency leave;
- 2) the time the leave should begin;
- 3) the date the teacher can return to full duty; and
- 4) fitness to continue performance in the teaching assignment until the leave is to begin.

All personal leave will be assessed in quarterly increments. All forms, of leave, not specifically covered under the emergency leave or personal leave provisions of this handbook are not eligible for reimbursement. In these instances, teachers will be charged an amount equal to his/her daily contractual salary.

In the event of a materially false statement, by a teacher, as to the cause of absence, penalties may include a full deduction to pay or other appropriate penalties/consequences. Accumulated or future sick leave may be forfeited if a teacher's absence is caused by optional dental or medical treatment which could have been provided, without medical risk, at a time when school was not in session. A leave record for each teacher will be kept by each school principal, and a copy forwarded to the superintendent monthly.

A. Annual Sick Leave

- 1) Sick Leave may be used for personal illness, illness, or death in the employee's immediate family, which shall include one's wife, husband, children, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, grandmother, and grandfather;
- 2) Any unused portion of Annual Sick Leave shall be carried forward to succeeding school years and credited to such teacher and/or administrator;

- 3) No teacher and/or administrator shall be permitted to transfer unused Accumulated Sick Leave from another school district to the Yazoo County School District; and
- 4) Substitute employees are not entitled to sick leave.

B. Extended Sick Leave

- 1) Any teacher and/or administrator who is absent due to personal illness, illness or death in the employee's immediate family, and who has exceeded all accumulated sick leave days shall be entitled to ten (10) days additional days with only the cost of a substitute to be deducted from his/her pay. (Substitute's daily rate established by the school board for said school year); and
- 2) For each day's absence, in excess of the aforesaid ten (10) days, there shall be deducted from such teacher's and/or administrator's salary an amount equal to a full day's pay. A full day's rate of pay is defined as the contract salary divided by the number of specified contracted days for that said school year.

C. Personal Leave

- 1) Advance notice shall be given to the principal before personal leave is granted. Sufficient time must be given, for the principal, to secure substitutes and arrange for an orderly continuation of the school schedule;
- 2) Personal Leave shall not be taken on the **first day of the school term nor within last week of school, nor shall it be taken for any days immediately preceding or following a legal or school holiday, except with prior permission;** and
- 3) Any personal leave days left (above 5) at the end of the school year will be credited to the employee's accumulated sick leave days and be considered at that point as sick leave days.

D. Regulations

- 1) **Maternity Leave:** An employee on maternity leave shall receive pay, insurance, and other benefits to the same extent and on the same basis as if they were on sick leave. A statement from a physician as to how long she may work before the birth of her child and when she should be allowed to return to work after the birth of her child may be required;
- 2) **Extended Absences:** A certificate from a physician or other medical practitioner may be required by the building principal for any teacher absent for three (3) or more consecutive school days, or for two (2) consecutive school days immediately preceding or following a non-school day;
- 3) **Military Leave Policy:** Employees of the school district shall be granted release time for mandatory military duty. Release time for military leave shall be limited to a period of not more than fifteen (15) calendar days. Such employees called for military duty shall receive the full salary to which they are normally entitled, less any compensation received for military services not to exceed per diem pay;
- 4) **Penalty for Giving False Information:** Any employee who gives materially false information as to the cause of absence which results in the employee receiving any of the benefits of this policy shall forfeit accumulated or future sick leave that he/she is otherwise entitled to for a period of one year. Full per diem shall be deducted for each day absent and claimed through false information and said number of days shall be deducted from the employee's accumulated sick leave days;

- 5) **Partial Absence During Workday:** Employee absences will be recorded in quarterly increments. Quarterly increments or full days will be reported to the central office for deductions. Half-days will be taken as follows: (a.) AM: 7:30-11:30; and (b.) PM: 11:30-3:30. If emergencies arise, employees will arrange the time of absence with his/her principal.
NOTE: Having to go to the bank or run an errand is not an emergency;
- 6) **Approved Leave Without Pay:** A maximum of three (3) days of leave may be granted an employee upon approval of appropriate administrative officials. One (1) full day's pay will be deducted for each day's absence and there will be no reduction of authorized leave days.
Note: We need your help with sick and personal leave days. If you are absent, please be sure correct information is sent to the central office before checks are prepared.

Unemployment Compensation Procedures

Employees are not eligible for unemployment benefits in the summer months between school terms, if there is reasonable assurance of employment for the same or similar work for the following school term. Employees who feel they may be entitled to unemployment benefits for job loss other than the annual summer break between school terms may apply for benefits through the Mississippi Employment Security Commission.

Workers' Compensation

It is the policy of Yazoo County School District 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 the Yazoo County School District maintains productivity and reduce workers compensation costs.

In order for this to be successful, all injuries must be reported immediately or as soon as medically possible. An employee can be assisted with immediate transportation from work to the medical facility. An employee's supervisor will report the injury to the district claims coordinator (Payroll Clerk) or directly to the Third-Party Administrator. Following medical treatment, the employee is to report his/her medical status to the supervisor and/or district claims coordinator. If the employee is unable to return to normal duties, an attempt to provide a position with modified duties will be provided, if applicable. The modified duty position will comply with the medical provider's job restrictions.

Requests for Leave

All requests for leave should be initiated via requested leave forms. Once approved by one's supervisor, the leave will attach to one's pay record for that pay period. Leave may be taken in increments of .25 hours instead of half days or whole days.



SECTION VI: Employee Conduct

Employee Conduct
(Cross Ref: Board Policy [GAB](#))

STATE BOARD POLICY: Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

Each educator, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the code of ethics which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation.

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). Employees of the Yazoo County 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. Unseemly dress, conduct or the use of abusive, foul, profane, suggestive, or inappropriate language by any employee, while on duty, is expressly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

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; and
- 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; and
- 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:
 - Employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification;
 - Information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies;
 - Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
 - Reasons for absences or leave; and
 - 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.

3.1 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 the 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:

- b) 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;
- c) Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students;
- d) Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement; and/or
- e) 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:

- a) Sexual jokes;
- b) Sexual remarks;
- c) Sexual kidding or teasing;
- d) Sexual innuendo;
- e) Pressure for dates or sexual favors;
- f) Inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing or grabbing;
- g) Rape;
- h) Threats of physical harm;
- i) Sexual assault;
- j) Electronic communication such as texting;
- k) Invitation to social networking;
- l) Remarks about a student's body; and
- m) Consensual sex

Standard 5: Educator/Collegial Relationships

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

5.1. 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; and/or
- 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:

- b) Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs;
- c) 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; and/or
- d) 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; and/or
- 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

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:

- a) Ensuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain; and
- b) Ensuring 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:

- a) 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;
- b) Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board; and/or
- c) 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 of 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 students 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:

- a) 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; and/or
- b) Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.

9.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) 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;
- b) 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; and/or
- c) Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standards 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.

10.0 Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the school board; and/or
- b) Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

VIOLATIONS:

Violations of this policy shall be reported and discussed in a conference between the employee and the school principal (or superintendent and principal if a principal is in violation of this policy). If the principal or superintendent finds the complaint to be factual, he/she shall issue a written reprimand to the employee(s) involved. This reprimand shall become a part of the employee's personnel file.

Violations of this policy may lead to an employee being placed on administrative leave, dismissed, or non-renewed. Employees shall have the right to appeal any disciplinary action taken against them by following the proper chain of command as specified in the district's "Employee Grievance Procedure" policy and the provisions of the Education Employees Procedures Law (EEPL).

Please refer to the EEPL Handbook, published by MSBA. **LEGAL REF.:** MS Code 37-9-59 & 37-9-101
CROSS REF.: Policy GAE-R – Licensed Staff Complaints and Grievance

Cell Phone/Use of School Phone

All telephone calls into and out of the school district are logged and monitored. Long distance personal calls should not be made from school phones. **Personal use of cell phones during**

instructional time is strictly prohibited unless prior permission is obtained from the building principal. Employee's usage of cell phones, not in accordance with this policy, may result in disciplinary action.

Conflict of Interest

The following definitions apply, in this article, unless the context otherwise requires:

- a) **"Authority"** means any component unit of a governmental entity.
- b) **"Benefit"** means any gain or advantage to the beneficiary, including any gain or advantage to a third person pursuant to the desire or consent of the beneficiary.
- c) **"Business"** means any corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, organization, holding company, self-employed individual, joint stock company, receivership, trust or other legal entity or undertaking organized for economic gain, a nonprofit corporation or other such entity, association or organization receiving public funds.
- d) **"Business with which he/her is associated"** means any business of which a public servant or his/her relative is an officer, director, owner, partner, employee or is a holder of more than ten percent (10%) of the fair market value or from which he or his relative derives more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) in annual income or over which such public servant or his/her relative exercises control.
- e) **"Compensation"** means money or thing of value received, or to be received, from any person for services rendered.
- f) **"Contract"** means:
 - (i) Any agreement to which the government is a party; or
 - (ii) Any agreement on behalf of the government which involves the payment of public funds.
- g) **"Government"** means the state and all political entities thereof, both collectively and separately, including but not limited to:
 - (i) Counties;
 - (ii) Municipalities;
 - (iii) All school districts;
 - (iv) All courts; and
 - (v) Any department, agency, board, commission, institution, instrumentality, or legislative or administrative body of the state, counties or municipalities created by statute, ordinance or executive order including all units that expend public funds.
- h) **"Governmental entity"** means the state, a county, a municipality, or any other separate political subdivision authorized by law to exercise a part of the sovereign power of the state.
- i) **"Income"** means money or thing of value received, or to be received, from any source derived, including but not limited to, any salary, wage, advance, payment, dividend, interest, rent, forgiveness of debt, fee, royalty, commission, or any combination thereof. (j) "Intellectual property" means any formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, or process created primarily as a result of the research effort of an employee or employees of an institution of higher learning of the State of Mississippi. (k) "Material financial interest" means a personal and pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, accruing to a public servant or spouse, either individually or in combination with each other. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following shall not be deemed to be a material financial interest with respect to a business with which a public servant may be associated:

- (i) Ownership of any interest of less than ten percent (10%) in a business where the aggregate annual net income to the public servant therefrom is less than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00);
 - (ii) Ownership of any interest of less than two percent (2%) in a business where the aggregate annual net income to the public servant therefrom is less than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00);
 - (iii) The income as an employee of a relative if neither the public servant or relative is an officer, director or partner in the business and any ownership interest would not be deemed material pursuant to subparagraph (i) or (ii) herein; or
 - (iv) The income of the spouse of a public servant when such spouse is a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with the governmental entity that employs the public servant and the public servant exercises no control, direct or indirect, over the contract between the spouse and such governmental entity.
- l) "**Pecuniary benefit**" means benefit in the form of money, property, commercial interests, or anything else the primary significance of which is economic gain. Expenses associated with social occasions afforded public servants shall not be deemed a pecuniary benefit.
 - m) "**Person**" means any individual, firm, business, corporation, association, partnership, union, or other legal entity, and where appropriate a governmental entity. (n) "**Property**" means all real or personal property.
 - o) "**Public funds**" means money belonging to the government.
 - p) "**Public servant**" means:
 - (i) Any elected or appointed official of the government;
 - (ii) Any officer, director, commissioner, supervisor, chief, head, agent or employee of the government or any agency thereof, or of any public entity created by or under the laws of the state of Mississippi or created by an agency or governmental entity thereof, any of which is funded by public funds, or which expends, authorizes, or recommends the use of public funds; or
 - (iii) Any individual who receives a salary, per diem or expenses paid in whole or in part out of funds authorized to be expended by the government.
 - q) "**Relative**" means the spouse, child, or parent.
 - r) "**Securities**" means stocks, bonds, notes, convertible debentures, warrants, evidence of debts or property or other such documents.
- 1) No public servant shall use his official position to obtain pecuniary benefit for himself other than that compensation provided for by law, or to obtain pecuniary benefit for any relative or any business with which he is associated.
 - 2) No public servant shall be interested, directly or indirectly, during the term for which he shall have been chosen, or within one (1) year after the expiration of such term, in any contract with the state, or any district, county, city or town thereof, authorized by any law passed or order made by any board of which he may be or may have been a member.
 - 3) No public servant shall:
 - (a) Be a contractor, subcontractor, or vendor with the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent, other than in his contract of employment, or have a

material financial interest in any business which is a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent.

(b) Be a purchaser, direct or indirect, at any sale made by him in his official capacity or by the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee, except in respect of the sale of goods or services when provided as public utilities or offered to the general public on a uniform price schedule.

(c) Be a purchaser, direct or indirect, of any claim, certificate, warrant, or other security issued by or to be paid out of the treasury of the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee.

(d) Perform any service for any compensation during his term of office or employment by which he attempts to influence a decision of the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member.

