

# Employee Handbook 2008-09

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# Employee Handbook Receipt

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Campus/department \_\_\_\_\_

(check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Alief ISD Employee Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby acknowledge access to the Alief ISD Employee Handbook which is available to me through the District's computer system at <http://www.aliefisd.net>.

I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document. Employees who have access to a district computer can access the handbook electronically and download (print) two copies of this page. Employees without access to a district computer have the option of receiving the handbook in hard copy.

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Note: You must sign two copies of this form, one for your records and one to be submitted to your supervisor.

# Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are have been summarized. In addition, employees may also need to refer to their own department or campus handbook for guidelines related to their specific departments or campuses. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to Dr. Rose Benitez, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources.

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

## District Information

### Description of the District

Originally farm and dairy land settled in the late 1800s, Alief (named for the community's first postmistress) officially became an independent school district in 1917. Today's urban Alief ISD encompasses 36.6 square miles in southwest Harris County, mostly within the Houston city limits. District boundaries are Westheimer Road on the north, a jagged line from Gessner Drive south to Roark Road on the east, and the Fort Bend County border to the south and west. We have an ethnically diverse student population of about 43,000 students. Our motto of "Preparing Students for Tomorrow. . .Caring for Them Today" is more than just a slogan--it is the district philosophy.

### Mission Statement

*Policy AE*

Believing the best philosophy of education is expressed by objectives that can be evaluated and communicated, the District dedicates itself to the concept that each individual is a unique personality capable of developing spiritual and moral values. It is further believed that each individual is capable of experiencing success and acquiring enthusiasm in the following areas:

1. Intellectual – the ability to think and act logically and constructively and to reason independently.
2. Societal – a belief in the dignity and worth of each person, an understanding of the common needs of all peoples, and an appreciation of American citizenship with its individual freedoms and responsibilities.
3. Economic and occupational competence – training that is broad in scope yet flexible in content.
4. Physical – progress in health and environment, and an understanding of appropriate uses of time.

Therefore, District philosophy is a belief that excellence in education is best achieved by maintaining high standards for discipline, by providing staff, faculty, and facilities of the highest quality, and by providing proper testing and counseling that will allow the individual to make the decisions that will affect his or her life.

## **Board of Trustees**

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

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

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the district to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the district's children. Trustees serve without compensation, must be registered voters, and must reside in the district.

Current board members include:

Sarah B. Winkler, President  
Nghi T. Ho, Vice President  
Dr. John Hansen, Secretary  
Rick Moreno, Asst. Secretary  
Charlie Cothran, Member  
Ann Williams, Member  
Gary Cook, Member

The board usually meets on the first and third Tuesday of the month at the District's Administration Building Board Room. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a two-hour notice.

All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the board to go into a closed session from which the public and others are excluded. Closed sessions may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real-property acquisition, certain personnel matters including employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or consulting with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

**Board Meeting Schedule for 2008-2009:**

July 17, 2008	January 13, 2009
August 5, 2008	February 6-7, 2009 (retreat)
August 19, 2008	February 17, 2009
September 2, 2008	March 3, 2009
September 16, 2008	March 24, 2009
October 7, 2008	April 7, 2009
October 21, 2008	April 21, 2009
November 5, 2008	May 5, 2009
November 18, 2008	May 19, 2009
December 16, 2008	June 2, 2009
	June 16, 2009

**Administration**  
**281-498-8110, main switchboard**

Superintendent	Dr. Louis B. Stoerner
Deputy Superintendents	
Instruction	Gina Tomas
Administrative Services	Charles Woods
Assistant Superintendents	
Human Resources	Dr. Rose M. Benitez
Finance	Deanna Wentz
Support Services	Rick Elizalde
Student Services	Joyce Eddings
Communications & Public Relations	Paula Smith
Area Superintendents	
Area A	Maggie Cuellar
Area B	Dr. Sue Page
Executive Director, Curriculum, Assessment and Evaluation	Glenda Thacker
Assistant to Deputy Superintendent	Sharman Potter
Controller	Grace Chang
Director of Athletics	Marvin Sedberry
Director of Construction & Facilities	Pat Dingrando
Director of Desktop Computing and Network Services	Wally Rakestraw
Director of Federal Funds	Karla Kessler

Director of Human Resources, Staffing And Recruiting	Walter Simmons
Director of Human Resources, Employee Relations & Sub Office	Cynthia Ginyard
Director of Human Resources, Risk Management	Raymond Brantley
Director of Leadership Development, Professional Development & ACP	Chuck Lang
Director of Maintenance & Operations	Jeff Delisle
Director of Management Information Systems	Doug Brown
Director of Nutrition Services	Sarah Jarrell
Director of Procurement & Distribution	Dirk Engel
Director of Special Populations	Jennifer Key
Director of Special Education	Martha Drewyer
Director of Transportation	Merl Ashton
Manager of Pupil Services	Tariq Hamid
Manager of Communications	Donna Senf
Personnel Administrator	Theresa Adame
Police Chief	Larry Gustafson
Tax Assessor/Collector	Pat Praessel

## Helpful Contacts

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

Athletics	281-988-3190
Federal Lunch Program	281-988-3388
Human Resources	281-988-3456
Insurance & Benefits (Risk Management)	281-988-3001 or 281-988-3860
Nutrition Services	281-988-3420
Payroll Department	281-988-3074
Police Department	281-498-3542
Purchasing Department	281-988-3188
Special Education	281-988-3440
Substitute Office	281-988-3111
Warehouse	281-988-3300

## Human Resources Records Specialists

The HR records specialist is the primary information contact person for a new employee as well as current employees. The records specialist can answer employees' questions related to compensation, leaves of absence, service records, and personnel records. The records specialists work with specific campuses and department according to the chart as follows:

<b>Sandy Sekal</b>	<b>Linda Cook</b>	<b>Sue Huard</b>
281-988-3456, ext 2080	281-988-3456, ext 2170	281-988-3456, ext 4030
<b>Campuses/Programs</b> Alief Middle School Chambers Elementary Collins Elementary Day Care Elsie High School Elsie Ninth Grade Center Holub Middle School Kennedy Elementary Landis Elementary Mata Intermediate Outley Elementary Owens Intermediate Petrosky Elementary Rees Elementary SOAR/LINC Youens Elementary  <b>Departments</b> Business/Finance Central Distribution MIS/Technology Services Police / Crossing Guards Purchasing Special Services Tax Office Transportation Warehouse	<b>Campuses/Programs</b> Alexander Elementary Boone Elementary Chancellor Elementary Hastings High School Hastings Ninth Grade Ctr. Heflin Elementary Hicks Elementary Horn Elementary Klentzman Intermediate Miller Intermediate O'Donnell Middle School Olle Middle School Smith Elementary Sneed Elementary  <b>Departments</b> Athletics Custodial Maintenance Print Shop Pupil Personnel Services	<b>Campuses/Programs</b> ALC Albright Middle School Best Elementary Bush Elementary Budewig Intermediate Crossroads Cummings Elementary Hearne Elementary Holmquist Elementary Kerr High School Killough Middle School Liestman Elementary Mahanay Elementary Martin Elementary Taylor High School Youngblood Intermediate  <b>Departments</b> CPR/Parental Involvement Human Resources/Risk Mgt Instruction/Curriculum Mailroom Nutrition Superintendent's Office

## School Calendar

The school calendar is adopted by the board of trustees on an annual basis in compliance with state law. The school calendar can be accessed at the District's website, <http://www.aliefisd.net>.

# Employment

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

*Policies DAA, DIA*

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to discrimination on any of the bases listed above should contact Dr. Rose M. Benitez, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources.

## **Job Vacancy Announcements**

*Policy DC*

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

## **Contract and noncontract employment**

*Policies DC, DCA, DCB, DCC, DCD, DCE*

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

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

**Term and continuing contracts.** Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification, such as teachers and nurses, will be employed by term or continuing contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. Campus principals and central office administrators are employed under two-year term contracts after completion of the one-year probationary period. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract and employment policies.

**Non-certified professional employees.** Certain non-certified employees in professional positions are not employed by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district.

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

## **Searches**

### *Policy DHE*

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

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

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted if reasonable suspicion exists, at random, when an employee returns to duty after engaging in prohibited conduct, and as a follow-up measure. Testing may be conducted following accidents. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty.

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

## **First Aid and CPR certification**

*Policies DBA, DMA*

Certain employees who are involved in physical activities for students must maintain and submit to the district proof of current certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Certification must be issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification to Raymond Brantley, Director of Risk Management.

## **Reassignments and Transfers**

*Policy DK*

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit their request by the date as determined by the Human Resources Department. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Human Resources Department and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

## **Workload and Work Schedules**

*Policies DEA, DL*

**Professional employees.** Professional and administrative employees are exempt from overtime pay and are employed according to the work schedules set by the district. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including required days of service and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation, including conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. These planning/preparation periods are not “off periods” and are part of the teacher’s scheduled workday. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The district may require teachers to supervise students during lunch one day a week when no other personnel are available. Further information is contained under the Campus Information/Student Issues section of this handbook.

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

## **Notification of Parents Regarding Qualifications**

*Policies DK, DBA*

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

Texas law also requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate. This notice is not required if parental notification under NCLB is sent. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals serving with an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take the certification exam) or individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request.

Employees who have questions about their certification status can call **Walter Simmons, Director of Human Resources, Staffing & Recruiting.**

## **Outside Employment and Tutoring**

*Policy DBD*

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

## **Performance Evaluation**

*Policies DN, DNA, DNB*

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the district. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda also can be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, have a performance conference with their supervisor, and get the opportunity to respond to the evaluation. Employees must receive a satisfactory performance evaluation in order to be eligible for any board-approved raises (see Compensation and Benefits section in this handbook, or DEA LOCAL policy).

For information on appraisals for teachers on a less than annual basis, please see *Appraisals – Teachers*, in the Campus and Student Issues section of this handbook.

## **Employee Involvement**

*Policies BQA, BQB*

At both the campus and district levels, Alief ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from the Communications and Public Relations Office.

## **Professional Development**

*Policy DMA*

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the district. Staff development for instructional personnel is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, addressed in the campus improvement plan, and approved by a campus-level advisory committee.

Staff development for noninstructional personnel is designed to meet specific licensing requirements (e.g., bus drivers) and continued employee skill development.

Individuals holding renewable SBEC certificates are responsible for obtaining the required training hours and maintaining appropriate documentation.

## **Required Professional Development for 187-day Employees**

The school calendar reflects 185 days, a combination of student instructional days and professional development/staff workdays. To meet the 187 days required by contract or work calendar, professional staff must acquire fourteen (14) hours of approved staff development outside of school hours. Professional development taken outside of the district to fulfill this requirement must be pre-approved by the campus principal and must be related to the employee's job duties.

Paraprofessional staff must fulfill their fourteen (14) hour requirement by either attending training and/or working days (e.g., registration) as approved by their campus administrator.

The deadline dates for completing the professional development requirement may be found on the Professional Development web page. Failure to meet the required professional development by the deadline dates will result in an equivalent loss of pay.

# **Compensation and Benefits**

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

### *Policy DEA*

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and a pay structure established for each position. The district's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All district positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional and administrative employees are generally classified as exempt and are paid annual salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as nonexempt and are paid based on hourly wages or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each overtime hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek.

The district pays all salaried employees over 12 months regardless of the number of days employed during the school year. Salaried employees will be paid in equal bimonthly payments, beginning with the first pay period of the school year. An employee who separates from service before the last day of instruction or retires under TRS, will receive in his or her final paycheck, a lump sum payment for wages

actually earned from the beginning of the school year to the date of separation. Employees that separate after the last day of instruction will continue to receive paychecks through the end of the summer.

Employees will receive written notice of their pay and work schedules before the start of each school year. Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time nurses, and full-time counselors will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule.

Employees should contact their Records Specialists (*see page 9*) in the Human Resources Department for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay. Disputes regarding compensation should be addressed to **Dr. Rose Benitez, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources.**

### **Pay Increase Eligibility**

*Policy DEA LOCAL*

In order to be eligible for any board approved salary or wage increase, an employee must receive a satisfactory evaluation. An employee who completes his or her contract year or duty calendar on a growth plan, a "Teacher in Need of Assistance" plan, or receives an overall unsatisfactory evaluation/rating shall not be eligible for the board approved pay increase for that year. An employee who is under suspension at the end of his or her contract year or duty calendar shall not be eligible for the board approved pay increase for that year (see policy DEA LOCAL).

### **Paychecks**

All employees are paid on a bi-monthly basis. Professional and salaried employees working a full school year receive their annual salary in 24 equal payments on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last workday of each month. Hourly employees are paid according to the hours worked as reported on their time sheets submitted by their respective departments. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization.

The schedule of pay dates for the 2008-09 school year follows:

#### **2008**

Thursday, June 12  
Monday, June 30  
Tuesday, July 15  
Wednesday, July 30  
Friday, August 15  
Friday, August 29  
Monday, September 15

#### **2009**

Thursday, January 15  
Friday, January 30  
Friday, February 13  
Friday, February 27  
Friday, March 13  
Tuesday, March 31  
Wednesday, April 15

Tuesday, September 30	Thursday, April 30
Wednesday, October 15	Friday, May 15
Friday, October 31	Friday, May 29
Friday, November 14	Monday, June 15
Friday, November 21	Tuesday, June 30
Monday, December 15	Wednesday, July 15
Friday, December 19	Thursday, July 30
	Friday, August 14
	Monday, August 31

## Pay Cycles

The numbers of days in an employee's assignment determines the first and last pay date for a particular school year. Human Resources' guidelines place employees into a pay cycle depending on the number of days for their position. Each pay cycle has a total of 24 pay dates. Below is a table listing the categories of work calendars with the first and last pay dates for each.

No. of Days for Position	First Check	Last Check
187 – 189*	August 31	August 15
190 – 219	August 15	July 31
220 - 234	July 31	July 15
235 – 260	July 15	June 30

\*Athletic coaches receive the first check for the school year on August 15<sup>th</sup> and the last check for the school year on July 31<sup>st</sup>.

## Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of one pay period is necessary to activate this service. With automatic deposit, an employee's pay is immediately available on the pay date. Contact the Risk Management Department for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

## Payroll Deductions

*Policy CFEA*

Automatic payroll deductions for the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) and federal income tax are required for all full-time employees. Medicare tax deductions also are required for all employees hired after March 31, 1986. Temporary and part-time employees who are not eligible for TRS membership must have deductions for their contributions to a 457 PST account in lieu of Social Security.

Other payroll deductions employees may choose are deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance; annuities; and higher education savings plans. Employees also may request payroll deduction for payment of membership dues to professional organizations. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

## **Overtime/Compensatory Time**

### *Policy DEA*

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees and paraprofessional employees) are entitled to overtime compensation or compensatory time (comp time). Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor.

Overtime and compensatory time is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour workweek and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. Saturday and ends 11:59 p.m. on Friday.

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

- Employees can accumulate up to 60 hours of compensatory time.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- An employee may be required to use comp time before using any other available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

### *Policy DEE*

Before an employee incurs any travel expenses, the employee's supervisor and respective central office administrator must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the district. Employees must submit receipts to be reimbursed for expenses other than mileage. Travel guidelines and reimbursement procedures can be obtained by contacting the district's Business Services office.

## **Health, Dental, and Life Insurance**

### *Policy CRD*

Information regarding group health insurance coverage, as well as supplemental insurance benefits, is available through the Risk Management Department. The Board of Trustees determines the district's contribution to employee insurance premiums annually.

The health insurance plan year is from January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to the end of the plan year. New employees must complete enrollment forms within the first 30 days of employment. Generally, current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during the open enrollment period. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Risk Management Department, or by accessing the Risk Management's website online at <http://www.aliefisd.net>.

### **Supplemental insurance benefits**

#### *Policy CRD*

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for dental, vision, supplemental life, catastrophic illness, and disability. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact the Risk Management Department for more information.

### **Cafeteria plan benefits (Section 125)**

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

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

### **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

#### *Policy CRE*

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case. Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor and the Risk Management Department. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under

the Texas Labor Code. See *Workers' Compensation Benefits*, page 28 for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

## **Unemployment Compensation Insurance**

*Policy CRF*

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

## **Teacher Retirement**

*Policy DEG*

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

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

# **Leaves and Absences**

## **Attendance Requirements**

*Policy DEC*

All Alief ISD employees have an important role in the education of children and in the operation of our school district. Therefore, regular and reliable attendance is an essential job function for all employees, and is a basic expectation of the District. Excessive absences are not acceptable since it has a direct negative impact on the accomplishment of the District's mission. The Commissioner of Education has defined excessive absences as more than is provided in a given year by the District's leave policy (not what has been accumulated).

Short absences for situations such as an employee illness, illness of an immediate family member, jury duty, or personnel business are coordinated through the campus or department. Manual trades employees are to call their supervisors to report their absences. All other employees are to call their principal or supervisor as well as the Absence Calling System to report their absences. Failure to report absences may result in disciplinary action, up to and including separation from employment due to job abandonment.

Absences will be tracked within the work calendar year. At the start of each employment year, a new cycle of recording absence occurrences will begin for each employee. Absences excluded are those covered within an official medical leave of absence as approved by the Human Resources Department, an official Workers' Compensation absence as approved by the Risk Management Department, or absences due to jury duty, subpoenaed court appearances, bereavement (immediate family), and approved vacation, comp time, discretionary leave, administrative leave/suspension, and UIL or other excused school business. When an employee falls into an excessive absence situation by exhausting all available leave provided by the District in the school/work calendar year, a Memo for the Record will be issued to the employee advising of his/her excessive absence status. A continued record of absences, not for the exception reasons stated previously, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **General Leave Information**

### *Policy DEC*

The district offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who have personal needs that will require long leaves of absence should call their Human Resources Records Specialists or the Director of Employee Relations for counseling about leave options, continuation of benefits, and communicating with the district.

Employees who take an unpaid leave of absence may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health care benefits for employees on leave authorized under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid by the District, as they were when they were working. Otherwise, the district does not make benefit contributions for employees who are not on unpaid leave.

Employees must follow district and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate leave request form. An employee absent **three (3)** or more consecutive workdays because of personal illness, or an illness of an immediate family member, shall submit, upon return to work, a medical certification of illness and of his/her fitness to return to work.

Personal (state) and local sick leave is available for the employee's use at the beginning of each school year. Paid leave shall not be approved for more workdays

than have been accumulated in prior years plus those to be earned during the current year.

**Full time (100%) employees earn leave days as follows:**

187 – 204 days	5 state personal and 6 local days
205 – 225 days	5 state personal and 7 local days
226 – 260 days	5 state personal and 8 local days

**Part-time employees who work at least 50% of the workdays earn leave days as follows:**

187 – 204 days	2.5 state personal and 3 local days
205 – 225 days	2.5 state personal and 3.5 local days

Employees who begin the school year on a medical leave will have their leave days awarded to them, on a prorated basis, upon their return to work. If an employee leaves the district before the end of the work year, the cost of any unearned leave days taken shall be deducted from the employee’s final paycheck.

**Personal Leave**

State law entitles all employees to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is earned at a rate of one-half a workday for each 18 workdays of employment up to the statutory maximum of five workdays annually. A day of earned personal leave is equivalent to an assigned workday. There is no limit on the accumulation of state personal leave, and it can be transferred to other Texas school districts and is generally transferable to education service centers. There are two types of personal leave: nondiscretionary and discretionary.

**Nondiscretionary.** Leave that is taken for personal or family illness, emergency, a death in the family, or active military service is considered nondiscretionary leave. This type of leave allows very little or no advance planning and will be granted to employees in the same manner as state sick leave.

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

**Limitations**

The effect of the employee’s absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor. To safeguard the continuity of instruction and student

learning, the following stipulations shall apply to the use of discretionary personal leave days:

1. Discretionary personal leave shall not be used:
  - The day before or after a holiday.
  - On a staff development day.
  - On weather make-up days.
  - On state-mandated test days.
  - During the last week of school.
2. Discretionary personal leave requires prior written approval by the supervisor.
3. Not more than two discretionary personal leave days shall be taken consecutively.
4. Not more than three percent of the professional and paraprofessional staff of a school or department shall be on discretionary leave.
5. Requests for discretionary personal leave shall be considered on a first-come, first-served basis.
6. Not more than five discretionary personal leave days may be taken per year.
7. Supervisors may deny any request for discretionary personal leave that would disrupt the educational process at the school or the District's ability to provide appropriate support services.

An exception to the stipulations shall be granted for attendance at an out-of-town high school/college graduation or wedding of an immediate family member as defined in policy DEC LOCAL. Requests under extenuating circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the supervisor.

## **Sick Leave**

Previously accumulated state sick leave is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. Sick leave can be used only in whole or half-day increments except when coordinated with family and medical leave taken on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis or when coordinated with workers' compensation benefits.

Sick leave may be used for the following reasons only:

- Employee illness
- Illness in the employee's immediate family
- Family emergency (i.e., natural disasters or life-threatening situations)
- Death in the immediate family
- Active military service

## **Local Leave**

Local leave days are advanced to eligible employees at the beginning of the school year but earned as follows:

1. Six days for ten month positions requiring a minimum of 187 work days
2. Seven days for eleven month positions requiring a minimum of 205 work days.
3. Eight days for twelve month positions requiring a minimum of 226 work days.

Local leave may be used for absences caused by personal illness, illness or death in the immediate family. A maximum of two days may be granted due to the death of an uncle, aunt, niece, nephew or cousin. Employees who are absent for more days than have been earned will have their pay docked accordingly.

### **Reimbursement for Local Leave**

An employee who has completed five years of continuous regular employment with the District (not on a substitute or temporary basis) and who is approved for full retirement from service by the Board under the policies of the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be eligible for reimbursement of accrued and unused local leave up to a maximum of 80 days as outlined in the table below. In the event of the death of an employee who meets the full retirement requirements under TRS and service requirements in the District as stated herein, the reimbursement for local days shall be processed in the same manner as a retirement and made payable to the deceased employee’s designated beneficiary or beneficiaries.

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Percentage of Payment</b>
30	100
25-29	90
20-24	80
15-19	75
10-14	70
5-9	65

The rate of pay for unused leave shall be based on the average of the highest three years of salary earned by the employee. Payment shall be made after 45 days from the day of retirement and verified by TRS, or in the case of death, upon receipt of a death certificate.

A noncontractual employee’s rate of pay for the unused leave shall be based on the past three years’ average daily rate of pay.

### **Temporary Disability**

Any full-time employee whose position requires certification from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is eligible for temporary disability leave. The purpose of temporary disability leave is to provide job protection to full-time educators who cannot work for an extended period of time because of a mental or physical disability of a temporary nature. A full-time educator may request to be placed on temporary disability leave or be placed on leave. Pregnancy and conditions related to

pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability. Other full-time district employees are also eligible for temporary disability leave.

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

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

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

## **Family and Medical Leave**

Employees who have been employed by the district for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12 months immediately preceding the need for leave are eligible for family and medical leave. The District has chosen a "rolling" 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any family medical leave for determining the 12-month period for which the 12-week leave entitlement occurs.

Family and medical leave is available for:

- The birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
- To care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition
- An employee's serious health condition
- A qualifying exigency resulting from active military service of a spouse, child, or parent.

A husband and wife who are both employed by the district are subject to limits in the amount of leave that they can take to care for a parent with a serious health condition; for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child; or to care for a covered military service member. Combined leave for spouses employed by the District is limited to a total of 12 weeks.

**Military service family leave.** An eligible employee is entitled to leave to care for an active duty military service member who incurs a serious illness or injury in the line of duty. The service member must be the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next

of kin. An eligible employee may take up to 26 weeks on a one-time basis to provide care to a covered service member.

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

**Use of paid leave.** Family and medical leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The district will designate the leave as family and medical leave, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

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

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

**Requests for FMLA.** When the need for family and medical leave is foreseeable, employees must provide 30-days advance notice of their need to the district. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must contact the Human Resources Department as soon as possible. Employees may be required to provide the following:

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

Employees requiring family and medical leave should contact their Human Resources Records Specialists for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## Vacation

Administrators and paraprofessionals in positions that require 235 days of service per year shall be awarded paid vacation. Manual trades employees who were hired after July 24, 1996, in positions that require 260 days of service per year shall be awarded paid vacation. See table below:

Length of Service in District	Vacation Days	Partial Year Pro Rata Earning	
		235 days	260 days
1-10 years	10	1:23	1:26
11-20 years	12	1:19	1:21.5
21+ years	15	1:15	1:17

Manual trades employees hired prior to July 24, 1996, in positions that require 260 days of service per year shall receive paid vacation days based on the chart as follows:

Length of Service in District	Vacation Days	Partial Year Pro Rata Earning
1 year	10	1:25
2 years	11	1:23
3 years	12	1:21
4 years	13	1:19.5
5 years	14	1:18
6-10 years	15	1:16.5
11-20 years	20	1:12.5
21+ years	25	1:10

Vacation time for the above employees shall be granted after completion of the year(s) of service in the District and shall be awarded on July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. All vacation days must be used within an 18-month period from the date awarded. Vacations shall be scheduled with the approval of the immediate supervisor.

Eligible employees who worked less than a full year prior to each July 1<sup>st</sup> are awarded earned vacation days on a partial year, pro rata basis for days worked as noted above.

Employees who work less than 50% of full-time are not eligible for vacation leave.

## Workers' Compensation Benefits

An employee absent from duty because of a job-related illness or injury may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits if the absence exceeds seven calendar days. An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use sick leave or any other paid leave benefits. While an employee is receiving workers' compensation wage benefits, the district will

charge available leave proportionately so that the employee receives an amount equal to the employee's regular salary.

## **Assault Leave**

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

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

## **Bereavement Leave**

Use of state and/or local leave for death in the immediate family shall not exceed five workdays per occurrence, subject to the approval of the District.

## **Jury Duty**

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

## **Other Court Appearances**

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

## **Military Leave**

**Paid leave for military service.** Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, or reserve component of the United States Armed Forces will be granted a paid leave of absence without loss of any accumulated leave for authorized training or duty orders. Paid military leave will not exceed 15 days each federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30). In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service. If an employee on military leave, as stipulated in law, re-enlists following initial military duty, that employee's military leave status shall be canceled.