(e) Perform any service for any compensation for any person or business after termination of his office or employment in relation to any case, decision, proceeding or application with respect to which he was directly concerned or in which he personally participated during the period of his service or employment.

4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, a public servant or his relative:

(a) May be an officer or stockholder of banks or savings and loan associations or other such financial institutions bidding for bonds, notes, or other evidence of debt or for the privilege of keeping as depositories the public funds of a governmental entity thereof or the editor or employee of any newspaper in which legal notices are required to be published in respect to the publication of said legal notices.

(b) May be a contractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent or have a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent where such contract is let to the lowest and best bidder after competitive bidding and three (3) or more legitimate bids are received or where the goods, services or property involved are reasonably available from two (2) or fewer commercial sources, provided such transactions comply with the public purchases laws.

(c) May be a subcontractor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent or have a material financial interest in a business which is a subcontractor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent where the primary contract is let to the lowest and best bidder after competitive bidding or where such goods or services involved are reasonably available from two (2) or fewer commercial sources, provided such transactions comply with the public purchases laws.

(d) May be a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent or have a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent: (i) where such goods or services involved are reasonably available from two (2) or fewer commercial sources, provided such

transactions comply with the public purchases laws; or (ii) where the contractual relationship involves the further research, development, testing, promotion or merchandising of an intellectual property created by the public servant.

(e) May purchase securities issued by the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee if such securities are offered to the general public and are purchased at the same price as such securities are offered to the general public.

(f) May have an interest less than a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor, subcontractor, or vendor with any governmental entity.

(g) May contract with the Mississippi Veteran's Home Purchase Board, Mississippi Housing Finance Corporation, or any other state loan program, for the purpose of securing a loan; however, public servants shall not receive favored treatment.

(h) May be employed by or receive compensation from an authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which the public servant is an officer or employee.

(i) If a member of the Legislature or other public servant employed on less than a full-time basis, may represent a person or organization for compensation before an authority of the governmental entity other than an authority of the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee.

5) No person may intentionally use or disclose information gained in the course of or by reason of his official position or employment as a public servant in any way that could result in pecuniary benefit for himself, any relative, or any other person, if the information has not been communicated to the public or is not public information.

6) Any contract made in violation of this section may be declared void by the governing body of the contracting or selling authority of the governmental subdivision or a court of competent jurisdiction and the contractor or subcontractor shall retain or receive only the reasonable value, with no increment for profit or commission, of the property or the services furnished prior to the date of receiving notice that the contract has been voided. (7) Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be punished as provided for in Sections 25-4-109 and 25-4-111. **LEGAL REF.:** S25-4-103, S25-4-105 Mississippi Code, 21.

Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy (Cross Ref: Board Policy [GBRM-2](#))

The following is the Yazoo County School District's Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy enacted pursuant to the Mississippi Drug and Alcohol Testing Law, MS Code Annotated Sections 71-7-1 ET.SEQ. SUPP (1994). Effective August 1, 1999, the District will begin testing personnel if it reasonably suspects an employee is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. This is in addition to the existing policy of random testing of all bus drivers. This policy will be enforced uniformly with respect to all personnel. All of the District's personnel, including administrators, will be subject to reasonable suspicion testing.

Dress Code/Professional Dress for All Faculty and Staff

The Yazoo County School Board assumes that all employees will dress in a manner befitting job responsibilities and that their personal appearance will be consistent with dress and appearance regulations required of students; thusly, setting examples for the students. The school district feels very strongly that all faculty AND staff are professionals and should dress in that manner.

Expectations for Employee Conduct

Staff members shall regard each student as an individual. The staff shall aid each student in his/her learning, consistent with consideration. Any use of derogatory remarks directed toward students, by staff members, shall be prohibited. Each student is urged to regard staff members as people with specific knowledge and capabilities. No student shall have the right, nor be allowed, to interfere with the efforts of the instructional staff to implement a learning program. Nor shall a student have the right, nor be allowed, to interfere with the learning of other students. Violation of the provisions of this policy shall result in appropriate disciplinary action. **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, 37-11-20

If any person eighteen (18) years or older who is employed by any public or private school district in this state is accused of fondling or having any type of sexual involvement with any child under the age of eighteen (18) years, who is enrolled in such school, the principal of such school and the superintendent of such school district shall timely notify the district attorney with jurisdiction where the school is located of such accusation, provided that such accusation is reported to the principal and to the school superintendent and that there is a reasonable basis to believe that such accusation is true. **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, 97-5-24.

Harassment

This school district affirms employees rights under Title VII and therefore "shall not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any employee, male or female, which harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment."

Nepotism

It shall be illegal for any superintendent, administrative superintendent, principal, or other licensed employee, to be elected by the school board, if such superintendent, administrative superintendent, principal or licensed employee is related, within the third degree by blood or marriage according to the common law, to a majority of the members of the school board.

No member of the school board shall vote for any person as a superintendent, administrative superintendent principal or licensed employee who is related to him/her within the third degree by blood or marriage or who is dependent upon him/her in a financial way.

Any contract entered into in violation of the provisions of this section shall be null and void. MS Code 37-9-21 (1997).

Political Activity

The board recognizes and encourages the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in activities, which exemplify good citizenship. However, school property and school time shall not be used for political purposes.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in any form will not be tolerated. Any incident of sexual harassment should be immediately reported to the immediate supervisor of the employee or the Assistant Superintendent for the conduct of an investigation. Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report, verbally or in writing, from any student regarding sexual harassment in the educational setting, must forward that report to the building principal or the Assistant Superintendent immediately.

All employees permitting or engaging in sexual harassment of students or other district employees will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any employee receiving a complaint of sexual harassment from a student and does not promptly forward the complaint to the principal, or the assistant superintendent shall be disciplined appropriately.

Staff Arrest/Indictment/Conviction

Any employee who is arrested, charged, indicted, or convicted for a felony or misdemeanor, with the exception of traffic violations, is required to notify his/her immediate supervisor and the superintendent or designee as soon as possible, but no later than within 24 hours, and prior to returning to duty.

Failure to report incidents may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Staff Complaints and Grievances (Cross Ref: Board Policy [GAER](#))

Purpose:

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure at the first possible administrative level, an equitable solution, to any complaint and/or grievance.

Definitions:

The following definitions shall apply in this grievance procedure:

- 1) A “complaint” is any issue that leads to a dispute between employees;
- 2) A “grievance” is a complaint by an individual based upon an alleged violation of his or her rights under state or federal law or board policy;
- 3) A “grievant” is a person or persons making the complaint; and
- 4) The term “days” shall mean working school days and shall exclude weekends, holidays, and vacations days.

Procedure for Processing Grievances:

Complaints are to be resolved, at the lowest administrative level, and there is no appeals process where complaints are concerned. Grievances will be reviewed, by the superintendent or his/her designee, to determine if it meets the definition of a grievance and only in those instances will it be subject to the following process.

Level One:

- 1) All grievances, as defined above, must be presented orally to the principal or immediate supervisor of the grievant within five (5) days of the act or omission complained of, and the principal or immediate supervisor and grievant will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
- 2) If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given by his/her principal or immediate supervisor, the grievant shall, within five (5) days after meeting with his/her principal or immediate supervisor, file a written statement with his/her principal or immediate supervisor setting forth in detail how the grievant claims to have been discriminated against. This written statement shall contain, in addition to the above, the time, place, and nature of the alleged act or omission and the state or federal law or board policy violated. ***The statement must be signed by the grievant.***
- 3) In the event the grievant does not submit to his principal or immediate supervisor a written statement as required, his/her failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by his/her principal or immediate supervisor.
- 4) Within five (5) days after receiving the grievant's signed statement, the principal or immediate supervisor shall send to the superintendent a copy of the grievant's statement, along with a statement from the principal or immediate supervisor, setting forth his/her response to the grievant and/or his/her decision, as is applicable. At the same time, the principal or immediate supervisor shall also provide a copy of his/her written statement to the grievant.
- 5) The written decision, of the principal or immediate supervisor, shall be deemed to be accepted by the grievant unless the grievant notifies the superintendent in writing within five (5) days of the date of the principal's or immediate supervisor's written decision of the grievant's intention to appeal the written decision of the principal or immediate supervisor.

Level Two:

- 1) Upon receipt by the superintendent of the written notice that the grievant intends to appeal the decision of his/her principal or immediate supervisor, the superintendent shall notify the grievant in writing within five (5) days and shall advise the grievant of the date, time, and place upon which the matter will be considered by the superintendent. The superintendent shall schedule a hearing on the matter no later than ten (10) days from the date of receipt of the grievant's written notice of intention to appeal the written decision of his/her principal or immediate supervisor.
- 2) The written statement submitted by the grievant to his/her principal or immediate supervisor in Level One shall form the basis for the grievance before the superintendent.
- 3) In the event, the grievant does not personally attend the hearing scheduled by the superintendent, his/her failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the written decision rendered by his/her principal or immediate supervisor at **LEVEL ONE**.

- 4) The superintendent shall render a written decision to the grievant within five (5) days of the date upon which the matter was heard.

Level Three:

- 1) If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at **LEVEL TWO**, or if the superintendent does not render a decision within five (5) days of the hearing, the grievant may file the grievance with the secretary of the school board. The name and address of the board secretary may be obtained from the Superintendent's office.
- 2) If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the school board within five (5) days of the superintendent's written decision at **LEVEL TWO**, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
- 3) Within five (5) days after receipt of the grievance, the board secretary, in concert with the board chairman and superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the school board on the grievance. Such hearing should be scheduled no later than thirty (30) days from receipt of the grievance.
- 4) The board shall render its decision within seven (7) days of the hearing.

STAFF PROTECTION

If any parent, guardian, or other person, shall insult or abuse any superintendent, principal, teacher, or bus driver, during the session of the school in the presence of school pupils, such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor (MS CODE 37-11-21). If any person shall willfully disturb any session of the public school or any public-school meeting, such person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. (MS CODE 37-11-23). The governing authorities of the district may, at its discretion, investigate and provide legal counsel for the defense or any claim, demand, or action, whether civil or criminal, made or brought against any school district employee as a result of his/her actions while acting in his/her official capacity. **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, as cited above.

Staff Relationships and Communication

All communications between student and district staff should be conducted with professionalism and consideration of proper staff/student relationships. District staff shall not communicate with students through the use of text messaging and social networking web sites. Teachers may communicate with the students, they instruct, through the use of the district's e-mail system. No communication with students, outside the district's email system, is allowed. All allowed e-mail communications should only relate to legitimate instructional assignments. Any unauthorized communication methods between district staff and students should not be deemed as confidential. Any violations of these regulations concerning staff and student communication will result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

Tutoring for Pay

To assure all students reasonable assistance, without charge, from his/her own teachers and to avoid placing a teacher in a position where he/she may have a conflict of interest, teachers shall receive no money for tutoring from any student he/she has in class or upon whose evaluation or assignment he/she will be called upon to make. Further, no tutoring for which a teacher receives a fee, will be carried on in the school building.

No teacher shall use his/her official position to obtain pecuniary benefit for himself/herself other than that compensation provided for by law, or to obtain pecuniary benefit for any relative or any business with which he/she is associated. S25-4-105 (1) (1988) **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code as cited above.

Using an Electronic Device While Driving on District Business (Cross Ref: Board Policy [ECIA](#))

No employee or volunteer driver of the Yazoo County School District shall operate any district motor vehicle or operate a personal motor vehicle in the course of their responsibilities and duties with the district while writing, sending, or reading a text message and from accessing, reading or posting to a social networking site using a hand-held mobile telephone.

Definitions Are as Follows:

- ❑ **"Hand-Held Mobile Telephone"** means a mobile telephone or other portable electronic communication device with which a user engages in a call or writes, sends, or reads a message using at least one hand. The term "hand-held mobile telephone" shall not include a voice-operated or hands-free device;
- ❑ **"Motor Vehicle"** means a vehicle driven or drawn by mechanical power and manufactured primarily for use on public highways;
- ❑ **"Social Networking Site"** means any web-based service that allows individuals to construct a profile within a founded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and communicate with other users of the site;
- ❑ **"Text Message"** includes a text-based message, instant message, electronic message, email, , but shall not include an emergency, traffic, or weather alert or a message related to the operation or navigation of the motor vehicle;
- ❑ **"Writing, Sending, and Reading,"** with respect to a text message, means the manual entry, sending, or retrieval of a text message, respectively, to communicate with any person or device.
- ❑ **"Voice-Operated or Hands-Free Device"** means a device that allows the user to write, send, and/or listen to a message without the use of either hand except to activate, deactivate, or initiate a feature or function.

Violations:

Violations, of this policy, may lead to disciplinary action including denial of use of school vehicles and district cell phones and up to and including termination. Certain violations are punishable by law. Any fines or penalties incurred shall be the responsibility of the employee.