**Reemployment after military leave.** Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active state military duty (Texas National Guard or Texas State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed in the position they would have held if employment had not been interrupted or reassigned to an equivalent or similar position provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. To be eligible for reemployment, employees must provide notice of their obligation or intent to perform military service, provide evidence of honorable discharge or release, and submit an application for reemployment to the Human Resources Department.

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

## **Employee Relations and Communications**

### **Employee Recognition and Appreciation**

*Policy DJ*

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the district. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the district newsletters, and through special events and activities such as:

- Staff Appreciation
- Service and Retirement Banquet
- Teacher of the Year
- New Teacher Celebration
- Quarterly Ad-Team Meetings
- School Marquee Messages
- District Website Announcements
- School Newsletters

## District Communications

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

- *The Communicator* – district newsletter produced five times a year; 90,000 copies mailed to Alief ISD residents and business partners.
- *The Express* – employee newsletter produced quarterly and mailed to employees' homes.
- Press releases to Houston Chronicle and local radio and television stations.
- District Website Announcement.
- Monthly calendars – printed and made available to employees.
- District Map and Calendar – printed for employees and community.
- Alief ISD Board of Trustees Brochure – made available at board meetings.
- General Information Brochures.
- Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) Brochure.
- School Dedication Brochures (when applicable).
- Bond Referendum Materials (when applicable).

## Complaints and Grievances

### *Policy DGBA*

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

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees. For ease of reference, the district's policy (DGBA LOCAL) concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints is reprinted as follows:

### **Guiding Principles**

The Board encourages employees to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with their supervisor, principal, or other appropriate administrator.

**Informal Process** Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the employee, he or she may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, employees are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. An employee whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time. The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level. This complaint procedure does not change an employee’s at-will status.

**Freedom from Unlawful Retaliation** Neither the Board nor any District employee shall retaliate against an employee for bringing a concern or complaint.

**Notice to Employees** The principal of each campus and other supervisory personnel shall inform employees of this policy.

**Specific Complaints** For more information on how to proceed with complaints regarding:

1. Alleged discrimination, including violations of Title IX or Section 504, see DAA.
2. Instructional materials, see EFA.
3. A commissioned peace officer who is an employee of the District, see CKE.

**Other Review Processes** Initial procedures and information regarding sexual harassment by other employees are found at DHC and information regarding federal nondiscrimination is found at DAA. Complaints arising from any of the following must be addressed through the local and statutory processes indicated below:

1. The proposed nonrenewal of a term contract issued under Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code, in accordance with DFBB.
2. The proposed termination or suspension without pay of an employee on a probationary, term, or continuing contract issued under Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code during the contract term, in accordance with DFAA, DFBA, or DFCA, respectively.

Complaints or grievances regarding the content of a non-PDAS employee's evaluation or appraisal shall be addressed through DNB (LOCAL). This policy shall apply to all other employee complaints.

**Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, terms are defined as follows: The terms "complaint" and "grievance" shall have the same meaning. A complaint under this policy may include:

1. Grievances concerning an employee's wages, hours, or conditions of work;
2. Specific allegations of unlawful discrimination in employment based on the employee's sex, race, religion, national origin, age, or disability;
3. Specific allegations of unlawful discrimination or retaliation based on the employee's exercise of legally protected rights; or
4. Specific allegations of adverse personnel action based on the employee's good faith report to an appropriate law enforcement authority of a violation of a law by the District or a District employee, i.e., "whistleblower complaints." [See DG]
5. Complaints arising from the dismissal or termination of an at will employee. [See DCD]
6. Complaints arising from the termination at end of year of the probationary contract of a professional employee. [See DFAA]

**Filing**

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, fax, or U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Faxed filings shall be timely filed if they are received on or before the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the fax copy. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.

**Response**

At Levels One and Two, "response" shall mean a written communication to the employee from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered or sent by U.S. Mail to the employee's mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on the deadline and received by the employee or designated representative no more than three days after the response deadline.

<b>Days</b>	“Days” shall mean District business days. In calculating time lines under this policy, the day a document is filed is “day zero,” and all deadlines shall be determined by counting the following day as “day one.”
<b>Representative</b>	“Representative” means any person who or an organization that does not claim the right to strike and is designated by the employee to represent him or her in the complaint process. The employee may designate a representative through written notice to the District at any level of this process. If the employee designates a representative with fewer than three days notice to the District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the District’s counsel.
<b>Whistleblower Complaints</b>	Whistleblower complaints shall be filed within the time specified by law. Such complaints shall first be filed in accordance with LEVEL TWO, below. Time lines for the employee and the District set out in this policy may be shortened to allow the Board to make a final decision within 60 days of the initiation of the complaint. [See DG]
<b>General Provisions</b>	<p>Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. Employees shall not bring separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.</p> <p>When two or more complaints are sufficiently similar in nature and remedy sought to permit their resolution through one proceeding, the District may consolidate the complaints.</p>
<b>Untimely Filings</b>	All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent. If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the employee, at any point during the complaint process. The employee may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.
<b>Costs Incurred</b>	Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.
<b>Complaint Form</b>	Complaints under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the District.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the employee does not have copies of these documents, they may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted unless the employee did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference. A complaint form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed, but may be refiled with all the requested information if the refile is within the designated time for filing a complaint.

**Informal  
Complaint  
Process**

An employee who has a complaint shall meet for an informal conference with the principal or immediate supervisor within 15 days of the time the employee first knew or should have known of the event or series of events causing the complaint. The employee and administrator shall attempt to resolve the problem informally. A decision from the informal meeting shall be rendered within two days. An employee is entitled to have representation present. Informal complaint resolutions are not required to be in writing.

**Level One**

If the outcome of the informal conference is not to the employee's satisfaction, the employee must complete the employee complaint form and submit it to the principal or immediate supervisor. This must be submitted within seven calendar days of the decision resulting from the informal conference. A Level One meeting shall be set within seven days after receiving the complaint. Complaint forms must be filed with the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

In most circumstances, employees on a school campus shall file Level One complaints with the campus principal; other District employees shall file Level One complaints with their immediate supervisor.

If the only administrator who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Superintendent or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator must note the date and times the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator. The appropriate administrator shall hold a conference with the employee within ten days after receipt of the written complaint.

The administrator shall have ten days following the conference to provide the employee a written response.

## **Level Two**

If the employee did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the employee may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days after receipt of a response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the response deadline at Level One.

The Superintendent or designee shall hold a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. At the conference, the Superintendent or designee shall consider only the issues and documents presented at Level One and identified in the Level Two appeal notice. The Superintendent or designee shall have ten days following the conference to provide the employee a written response.

## **Level Three**

If the employee did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the employee shall deliver the appeal notice to the secretary of the Superintendent for filing with the Board. [See BE (LOCAL).]

The appeal notice shall be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days after receipt of a response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the response deadline at Level Two.

Following receipt of the appeal notice and a determination that time lines have been met, the President of the Board shall furnish a copy of the appeal notice to each Trustee. The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board with copies of the complaint form, all responses; all appeal notices, and all written documentation previously submitted by the employee or the administration.

At its next meeting, the Board shall examine the written grievance in closed meeting, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, with neither the grievant nor the grievant's representative, nor the person or persons complained of in this grievance present. The Board shall make a written or audio taped record of this deliberation. The Board shall make a determination as to whether the grievance as presented merits a hearing. If the Board determines that the grievance is not meritorious, the grievant shall

be so informed in writing by the President of the Board within seven days following the meeting. The decision of the Superintendent with respect to the grievance shall then be final.

If the Board determines that the grievance as presented merits hearing, the President of the Board shall inform the grievant of the date, time, and place of such hearing. If a hearing is conducted, the person or persons complained of shall have a right to be present, with a representative, together with the grievant and the grievant's representative. The Board shall consider only the information presented at the Level Three closed meeting.

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation. The Board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Three presentation. The Level Three presentation, including the presentation by the employee or the employee's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the complaint. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If for any reason the Board fails to reach a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

See DGBA LOCAL policy, and DGBA EXHIBIT for grievance forms and procedures.

# Employee Conduct and Welfare

## Standards of Conduct

### *Policy DH*

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

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

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day the superintendent first learns of the incident. See *Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification*, page 56 for additional information.

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

## Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

### Statement of Purpose

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall

extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

## **Professional Standards**

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

**Standard 1.1** The educator shall not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Standard 2.7** The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC under this chapter.

### **3. Ethical Conduct toward Students**

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

**Standard 3.2** The educator shall not knowingly treat a student in a manner that adversely affects the student's learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.

**Standard 3.3** The educator shall not deliberately or knowingly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

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

**Standard 3.5** The educator shall not engage in physical mistreatment of a student.

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

**Standard 3.7** The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or knowingly allow any student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

## **Harassment**

*Policies DH, DIA*

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

Employees who believe they have been discriminated, or retaliated against, or harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the campus principal, supervisor, or appropriate district official. If the campus principal supervisor, or district official is the subject of a complaint, the employee should report the

complaint directly to the superintendent. A complaint against the superintendent may be made directly to the board.

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

- The District prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on a person's race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion, or age.
- Employees shall not tolerate harassment of others and shall make reports as required at reporting procedures, below.

**Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment of an employee is defined as unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to the conduct is either explicitly or implicitly a condition of an employee's employment or when submission to or rejection of the conduct is the basis for an employment action affecting the employee.
2. The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive work environment.

**Examples**

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to, sexual advances, touching intimate body parts; coercing or forcing a sexual act on another; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communication, or contact.

**Other Prohibited Harassment**

Harassment of a district employee on the basis of the employee's race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion, or age includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct related to these characteristics when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

1. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance.
2. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive work environment. **or**
3. Otherwise adversely affects the employee's employment opportunities.

**Examples** Examples of prohibited harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for workplace accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes, name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other types of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

**Reporting Procedures** An employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited harassment should immediately report the alleged acts to an appropriate person designated below.

Any district employee with supervisory authority who receives notice that another employee has or may have experienced prohibited harassment is required to immediately report the alleged acts and take whatever other steps are required by this policy.

Any other person who knows or believes that a District employee has experienced harassment should immediately report the alleged acts to the appropriate person designated by this policy.

**Timely Reporting** Reports of harassment shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged acts. A failure to promptly report alleged harassment may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the harassment.

A district employee may report harassment to his/her supervisor or campus principal. A person shall not be required to report harassment to the alleged harasser; nothing in this policy prevents a person from reporting harassment directly to one of the District officials below:

- District Officials**
1. For sexual harassment, the Title IX coordinator (see DAA LOCAL).
  2. For all other prohibited harassment, the Superintendent.

A report against the Title IX coordinator may be made directly to the Superintendent; a report against the Superintendent may be made directly to the Board.

**Notification of Report** Upon receipt of a report of harassment, a supervisor or principal shall immediately notify the appropriate District official listed above.

**Confidentiality** To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with applicable law.

**Investigation of the Report** The District may request, but shall not insist upon, a written report. If a report is made orally, the District official shall reduce the report to written form.

Upon receipt or notification of a report, the District official shall determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute sexual harassment or other prohibited harassment as defined by District policy. If so, the District official shall immediately authorize or undertake an investigation.

If appropriate, the District shall promptly take interim action to prevent harassment during the course of an investigation.

The investigation may be conducted by the District official or a designee, such as the campus principal, or by a third party designated by the District, such as an attorney. When appropriate, the campus principal or supervisor shall be involved in or informed of the investigation.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations. The investigation may also include analysis of other information or documents related to the allegations.

The District's obligation to conduct an investigation is not satisfied by the fact that a criminal or regulatory investigation regarding the same or similar allegations is pending.

**Concluding the Investigation** Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten business days from the date of the report; however, the investigator shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The investigator shall prepare a written report of the investigation. The report shall be filed with the District official overseeing the investigation.

**District Action** If the results of an investigation indicate that prohibited harassment occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate

disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the harassment.

The District may take disciplinary action based on the results of an investigation, even if the District concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or District policy.

**Appeal**

A complainant who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through DGBA (LOCAL) beginning at the appropriate level.

The complainant shall be informed of his or her right to file a complaint with the Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

**Retaliation Prohibited**

Retaliation against an employee alleged to have experienced harassment, a witness, or another person who makes a report or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited. A person who makes a good faith report of prohibited harassment shall not suffer retaliation for making the report. A person who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding prohibited harassment is subject to appropriate discipline.

**Records Retention**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with DAA (LOCAL).

**Access to Policy**

This policy shall be distributed annually to District employees. Copies of the policy shall be readily available at each campus and the District administrative offices.

**Harassment of Students**

*Policies DF, DH, FFG, FFH*

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. All allegations of prohibited harassment or abuse of a student will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Child Abuse and Neglect, page 64 for additional information.*

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students may be found at DF (Legal) and FFH (Local).

## **Drug-Abuse Prevention**

*Policies DH, DI*

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

### **Drug-Free Requirements**

The District prohibits the unlawful distribution, possession, or use of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as part of any of the District's activities.

Employees who violate this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Such sanctions may include referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs or employee assistance programs, termination from employment with the District, and referral to appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution.

Compliance with these requirements and prohibitions is mandatory and is a condition of employment.

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

Employees shall not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances during working hours while at school or at school-related activities during or outside of usual working hours:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverages.
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.
4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs.

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

## **Exceptions**

An employee who manufactures, possesses, or dispenses a substance listed above as part of the employee's responsibilities, or who uses a drug authorized by a licensed physician prescribed for the employee's personal use shall not be considered to have violated this policy.

## **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS (Policy DI EXHIBIT)**

The District prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances, illegal drugs, inhalants, and alcohol in the workplace. *41 U.S.C. 702(a)(1)(A); 28 TAC 169.2*

The District shall establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the District's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance abuse programs, and the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations. *41 U.S.C. 702(a)(1)(B); 28 TAC 169.2*

Employees who violate this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Such sanctions may include referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs or employee assistance programs, termination from employment with the District, and referral to appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution. [See policies at DH and DHE] *41 U.S.C. 702(a)(1)(A); 28 TAC 169.2*

Compliance with these requirements and prohibitions is mandatory and is a condition of employment. As a further condition of employment, an employee shall notify the Superintendent of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction. Within ten days of receiving such notice—from the employee or any other source—the District shall notify the granting agency of the conviction. *41 U.S.C. 702(a)(1)(D), (E)*

Within 30 calendar days of receiving notice from an employee of a conviction for any drug statute violation occurring in the workplace, the District shall either **(1)** take appropriate personnel action against the employee, up to and including termination of employment, **or (2)** require the employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state, or local health agency, law enforcement agency, or other appropriate agency. *41 U.S.C. 703*

[This notice complies with notice requirements imposed by the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act (*41 U.S.C. 702*) and notice requirements imposed by the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission rules at 28 TAC 169.2]

## **Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

### *Policy CAA*

All employees should act with integrity and diligence in duties involving the district's financial resources. The district prohibits fraud and financial impropriety, as defined below. Fraud and financial impropriety includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the district.
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document.
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other district assets, including employee time.
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of district financial transactions.
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of district information or activities.
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties.
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the district.
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the district.
- Destroying, removing, or inappropriately using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment.
- Failing to provide financial records required by state or local entities.
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by policy.
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the district.

## **Conflict of Interest**

### *Policies BBFA, DBD*

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

- A personal financial interest.
- A business interest.
- Any other obligation or relationship.
- Nonschool employment.

## **Gifts and Favors**

### *Policy DBD*

Employees may not accept gifts or favors that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor,

or service by an administrator or teacher that might reasonably tend to influence the selection of textbooks may result in prosecution of a Class B misdemeanor offense. This does not include staff development, teacher training, or instructional materials, such as maps or worksheets that convey information to students or contribute to the learning process.

## **Associations and Political Activities**

### *Policy DGA*

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

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

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

## **Safety**

### *Policy CK*

The district has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve district equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules.
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times.
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor.
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the Risk Management Department or the Alief ISD Police Department.

## **Tobacco Use**

### *Policies DH, GKA, FNCD*

State law prohibits smoking or using tobacco products on all district-owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off campus. This includes all

buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of district-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking while inside the vehicle. Notices stating that smoking is prohibited by law and punishable by a fine are displayed in prominent places in all school buildings.

## **Criminal history background checks**

*Policy DBAA*

Employees may be subject to a revise of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted on certain employees and entered into the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Clearinghouse. This database provides the district and SBEC with access to an employee's current national criminal history and updates to the employee's subsequent criminal history.

## **Employee Arrests and Convictions**

*Policy DH*

An employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony, any offense involving moral turpitude, and any of the other offenses listed below:

- Crimes involving school property or funds.
- Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator.
- Crimes that occur wholly or in part of school property or at a school-sponsored activity.
- Crimes involving moral turpitude.

Moral turpitude includes the following:

- Dishonesty.
- Fraud.
- Deceit.
- Theft.
- Misrepresentation.
- Deliberate violence.
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor.
- Drug- or alcohol-related offenses.
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code.

On an annual basis, the district conducts criminal history checks on all of its employees. Failure to have reported an arrest or conviction of a crime may result in disciplinary action.

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

*Policies FNCG, GKA*

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

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

*Policy GKC*

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

## **Copyrighted Materials**

*Policy EFE*

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Rented videotapes are to be used in the classroom for educational purposes only. Duplication or backups of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

## **Computer Use and Data Management**

*Policy CQ*

The district's electronic communications systems, including its network access to the Internet, are primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use of the system is permitted if the use:

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

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

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

### **Acceptable Use Policy**

The district's acceptable use policy regarding electronic communication and data management follows:

**Availability of Access** Access to the District's electronic communications systems, including the Internet, shall be made available to students and employees exclusively for instructional and administrative purpose and in accordance with administrative regulations.

Access to the District's electronic communications system is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and guidelines. Noncompliance with applicable regulations may result in suspension or termination of privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with District policies. [See DH, FN series, FO series, and the Student Code of Conduct] Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the District.

**Acceptable Use** The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations, guidelines, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the District and with law, and policy governing copyright. [See EFE]

**Monitored Use** Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications systems by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated District staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes.

**Disclaimer of Liability** The District shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic communication resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by

users. The District shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on the Internet.

## **Guidelines for Using Electronic Mail**

1. Staff members are expected to use district resources in an appropriate manner. Inappropriate use of e-mail may result in loss of access privileges.
2. E-mail is unforgiving. Once the sent button is pushed, there is no turning back. The message cannot be retrieved. Be just as careful when sending e-mail as you would be in committing to paper your thoughts or reactions. Remember, the written word can often be misinterpreted.
3. Group mailings to whole staffs (groups) should be first cleared with the principal to ensure the appropriateness of the memo. No one likes "junk mail." Mail should only be sent to those people who are affected by the message. In addition, group mailings tie up the network. Chain letters are an example of inappropriate mail. If it is not necessary to send a group mailing, don't.
4. E-mail is a district service provided by public funds. It may not be used to promote organizations outside of the school nor may it be used for an individual's purposes only. (See CQ LOCAL).
5. Remember to exit and sign off the system. If you leave your e-mail open, other (including students) may have access to it.
6. Be polite; messages typed in all capital letters are the computer equivalent of shouting and are considered rude.
7. Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs and any other inflammatory language are prohibited.
8. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is considered inappropriate.
9. Transmitting obscene messages or pictures is prohibited.

E-mail is a resource provided by the district to help make the communication between employees more efficient and effective. It is to be used for instructional and administrative purposes. Violations of appropriate use may result in a loss of privilege or in disciplinary action.

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

### *Policy CKA*

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

## **Pest Control Treatment**

*Policy DI, CLB*

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

Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a district building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located in the main office of a campus, or front doors of a District facility. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

## **General Procedures**

### **Bad Weather Closing**

The district may close schools because of bad weather or emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the district's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late or to release students early, school officials will notify the local radio and television stations. Employees are asked to monitor local radio and/or television stations regarding official notification of district/school closures and to follow directions accordingly. Please note that some employees, considered essential personnel, may be required to report to work in certain circumstances regardless of a district closure.

### **Emergencies**

*Policy CKC*

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

### **Purchasing Procedures**

*Policy CH*

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

Contact Dirk Engel, Director of Procurement and Central Distribution, for additional information on purchasing procedures.

## **Name and Address Changes**

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

## **Personnel Records**

*Policy GBA*

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

- Address.
- Phone number.
- Social Security number.
- Information that reveals whether they have family members.

The choice to not allow public access to this information may be done at any time by submitting a written request to their Human Resources Records Specialist. New or terminating employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public.

# **Termination of Employment**

## **Resignations**

*Policy DFE*

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

The superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee resigns and reasonable evidence exists to indicate that the employee has engaged in any of the acts listed in Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification, *on page 56*.

**Noncontract employees.** Noncontract employees may resign their positions at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the Superintendent or designee at least two weeks prior to the effective date. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so.

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

*Policies DFAA, DFAB, DFBA, DFBB, DFCA, DFD, DFF*

Employees on probationary, term, and continuing contracts can be dismissed during the school year or nonrenewed at the end of the year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay, or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The time lines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or nonrenewal occurs will be provided in a written notice and given to the employee. Advance notification requirements do not apply when a contract employee is dismissed for failing to obtain or maintain appropriate certification or whose certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the time lines and procedures can be found in the DF series policies that are available to employees at [www.aliefisd.net](http://www.aliefisd.net).

## **Dismissal of Noncontract Employees**

*Policy DCD*

Noncontract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, military status, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Noncontract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (*See Complaints and Grievances, page 32*).

## **Exit Procedures**

*Policy DC*

Exit interviews, if possible, will be scheduled for employees leaving the district. Upon receipt of an employee's resignation, exit data sheet, or termination notice, information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting records will be provided by Human Resources. Separating employees are asked to provide the district with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the district with feedback on his/her employment experience.

All district keys, books, property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment. The district may withhold the cost of any unreturned items from the final paycheck.

## Reports to State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC)

### *Policy DF*

The dismissal or resignation of a certified employee will be reported to SBEC when the superintendent first learns about an alleged incident of conduct that involves the following:

- A reported criminal history.
- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other illegal conduct with a student or a minor.
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance.
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of school property or funds.
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position.
- Committing a crime on school property or at a school-sponsored event.
- Violating assessment instrument security procedures.

### **Report concerning court-Ordered Withholding**

The district is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance to the court and the individual receiving the support (Texas Family Code §8.210, 158.211). Notice of the following must be sent to the court and support recipient:

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

## **Campus Employees and Student Issues**

### **Attendance - Staff**

Staff members are expected to begin assigned duties on time in the appropriate location(s). In the event of an absence, the staff member must notify the principal and the substitute call line as far in advance of the absence as possible. Absent staff members must telephone the school secretary no later than 3 p.m. on the date of the absence regarding their return/non-return to duty the following school day. Campus staffs are also required to comply with the Attendance Requirements described previously in this Handbook on page 21. Regular and reliable attendance is an essential function of every employee's job, and is a basic District expectation. Employees whose absences become excessive may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. **Teachers cannot cover another teacher's class/absence without prior administrative approval.**

## **Attendance - Students**

### *Policy FDD*

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

## **Administering Medication to Students**

### *Policy FFAC*

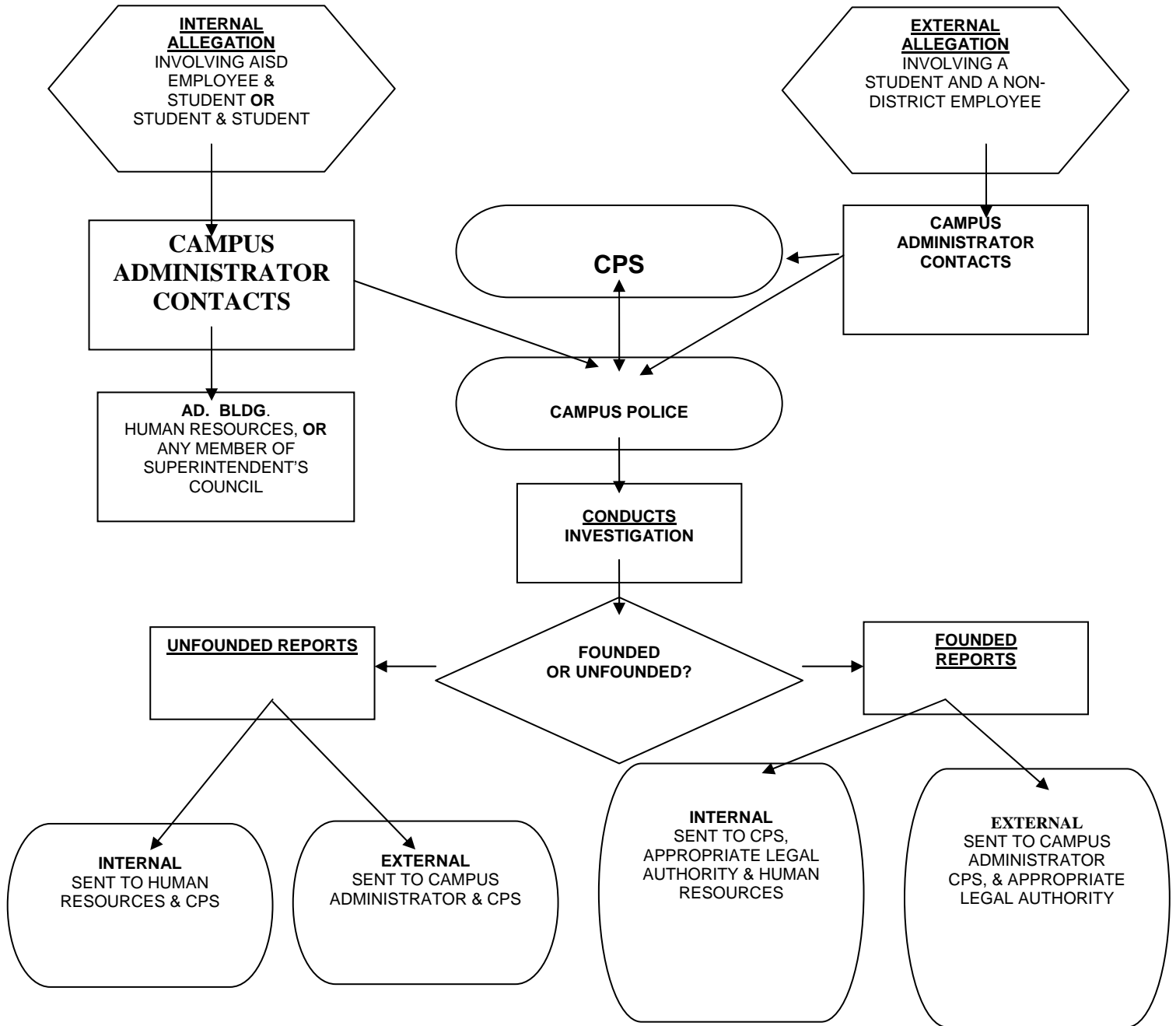
Only designated employees can administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. A student who must take medication during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine, in its original, properly labeled container.