Web and Social Media/Social Networking and Use

All employees, faculty, and staff shall observe the following while participating in any social media websites or applications including, but not limited to, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, and/or Instagram:

- 1) Access of social media websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited.
- 2) Employees, faculty, and staff shall not friend students on any social media platforms.
- 3) Employees, faculty, and staff shall not give social media passwords to students.

- 4) Employees, faculty, and staff shall not post any data, documents, photos, or inappropriate information on any website or application that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. This determination will be made by the Superintendent.
- 5) Employees, faculty, and staff are solely responsible for the security of their social media accounts.
- 6) Employees, faculty, and staff are solely responsible for the content that is posted on their social media accounts at all times.
- 7) Employees, faculty, and staff shall NEVER use their personal social media accounts in any way purporting to be or speaking for the Yazoo County 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 these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. 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.

Workplace Violence

The district complies with the **Mississippi Prevention of School Violence Act**.

1) **Weapons Not Allowed:**

- No student may possess a weapon on school property, which includes school buildings, grounds, athletic fields, or any other property used for school purposes. This prohibition includes all weapons except those used only for educational or school-sanctioned ceremonies, carried by governmental agents such as policemen or in other very limited circumstances permitted by law.
- Non-students may possess a firearm on school grounds only if it is in a vehicle and is not brandished, exhibited, or displayed in a careless, angry, or threatening manner.
- A person may be guilty of a felony and subject to a \$5000 fine and/or 3 years in jail for possession on school property/at school-related events of a gun, rifle, pistol, other firearm, dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, powerful explosive, or for causing, encouraging, or aiding a minor to possess same. A person may be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a \$1000 fine and/or 6 months in jail for possession on school property/at school-related events of a BB gun, air rifle, air pistol, bowie knife, dirk, dagger, slingshot, leaded cane, switchblade, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razors and razor blades (except for shaving only), any sharp-pointed or edged instrument (except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips and tools used only to prepare food, instruction and maintenance of school property), or for causing, encouraging or aiding a minor to possess same. Stun guns are also prohibited.
- A copy of Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-17 shall be posted in public view at the school. For further information, please contact your principal.

2) **Reporting Requirements:**

- The district will be notified within 1 week whenever a student is arrested for, lawfully charged with, or convicted of a crime;
- The district will take whatever disciplinary or other action is deemed necessary under the circumstances, in the discretion of the Superintendent and/or principal, if so designated;
- When a violent act occurs on school property or during a school activity, the following reports, below, will be made;
- School employees will notify the principal when they have knowledge of unlawful or violent acts, which have occurred or may have occurred. The principal will immediately notify law enforcement when he/she has a reasonable belief that a violent crime has occurred;
- Law enforcement must immediately dispatch an officer and arrests may be made with probable cause; and
- The Superintendent will notify the youth court and law enforcement officials of a crime committed by a student.



SECTION VII: Instruction

Instructional Management Systems

School Status Pro and TeachBoost for Teacher Classroom Observations

School Status Pro and TeachBoost are the district choice of platform for classroom observations concerning the teachers and the school administrator. Each school site administrator will specify how lesson plans should be submitted for review.

Mastery Connect is the K–12 digital assessment management system that makes data-driven instruction a no-brainer. Educators use expertly developed, tightly aligned items from the Mastery Item Bank to create formative assessments that tell them what students know and where they need to take their instruction next. The Mastery View Assessment offerings include predictive benchmarks to gauge students' progress at key points during the school year, a tightly aligned item bank that reflects state assessment rigor, and an ACT practice test to ensure students are prepared for the next step in their academic career. They provide everything you need to gauge standards mastery and predict summative outcomes. Mastery Connect enables districts, schools, and teachers to create and administer common assessments, online or offline, and intuitively analyze the data to improve instruction. Mastery View Formative Assessments are short, expertly created formatives that clearly and efficiently reveal students' mastery of key learning standards.

SAM-Gradebook/Attendance

SAM Spectra is the district choice for a student administrator manager. With SAM Spectra, the district manages most every aspect of their daily routine including enrollment, attendance, grading, scheduling, discipline, special education, state reporting, calendars, dashboards, a Parent Portal, and a Student Portal.

Teachers are expected to input attendance daily for each class. Teachers are also expected to update/post grades weekly into SAM Spectra. Descriptions used to label grades in SAM should include the standard and other easily identifiable key words such as remediation, formative assessment (FA), group activity, etc.

ACADEMICS, GRADING, AND ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, teachers shall employ formative assessment strategies for the purpose of adjusting ongoing instructional strategies and procedures to improve the learning progression of students. Summative assessments shall also be utilized to measure a student's progress toward or degree of accomplishment relative to stated goals and objectives (standards) for a subject. Both types of assessments shall be factored/averaged into the grade received, with primary weight being on summative assessments and denoting the degree of mastery learning of material presented.

A standard numerical grading system shall be implemented and maintained in the district. The representative grade scale shall be as follows:

GRADING SYSTEM/SCALE:

To evaluate student performance for the purposes of promotion, retention, or alternative programs, the following numerical values shall be used in determining letter grades. Numerical values will be utilized on reports of progress and report cards.

Grades K-12:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
Below 60	F

The Pre-Kindergarten students will be assessed through a checklist of Early Learning Standards for 4-Year-Olds from Mississippi Department of Education.

Board Policy IHA

The Yazoo County School District utilizes an established grading system to communicate to parents a periodic evaluation summarizing significant factors of the student's success in the educational program.

The grading system is based upon student achievement and performance, bearing in mind that any system incorporates both subjective and objective considerations in student evaluation.

ACADEMIC COURSE CHANGES:

There will be no changing or dropping of courses after ten (10) days, from the opening day of school, unless deemed necessary by the principal and counselor.

Specifics Regarding the Recording of Grades:

Only numbers and/or numerical marks will be used in recording grades. Grades on report cards will be recorded in numerical form. Semester exam grades and semester averages will be recorded as numerical grades. Nine weeks tests and/or semester exams will carry no more weighting than any other test and/or assessment given. All grades on permanent records will be recorded as numerical grades.

Grades shall be indicative of progress towards or degree of accomplishment relative to grade level standards and objectives of the subject and shall represent only the quality of assignments completed or not completed. Grades shall be recorded **no less than every other week** and **shall be listed by standard with a description of the assignment/assessment.**

A record of assignments pursuant to the evaluation of progress toward set standards will be recorded and filed for use in parent-student conferences. Actual grades may be recorded in the grade book for reference with parents at conferences. Teachers will maintain overall averages, within an attainable passing range, and a curve will not be used in grading.

Since learners only progress effectively when they complete work assigned, students are expected to complete all assignments. **Hence, teachers shall pursue work not turned in prior to assigning term grades, exacting a reasonable penalty for late work when**

appropriate. When a student does not turn in an assignment prior to the end of a term, a grade of zero may become part of the average for that term. Students with any missing work noted prior to the end of any grading period will be ineligible for exemption from taking exams.

Teachers are expected to reteach students according to substandard or failing formative and/or summative work. Teachers will select which assignments qualify for a redo opportunity, with the exception of term/semester exams or Dual Enrollment/Advanced Placement courses, that are considered college caliber courses and are guided by external institutions. Principals shall work with grade levels or departments to develop consistency in redo procedures at the school level. Students must go through teacher prescribed remediation and intervention before being permitted to redo work.

The opportunity to redo can be rescinded if a student abuses the opportunity. Since students have this option for grade improvement, no extra credit will be assigned or awarded. Teachers shall adhere to district or school prescribed weighting for competency areas.

Weighting of Grades in Kindergarten – 5th Grade:

In reference to grades and their perspective weights in kindergarten through 5th grade, the Yazoo County School District believes that to get an accurate representation of the growth and success of a student in a class, the teacher will implement and utilize the following processes and procedures throughout the 2022-2023 school year:

- A minimum of 9 daily grades – meaning approximately one (1) daily grade per week for the nine-week grading period;
- A minimum of 4 assessment grades – meaning approximately every two (2) weeks, a student will be given a summative assessment and a grade will be recorded; and
- Elementary School (Kindergarten – 5th Grade): Daily grades will be equal to 55% of the total average each nine weeks and summative assessments will be equal to 45% of the average each nine weeks.

Weighting of Grades in 6th Grade – 8th Grade (Middle School Scheduling):

In reference to grades and their perspective weights in 6th through 8th grade, the Yazoo County School District believes that to get an accurate representation of the growth and success of a student in any class, the teacher will implement and utilize the following processes and procedures throughout the 2022-2023 school year:

- A minimum of 12 daily grades – meaning approximately one (1) daily grade per week for the nine-week grading period and then where appropriate and applicable, a second daily grade can be taken in the same week in order to obtain a total of 12 daily grades by the end of the nine weeks;
- A minimum of 4 assessment grades – meaning approximately every two (2) weeks, a student will be given a summative assessment and a grade will be recorded; and
- Middle School: Daily Grades (minimum of 12 – see statement above) are equal to 45% of the total average for the class each nine weeks and summative assessments (minimum of 4 – see statement above) are equal to 55% of the total average each nine weeks for the class.

Weighting of Grades in 9th Grade – 12th Grade (High School Block Scheduling):

In reference to grades and their perspective weights in 9th through 12th grade, the Yazoo County School District believes that to get an accurate representation of the growth and success

of a student in any class, the teacher will implement and utilize the following processes and procedures throughout the 2022-2023 school year:

- A minimum of 12 daily grades – meaning approximately one (1) daily grade per week for the nine-week grading period and then where appropriate and applicable, a second daily grade can be taken in the same week in order to obtain a total of 12 daily grades by the end of the nine weeks;
- A minimum of 5 assessment grades – meaning approximately every 8-10 days of instruction, an assessment should be administered and recorded; and
- High School: Daily Grades (minimum of 12 – see statement above) are equal to 45% of the total average for the class each nine weeks and summative assessments (minimum of 5 – see statement above) are equal to 55% of the total average each nine weeks for the class.

EXAMPLES of “DAILY WORK” in the APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVELS:

Examples, of different assignments, of what constitutes “**daily work**” that is graded for accuracy and recorded in the grade book might include the following: (1) Classwork; (2) Labs; (3) Guided Practice; (4) Bell Work; (5) Homework; (6) Completed Lab Report; (7) Current Event; (8) Weekly Notebook Checks with Described Expectations and Criteria; (9) Quizzes; and (10) any other quality assignment aligned to a grade level standard that can determine mastery through its completion.

EXAMPLES of “TESTS/ASSESSMENTS” in the APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVELS:

Examples, of different assignments, of what constitutes “**tests/assessments**” that are graded for accuracy and recorded in the grade book might include the following: (1) Unit tests; (2) Major Tests; (3) Multiple Skills Tests; (4) Performance-Based Assessments; (5) Components of the District Chosen Digital Platform Assessments; and (6) Any other major summative assessment aligned to a grade level standard that can determine mastery by its successful completion.

CALCULATING TERM GRADES:

Grade Pre-K: based on standards-based mastery requirements; and

Grades K-12: based on all assignments such as classwork, quizzes, process grades, writings, products and projects, and homework.

CALCULATING FINAL GRADES:

First and second semester grades will be added and divided by two. For secondary courses of one semester length, the final grade will be the same as the semester grade.

Grading Changes:

(1) No school board member, school superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, guidance counselor, other teachers, coaches, or other administrative staff members of the school or the central office staff of a local school board shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to change, alter, or otherwise affect the grade received by a student from his/her teacher except as otherwise specifically allowed by this section.

(2) A teacher's determination of a student's grade as a measure of the academic achievement or proficiency of the student shall not be altered or changed in any manner by any school official or employee other than the teacher except as provided in this subsection.

(3) A school official or employee having authority provided under formally adopted written rules and procedures adopted by the local school board to change a student's grade can take

such action only upon it being determined that the grade is an error or that the grade is demonstrably inconsistent with the teacher's grading policy.

(4) Any local school district or personnel employed by the school district that violates the provisions of this act shall cause the local school district or school to be subject to losing its accreditation in the manner determined by the policies and procedures of the State Board of Education. **LEGAL REF.: MS Code 37-11-64**

TRANSFER GRADES:

Students transferring to the Yazoo County School District with only letter grades will be assigned the following numerical grades:

A – 95

B – 85

C – 75

D – 67

F – Below 60 (not to be assigned below 50)

Letter grades may be converted to number grades as recorded by the transfer student's previous school if an official notice, regarding the grades, is received by the school within six weeks after enrollment.

ACTIVE PARENT:

Online access to students' grades, discipline, attendance, and school news is available through the District's website at www.yazoo.k12.ms.us in Active Parent. **The URL address for Active Parent is the following: MS.8200.activeparent.net.** Parents must enroll to access this information. Enrollment will take place during registration. If you are already a member of Active Parent, it is not necessary to re-enroll.