There are instructions in the student/parent handbook regarding medicine to be given to students at school. Teachers should ensure that medicine brought to school (prescription or nonprescription) is kept only in the clinic and that the student is sent to the clinic for the nurse to give it to him/her at the time(s) designated by the parent. No medicine is to be given or taken at school except in the clinic.

## **Allegations Involving School Personnel**

When a parent or student makes an allegation of abuse, neglect or harm involving school district personnel, the administrator/supervisor/district must report the allegation to the local police authority (Alief ISD Police) to investigate (see chart on following page). This procedure allows the investigation to be done by a department outside of the school and by an agency that is trained to do investigations.

## INVESTIGATION OF REPORTS ALLEGING CHILD ABUSE



## **Appraisals – Teachers**

District Policy (DNA LOCAL) requires the evaluation of teachers on an annual basis in accordance with the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS). However, district teachers who meet the criteria listed below shall be eligible for a less-than-annual appraisal as permitted by law and policy (HB 1440, DNA LOCAL). A teacher who meets the required criteria must agree in writing to be appraised on a less-than-annual basis.

### **Teachers evaluated on an annual basis:**

1. Teachers who have completed less than three years of service in the district.
2. Teachers serving on a Probationary Contract.
3. Teachers who scored less than “proficient” in any domain on their last appraisal and/or identified as a “Teacher in Need of Assistance” (TINA).
4. Teachers who are not SBEC certified or not teaching in his/her area of certification.

### **Teachers who meet the following eligibility criteria will not be evaluated for two years:**

1. Teachers who have completed between three and ten years in the district.
2. Teachers who serve under a Term or Continuing Contract.
3. Teachers who scored “proficient” in all domains on the most recent PDAS evaluation, and have not had any areas of deficiency identified.
4. Teachers are SBEC certified and teaching in his/her area of certification.

### **Teachers who meet the following eligibility criteria will not be evaluated for three years:**

1. Teachers who have completed eleven or more years in the district.
2. Teachers who serve under a Term or Continuing Contract.
3. Teachers who scored “proficient” in all domains on the most recent PDAS evaluation, and have not had any areas of deficiency identified.
4. Teachers are SBEC certified and teaching in his/her area of certification.

### **Criteria to return teacher to the annual PDAS cycle:**

1. If it is determined that a teacher is deficient in any area, at any time, by the campus administrator(s).
2. Once placed on the annual evaluation cycle, the teacher must achieve a minimum of “proficient” in all PDAS domains to be eligible to return to the less-than-annual evaluation cycle.

### **Appraiser Responsibilities:**

1. In a school year in which a teacher is not scheduled for a PDAS appraisal, the principal or supervisor will conduct a minimum of two (2) “walk-throughs,” as well as conference with teachers regarding activities related to PDAS Domains 5 through 8.
2. Appraisers will complete a Walk-Through form.
3. Completed Walk-Through forms will be submitted to the Human Resources Department at the conclusion of the evaluation year.
4. Appraisers will notify Human Resources when a teacher is returned to an annual PDAS evaluation cycle.

**CAMPUS DIRECTORY**  
(All addresses are Houston, TX)

<p><b>Alexander Elementary</b> Principal, Melissa Scott 8500 Brookwulf, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8300</p>	<p><b>Liestman Elementary</b> Principal, Ava Montgomery 7610 Synott, 77083 Ph: 281-983-8348</p>	<p><b>Albright Middle</b> Principal, Patrick Cherry 6315 Winkleman, 77083 Ph: 281-983-8411</p>
<p><b>Best Elementary</b> Principal, Lorena Augusta 10000 Centre Parkway, 77036 Ph: 713-988-6445</p>	<p><b>Mahanay Elementary</b> Principal, Jo Nell Keller 13215 High Star, 77083 Ph: 281-983-8355</p>	<p><b>Alief Middle</b> Principal, Vinson Lewis 4415 Cook Road, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8422</p>
<p><b>Boone Elementary</b> Principal, Angela Chapman 11400 Bissonnet, 77099 Ph: 281-983-8308</p>	<p><b>Martin Elementary</b> Principal, Sandy Taylor 11718 Hendon, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8363</p>	<p><b>Holub Middle</b> Principal, Pat Brown 9515 S. Dairy Ashford, 77099 Ph: 281-983-8433</p>
<p><b>Bush Elementary</b> Principal, Gloria Price 9730 Stroud, 77036 Ph: 713-272-3220</p>	<p><b>Outley Elementary</b> Principal, Pam Pecheux 12355 Richmond, 77082 Ph: 281-584-0655</p>	<p><b>Killough Middle</b> Principal, Luis Olivas 7600 Synott, 77083 Ph: 281-983-8444</p>
<p><b>Chambers Elementary</b> Principal, Jannae Jernberg 10700 Carvel, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8313</p>	<p><b>Petrosky Elementary</b> Principal, Bernadette Bentley 6703 Winkleman, 77083 Ph: 281-983-8366</p>	<p><b>O'Donnell Middle</b> Principal, Janie Saxton 14041 Alief Clodine, 77082 Ph: 281-495-6000</p>
<p><b>Chancellor Elementary</b> Principal, Lisa Saarie 4350 Boone Road, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8318</p>	<p><b>Rees Elementary</b> Principal, Kim Winans 16305 Kensley, 77082 Ph 281-531-1444</p>	<p><b>Olle Middle</b> Principal, Cassandra Dyson 9200 Boone Road, 77099 Ph: 281-983-8455</p>
<p><b>Collins Elementary</b> Principal, Paul Baez 9829 Town Park Dr., 77036 Ph: 713-272-3250</p>	<p><b>Smith Elementary</b> Principal, Mary Ann Bronson 11300 Stancliff, 77099 Ph: 281-983-8380</p>	<p><b>Alief Learning Center</b> Principal, Pauline Beckley 4427 Belle Park, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8000</p>
<p><b>Cummings Elementary</b> Principal, Kathy Navel 10455 S. Kirkwood, 77099 Ph: 281-983-8328</p>	<p><b>Sneed Elementary</b> Principal, Jan Garrett 9855 Pagewood, 77042 Ph: 713-789-6979</p>	<p><b>Crossroads</b> Principal, Tremayne Wickliffe ISC Building Ph: 281-988-3266</p>
<p><b>Hearne Elementary</b> Principal, Bert Bilton 13939 Rio Bonito, 77083 Ph: 281-983-8333</p>	<p><b>Youens Elementary</b> Principal, Nancy Trent 12141 High Star 77072 Ph: 281-983-8383</p>	<p><b>Elsik NGC</b> Principal, Greg Freeman 6767 S. Dairy Ashford, 77072 Ph: 281-988-3239</p>
<p><b>Heflin Elementary</b> Principal, Robin Human 3303 Synott, 77082 Ph: 281-531-1144</p>	<p><b>Budewig Intermediate</b> Principal, Rosalind Burroughs 12570 Richmond Ave., 77082 Ph: 281-988-3200</p>	<p><b>Elsik High</b> Principal, Hilda Rodriguez 12601 High Star, 77072 Ph: 281-498-8110, ext 3161</p>
<p><b>Hicks Elementary</b> Principal, Mary Kessler 8520 Hemlock Hill Dr., 77083 Ph: 281-983-8040</p>	<p><b>Klentsman Intermediate</b> Principal, Sonya Vaden 11100 Stancliff, 77099 Ph: 281-983-8477</p>	<p><b>Hastings NGC</b> Principal, Jackie Armwood 6750 Cook Rd., 77072 Ph: 281-988-3139</p>
<p><b>Holmquist Elementary</b> Principal, Nancy Lewin 15040 Westpark Dr., 77082 Ph: 281-988-3024</p>	<p><b>Mata Intermediate</b> Principal, Janet Spurlock 9225 S. Dairy Ashford, 77099 Ph: 281-983-7800</p>	<p><b>Hastings High</b> Principal, Jennifer Parker 4410 Cook Road, 77072 Ph: 281-498-8110, ext 2910</p>
<p><b>Horn Elementary</b> Principal, Kathy Jahn 10734 Bissonnet, 77099 Ph: 281-988-3223</p>	<p><b>Miller Intermediate</b> Principal, Janine Hoke 15025 Westpark, 77082 Ph: 281-531-3430</p>	<p><b>Kerr High</b> Principal, Raymond Lowery 8150 Howell Sugar Land 77083 Ph: 281-983-8484</p>
<p><b>Kennedy Elementary</b> Principal, Cindy Rouse 10200 Huntington Place, 77099 Ph: 281-983-8338</p>	<p><b>Owens Intermediate</b> Principal Amador Velasquez 6900 Turtletwood Dr., 77072 Ph: 281-983-8466</p>	<p><b>Taylor High</b> Principal, Dr. Walter Jackson 7555 Howell Sugar Land, 77083 Ph: 281-988-3500</p>
<p><b>Landis Elementary</b> Principal, Chris Pichon 10255 Spice Lane, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8343</p>	<p><b>Youngblood Intermediate</b> Principal, Pam Bruner 8410 Dairy View Lane, 77072 Ph: 281-983-8020</p>	<p><b>SOAR</b> Principal, VACANT Elsik Annex Ph: 281-988-3499</p>

# Communications and Data Management

## Classroom Telephone Usage

Classroom telephones are primarily for administrative and disciplinary purposes only. Administrative usage is limited to before school, after school, and conference times. Teachers may use classroom telephones during their conference periods for personal use but should limit the length of the call so other teachers will have fair access to the telephones. The teacher may make student discipline concerns and positive reinforcement calls during instructional time (with discretion, must not interfere with instruction or embarrass a student in front of others). All student usage must be under teacher supervision.

## Cellular Telephones and Pagers

Personal cellular telephones and pagers are not to be worn or turned on during the instructional day. Cellular telephones may only be used to make calls during the duty-free lunch period and planning time. Calls may be received after the instructional day has ended.

Also, cellular telephones must be turned off while in attendance at building and district in-services. Pagers may be worn, but the pager should be set to vibrate so incoming messages will not create a distraction.

All incoming calls during the instructional day should be to the telephone in the central office. Staff will be notified immediately if an emergency call is received. All other telephone messages will be placed in staff mailboxes.

## Network Etiquette

1. Using network resources in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by other users is prohibited.
2. For security reasons, always log-off of the network when a session is complete.
3. Learn proper network navigation techniques to facilitate proper printer selection, document saving, and CD tower access, etc.
4. Train students in the proper use of all network resources.
5. All personal external storage devices such as floppy disks, DVD, USB, etc. must be scanned using installed virus scanning software.

## Internet

1. Restrict access to course-related materials for educational purposes.
2. Train students in the proper use of all Internet resources.
3. Convey to students expectations for appropriate use.
4. Convey to students consequences for inappropriate use such as off-task behavior, impolite or abusive language, accessing unapproved sites, sending materials or information without permission.

5. Monitor student use to keep students on task and maintaining focus.
6. Supervise student use and intervene when necessary to ensure appropriateness of materials being accessed.
7. Follow school procedures for preventing unauthorized use.
8. Maintain student/parent agreement forms on file.

### **Copyright of Print / Non-Print Materials**

1. Teachers may not copy from works that are considered consumable.
2. Teachers may not copy items in order to substitute for the purchase of books, music, etc.
3. Teachers will be apprised of single and multiple copy guidelines per Board policy.
4. Copying software is illegal. Unauthorized software will be removed.
5. Users may not upload programs to the district's systems without appropriate authorization.

### **Video Delivery**

1. Video must be used in "face-to-face" teaching and have direct significant connection to content being taught.
2. Videos should be an interactive medium. This means that students should not be passive observers.
3. Performance must be of a legally acquired copy of the work which may include rentals, purchase, and school owned tapes. Off-air videotape recordings may be used in the following manner starting from the day of the original broadcast:
  - a. Day 1-10: Your students may view the program a maximum of two times.
  - b. Days 11-45: You may view the video for instructional/assessment purposes.
  - c. Day 46: If permission has not been obtained to keep the video it must be destroyed.
4. Performance must take place in a classroom or similar place of instruction.

### **Distance Learning**

1. Appropriate permissions and authorizations must be obtained prior to use.
2. Proper log must be maintained.

**Violations of the above may result in disciplinary actions and/or loss of access privileges.**

## **EXPLANATION OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT**

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate electronic media resources for instructional and administrative purposes.

**Availability of Access** – Access to the District’s electronic communications systems, including the Internet, shall be made available to students and employees exclusively for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations.