REPORT CARDS:

The report card, issued at the end of each grading period, is the official notification to the home of a student's progress.

A student's progress report and report card will be available based on the YCSD Board approved school calendar. At the end of each nine-week grading period, a parent/teacher conference will be encouraged and scheduled, virtually or in-person, based on preference and needs of the parents and/or legal guardians to come to the school to meet with teachers regarding his/her student's progress. If the conference is held virtually, the report card will be sent home with the student provided the student's device has been turned in to the appropriate school and any pending fines are paid (4th nine weeks). If a conference is scheduled in-person, the report card will be given to the parent/legal guardian during the conference. The final (end-of-year) report card is mailed to the home address provided by the student at the time of student registration again provided that the student's device has been turned in to the appropriate school and any pending fines are paid.

Each report card provides for current grades and class absences.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS: (Board Policy IHE)

A fixed set of criteria, based on student performance, will be used to determine promotion from one grade level to another at each school level.

Elementary and Middle School Promotion:

Students in grades kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade must pass both math and English language arts. If students do NOT pass all of these subjects with at least a “60” yearly average, he/she will be retained in his/her current grade.

Students in grades 4 through 8 must pass English language arts, math, and science.

Students in grades 6 through 8 – in addition to successfully passing English language arts, math, and science – students will be retained in his/her current grade, if he/she fails **TWO OR MORE** subjects of any content.

Students who score “proficient” or “advanced” on their state assessments, and do not pass the course, will be discussed, if necessary, by a district committee for potential promotion.

EXPECTED PERFORMANCE LEVELS AT THE CONCLUSION OF EACH GRADE LEVEL:

The following link serves to represent, for a parent, the end-of-the-year expectations, outcomes, and/or basically what a student should know and be able to perform collectively as he/she readies to transition to the next grade level. This link is applicable from the elementary level all the way through high school, and as a parent, you can download the grade level(s) that are specific to you and your student(s): <https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Parents-Guides-to-Student-Success>

High School Promotion:

A student will be classified as a:

Freshman upon promotion from the 8th grade;

Sophomore after successfully completing a minimum of 6 units;

Junior after successfully completing a minimum of 12 units; and a

Senior after successfully completing a minimum of 18 units.

LISTS of DISTINCTION AND HONOR:

The Yazoo County School District recognizes three types of honor rolls:

- The “**Superintendent’s List**” shall be composed of all students with nine weeks averages no lower than **95**.
- The “**Principal’s List**” shall be composed of all students with nine week averages no lower than **90**.
- The “**A/B Honor Roll List**” shall be composed of all students with nine week averages no lower than **80**.

These lists shall be determined at the end of each 9-week grading period and published.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The Yazoo County School District aims to prepare the youth of this community for their roles as future citizens by providing optimum educational experiences, opportunities to develop leadership and other social skills, and instruction in the values necessary for continuation of our changing

democratic society. In order to accomplish this mission, it is important to us to recognize students who excel academically, exhibit leadership skills, and demonstrate good citizenship. Awards are given to students periodically, throughout the year, in various fashions.

Report Cards (Cross Ref: Board Policy [IHAB](#))

Teachers will issue report cards every 9 weeks. These report cards should be returned, signed by one of the parents or the guardian of the pupil, to the teacher the next day, unless extenuating circumstance require an extended time. Progress Reports will be sent to parents at approximately halfway through each 9-week term. Parents may view their child’s grades at any time online with the **ACTIVE PARENT** (www.yazoo.k12.ms.us) by contacting their child’s school office to obtain a login and password. It is our hope that, through close cooperation of parents, students, and teachers, failures may be kept to a minimum. Parents are urged to schedule conferences with teachers about the progress of their student(s). Final grades should be in the office no later than two days following the student’s final examination.

Make-Up Work Policy

Both the STUDENT AND TEACHER are responsible for making sure that make-up work is completed. If a student misses the day of a test, they will be required to make up the test upon returning to school. If a student is absent the day before a test and no new materials have been introduced, he/she must make up the test upon returning to school; if new materials were introduced before the test was given, they will be given one (1) additional day to make up the test. If a student is absent 2-5 consecutive days, the student will be given one (1) week to make up work. If a student is absent more than 5 consecutive days, the principal or assistant principal will use discretion in setting the time for make-up work to be completed.

Lesson Planning (Cross Ref: Board Policy [IB](#))

Lesson plans should be well-designed and aligned with the District Instructional Management Plans. The Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks/Mississippi College and Career-Ready Standards, State Accountability Standards, and the Career and Technical Education curricula will serve as the basis of the minimum district curriculum. Pacing guides have been developed and are revised annually per relevant data analysis by the teaching staff and administration. Lesson plans and objectives will be reviewed by the principal or designee.

Literacy Based Promotion Act (Cross Ref: Board [ICHI](#))

In compliance with the “Literacy Based Promotion Act,” it is the intent of the Yazoo County School District to improve the reading skills of Kindergarten - Third Grade students so that every student completing the Third Grade is able to read at or above grade level. This district shall comply with all requirements of the Act, including, but not limited to the Third Grade Reading Summative Assessment --Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, a student scoring at the lowest achievement level in reading on the established state assessment for 3rd grade will not be promoted to 4th grade.

Social Promotion – A student may not be assigned a grade level based solely on age or any other factor that constitutes social promotion.

Public School Requirements:

If a K - 3 student has been identified with a substantial deficit in reading, the teacher will immediately, and with each quarterly progress report, notify parents or legal guardians of the following in writing:

- Determination of a substantial deficit in reading;
- Description of student services and supports presently provided;
- Description of proposed supplemental instruction and support to remediate the student's deficit areas;
- Strategies for parents to use to help students at home; and,
- Notification that student will not be promoted to 4th grade if reading deficiency cannot be remediated by the end of 3rd grade.

Provide intensive reading instruction and immediate intervention to each K - 3 student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at any time.

The intensive reading instruction and intervention must be documented for each student Grades K-3 in an individual reading plan, including, at a minimum, the following:

- A. The student's specific, diagnosed reading skill deficiencies as determined (or identified) by diagnostic assessment data;
- B. The goals and benchmarks for growth;
- C. How progress will be monitored and evaluated;
- D. The type of additional instruction services and interventions the student will receive;
- E. The research-based reading instructional programming the teacher will use to provide reading instruction, addressing the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension;
- F. The strategies the student's parent is encouraged to use in assisting the student to achieve reading competency; and
- G. Any additional services the teacher deems available and appropriate to accelerate the student's reading skill development.

Good Cause Exemptions:

A 3rd grade student who fails to meet the academic requirements for promotion to the 4th grade may be promoted for good cause:

- A. Limited English Proficient students who have had less than two (2) years of instruction in English Language Learner program;
- B. Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide accountability assessment program is not appropriate, as authorized under state law;
- C. Students, with a disability, who participate in the state annual accountability assessment and who have an IEP or Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received

- intense remediation in reading for two (2) years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading OR was previously retained in Kindergarten or First, Second or Third grade;
- D. Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an alternative assessment approved by the State Board of Education; and
 - E. Students who have received intensive intervention for two (2) or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading, and who previously were retained in kindergarten, first, second or third Grade for a total of two (2) years and have not met exceptional education criteria.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, if a student's reading deficiency is not remedied by the end of the student's Third-Grade year, as demonstrated by the student scoring above the lowest two (2) achievement levels in reading on the state annual accountability assessment or on an approved alternative standardized assessment for Third Grade, the student shall not be promoted to Fourth Grade.

Planning Period/Preparation

As specified in the MS Public School Accountability Standards, each secondary teacher (in a 6 or 7 period day) is entitled to 225 minutes of planning per week and an elementary teacher is entitled to 150 minutes per week. Teachers should use this time for lesson preparation, grading, grade-level/subject-area team meetings, parent conference, Tier paperwork or other classroom related activities.

Procedures Investigating Discipline

When investigating discipline, please follow the guidelines listed below:

- Investigate thoroughly with any/all students involved;
- Administrators should contact parents regarding discipline consequences to ensure student confidentiality (secretaries should not make calls discussing discipline concerns);
- Discipline procedures/consequences should be consistent; and
- All discipline should follow the policies and procedures of the Yazoo County School District

Student Restraint and Seclusion

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [JCBA](#))

(MS CODE: 37-9-69; 37-11-57)

The Yazoo County School District Board of Trustees supports a positive approach to behavior that uses proactive strategies to create a safe school climate that promotes dignity, creates authentic student engagement, and improves student achievement for all students. In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-9-69 and 37-11-57, it is recognized that staff may intercede in situations wherein students are displaying physically violent behavior or are deemed to be a danger to themselves or others. The use of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment regarding student management is prohibited. Restraint and/or seclusion shall not be utilized as a punitive measure. Only school personnel trained in the use of restraint and seclusion should be used to observe and monitor these students. Staff engaged in monitoring students shall have knowledge of effective restraint and seclusion procedures, emergency procedures, and knowledge of how to effectively debrief students

after the use of restraint or seclusion. This policy in no way shall inhibit the right of staff to reasonable self-defense in accordance with the provisions of the 5th and 14th amendments to the Constitution of the United States, or the Constitution of Mississippi, nor negate the obligation of the district to provide a safe work environment.

In any situation in which a student is a danger to himself/herself or others, and it becomes necessary to contact law enforcement or emergency medical personnel, nothing in this policy guidance shall be construed to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.

Restraint

Physical restraint is considered to be an emergency response after all other verbal and non-verbal de-escalation measures have failed in effectiveness. When using physical restraint for students who are a danger to themselves or others, staff should take precautions necessary to ensure the safety of the student and the staff members engaged in restraining the student. The following is prohibited by law:

- 1) Physical restraints that restrict the flow of air are prohibited in all situations;
- 2) The use of mechanical restraints is prohibited, except by law enforcement; and
- 3) The use of chemical restraints is prohibited.

Seclusion

The use of seclusion occurs in a specially designated room or space that is physically isolated from common areas and from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. The room or space used for seclusion may not be locked and staff shall be present to monitor the student. Seclusion shall cease once the student regains control of his or her behavior.

Administrative Procedures

This policy and the supporting procedures are designed to ensure the safety of all students, school personnel, and visitors.

The following provisions shall be adhered to:

- A. Staff and faculty shall be trained at least annually on the use of physical restraint and seclusion. Teachers and other district personnel shall be trained on how to collect and analyze student data to determine the effectiveness of these procedures in increasing appropriate behavior;
- B. Administrators shall document incidents of the use of physical restraint or seclusion by staff or faculty participating in or supervising the restraint or seclusion event;
- C. A review of the use of a restraint and seclusion process shall be conducted by the school to determine if revisions of behavioral strategies are in place to address dangerous behavior or if positive behavioral strategies were not in place at the time of the restraint or seclusion;
- D. The school board shall review this policy and incidents of seclusion and restraint data at a minimum, annually. At a minimum, the Superintendent shall make quarterly reports of incidents of restraint and/or seclusion to the school board. The school district shall report the incidents to Mississippi Department of Education annually;

- E. This policy and supporting procedures shall be reviewed with all staff on an annual basis;
- F. The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for reporting the use of restraint or seclusion to the local board of education and to the Mississippi Department of Education;
- G. After reviewing the district reports of incidents in which restraint and seclusion were used, if necessary, the superintendent shall make recommendations to the board for possible revisions to this policy;
- H. The review and/or revisions to this policy shall be documented on the school board meeting agenda and the subsequent minutes of the school board meeting; and
- I. The school district or school shall maintain records of its review of and any resulting decisions or actions regarding the use of seclusion and restraint.

Parental Notification

- A. All parents shall receive, at least annually, written information about the policies and procedures for restraint and seclusion issued by this school district. The written policies shall be included in the code of conduct, student handbook, school board policy manual, and any other appropriate school publication;
- B. Parents or guardians shall be notified verbally or in writing on the day of the restraint or seclusion or no later than 48 hours following the incident. In the event a parent cannot be reached by telephone, a letter shall be sent informing the parent of the incident and the person who can be contacted at the school to address any questions the parent may have. At the time the parent is notified, the school shall schedule a debriefing with the parent to discuss the incident; and
- C. A complaint from a parent regarding the physical restraint or seclusion of their child may be submitted in writing to the principal. The written complaint must state the student's name, the nature and date of the restraint or seclusion, the persons involved (teacher, witness, etc.) and requested action. The principal shall provide an initial response to the complainant within five school days. If the parent is not satisfied with the response, he/she may request (in writing) a review by the superintendent. Within 10 days from receiving the request for a review, the superintendent will issue a decision.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE (BOARD POLICY [JCA](#))

An organized discipline program provides the structure and support to the academic achievement of the school. Positive interactions with students lead to lower discipline instances. The discipline policies of the Yazoo County School District are in compliance with Federal and State Statutes. The discipline policy incorporates the student code of conduct required by Board Policy [JCA](#) and the policies and procedures set forth herein and as supplemented by all others adopted.

Excessive discipline issues in any particular classroom are often evidence of poor preparation, instruction, and/or classroom management on the part of the teacher. It is expected that students are **NEVER** left unsupervised. ***Understand that you, as the teacher, are personally liable for all students who are assigned to you.*** As long as you are supervising the students assigned to

you and you are following the policies and procedures set forth by the Yazoo County School District, you are legally protected. Failure to be at the appropriate post or follow district policies opens one up to this liability.

Faculty members are expected to handle routine discipline issues and building level administration will handle severe and/or chronic cases. Discipline problems are not to be sent to the library, to the counselor, or placed unsupervised in the hallway. The authority to supervise students extends, throughout the school day, including time between home and school, at school sponsored events, and outside school, if it affects or relates to the management and efficiency of the school. Extra-curricular events are a representation of the school. Sponsors/coaches/directors are expected to supervise students and ensure they conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies the character expected of Yazoo County Students.

The Yazoo County School Board supports the faculty, staff, and administrators in efforts to maintain proper decorum among students. The Board authorizes principals to use such reasonable disciplinary measures as necessary to ensure a properly functioning school organization.

Cumulative Student Services

ELL Program/Homeless Program and Procedures

The English Language Learners (ELL) Program is a program that the Yazoo County School District (YSCD) offers the English Language Learner in grades K-12 to meet the needs of students whose home or first language is other than English. The goal of the ELL program is to increase student access to quality education while providing guidance and support to other professionals within the school community who are involved in the education of English Learner (EL) students.

In order to determine students' eligibility for the ELL program, all students complete a Home Language Survey when they enter the Yazoo County School District. If this survey, indicates use of a language other than English, the students are given an English proficiency test prescribed by the MS Department of Education. When the test indicates less than full proficiency in English, students are scheduled to receive ELL services unless the parents chooses that they not participate.

Students who are EL shall be provided equal opportunities to participate in the educational programs operated by the district as required by federal, state, and local policy.

Reference: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A copy of the Yazoo County School District's ELL Policy and Procedures can be found on the YCSD website at www.yazoo.k12.ms.us.

For additional information regarding the YCSD ELL Program, contact the district's Federal Program's Director, Kim Newton at (662)746-4672.

Education for Homeless Children and Youth Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act, ensures that children and youth experiencing homelessness have full and equal access to an appropriate public education and that they experience success in school.

When a child is determined to be homeless as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act, the Yazoo County School District (YSCD) shall consider and take enrollment action that is in the best interest of the child.

A copy of the Yazoo County Policy can be found on the YSCD website at www.yazoo.k12.ms.us. If you have questions regarding the McKinney-Vento Act you can contact the district's Federal Program's Director, Kim Newton at (662)746-4672 ext. 1025.

Procedures for the Enrollment of Homeless Students

- 1) Parents of every student enrolling in the Yazoo County School District will complete the parent/guardian/residence section of the student enrollment forms.
- 2) The homeless liaison at each school site will review the enrollment forms and alert the District Homeless Liaison in the Office of Federal Programs of possible homelessness.
- 3) The Homeless Liaison or designee will then use a series of questions to determine if the student meets the eligibility criteria for services provided under the McKinney Vento Act.
- 4) The liaison or designee will complete the necessary forms and file the appropriate records in the Federal Program Office of the Yazoo County School District.

TST/MTSS (Multi-Tiers of Support System)

The YSCD utilizes the Multi-Tiered Teacher Systems of Support, at each site, to support struggling learners through academics and behavior. The Three Tier Instructional Model is utilized to provide supports.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

The Tree Tier Instructional Model is a part of **State Board Policy 41.1**. This model is designed to meet the needs of every student and consists of three tiers of instruction:

- **Tier I:** Quality classroom instruction based on Mississippi Standards;
- **Tier II:** Focused supplemental instruction; and
- **Tier III:** Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students.

For more information, see the **Multi-Tiered System of Supports-Quick Reference Guide in the Appendix**

Mississippi Assessment System (Cross Ref: Board Policy [II](#))

Whereas state law requires every school district within the state to “periodically assess student performance and achievement in each school” (Mississippi Code Section 37-16-5), student assessment therefore is not an option in the Yazoo County School District, but rather a requirement.

The Yazoo County School Board believes that state student assessments are useful and valid tools in helping the school board assess the progress the school district is making in raising the level and quality of education throughout the district.

Each school district in Mississippi must submit a test security plan to the MS State Department of Education every year that addresses the security and administration of the Mississippi Assessment System (MAAP). House Bill No. 603 requires strict adherence to test security regulations.

In section **37-16-4 of H.B.603** it is unlawful to:

- Give examinees access to test questions prior to testing;
- Copy or reproduce all or any portion of any secure test booklet;
- Coach examinees during testing or alter or interfere with examiner’s responses in any way;
- Make answer keys available to examinees;
- Fail to account for all secure test materials before, during, and after testing; and
- Participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist, encourage, or fail to report any of the acts prohibited in this section.

House Bill 603 further states that any person violating any of the above “is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), or be imprisoned for not more than 90 days, or both.” Upon conviction, the state board of education may suspend or revoke the administrative or teacher credentials, or both, of the person convicted. All certified and non-certified personnel are expected to follow the Yazoo County School District’s test security plan when statewide testing is conducted.

Student Supervision

All employees of the Yazoo County School District must be vigilant in their efforts to supervise students. Students should never be left unsupervised for any reason.

Supervision and Evaluation (Cross Ref: Board Policy [GDI](#))

The principal, of each school, is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of all local school personnel. It is the duty of the principal to document situations, either positive or negative, which reflect the quality of work being done by each employee.

The purpose of supervision and evaluation is instructional improvement. Observations and evaluations will be conducted in accordance with adopted state policy, which includes the Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System. The Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System

provides a reliable and valid system of performance assessments, based on common standards to gauge teacher effectiveness, help track educational progress, identify areas of need, and improve performance throughout a teacher's career. It is designed to improve student achievement by providing teachers with clear, specific, actionable, and timely feedback to inform continuous improvement. Evaluations of certified employees are submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education annually.

Textbooks

(Cross Ref: BOARD POLICY [ICFA](#))

Students should be urged to give their textbooks the best possible care. Fines will be assessed on damages to individual books. Teachers must keep an accurate record of textbooks and the conditions of the books issued. (This record should include the following: ISBN numbers, title, edition, publisher, and quantity.) Keep your principal informed of your textbook needs.

Field Trip Policy

The following guidelines are set to implement the planning of field trips and excursions as part of, and directly related to, classroom learning activities:

All trips must be well planned, properly timed, and related to regular learning activities.

- 1) Field trips and other out-of-district activities cannot conflict with the state testing program schedule or with the district's grading period testing program;
- 2) When possible, trips should be scheduled so as not to interfere with the regular instructional day, i.e., scheduled during holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring break;
- 3) All field trips must be conducted five school days prior to the week of term examinations;
- 4) There will be no approval of field trips from the week after spring break until all state testing is complete;
- 5) All trips and the arrangements thereto, must be within budgetary allotment for this purpose. Costs incurred must come from the school's instructional budget and/or the appropriate department's budget and/or the students will assume the entire or partial costs of the field trip when the trip has not been included in the district or school budget;
- 6) All student fees shall be collected prior to departure;
- 7) Field trips should be planned well enough in advance (2-3 weeks) for any cafeteria needs i.e. food orders for sack lunches, etc. Requests for sack lunches made within 2 weeks prior to trip may not be granted;
- 8) The person initiating the request for the field trip shall be responsible for meeting all requirements related to the trip as defined in this policy;
- 9) Adequate chaperones will be assigned as follows:
Grades K-5th Grade - 1 adult for every 10 students;

Grades 6th Grade - 12th Grade - 1 adult for every 20 students.

Extra-curricular activities (ie: athletic teams, band, show choir, fine arts) are encouraged to use this as a guide. The AD and/or Head Coach/Sponsor are responsible for supervision of students to and from all contests and events.

The school principal and the Assistant Superintendent must approve all field trips prior to any initial arrangements being made by the sponsor, adviser, or coach.

The Yazoo County School District Board of Education and the superintendent or designee must approve field trips that require pupils to participate in fundraising activities or to pay a fee to defray expenses, in advance. Money collected for a specific field trip may not be in excess of the actual cost of the trip, and all money collected shall be receipted and deposited as prescribed by board policy.

Each student who goes on a field trip or excursion must have a "**Yazoo County School District Off Campus Permission Form**" completed and signed by the parent/guardian prior to leaving campus.

The trip's sponsor/adviser/coach must provide the school's principal the following information -- (This information will be included on the "**Request for Field Trip Form**"):

- (1) date of trip;
- (2) name [destination] of trip/excursion;
- (3) educational objectives;
- (4) sponsoring group/organization;
- (5) name(s) of sponsor/adviser/coach;
- (6) time of departure and estimated time of return;
- (7) route to be followed with proposed stops;
- (8) method of transportation, e.g., school bus, commercial carrier;
- (9) list [name, address, telephone number] of chaperones;
- (10) list of students with copies of permission forms; and
- (11) list of students and adults, including the bus driver, security guard, etc., according to each vehicle.

Transportation, inside and outside the school district, is subject to all school policies and regulations. Attention, as well, is paid to the school and classroom discipline procedures in terms of eligibility to attend and off-campus field trip/excursion.

All field trips/excursions are considered educational opportunities and no student will be counted absent from school on the day(s) he/she is on the trip/excursion.

Ventilation and Lighting

All classrooms should be well-ventilated and well-lighted to protect the health of the students and teachers. The teacher should adjust blinds and windows in order to make the most of the natural light

and fresh air. Lights should not be turned on unless they are needed. Teachers should turn off lights when leaving their rooms. All blinds should be adjusted equally to conform to the school's general appearance.



SECTION VIII: Professional Development

Recertification and License Renewal

Professional Development activities are provided in accordance with Section 37-17-8 of the Mississippi Code, applicable regulation, and the **District Professional Learning Plan**. These activities are designed to enhance the delivery of instruction and to maximize student benefit from that instruction as measured by standardized achievement tests. **All instructional personnel shall be licensed in accordance with state law and the regulation of the Mississippi State Department of Education.** Such license and transcript of credits shall be on file in the office of the superintendent of schools prior to the issuance of the first salary check.

ATTENTION: The obtaining and maintaining of proper licenses by instructional personnel shall be the direct responsibility of the employee. The employee is responsible for maintaining all information concerning staff development and continuing education units that may be required for license renewal. Policies and procedures for the obtaining and renewal of proper licenses shall be in accordance with regulations of the State Board of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education. Under state guidelines, **teachers are responsible for maintaining all records necessary for re-certification upon the expiration of the existing certificate.** When a teacher has met the appropriate criteria for license renewal, he/she is to submit an online application via the Mississippi Department of Education's ELMS system. The teacher will then submit the original certificates to the ELMS District Administrator for verification and approval for license renewal. Please review the criteria for re-certification published in the General Guidelines Mississippi Educator Licensure.

Teachers who register for Local Regional Education Service Agency workshops and are unable to attend must contact for Local Regional Education Service Agency and cancel within the given timeframe. If a fine is assessed due to nonattendance and not properly notifying for Local Regional Education Service Agency, the employee will be responsible for paying this fine!

All employees must have the written approval of their supervisor before registering for any workshop for which district funds will be used or for which professional days will be provided.

Resources Available

The following **resources** are available for YCSD employees, for professional development, within the district:

- ASCD Activate (Association of Curriculum and Development);
- PLC's within each school; and
- Consultants - YCSD partners with external consultants

Requests for Professional Development

Teachers, who are interested in a particular professional development activity, should complete the required forms and give to the school principal. The principal will either approve or disapprove. The request is then sent to the district office for approval or disapproval. The request should be made

three to four weeks in advance to make sure that it has been adequate time for the request to cycle through the process.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL UPGRADE IN CERTIFICATION

If, at the commencement of the scholastic year until October 1 of the current scholastic year, any licensed employee shall present to the superintendent a certificate of a higher grade than that specified in such individual's contract, such individual may, if funds are available from minimum education program funds of the district, or from district funds, be paid from such funds the amount to which such higher grade certificate would have entitled the individual, had the certificate been held at the time the contract was executed. MS Code: 37-9-17 (1987) **LEGAL REF.:** Mississippi Code, as cited above.