**Explanation:**

The district has made available to employees and students access to the Internet. The uses of the Internet are for instructional and administrative purposes only. In CQ(Regulation), specific guidelines for staff and students are outlined on appropriate use of the Internet. E-mail is also included as a means of electronic communications. E-mail is a resource designed to provide employees with an efficient and effective way to communicate with each other regarding instructional and administrative business.

Access to the District’s electronic communications system is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations governing use of the systems and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and guidelines. Noncompliance with applicable regulations may result in suspension or termination of privileges and other disciplinary action consistent with District policies. (See DH, FNC, FNCJ, FO, and the Student Code of Conduct).

**Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the District.**

**Explanation:**

Use of any of the electronic communications systems (i.e. the Internet, e-mail, etc.) is not a right. Users must abide by the guidelines established or they may forfeit the privilege of being able to utilize these resources. This applies to employees as well as students. Since these resources are provided with public funds, they may not be used for personal gain (i.e. selling products or services, promoting self in anyway), as a political or public forum to express views or solicit support, nor may they be used to harass or otherwise demean others.

**Acceptable Use** – The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations, guidelines, and use agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the District and with law and policy governing copyright. (see EFE).

**Monitored Use** – Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications system by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated District staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes

**Explanation:**

Electronic mail is a very convenient and easy to use system, so much so that it creates the illusion of being personal. It is not. Employees should remember that the system belongs to the District and, therefore, may be regulated and monitored by District personnel. Any information sent over e-mail should not be considered as private dialogue. Information regarding a student sent over e-mail may be subpoenaed. The same protocol used for non-electronic mail should also apply here. E-mail is non-forgiving. Once a message has been sent, it cannot be retrieved. In addition, campuses should be consistent in their application regarding group mailings. If all paper memos to the entire staff must be approved by the principal, then the same practice applies to electronic mail. Once again, this paragraph emphasizes that the purpose of using these systems is educational and administrative. See CQ (Exhibit) for specifics regarding Internet etiquette for staff and students.

**Disclaimer of Liability** – The District shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic communication resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The District shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on the Internet.

**Explanation:**

The responsibility for appropriate use of any of the electronic systems is placed on the user.

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

*Policies DF, DG, DH, FFG, GRA*

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services, or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Abuse is defined by Texas Family Code and includes any sexual conduct involving an educator and a student or minor. Reports to Child Protective Services can be made to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report. All school personnel shall participate in a staff development program to become acquainted with child abuse and neglect laws and the procedures to be followed in dealing with such cases.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the district is prohibited from retaliating against an employee who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

An employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in prosecution for the commission of a Class B misdemeanor. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agencies. In addition, employees must cooperate with child abuse and neglect investigators. Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report to the appropriate state agency. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer's request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

School personnel suspecting child abuse or neglect shall follow these steps when reporting such cases:

1. The initial oral report shall be made directly to any of the agencies listed in policy FFG and to the building principal and/or school nurse.
2. The school nurse shall provide the form for filing the written report as required in policy FFG. The person who made the initial oral report must complete a copy of this report. The written report is then mailed to the same agency given the oral report, and a copy filed with the school nurse.
3. It becomes the responsibility of the child welfare unit to make further investigations.

The Texas Department of Protective & Regulatory Services (PRS) has developed a secure website designed specifically for professionals to report suspected abuse/neglect via the Internet. Professionals are encouraged to use this new process to report non-emergency situations of child abuse/neglect to our statewide hotline (Statewide Intake – SWI).

To access the web site, professionals are required to have a “user name” and “password.” The user name and password are the same for all professionals to access the web site.

The link to the reporting web site is: <https://reportabuse.ws> (You MUST include the “s” in <https://> above to access the site.)

- Users will then be prompted for a user name and a password
- The user name is: **professional**
- The password is: **report1**

Use of the web site should not be a substitute for reporting life-threatening or emergency situations. If you feel that immediate intervention is needed to protect a child, please call the CPS hotline at 1-800-252-5400. Call your local law enforcement agency (Alief ISD Police) or 911 if the situation is life threatening.

Once you have filed a report through the Internet reporting system, SWI staff will send an e-mail response acknowledging receipt of the information and will provide the PRS identification number of the intake or I&R for your files.

## **Classroom Supplies/Instructional Materials/Furniture/Equipment**

Check with the office staff, the librarian, or your team leader for information on obtaining classroom supplies, instructional materials, etc.

Teachers should notify the office staff or the librarian, as appropriate, regarding any damage, disappearance, or need for repair of furniture, equipment, and instructional materials in their care.

The principal will instruct staff members regarding the end-of-year inventory/storage/check-in of such items as lesson plan books, grade books, keys, desk supplies, library-controlled and other equipment and instructional materials, classroom furniture, etc.

## **Complaints – Parents and Students**

### *Policy FNG*

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

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

During the course of the year there may be times when parent questions, concerns, or disagreements arise over a situation, action or decision from the school or school personnel. Individuals involved in the complaint or concern usually want the opportunity to resolve these issues first. Therefore, it is important for resolutions to be secured at the lowest level possible.

### **At the school level:**

- Conference with the teacher or staff member with whom the concern arises.
- Conference with the supervising administrator.



1. The purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is of a commercial nature or for nonprofit educational purposes.
2. The nature of the copyrighted work.
3. The amount and importance of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole.
4. The effect of the use upon the potential market for, or value of, the copyrighted work.

**Performances and Displays** — A further exception shall be performance or display of a work by instructors or students in the course of face-to-face teaching activities in a classroom or other similar place devoted to instruction.

## **Software Copyright Guidelines**

We recognize the computer software piracy is a major problem for the industry and that violations of copyright laws contribute to higher costs and greater efforts to prevent copying and/or lessen incentives for the development of effective educational uses of microcomputers. Therefore, in an effort to discourage violation of copyright laws and to prevent such illegal activities:

1. The ethical and practical implications of software piracy will be taught to educators and school children in all schools in the district (e.g., covered in fifth grade social studies classes).
2. When permission is obtained from the copyright holder to use software on a disk-sharing system, efforts will be made to secure this software from copying.
3. Under no circumstances shall illegal copies of copyrighted software be made or used on school equipment.
4. The Technology Coordinator of this school district is designated as the only individual who may sign license agreements for software for schools in the district. Each school using licensed software should have a signed copy of the software agreement.
5. The principal at each school site is responsible for establishing practices which will enforce this district copyright policy at the school level.

## **Dietary Supplements**

*Policy DH, FFAC*

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

There are instructions in the student/parent handbook regarding medicine to be given to students at school. Teachers should ensure that medicine brought to school

(prescription or nonprescription) is kept only in the clinic and that the student is sent to the clinic for the nurse to give it to him/her at the time(s) designated by the parent. No medicine is to be given or taken at school except in the clinic.

Staff members may obtain certain nonprescription medicines (such as aspirin, antacids, antihistamines, etc.) from the nurse and will need to sign a form recording medication dispensed from the clinic.

## **Dress and Grooming (Staff)**

### *Policy DH Regulation*

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a high standard of dress, staff members shall maintain dress and grooming standards that are appropriate for their assignments, and in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Hosiery (for females) will be optional.
2. Facial hair (beard, mustache or goatee) must be well groomed.
3. Tattoos that are distracting in the learning environment will be covered at all times.
4. Body piercings (except for earrings for females) should not be visible.
5. Outer garments will fit properly (not tight fitting) and be of an acceptable length.
6. Undergarments must not be visible.
7. Professional footwear does not include flip flops, slippers, shower shoes, house shoes, and "cros".
8. Sweatpants, wind pants, warm-ups leggings, cargo style, low-rise, spandex or similar tight pants are not permitted (with the exception for coaches noted below).
9. Athletic wear is permitted during PE or athletic classes.
10. Coaches are to be in neat athletic attire while in the regular classroom.
11. Blouses, sweaters, and shirts must cover the midriff and lower back, including while reaching or bending.
12. Halters, bare backs, tank tops, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts, see-through garments, revealing or provocative necklines are not permitted.
13. Shirt and tops that are not made to be worn out (shirts or tops with a long tail) should be tucked in, unless worn as a jacket.
14. Jeans, of any color, are only permitted when approved by the campus principal and/or department supervisor.
15. Capri pants, loosely fitted on the leg, and no shorter than mid-calf are permissible.

The campus principal/department supervisor has the discretion to make exceptions as per the job assignment of the employee.

## **Equal Educational Opportunities**

### *Policy FB*

Alief Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap or gender. The AISD Career and Technical Education program operates in accordance with the provisions in Titles VI, VII, IX and Section 504 from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Alief ISD program admission procedures, facilities, job placement, student treatment, course curriculum and graduation requirements are designed to eliminate discrimination. Alief ISD will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in any educational or vocational program.

The Director of Special Populations, P.O. Box 68, Alief, TX 77411, 281-498-8110, ext. 4670, is the responsible person in Alief ISD for coordinating the efforts to comply with and carry out the responsibilities under Title VI, VII, IX and Section 504.

### **Information Regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and these procedures is to prohibit discrimination on the basis of handicap and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

An eligible student is one who (a) has, (b) has record of having, or (c) is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

"Physical or mental impairment", means (a) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems; or (b) any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental illness or specific learning disabilities.

A substantial limitation in learning must be demonstrated by an educational evaluation, i.e., a serious academic deficit and/or serious behavior problems resulting from the student's disability and not from other causes.

Disabled students between the ages of 3 and 21 who have not graduated are eligible.

#### **COORDINATION**

The district's Coordinator for Counseling shall serve as the designated District Section 504 Coordinator and shall coordinate

district-wide efforts to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The campus principal will designate a campus 504 coordinator to implement campus Section 504 procedures.

**SECTION 504  
COMMITTEE**

The Section 504 Committee shall be composed of at least two persons, including the campus 504 coordinator and persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of evaluation data, placement options, and the legal requirements regarding least restrictive environment; e.g., counselor, nurse, teacher, administrator, parent and/or support personnel. The committee will review the following information:

- Specific concerns/needs.
- Previous interventions/modifications.
- Significant factors, including available test results.
- Need for further evaluation.
- Need for referral to other staff/programs.
- Need for classroom modifications.

The committee will complete, sign and send to parents and other appropriate staff the report of 504 Committee Action (504-D), the modification plan if the student is eligible, and the parent notice of rights.

**REFERRALS**

Students may be referred by parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, or any other District employee for evaluation to determine if they have disabilities and are in need of special instruction or services.

**NOTICE**

Basic information about Section 504, including parent/student rights, is included in the student handbook.

The campus Section 504 Coordinator shall notify parents prior to any individual evaluation conducted to determine if their child has disabilities or to determine what educational or related services should be provided to the student. Parents shall also be given written notice of the District's refusal to evaluate a student or to provide specific aids and services the parents have requested.

**EVALUATION**

An evaluation shall be conducted before any action is taken to place a student with disabilities or make a significant change in placement in an instructional program. The evaluation process will focus on several areas with data collection coming from a variety of sources including:

- Achievement data in academic areas.

- Ability/intelligence scores.
- Adaptive behavior measures (required).
- Vision/hearing screening.
- Parent information form to include social, cultural, physical information.
- Teacher referral form and recommendations.
- Test instruments will be:
  - Valid and reliable.
  - Administered by trained personnel.
  - Tailored for specific areas of educational need similar to special education tests.
- Further testing may include:
  - Medical exams.
  - Interest/reading/math inventory.
  - Drug/alcohol dependence test.

A comprehensive assessment will be administered by the appropriate campus diagnostician when there is suspected special education eligibility.

An appropriate test battery, as recommended by the campus screening committee, will be administered by designated campus personnel when only 504 eligibility is suspected. 504 eligibility will be reviewed yearly. 504 evaluation data is compiled and placed in the student's cumulative record folder.

## **PLACEMENT**

The district shall provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped student regardless of the nature or severity of the student's handicap.

In making educational placement of 504 handicapped students, the committee members must utilize information from a variety of sources which include:

- Aptitude and achievement tests.
- Teacher input.
- Physical, social, cultural, behavioral information including adaptive behavior.

Placement decisions must be made by a group of persons (at least 2) who are knowledgeable about the student, the evaluation data and placement options. The student must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with non-handicapped students. If the student is determined to be 504 eligible, an individualized instructional plan will be developed, implemented and monitored.

## **Fund Raisers**

1. All fund raisers must have campus principal's approval
2. Plan fund raisers carefully.
3. Do not plan for Moon Walks, Pony Rides, Amusement Rides, etc. When in doubt, check with the Risk Management Department for approval before proceeding, especially for anything which would generate a potential liability concern.
4. Have contracts reviewed by central office (Area Superintendent, Director of Risk Management, and/or Internal Auditor).
5. SHOULD NOT COMPETE WITH AISD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT
6. Should not involve charging students or staff for the right or privilege to wear articles of clothing (jeans, caps, crazy socks, t-shirts, etc.)
7. Typically should not involve charging staff or students for participating in a school activity held within the instructional day. Exceptions must have central office approval prior to the event or activity.