PRINCIPALS EVALUATION

All principals will be formally evaluated using the Mississippi Principal Evaluation System (MPES) as approved by Mississippi Department of Education and the school board. The superintendent, or his/her designee, will evaluate the supervising principal using the MPES instrument. Supervising principals will evaluate the assistant principals using the MPES instrument. Procedures of the MPES will be followed.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL EVALUATION

The purpose of teacher evaluation shall be to assist teachers in strengthening and developing their professional abilities through an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. Formal evaluations shall be made by the principal or other authorized administrative personnel, using evaluation procedures recommended by the Mississippi Department of Education and approved by the school board. Career teachers will be evaluated using the state adopted evaluation instrument – Mississippi Professional Educator Growth Rubric. Pre and Post conferences will be conducted with each career teacher. During this conference, an explanation of the PGS processes and procedures of the use of the instrument will be given to the teacher.

The principal shall conduct a Pre and Post conference with all personnel to review and sign the evaluation form. The signature need not indicate agreement with the results. In addition, the principal shall visit each teacher's classroom for informal evaluations at least five times each year to offer suggestions, give encouragement, and compliment teachers whose efforts merit such recognition. All other licensed and non-licensed personnel will be evaluated by their immediate supervisor using the prescribed assessment instrument.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All district personnel have a contractual obligation to participate in the district professional development program. Licensure renewal options are separate from the required district professional development program.

Procedures for Sharing Professional Development

Any employee who attends an off-campus professional development session may be asked to share the information with other potential employees who will benefit from said information.

Faculty Meetings

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [GBRD](#))

Faculty meetings are held when needed, at the discretion of the principal. Teachers should be present and on time for all faculty meetings. Please do not ask to be excused for any reason other than an emergency. Anyone missing faculty meetings is to report to the principal the next school day to discuss the agenda.



SECTION IX: Technology

District Copier/Printer Expectations

It is imperative that employees only copy what is essential for instruction. Each copier contains a data footprint of each and every copy that is made and can be tracked by the user identification input.

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy

(Approved by the Yazoo County Board of Education)

The Yazoo County Schools' electronic network is available to students and employees, and the goal is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovations, and communications. As the technological environment is large and varied, the use of technology by students and employees must be legal and ethical; and it should be consistent with the educational vision, mission, and goals of the Board of Education.

The use of the Yazoo County Schools' network and devices is a privilege, not a right, and each user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette and the provisions in this document. Violations of these provisions, or applicable laws and regulations, may result in the loss of computer services, disciplinary action to include termination of employment and/or appropriate legal action, and/or assessment of the cost of damages to hardware/software.

The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

- Accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material;
- Transmitting obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language;
- Violating any local, state, or federal statute;
- Accessing another individual's materials, information, or files without the permission of that person;
- Violating copyright or otherwise using the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission;
- Using passwords other than one's own without written permission from that person;
- Vandalizing, defined as any unauthorized access and/or malicious attempt to damage computer hardware/software or networks or destroying the data of another user, including creating, uploading, or intentionally introducing viruses;
- Using the network for commercial purposes;
- Harassing, insulting, or attacking others;
- Giving out personal information on-line such as full name, home address, phone number, etc.;
- Gaining unauthorized access ("hacking") to resources or entities;
- Invading the privacy of individuals;
- Altering the set-up of computers as set by the system administrator;
- Using software which has not been assigned or approved by staff;

- ❑ Failing to follow a district policy while using computers or failing to follow any other policies or guidelines established by district administration, teachers, or other appropriate district staff;
- ❑ Seeking to gain or gaining unauthorized access to information resources or other computing devices; and
- ❑ Accessing chat rooms, and sites selling term papers, book reports and other forms of student coursework.

The school district maintains the right to limit the content of material that students read due to legitimate pedagogical concerns. Because the Internet contains an unregulated collection of resources, the district cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information or the appropriateness of any material that a student/employee may encounter.

Therefore, before using the district's on-line resources, each student/employee (and the parents/guardians of the student) shall sign and return an **“Acceptable Use Agreement.”** Students/Employees and parents/guardians shall agree to not hold the district responsible for materials acquired on the system, for violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes, or negligence or any costs incurred by users.

There have been cases of the Internet being used as a tool in credit card fraud, electronic forgeries, and other forms of illegal behavior. Students and employees should be aware that these activities exist and should exercise extreme caution to prevent themselves from becoming a victim of such scams.

Although the staff will supervise the student use of the Internet while at school, parents are encouraged to have a discussion with their children about values and how those beliefs should guide student activities while using the Internet.

INTERNET SAFETY:

General Warning: Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users

All users, and their parents/guardians, are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school- aged pupils. Every user must take responsibility for his/her use of the computer network and Internet and stay away from these sites. Parents of minors are the best guide of materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he/she should report such use to the person designated by the school.

Personal Safety:

Be safe! In using the computer network and Internet, do not reveal personal information such as your home address or telephone number. Do not use your real last name or any other information which might allow a person to locate you without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher. Do not arrange a face--to--face meeting with someone you “meet” on the computer network or Internet without your parent’s permission (if you are under 18). Regardless of your age, you should never agree to meet a person you have only communicated with on the Internet in a secluded place or in a private setting.

“Hacking” and Other Illegal Activities:

It is a violation of this Policy to use the school’s computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.

INTERNET FILTERING:

The Yazoo County Schools, either by itself or in combination with the Internet Provider, will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent students from accessing (1) visual depictions that are obscene; (2) child pornography; or (3) other images harmful to minors.

The school will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material which is inappropriate for minors.

Internet filtering software or other technology-based protection systems may be disabled, by a supervising teacher or school administrator, as necessary, for purposes of bona fide research or other educational projects being conducted by students aged 17 and older. The term **“harmful to minors”** is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 USC Section 254[h][7]), as meaning any picture image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, an actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

ELECTRONIC MAIL (email):

The Yazoo County Schools provides access to electronic mail for all employees and for specific and selected student use. Such access is for his/her use in any educational and instructional business that they may conduct. Limited personal use of electronic mail is permitted as long as it does not violate Yazoo County Schools policy and/or adversely affect others. Electronic mail shall not be used to promote political, religious, and/or personal gains. The Board cannot guarantee the privacy, security, or confidentiality of any information sent or received via electronic mail. Network administrators can review e-mail, file folders, and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

NETWORK ETIQUETTE ("Netiquette"):

Users of E-mail, and other network services, should be aware of the common expectations of network etiquette that users expect from one another, and they are as follows:

- E-mail messages are not guaranteed to be private;
- When sending e-mail, make your "subject" as descriptive as possible;
- Do not post the personal address or phone numbers of students or colleagues;
- Check your e-mail frequently and delete it after reading it;

- Proofread and edit messages before they are sent, but be tolerant of errors in messages from others;
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor: without face--to--face communications, a joke may not be taken the way it was intended;
- Do not publicly criticize or inflame others;
- Protect the privacy of other people; and
- Messages written in all capitals are difficult to read and are the network equivalent of shouting.

WEB PAGES:

The Internet is a worldwide system of networks, which makes a vast quantity of information and resources available to anyone who has a computer, a modem, and an Internet access account. Examples of documents which Yazoo County Schools students and employees might publish on the Internet include job vacancies, school assignment information, bus routes, student project information and other information of public interest. All web pages created by students and student organizations on the district's computer system will be subject to treatment as a district -sponsored publication. Accordingly, the district reserves the right to exercise editorial control over such publications.

Content published via the Yazoo County Schools network must comply with the following regulations:

- All publications must comply with all policies and regulations of the district and all state, federal and international laws concerning copyright, intellectual property, and use of computers;
- All Yazoo County Schools publications should reside on the district's communication network. Any exceptions must be approved by the Technology Coordinator;
- All content must be appropriate, decent, in good taste, and not intended to harass or demean individuals or groups;
- Correct grammar and spelling should be used;
- Publications must include a statement of copyright, when appropriate, and indicate that permission has been secured to include copyrighted materials;
- Factual information must be documentable;
- Only a student's first name will be used when publishing student work and/or pictures. Pictures that are a part of student publishing will not include any identifying information. Under no circumstances, will a student's home address or phone number be included;
- Links to other sites should be scrupulously researched to make sure that the linked site is free from objectionable material. The following disclaimer should be posted on the school's web page -- "The links in this area will let you leave the school and school district site. The linked sites are not under the control of the school/district, and the school/district is not responsible for the contents of any linked site, or any link contained in a linked site, or any changes or updates to such sites. The school/district is providing these links to you only as a convenience, and the inclusion of any link does not imply endorsement of the site by the school/district;"
- Publications must identify affiliation with Yazoo County Schools;

- All publications must provide a link to the Yazoo County Schools home page;
- The date of creation and the date last updated are required on all publications;
- All publications must include the e-mail address of the person maintaining the page;
- All publications must include the statement, "Yazoo County Schools does not discriminate in its programs or employment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, sex or age, except as provided by the law or policy;"
- Commercial use (advertisements, business logos, etc.) is prohibited. (A listing of school adopters is permitted);
- Documents should be high quality and structured for clarity and readability;
- All publications must be reviewed and approved as described below;
- Written permission must be on file for all students/employees pictures to be placed on the page; and
- Permission must be granted, and on file, for all original work (poems, stories, artwork, etc.) done by students/employees that is posted on the page.

INTERNET PUBLISHING:

Design and Development:

Project pages and other documents for publication may be designed and developed as desired by individual students, teachers, or groups as appropriate. The content of the school's/department's home page is left to the discretion of the school/department except for the required elements listed above.

Approval and Implementation:

The school principal/department supervisor is responsible for implementation of the homepage and the documents maintained on the server. The principal/supervisor is also responsible for maintaining a back-up of the information so that a prompt recovery can be made in the event of corruption or loss.

Maintenance:

School principals/department supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all publications implemented, by their respective areas, are updated as necessary to maintain accurate and current content. This includes the regular review, testing, and modification of all links and the withdrawal of any documents which become inaccurate or irrelevant.

THE WEBMASTER:

The Webmaster, in the IT Department, will provide assistance, as requested in the design and development of electronic documents. In addition, the Webmaster will monitor all Yazoo County Schools publications. Internet documents, published by students and employees, will normally reside on the system's server or a school or project server maintained by an individual school. As school principals/department supervisors are responsible for ensuring the integrity and recoverability of their respective servers, the Webmaster's role in implementation is limited to advising and assisting as requested.

COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS:

All copyright laws and regulations, in all formats, including electronic- based works or processes will be enforced. Material that may be copyrighted: "Any tangible medium of expression now known or later developed, which can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated either directly or with the aid of a machine, i.e. books, videos, pictures, etc." (Public Law 94-553 [U.S. Code 17] January 1, 1978. Public or private educational institutions must comply with copyright laws. A 1980 amendment to the 1976 Copyright Act gives computer programs the same basic protection as other original works of authorship.

All material, including graphics, available on the Internet is copyright protected unless otherwise stated. It is illegal to make or distribute copies of copyrighted material without proper authorization.

Yazoo County School District licenses the use of copies of computer software from a variety of outside companies.

Yazoo County Schools does not own the copyrighted software or it's related documentation and, except for a single copy, for back-up purposes, or unless expressly authorized by the copyright owner(s), does not typically have the right to reproduce it for use on more than one computer, unless district licenses have been obtained.

Yazoo County Schools students/employees are not permitted to install their personal copies of any software on the system's computers unless specifically authorized by the licensee.

Yazoo County Schools students/employees are not permitted to copy software from the system's computers and install it on home or any other computers unless specifically authorized by the licensee.

Yazoo County Schools employees learning of any misuse of software or related documentation within the school system shall notify the IT Department. Unauthorized reproduction of software is a federal offense. Offenders can be subject to civil damages up to \$100,000 per title copied and criminal penalties including fines up to \$250,000 per work copied and imprisonment up to five years per title copied.

Any **Yazoo County Schools** employee who knowingly makes, acquires, or uses unauthorized copies of computer software licensed to Yazoo County Schools or who places or uses unauthorized software on the system's premises or equipment shall be subject to disciplinary action, as appropriate.

Yazoo County Schools does not condone and specifically forbids the unauthorized duplication of software.

SECURITY:

Security, on any computer system, is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Yazoo County Schools network, please contact IT Department. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to login to any system, program, or network as an administrator may result in cancellation of user privileges.

Occasionally, individuals are issued passwords in order to access programs as part of the tasks they perform. It is each individual's responsibility to protect the integrity of those passwords, and password sharing is strictly prohibited.

Any individual identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access.

Google Apps for Education:

Google Apps for Education (GAFE) is an important tool utilized by teachers and students. GAFE includes Google applications for creating, sharing, and storing documents, assignments, videos, and may include the use of a district student email account. The use of GAFE is at the discretion of the classroom teacher and will only be used when appropriate for the student's learning objectives. The use of GAFE is governed by the district's Technology Acceptable Use Policy. YCSD encourages all parents to share in the GAFE experience by logging in with your child. School staff will monitor the use of technology while at school. Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's use of technology from home. Students and Faculty are responsible for their behavior at all times.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS:

Consequences of violations, include but are not limited to, the following:

- Suspension of information network access;
- Revocation of information network access;
- Suspension of network privileges;
- Revocation of network privileges;
- Suspension of computer access;
- Revocation of computer access;
- School suspension;
- School expulsion to the alternative program – if a student;
- Fines related to equipment damages; and
- Legal action and prosecution by the authorities.