## **Gifts to School Personnel**

Students and their parents are discouraged from presenting gifts to district employees. It would be considered appropriate, and certainly appreciated, to write letters to school personnel expressing gratitude or appreciation. (Board of Trustees Policy FJ/Local)

## **Harassment of Students**

*Policies DF, DH, FFG, FFH*

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. All allegations of prohibited harassment or abuse of a student will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his/her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. *See Reporting suspected child abuse, page 64 for additional information.*

## **Hazard Communication Program**

The district has instituted a program to promote employees' health and safety: the effects of chemical substances being used in district operations are evaluated and employees are informed regarding potential hazards. Supervisors will inform employees annually about the program (about the chemical and physical hazards in the building and how to safeguard against those hazards). This annual training will include such topics as how to interpret product labels and Material Safety Data sheets, how to recognize chemicals and where they are located, and how to obtain additional information about chemicals. Each employee is responsible for letting the supervisor know about any change in the

work area that may compromise the health or safety of persons working or visiting in that area.

## **Lunch – Duty-Free**

In compliance with the Texas Education Code, all teachers will be granted a 30-minute lunch period free of all duties and responsibilities. Only in the case of personnel shortage, extreme economic conditions, or unavoidable/unforeseen circumstances may a teacher be required to supervise students during the lunch period. Even under these circumstances, the teacher may not be required to supervise students during the lunch period more than one day in any school week.

Should a teacher/staff member wish to leave the building during the duty-free lunch period, the teacher/staff member should sign out as he/she leaves the building and sign in upon return, according to the campus sign in/out procedures. This daily 30 minute period may not be traded with, or sold to, another staff member.

## **Meetings - Staff**

General staff meetings are scheduled during the school year as needed. The agenda may include organizational and professional growth topics.

The building administrator and staff will determine days per month on which these meetings may be scheduled, and employees will be expected to remain on duty until the end of the meeting on those days. Typically, administrators will try to limit after school meetings to 60-75 minutes. By designating certain days for staff meetings, employees can plan other after-school events without the possibility of them conflicting with a previously unanticipated staff meeting. If no meeting is held on these selected days, regular dismissal time will apply. Emergencies which may prevent an employee from attending a staff meeting should be discussed with the principal.

## **Occupancy Permits**

City regulations require that all staff members know the location in the building of the occupancy permit. Check with the office staff for the location of your building's occupancy permit (generally in the office workroom).

## **Partners In Education**

Partners in Education (PIE) support Goal IV of Alief's District Improvement Plan: Family, community, and educators will work together to develop responsible, productive citizens. Under the PIE umbrella are the following programs: Alief ISD Mentor Program for students, School-Community Partnerships, and Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS).

## **Mentor Program**

Research repeatedly shows that having a mentor helps students to be more successful in school. Mentors provide constant encouragement and emotional support for their students. Mentors help students to: accept responsibility; use good study habits; make positive choices; learn problem solving skills; apply their talents; and have better peer relationships.

Mentors meet with their students once a week for 30 to 60 minutes in the school during school hours for the entire school year. Sometimes mentors wish to check with teachers to see how the student is doing. They will want to know if behavior, attitude, or academics are improving.

New mentors must attend an orientation. If you would like to recommend a student for the program, please see your counselor. If you would like to be a mentor, please **call 281-498-8110, ext. 6580.**

## **School-Community Partnerships**

Partnerships with area business and organizations can be a very gratifying experience for all involved. A partnership is a commitment between a business or non-profit group and school to work together to enhance student achievement.

Partnerships can help provide funding, human resources such as mentors, tutors, judges, SDC reps, and/or program sponsorship, as well as incentives to be awarded to students for a job well done. By sharing their expertise and knowledge, business volunteers help to prepare students to become productive citizens in our future workforce.

Partnerships are only limited by the imagination. If you are interested in a partnership on your campus, please **call 281-498-8110, extension 6580.**

## **Volunteers in Public Schools**

For many years, Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) has been a very important program within the Alief Independent School District. With over 1,800 volunteers cleared during the previous school year, the district received an astonishing 50,000 plus hours of donated time through May 2008 from dedicated community members.

Research has shown that children attend school regularly, demonstrate improved behavior, and achieve better grades when their parents are involved in their education. By cultivating the parent-school relationship, you are building an understanding and a support network of those parents who volunteer.

Please welcome the volunteers at your campus and find a way to help them help you. If you have any questions about the **VIPS program, call 281-498-8110, extension 2550.**

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

### *Policy FFAC*

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

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

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

## **Professional Associations**

Teachers have the opportunity to join and support various professional organizations. The district has established the following operating guidelines in collaboration with the various teacher organizations:

**School Visits** – Organization representatives are allowed to visit campuses before and after school (outside of the instructional and duty day). Representatives are allowed to meet with their members during their conference periods if invited by the members. Like any other campus visit, organizational representatives must sign in at the front office. In addition, representatives are to schedule meetings with the principal in advance in order to avoid conflicts with other scheduled activities.

**Distribution of Flyers/Notices** – Access to organization members' mailboxes on campuses is to be determined by the campus principals. Principals or his/her designee may place flyers/notices individually addressed to members in their mailboxes. Flyers/information brochures may be placed in the faculty lounge or on faculty bulletin boards. Blanket distribution to non-members is prohibited.

**Email communication** – An organization may use the district's e-mail system to communicate with their members only. Blanket e-mail communications to non-members are prohibited.

## Professional Development

*The school calendar reflects 185 days, a combination of student instructional days and professional development/staff workdays. To meet the 187 days required by contract or work calendar, professional staff must acquire fourteen hours of approved training during summer or outside of school hours. Paraprofessional staff must fulfill their fourteen hour requirement by either attending training and/or working day (e.g. registration) by their campus administrator. Failure to meet these requirements by the deadline dates (see Professional Development website) will result in an equivalent loss of pay.*

Alief ISD provides quality professional development for its staff. The heaviest concentration of content area sessions within the district is offered during the summer months. See Professional Development web page, <http://www.aliefisd.net/staff-dev/default.htm>, for fall, spring, and summer catalogs and registration information. Sessions are also scheduled periodically during the school year by the Curriculum/Professional Development, Special Education, and campus-based administrators.

Campus administrators are responsible for providing additional training on such topics as the Discipline Management Plan, Hazardous Materials Act, student testing programs, Campus Action Plans, child abuse/suicide, HIV/AIDS, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and special education procedures and guidelines.

## Release of Students

At no time should a staff member release a student to an individual without having verified with front office staff that the person has the authority and permission to assume responsibility for the child and take the child from the building.

Front office staff should check student records (enrollment card, clinic card, the district's student software system, parent notes, etc.) to verify the person is listed as parent, guardian or an emergency contact. At no time can assumptions be the basis of a decision to release a child. There must be clear evidence of the relationship/connection to the student. If something appears questionable or raises concerns for situations involving court or legal documents, an administrator **must** be contacted to assist with the process.

Administrators may release to:

- Legal authorities such as police, CPS, etc. providing appropriate identification has been provided.
- Person(s) other than parent, guardian or emergency contact(s) providing parent or guardian has notified the school in writing granting permission for the person to take the child from the school. In these cases, signatures need to be compared and verified. If questionable, contact the parent to confirm he/she sent the note or is aware of the request.

- Person(s) other than parent, guardian or emergency contact(s) providing parent or guardian has notified the school by phone (emergency situations) and the phone request (on speaker phone) was heard and witnessed by at least two staff members and documented on the Change of Transportation/Release from School form.

For situations that create questions or concerns, please contact central office.

## Resignations

Letters of resignation should be submitted to the Human Resources Department. A copy of the letter should also be given to the employee's principal. If a teacher must leave the district during the school year, it is expected that he/she will remain on duty until a suitable replacement is found. End-of-year resignations should be submitted by the resignation deadline, which is 45 days before the first day of instruction of a new school year. For information regarding post employment benefits, call the Risk Management Department.

## Short Leave for Professional Growth/School Business

***Regardless of funding source, approval for short leave forms will be limited to professional development opportunities within the Houston area and reflect high correlation with or impact on district and campus goals and priorities. In addition, a teacher who has already accumulated 10 or more absences during the school year will not have his/her short leave request approved.***

A Request for Short Leave form should be processed if...

1. An employee will be absent from duty in order to attend the event.  
**AND/OR**
2. Any expenses involved will be paid for from district funds.

**Note:** The name of the activity or event should be entered in full on the form (example: Ninth Annual Conference of the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented rather than TAGT Conference).

A request for leave processed for either of the reasons above should be forwarded with the employee's, principal's and coordinator's (if required) signatures to the administrative supervisor.

When all required signatures are obtained, the form is returned to the originating office after one copy has been detached for filing at the Administration Building. (These copies will remain on file for the current school year only). The employee should be given a copy and is responsible for maintaining it in his/her personal files for purposes of absence reporting, expense payment/reimbursement, applying for AAT credit, etc.

When registering an absence with the district's absence system, the following codes should be used for school business related absences:

- **#13** – School Business (optional) This number is used for trainings and conferences in which a staff member chooses to attend or one in which a campus administrator has requested a staff member attend. Typically, these trainings are held out of the district.
- **#14** – School Business (district required) This number is used when an employee is **required** to be away from the campus for the purpose of **district** trainings, **district** meetings, field trips or sponsoring a student group.

## Staying After School - Students

If a student needs to be detained for additional instruction or for disciplinary reasons, the teacher or administrator must notify parents by phone or by note in advance so that transportation arrangements can be made. If a note is sent, please require a return of the note or an acknowledgment slip with a parent's signature.

For liability reasons, teachers are not to transport students home following an after-school session.

## Student Discipline

*Policies in the FN series and FO series*

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

Webster's Dictionary defines discipline as "to train or develop by instruction and exercise." As professional educators, we have the responsibility of developing a discipline management system for our students. This system's purpose should be to train our students to be self-disciplined. The focus of this system should be on appropriate student behaviors and the system should be delivered with care and concern for the child.

In order to be successful, all students need structure, predictability, consistency, immediacy of consequences and skill training. Just as with reading, writing and math strategies, discipline strategies must be taught. The focus of a good classroom discipline management system must be on teaching — helping the student and shaping behavior.

## Roadmap for successful discipline management in the classroom:

1. Teach students self-discipline strategies and procedures and routines at the beginning of the school year. Reteach, as needed, and reinforce these behaviors throughout the school year.
2. Look for what your students are doing correctly — and tell them. Let them know specifically what they are doing that you expect and appreciate.
3. Treat students with dignity and respect at all times.
4. Ignore irritating or attention-seeking behavior ...
  - When it is not habitual.
  - When it is not unsafe.
  - When it is not interfering with other children's learning.
  - When classroom peers are not reinforcing the behavior.
5. Use mild negatives: decreasing space between the teacher/student, increasing visibility by eye contact with the student, using the student's name in an example, giving the student a job, etc.
6. Use more severe negatives in private: "I'll speak to you after class."
7. Make an individual plan for the student:
  - Determine the one or two undesirable behavior(s) on which to focus.
  - Determine the behavior(s) you would like to see in its place (replacement behaviors).
  - Determine a positive reinforcer for the new behavior(s).
  - Determine a negative reinforcer for the undesirable behavior (e.g., time-out in the room, denial of a privilege, time out in another classroom, a note or call to the parent, a conference with the parent, if serious-office referral, etc.)
  - Hold a conference with the student to check for understanding.
  - Program events/circumstances to bring about the child's success (plan for it and make it happen).
  - Use a regular schedule of positive reinforcement, later modified to an intermittent schedule of +R.
8. Consult the principal and the Discipline Management Plan/Code of Student Conduct.

## Confiscating Student Items/Work

***A teacher or staff member has the right to confiscate from a student any item that is considered a disruption to the learning environment or in violation of school policies. However, the item may not be destroyed or disposed of in any manner.***

- An item of value, or potential value, should be maintained in the office safe or in a locked storage place for safekeeping. Parents should be notified and allowed to pick up the item from the school or the item is to be returned to the student at the end of a class period, the end of a school day, when the student withdraws or at the very latest, the end of the school year.
- An item considered to be a danger to the student and/or jeopardizes the safety of others is to be immediately turned into administrators and/or campus police.

- Student work that is collected due to violation of school or classroom polices should be maintained in a file until 3 weeks after the end of the current nine weeks reporting period.

## **Touching Students**

***When in the act of disciplining, at no time should an employee touch a student in any manner unless the child poses a serious danger to himself or others.***

Appropriate techniques other than touching would include:

- Talking/conferencing with the students.
- Standing in close proximity to encourage appropriate behaviors.
- Specific verbal directive such as “Stop,” “Move away,” and/or “Come with me”.

If these techniques are unsuccessful and further assistance is needed contact an administrator or a colleague.

**When in situations involving disciplining, redirecting, or correcting a student’s behaviors, touching the student at anytime places an employee at risk of being in a questionable or volatile situation; therefore, it is imperative employees strictly adhere to this policy. Restraining a student should be limited to times when a student is in serious danger of hurting himself or others and should be done by those properly trained in therapeutic holds.**

## **Student Records**

*Policy FL*

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

- Parents married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights.

The student handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the campus principal for assistance. According to Board Policy FL/Local, directory information includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, date/place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities/sports, weight/height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received, the most recent school attended by the student, and other similar information.

Policy FL states that the district may release directory information (upon written request per FL/Local) if it has given public notice

- Of the categories of information that it has designated as directory information.
- Of the right of the parent to refuse to permit the release of any or all of that information.
- Of the period of time within which the parent must inform the district in writing of the refusal to permit the release of such information.