INTERNET SAFETY POLICY CHILDREN'S INTERNET PROTECTION ACT (CIPA) POLICY

The Yazoo County School District (YCSD) adopts guidelines that require efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of Internet resources within the educational setting. The Yazoo County School district shall be in compliance with The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) which is a federal law enacted by Congress in December 2000 to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers.

CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-Rate Program, a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries.

The following policy issues that are addressed in the "Internet Safety Policy" are:

- Minors and employees will not be allowed access to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;

- ❑ For the safety and security of minors and employees on the Internet, students and employees will not be allowed to access chat rooms, blogs, and other forms of direct electronic communications from the general public;
- ❑ All employees are prohibited from text messaging an individual student at any time. This behavior creates opportunities for inappropriate relationships and should therefore be avoided except for educational purposes (ex: teachers, instructors, coaches may text the entire team concerning time changes or postponements in games, tournaments, performances, etc.);
- ❑ Students and employees are unauthorized to access Internet “hacking” and other unlawful activities online;
- ❑ Students and employees are unauthorized in the use, disclosure, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors and employees;
- ❑ The YCSD provides measures designed to restrict minors and employees access to harmful materials (i.e., pictures that are obscene, are child pornography, etc.) through internet filtering/blocking via a District Content Filter/and Bell South Internet filtering services;
- ❑ A district authorized person may disable the blocking or filtering measure during any use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes;
- ❑ The YCSD provides reasonable public notice through the local newspaper and holds a public hearing to address proposed technology protection measures and “Internet Safety Policy;”
- ❑ The YCSD will provide for the education of minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms. (Added by amendment to meet July 1, 2012, CIPA regulations); and
- ❑ The YCSD will provide activities which will increase the awareness level of students, staff, and parents regarding cyberbullying and the appropriate methods for response and reporting. (Added by amendment to meet July 1, 2012, CIPA regulations).

By adopting and implementing the “**Internet Safety Policy**,” the YCSD is committed to providing an Internet network that allows legitimate access to educational resources for our students and employees.

Work Order Forms:

If at any time you are having issues with technology in your classroom, or need assistance with using the technology, contact the Technology Department through the Form provided in the Appendix as well as through the technology help desk on the district website.



SECTION X: School Finance

Fixed Assets

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [DM](#))

The Yazoo County School District must establish adequate procedures to ensure that the fixed asset accountability system is being maintained on a current basis. These internal control procedures will address acquisitions, adjustments, transfers, and disposals. Help in maintaining adequate, up to date, records is imperative.

Equipment having a “fixed asset label with number” must remain at the room/location in which it is inventoried. Before moving this equipment to a different room/location, the following policy should be followed:

- Permission should be granted from the building principal;
- “Change of Location” form(s) should be completed;
- Return completed form(s) to the school office;
- Each school office will report all changes to the Central Office in a timely manner;
- Prior approval to check out equipment must come from the building principal with proper documentation on file in the principal’s office and teacher’s classroom;
- Any equipment assigned to an employee is the sole responsibility of the employee; and
- The employee will be charged for un-accounted equipment.

Fundraising

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [DK](#))

The principal, superintendent, and school board must approve all fund-raising activities. All fundraising requests must be submitted to the building principal who will provide a request to the superintendent to obtain board approval.

Policies and state laws require all school monies received by the teacher be deposited in the school office into a central account. A receipt will be issued to the teacher and the funds will be expended upon proper authorization.

Please be aware that school employees should not be involved with the collection of monies for the benefit of the booster clubs. If money is collected by a school employee, that money must be turned into the school office or the central office and deposited into the appropriate school district bank account by authorized employees. Employees shall not keep money in their desks overnight but should turn in all money to the school office or central office before leaving each day (or as soon as possible, if it is not feasible to turn in the money the same day as received).

In addition, the use of the Yazoo County School district’s Federal I.D. Number by the various booster clubs is strictly prohibited.

Purchasing/Purchase Orders
(Cross Ref: Board Policy [DJEG](#))

No employee shall charge anything to the school. Purchase requisitions must be presented to the principal for any orders. No staff is authorized to pick up, receive, or receipt any material, supply, or service for the Yazoo County School System (including donations) unless the acquisition is properly approved and executed. Any employee purchasing goods, without an approved purchase order, will be held personally liable for the expenditure.

Salespeople, Solicitors, and Visitors:

Vendors, allowing any Yazoo County School District employee to purchase without authorization, will be sent a certified letter stating that any additional purchase(s) made by a Yazoo County School System employee, without a purchase order, will be the responsibility of the vendor and not the Yazoo County School District.

Salesmen should always secure the permission of the principal before contacting a teacher. Only, occasionally should it be necessary to interrupt a teacher while a class is in progress. The principal or designee will conduct the caller to the teacher's room if a visit appears to be necessary.

Otherwise, all business of either school or personal nature will be conducted during the teacher's free time. No employee of the school district will be allowed to sell products to students for non-school activities. No employee will be allowed to solicit membership in an organization during the school day. (See Length of Work Day –Board Policy [GBRB](#))

Visitation is restricted to those persons having been cleared through the principal's office. It is the responsibility of every employee to direct a visitor to the principal's office first. Any person on campus without proper authority or who are distracting normal school operations should be reported to the principal or security personnel. Trespassers will be prosecuted.

Travel
(Cross Ref: Board Policy [DJD](#))

Travel must be approved beforehand by completing a travel requisition and submitting it to the principal. In cases where a travel advance is authorized, settlement with the district, after the travel is completed, must be done within three (3) days of returning from the authorized destination. A mileage statement must be submitted to the principal for all official travel on school business authorized by that principal. Reimbursement at the current authorized rate per mile, plus necessary expenses for room and board, if needed, is itemized with receipts. The signature of the teacher on request for reimbursement attests that the request is accurate and valid. When overnight travel is required, the district will reimburse for out-of-pocket expenses for room and board and meals provided a receipt is submitted. (See Local School Board Policy [GBRF](#) regarding limits on meal reimbursements.)



SECTION XI: **Child Nutrition**

Teacher Accounts and Costs of Meals:

All employees, of the Yazoo County School District, are eligible and encouraged to acquire a cafeteria account number and purchase breakfast and lunch through the cafeterias at each school. Adults are served the same proportion size as high school students and are charged \$4.50 for lunch and \$2.60 for breakfast.

Fundraising (Cross Ref: Board Policy [DK](#))

The principal, superintendent, and school board must approve all fund-raising activities. All fundraising requests must be submitted to the building principal who will provide a request to the superintendent to obtain board approval.

Policies and state laws require all fundraising that includes food items to follow the Smart Snack Guidelines (listed below).

Smart Snack Policies (Applies to any type of food being sold including Fundraisers)

Chapter 17: Child Nutrition:

Rule 17.10 Smart Snacks Standards for ALL Foods and Beverages Sold in Mississippi Schools. The State Board of Education (SBE) shall adopt Smart Snacks Standards for All Foods and Beverages Sold in Mississippi Schools. These standards will ensure school district compliance of what products can be sold and the time of day they can be sold on a school campus.

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 directed the USDA to establish nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to students in schools during the school day. The Smart Snacks Standards ensures schools will provide students healthier choices by offering more whole grain options, fruits, vegetables, leaner protein, and lower-fat dairy. Smart Snacks applies to all foods and beverages sold to students through:

1. Vending machines;
2. Student stores;
3. Snack bars;
4. Fundraisers;
5. Culinary Education Program Sales; and/or
6. Any other sales

Time of Day for ALL Foods and Beverages Sold in Schools:

The following regulations apply to all Mississippi school campuses during the school day. The school day is defined as the hours between 12:00 a.m. the midnight before until 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day. This policy does not apply to school-related events; such as interscholastic sporting events, school plays, and band concerts; where parents and other adults constitute a significant portion of the audience or are selling beverages as boosters.

In addition, no food items shall be sold on the school campus for one (1) hour before the start of any meal services period through the end of the meal service, including breakfast (if offered).

FOOD Regulations for Mississippi Schools:

All foods sold in schools must meet the following ingredients and nutrient requirements:

- 1) Be a Whole Grain-Rich (WGR) product; or
- 2) Have as the first ingredient a fruit, vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- 3) Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or
- 4) Contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of one of the nutrients of public health concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber). 65
 - Calories Limits:
 - i. Snack/Side items: No more than 200 calories; and
 - ii. Entrée items: No more than 350 calories
 - Sodium Limits:
 - i. Snack/Side items: No more than 230 mg; and
 - ii. Entrée items: No more than 480 mg
 - Fat Limits:
 - i. Total fat: No more than 35% of calories;
 - ii. Saturated fat: < 10% of calories; and
 - iii. Trans fat: zero grams
 - Sugar Limits:
 - i. No more than 35% of weight from total sugars in foods (excludes sugars naturally occurring in fruits, vegetables, and dairy) -- For smoothies (made with low-fat yogurt or other low-fat dairy alternatives and/or fruit/juice), yogurt and pudding, no more than 5 grams total sugar (added and naturally occurring) per ounce.
 - Exemptions:
 - i. Dried/dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners; or
 - ii. Dried fruits with nutritive sweeteners for processing and/or palatability; or
 - iii. Products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats.
 - Food Accompaniments
 - i. Accompaniments such as cream cheese, sugar, sweeteners, salad dressing, ketchup etc., must be included in the nutrient analysis as part of the food item sold; and
 - ii. This helps control the number of calories, fat, sugar, and sodium added to foods.

BEVERAGE Regulations for Mississippi Schools:

The fluid and nutrition needs of young people at school are best met through well- balanced, nutrient-rich school meals provided through Child Nutrition Programs, planned by nutrition professionals following US Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines.

Beverages for All Grades:

Beverage	Elementary School (K-5)	Middle School (6-8)	High School (9-12)
Plain Water, Carbonated or not	No Size Limit	No Size Limit	No Size Limit
Low-Fat Milk, Unflavored	≤ 8oz.	≤ 12oz.	≤ 12oz.
Non-Fat Milk, Unflavored or Flavored	≤ 8oz.	≤ 12oz.	≤ 12oz.
100% fruit/vegetable juice	≤ 8oz.	≤ 12oz.	≤ 12oz.

Other Flavored Beverages in High Schools ONLY:

- ❑ Calorie-Free Beverages: Maximum serving size 20 fluid ounces (20 oz.)
 - i. Calorie –free flavored water, with or without carbonation
 - ii. Other calorie-free beverages with less than 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces
 - iii. (8 oz.), or up to 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces
- ❑ Lower Calorie Beverages: Maximum serving size 12 fluid ounces (12 oz.)
 - i. Up to 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces; or
 - ii. Up to 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces

CAFFEINE:

- ❑ Elementary and Middle School (K-8)
 - i. Foods and beverages must be caffeine-free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances.
- ❑ High School (9-12)
 - i. Coffee and tea may be sold in high schools only; however, if cream and sweetener are offered as accompaniments, the cream and sweetener must be included in the evaluation of the coffee or tea against the beverage standard.
 - ii. The use of accompaniments may be averaged over the number of drinks sold.
 - iii. The other beverage standard in high school permits <60 calories per 12 fl oz; this is the same as <5 calorie per 1 fl oz.
 - iv. If a smaller beverage is served, the calories may not exceed 5 calories per fl oz, for example a 6 fl oz beverage may have no more than 30 calories.

VENDING/SNACK Regulations for Mississippi Schools:

Schools shall utilize the **Healthier Generation Alliance Product Calculator** to analyze all food and beverage products before they can be sold. This calculator is the most accurate tool to use when analyzing products to determine if they meet the Smart Snack Standards for vending products, snack products, entrees, side dishes and beverages.

TEACHERS

Lounge Vending:

At least 50 percent of the items sold in staff vending areas/lounges (those inaccessible to students) should meet the Smart Snacks Standards.

CULINARY

Education Programs:

Culinary Education Programs operating in schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NLSP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must follow the same Smart Snack Standards previously mentioned. The Smart Snack standards have no impact on the Culinary Education Programs curriculum in schools nor do they impact foods sold to adults at any time. However, any foods and beverages prepared and sold to students by Culinary Programs, during the school day must meet the same nutrition standards.

RESOURCES:

- Please visit the MS Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition website for additional information;
- Please visit United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service website for additional information;
- Please visit the Healthier Generation, Smart Snacks Alliance Product Calculator website for additional information.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS): Federal Law # 7 CFR 210.11 (Adopt 10/2015).

Food From Outside Vendors:

Breakfast and lunch are served each day in the cafeteria. Students who bring their lunch may only purchase milk to drink with their lunch. Extra food sales are available daily. Cash only is acceptable. Students are not allowed to leave campus to purchase food for lunch. Outside fast food is not allowed to be delivered to students unless prior administrative approval is given due to special occasions.

All food that is brought into the cafeteria, and not purchased in the cafeteria, must be in unmarked containers or bags.

Teacher Expectations in Cafeteria:

Teachers, assigned to the cafeteria or who bring their students to lunch, are on duty during the lunch period. Students are to be supervised by teachers on duty upon entering the cafeteria, while in line, during lunch, and in cleaning up the lunch tables prior to leaving the cafeteria. All students and staff should clean their table prior to leaving to ensure the next lunch period has a clean area to eat.

During the Breakfast and Lunch periods, cafeteria staff duties are to prepare and serve students and staff and they can not keep all of the tables wiped at the same time. Monitoring behavior, while students are in line and during lunch, is the responsibility of the staff on duty.



SECTION XII: **Safety and Wellness**

Dismissal of Students from Campus

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [JGFC](#))

School campuses are closed during the school day. Under no circumstances, should any teacher give permission to any student to leave campus unless the principal is consulted, and permission granted.

ID Badges/Classroom Keys

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [EBBAA](#))

An identification badge and classroom key will be provided to all employees. If the badge or key is lost, the employee should report the loss immediately to the building principal or supervisor. A new one will be issued to the employee. Cost of replacement (\$5) for the badge and key (\$20) will be the responsibility of the employee.

Employees will wear their identification badges at all times while on school grounds.

Safety and Disaster Drills

(BOARD POLICY [EBBC](#))

Various disaster drills will be conducted throughout the year at each school site. The building principal will schedule and report to the Superintendent these drills. All faculty members are expected to participate in these drills to assist ensuring the safety of the students at Yazoo County School District. Routes and procedures are to be posted in your classroom and reviewed with students in accordance with the expectations provided by the building level principal.

Student Hazing

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [JCA](#) , [JCHCAA](#))

The MHSAA defines hazing as any act or ceremony which can create the risk of harm to a student as a form of initiation into a particular club or activity. Hazing includes activities that involve the risk of physical harm, whipping, branding, ingesting vile substances, sleep deprivation, over-exposure to heat or cold, restraint, nudity or kidnapping, i.e., Hazing, bullying, or harassment by any name is wrong and should be reported to the local administration. Students participating in sports activities will be held accountable to the same disciplinary procedures as with any school approved event. This also includes the school policy regarding bullying and harassment. Employees encouraging or engaging in will be considered in violation of Board policies.

Bullying/Harassment

(Cross Ref: Board Policy [JDDA](#), HB 263)

The Yazoo County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or employee is subject to bullying or harassing behavior by any other school employee or student. Likewise, the District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person engages in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness, or person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior.

- 1) Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by an actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, and that:
 - Places a student or school employee in actual or reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
 - Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits;
 - A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior;
- 2) No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students;
- 3) No person shall engage in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness, or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior;
- 4) A school employee or student who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to the appropriate school official;
- 5) Conduct described in section (1) is considered bullying or harassing behavior if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

The Yazoo County School District recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take **"reasonable actions"** as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing.

Furthermore, the Yazoo County School District defines **"reasonable action"** as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school official in authority when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

Procedures for Reporting Bullying/Harassing Behavior **(Also see www.yazoo.k12.ms.us for procedures):**

Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, has witnessed bullying or harassing behavior, or who has reliable information that a student, school employee or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school official.

The report shall be made promptly, but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. The school official shall complete a **"Bullying/Harassing Behavior"** complaint form which shall include the following:

- the name of the reporting person;
- the specific nature and date of the misconduct;
- the names of the victim of the misconduct;

- ❑ the names of any witnesses; and
- ❑ any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint.

The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints, against the principal, shall be made to the superintendent and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board chairman.

The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The district official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) working days after initial receipt of the complaint by the district.

The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be put in writing. The district official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents, as appropriate, when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the district official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and other affected parties as deemed necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within ten (10) working days.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent.

The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents, as appropriate, to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.

Transportation of Students:

The safety of pupils to and from school should be of serious concern to every member of the Yazoo County School District staff. Each principal assumes the responsibility of having persons assigned to supervise the loading and unloading of all school buses. Bus drivers, as well as school staff, are responsible for making sure students are instructed on safety procedures, while riding the bus, and ensuring that students follow these instructions.

Accountability standard #29 requires that emergency bus evacuation drills are conducted at least two (2) times each year.

Teacher Wellness Plans:

Students are not the only ones who need good health. An employee's mental health and physical health are essential and critical to the success of a school system. School personnel who want to encourage children and teens to live a healthy lifestyle will be more successful if they model healthy

behaviors themselves. Each school, in the Yazoo County School District, implements an **Employee Wellness Plan** the school's **Health and Wellness Policy**.

Each school's Health and Wellness Policy can be accessed at each school site and through the YCSD website (www.yazoo.k12.ms.us).



SECTION XIII: **Extracurricular** **Activities**

Extra-Curricular Duties
(Cross Ref: Board Policy [GBRE](#))

Teachers, and other personnel, will be called upon to perform extra duties such as sponsoring clubs, selling or receiving tickets, supervising children in the cafeteria, and supervising bus loading and unloading.

The principal of each school shall assign duty posts at strategic places, around buildings and grounds, so the entire student population shall be under supervision at all times.

Clubs must be official clubs, with student officers elected. Student members must have meetings with recorded minutes and students must approve club transactions.

Athletics: (see YCSD Athletic Handbook)

Clubs (See School Guidelines, Procedures, and Processes)

Teachers may be asked, if relevant and necessary, to help with the sponsorship of a student club such as Beta Club(s), Student Council(s), Yearbook Club/Committee. It is the expectation of the Yazoo County School District that teachers take an interest and sponsor and/or assist with said “clubs and activities.”

Again, and in summary, clubs must be official clubs, with student officers elected. Student members must have meetings with recorded minutes and students must approve club transactions.



SECTION XIV: **Additional** **Policies and** **Procedures**

Confidentiality

The Yazoo County School District ensures confidential responsibility in terms of safeguarding protected private identifiable information. It is the policy of the Yazoo County School District that employees comply with the Mississippi mandated identity theft prevention laws and School District data breach procedures. Employees are required to protect the sensitive personally identifiable information about students, employees and others from inadvertent, negligent, and willful disclosure or breach of such information, data or records. Violation of this Policy may result in corrective action up to and including termination and may be punishable by law.

All employees must protect and secure all electronic resources and information, data and records of the School District from theft, and inadvertent disclosure when they are under the supervision and control of the School District, and when they are not under the supervision or control of the School District, for example, but not limited to, working at home, on vacation, or elsewhere. If any employee becomes aware of the release of School District information, data or records the release must be reported to the Superintendent or designee immediately. If there is a breach of security of the information, data, or records of the School District, the School District must disclose any breach of security of computerized records after discovery or notification of the breach to any Mississippi resident whose personal information was or is reasonably believed to have been accessed by an unauthorized person.

Before disclosing a breach of security, the School District must report the breach of security, and any information pertaining to the breach, to the local or state law enforcement agency for investigation or handling in advance of the disclosure to the customer, or others. The School District may be required to delay notification if a law enforcement agency determines that the notification will impede a criminal or civil investigation.

The School District administration must then determine whether a data breach notification will be issued. Notifications may be made through a written notice, telephone notice, electronic notice, or a substitute notice.

A notice, of the security breach, must be provided to residents whose un-encrypted and un-redacted computerized personal information was or is reasonably believed to have been accessed and acquired by an unauthorized person and that the School District believes has or could cause loss or injury.

All records of the School District must be destroyed pursuant to the School District document retention and destruction policy, schedule, Mississippi Department of Archives requirements. Destruction means shredding, erasing, or modifying the personal information in the records to make them unreadable, undecipherable, or non-reconstructionable through generally available means.

Social Security Number Requirement:

Unless otherwise permitted by law, School District employees must protect the privacy of Social Security numbers.

- 1) The School District may not do any of the following:
 - Publicly post or publicly display in any manner an individual's Social Security number. "Publicly post" or "publicly display" means to intentionally communicate or otherwise make available the Social Security number to the general public;
 - Print an individual's Social Security number on any card required for the individual to access products or services provided by School District;
 - Require an individual to transmit his or her Social Security number over the Internet unless the connection is secure, or the Social Security number is encrypted;
 - Require an individual to use his or her Social Security number to access an Internet website unless a password or unique personal identification number or another authentication device is also required to access the website; and
 - Print an individual's Social Security number on any materials that are mailed to the individual unless Federal or State law requires the Social Security number to be on the document to be mailed. However, Social Security numbers may be included in applications and forms sent by mail, including documents sent as part of an application or enrollment process or to establish, amend or terminate an account, contract, or policy or to confirm the accuracy of the Social Security number. A Social Security number that is permitted to be mailed under this section may not be printed, in whole or in part, on a postcard or other mailer not requiring an envelope, or visible on the envelope or without the envelope having been opened.
- 2) The School District may collect, use, or release a Social Security number as required by federal or state law, or may use the Social Security number for internal verification, administrative purposes or for law enforcement investigations;
- 3) This requirement does not apply to a document that is required by law to be open to the public, and originates with, or is filed, recorded, or maintained by any governmental agency, instrumentality or taxing authority (Indicator E-3);
- 4) Employees who work, with this information, attend training annually to be updated on the most reliable and certain strategies to protect personal information.

This policy demonstrates the YCSD's guarantee to require staff that work with personally identifiable information are trained and continue to be updated in procedures and processes to ensure the protection and integrity of the information. **CROSS REFERENCE:** Policy: Section: G Personnel Policy Code: GAGAB (Confidential Information and Disclosure of Information).

Patriotism-In God We Trust (Reference Law/Policy)

- ❑ The United States flag shall be displayed in each classroom and in each main room (library, etc.) of the school building at all times while school is in session. Teachers shall encourage all pupils to repeat the oath of allegiance to the United States flag at the beginning of the first hour of class each day school is in session;
- ❑ Teachers shall provide students instruction in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag, and in patriotic exercises. Any student who objects to reciting the oath of allegiance shall be excused from participating; and
- ❑ State law requires all classrooms display the “***In God We Trust***” signs in the classroom.



SECTION XV: **School Procedures**

(It is likely that your site administrator will have prepared for you procedures specific to your campus – these can be added and applied here!)



SECTION XVI:
Listing and
Appendix of
Needed Forms:



Cumulative Listing and Appendix of Forms Needed by Employees:

- Form 1: Memo of Understanding for the 2023-2024 YCSD Employee Handbook;
- Form 2: Mississippi Professional Educator Growth Rubric
- Forms 3-7: New Employee Forms
 - Direct Deposit Form
 - W-4 (2019)
 - MS Employer's Withholding Exemption Certificate
 - State of MS Health Insurance Plan Application for Coverage
 - State and School Employee's Life Insurance Plan Application
- Form 8: Sick Leave Form
- Form 9: Personal Leave Form
- Form 10: Professional Development Request Checklist Form;
- Form 11: Professional Leave Form
- Form 12: Mileage Form for Reimbursement;
- Form 12: MTSS Academic Folder Lay-Out Reference
- Form 13: Field Trip Request Form
- Form 14: Parental Consent for Off-Campus Field Trip
- Form 15-20: Fixed Asset Forms
 - Add an Asset
 - Transfer an Asset
 - Assignment of Fixed Asset
 - Lost or Stolen Property Affidavit
 - Fixed Asset Assurance Form for Administrators;
 - Fixed Asset Assurance Form for Teachers and Other Employees;
- Form 21: Blank Requisition
- Form 22: Building and Grounds Checklist
- Form 23: Salary Schedule
- Form 24: Sample Letter of Reprimand
- Form 25: Educator Code of Ethics;

- Form 26: YCSD Grievance Form;
- Form 27: Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Form;
- Form 28: Waiver;
- Form 29: “Special Diet Form;” and
- Form 30: HIPPA Training Acknowledgement Form;

Memo of Understanding for the 2023-2024 YCSD Employee Handbook

I understand that the YCSD Employee Handbook is available online and that I may request a printed copy from the school/district office. I further understand that the YCSD Employee Handbook is a summary of YCSD school board policies, which can be accessed at www.yazoo.k12.ms.us at any time.

I agree to abide by the policies established by the school board and those outlined in the YCSD Employee Handbook. I understand that the YCSD Employee Handbook. I understand that the YCSD Employee Handbook is not a contract of employment and may be updated with or without notice. I further understand that violations of the YCSD Employee Handbook may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Printed Name

Signature

Date