In other words, parents must be notified that directory information is subject to release (the handbook for parents contains such a notice), and they must be given an opportunity to refuse to permit release (there is a yes/no blank to check on the enrollment card).

For many reasons, information about students or parents is never given to a telephone caller. Due to the custodial situations in which many of our students are involved, even the fact of a student's enrollment is not acknowledged to a telephone caller. Refer inquiries — written or verbal — for information about students/parents to the principal (including any from persons claiming to be employees of agencies such as Children's Protective Services, the Houston Police Department, etc., for which identification must first be properly verified).

## **Student Safety**

The safety of children is a major objective of our schools.

### **Serious Injury or Illness**

A child who becomes ill or is injured at school must be referred to the nurse. This is especially critical when possible injury to the head or eyes is involved. In the event of a serious injury or illness, **STAY WITH THE CHILD, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE THE CHILD, SEND FOR THE NURSE IMMEDIATELY, AND DIRECT STUDENT OBSERVERS AWAY FROM THE AREA IF POSSIBLE.** The customary clinic referral slip (45-0190) should follow. In all cases of emergency, employees are expected to exercise reasonable and prudent measures, including the administration of first aid procedures.

### **Mobile Cabinets, Cafeteria Tables, and Television/Audiovisual Carts**

Mobile coat and other storage cabinets can be caused to topple. To prevent possible injury to students, keep cabinet doors closed, do not let children stand on the bottom shelf/floor of a cabinet, pull on the doors, or climb on cabinets. Do not store items on the tops of cabinets. Students are not to be allowed to move cafeteria tables or television/audiovisual carts (not to step or "ride" on the latter).

## **Errands and Physical Labor**

No student will be required or permitted, without the principal's approval, to do any physical labor in or about the building or grounds.

## **Emergency Drills**

The principal will conduct at least one fire drill monthly. Unobstructed and obstructed drills will be held on alternating months. Disaster drills, such as for tornadoes, also must be conducted frequently throughout the year. All building occupants must participate.

Students should be taught drill regulations and the public address signals associated with them, as well as what verbal signals will be given if the public address system cannot be used and any hand signals which may be needed (e.g., one hand up for the line to stop, both hands up for the line to reverse, etc.). Floor plans or maps showing routes for both types of drills for each classroom area must be posted. General fire safety rules and disaster survival procedures should be included in instruction.

Teachers are responsible for the supervision of the students in their charge during these drills or events and are responsible for knowing recommended procedures.

### **1. Fire/building evacuation drills**

- Upon hearing the evacuation signal, students should leave the building quietly and in an orderly manner by the designated route without running, pushing, etc., and stand silently in line facing the building (approximately 50 feet away from the building and away from any fire hydrants or electric lines).
- Students may not be assigned to check the building or restrooms; these checks shall be conducted by staff personnel only.
- All doors to classrooms shall be closed and lights turned off before leaving the building.
- Remember that handicapped students may need special assistance.
- Teachers should call roll once the class has evacuated; strict discipline should be maintained.
- When signaled to do so, students should return to the building in the same manner in which they were expected to evacuate.

### **2. Disaster/tornado drills**

- Teachers should keep a source of parent contact information for each child readily accessible, as well as plans for activities (music, games, lessons, etc.) to lessen tension during a period of confinement.
- When practicing, stress to children the importance of remaining calm and listening to directions, such as the command to "drop" in the event of a tornado.
- Upon hearing the signal, students should go to the designated area silently and in an orderly manner. Students should be as far away from windows and exterior doors as possible. If they are outdoors when the signal is

- given, they should return to the building to seek shelter (in their assigned space if possible, but not in the larger areas such as the gym, cafeteria, or library).
- Each child should crouch on the floor face down with knees tucked under the body and hands clasped behind the head ("duck and cover").
- Teachers should call roll at the shelter site.
- When the signal is given, students should return to the classroom in the same manner in which they were expected to go to the shelter site.

Teachers should notify the office at once of any sign of smoke, fire, etc., and in the event of disaster, should...

- Remain with the students until relieved of supervision by the principal. Those not in charge of students at the time of the occurrence should report to the principal or to a pre-assigned station.
- Report immediately any missing children. If there is any reason to believe that students remain in an endangered area, attempt rescue measures with any and all competent personnel available.
- Refer students in need of first aid to the nurse or other person trained in first aid.
- Render first aid and any other assistance needed, extinguish incipient fires, and work toward restoring order.

### **Crisis Plans**

- a. AISD has a district crisis plan which is disseminated each year. All staff members are required to be familiar with this plan.
- b. Each campus should have a designated Crisis Team consisting of staff members, administrators, nurse and counselor.
- c. Each campus is required to develop crisis plans for situations that would pose a threat to students and staff members physical or emotional safety (e.g. – death, hazardous chemicals, weapons, etc.). The plans should include codes/signals, procedures, persons responsible, plans for lock-downs, shelter-in-place, etc.

### **Emergency Issues with Students/Staff**

Should a staff member become aware of a student or another staff member making serious threats or statements of harming self or others (e.g.-threats of suicide or killing), then the staff member must report it immediately to a building administrator and/or counselor. If a student has threatened to harm him/herself, a conference with the student's parent or guardian must be held that day to advise the parent/guardian of the serious concern, provide the parent with a referral list and complete the Notification of Emergency Conference form (AISD 45-1500).

## **Safety Patrols**

Qualifications for Safety Patrol membership should be established by the principal and sponsor(s). Patrol responsibilities include monitoring and assisting other students in the building and on the playground both before school and at dismissal times. Students must obey the directions of the Safety Patrols, or warnings/citations will be issued. Patrol sponsors will maintain records of citations and determine appropriate consequences. Patrols can help in seeing that:

- Students walk, not run, as they enter/leave the school grounds and building.
- Students walk inside the building.
- Students do not ride their bicycles on the school grounds/sidewalk, but dismount and guide their bicycles to/from the bicycle racks.
- Students leave the campus upon dismissal.

## **Security**

The following suggestions are offered for the safety of our employees and their property:

1. Keep your car locked.
2. Park in spaces designated for staff members.
3. Do not leave valuables where they can be easily seen in your car.
4. Do not bring large sums of cash to school.
5. Keep your purse/wallet in a secure place during the day; take it with you when you leave your area.
6. Never keep student money in the classroom; turn it in to the office daily as quickly as possible.
7. Notify the office immediately if you become suspicious of anyone you don't recognize in the building or feel uneasy during a parent conference.
8. Make sure the building door locks behind you when you leave.
9. Do not stay in the building alone after dark.

## **Staff Accidents**

Staff members are cautioned at all times to use prudent and proper safety measures. For example, stepladders provided at each campus should be used to reach high locations, and safety straps should be in place on AV equipment before pushing an AV cart.

The nurse must be informed immediately of any injury at school to an employee. A form must be completed and forwarded to the Risk Management Department. Any potentially unsafe conditions in the building or on the grounds should be reported immediately to the principal.

NOTE: To call the local emergency help number from a district phone, first press 9 for an outside line and then 911; 911 without the preceding 9 should be used for telephones (such as lounge phones) which are financed by the individual buildings and are not part of the district phone network.

The AISD Police Department's direct line is **281-498-3542** and should be called in case of any emergency at your campus.

## **Supervision of Students**

Teachers are responsible for the students in their charge and should closely supervise them at all times. Only in emergencies should a teacher leave the room, and then a teammate must be notified of the departure and return; any absence from the classroom should be as brief as possible.

If an accident or discipline problem warrants, summon the appropriate person by wall phone or by sending a responsible student.

If an emergency requires a teacher's departure from the building, a building administrator should be notified personally. If the need for a brief absence is known in advance, **Form 45-0942** ("Staff Form for Leaving the Building") must be submitted.

When accompanying children to other classrooms, to the cafeteria, to bus lines, etc., teachers should remain with the children until the person on duty at the destination actually assumes responsibility for them. Designated pick-ups should be made promptly.

On the playground, teachers must constantly circulate and supervise students. This is not the time for paperwork or visiting with other teachers. Teachers should station themselves at strategic locations on the playground (i.e., teachers on duty should not congregate).

## **Textbooks**

To check textbooks in or out, please use the **Book Request/Return Form (45-0180)**. This form should be given to the bookroom clerk as early as possible prior to the opening of school and at least a day in advance during the school year. The bookroom clerk will maintain original records of textbook transactions; teachers will receive copies of these forms.

The Texas Education Code provides that school districts may not require an employee of the district **who acts in good** faith to pay for textbook, electronic textbook or technological equipment that is damaged, stolen, misplaced, or not returned. Therefore, to act in good faith, teachers must keep accurate records by number of all textbooks issued to students and must ensure that books are kept covered (a State requirement). Book covers and textbook record cards will be obtained for the school by the office staff. See that each child's name is written in every book issued to him/her. Similarly, teachers

must also keep accurate records of textbooks and materials issued to them for use in their classrooms.

**Loss of Textbooks.** In the case of damaged, stolen, misplaced, or not returned textbooks or technological equipment, the teacher will provide the district with a written statement as to the extent and circumstances of the damage, theft, or loss of the textbook or technological equipment. If it is determined by the district that the teacher reporting the damage, theft, or loss of a textbook or technological equipment, did not act in good faith, the teacher will be financially liable for the textbook or technological equipment.

If a student loses a book, another book should be provided to the student to use within the school day. Every effort should be made to obtain payment for the lost book from the parent. A **Form Letter (45-0415)** may be used to notify the parent of the price of the book (textbook prices will be furnished by the bookroom clerk). Once payment for the textbook has been rendered, a new book may be issued to the student for home and school use. If a textbook, which has been paid for, is subsequently found, a full refund will be issued to the parent by check from the office (no processing charges will be deducted from refund checks).

Fines are charged to students for damage to textbooks; please check with the office for the amount to be charged. If a textbook is not returned or paid for, the school may withhold the student's records requested by another school or from the parent at the end of the school year.

**Loss of Teacher Materials.** Teacher editions, resource kits, curriculum guides, instructional materials, handbooks, etc. are issued to faculty members and are accounted for at end-of-year inventory time. **Teachers must act in good faith by properly keeping an inventory of items issued to them.** Summer checkouts are arranged through the principal of the bookroom clerk. These manuals/materials are to be turned in upon resignation, change of assignment, the end of the school year, or date as designated by the campus principal. In the event of loss, **the individual faculty member assigned the item is responsible for reimbursement of replacement cost to the campus or district.**

**Faculty members are also financially responsible for any textbooks or library books checked out to them as individuals.** A faculty member, acting in good faith, is not responsible for books in which he/she clearly maintains a system that appropriately documents the book(s) being checked out to a student or parent and not returned. Appropriate documentation should include dates issued/returned, book number (if applicable), book title, possibly the author, student signature, etc. The system should also provide for written notification to the parents regarding the need for the item to be returned or the replacement cost to be paid in order to clear their child's records.

**Returning or repaying the district for lost instructional items is critical. Any remaining fees or charges at the end of the school year will be reconciled through payroll.**

## **Transporting Students in Private Vehicles**

Because of the potential liability involved, staff members are advised against transporting students to/from school or during school hours.

If a student is in need of transportation, please notify the building administrator.

## **Travel Guidelines**

**Short Leave Forms are required for all district travel...see Short Leave section of handbook for more information.**

- These guidelines apply regardless of the funding source for the travel.
- Amounts spent on travel per employee should be fiscally responsible and in line with department guidelines.
- Exceptions to these guidelines may be approved by the Superintendent or appropriate Deputy Superintendent.

## **Campus Administrators**

- Principals and Associate Principals – one out of state conference per year.
- Assistant Principals – out of state conference every other year – assigned rotation.
- Additional requests for out of state travel must be approved prior to registration.
- Attendance record for the year must be submitted with short leave forms.

## **Specialists**

- Each campus may send a maximum of two specialists per year to an out of state conference
- Requests for school business (conferences/in-services out of district) will not be approved if the total number of absences for any reason exceeds 15 days OR if days of absence impact a critical time of the year (e.g. TAKS, other testing periods, special events, etc.)
- Supervising student activities such as UIL events and chaperoning field trips or attending in-district meetings or training are not included in the 15-day count. **These are coded as #14 in the district's absence system.**

## **Classroom Professionals (including Speech Therapists, Title I and Resource)**

- In state travel only during the school year
- Requests for school business (conferences-in-services out of district) will not be approved if the total number of absences for any reason exceeds 10 days.

Supervising student activities such as UIL events and chaperoning field trips are not included in the 10 day count. **These are coded as #14 in the district's absence system.**

#### **Non-classroom Professionals (including counselors, nurses and librarians)**

- Each campus may send one non-classroom professional per year to an out of state conference.
- Requests for school business (conferences/in-services out of district) will not be approved if the total number of absences for any reason exceeds 10 days.
- Supervising student activities such as UIL events and chaperoning field trips are not included in the 10 day count. **These are coded as #14 in the district's absence system.**

#### **Paraprofessionals**

- Supervisors will approve in state travel as appropriate.

### **Tutorials - Private**

Teachers may tutor students on a private basis. However, if there is a fee or charge attached to the tutorial services, the following procedures must be followed:

- Disclose in writing to his/her immediate supervisor any private tutoring of District students for pay.
- Pay a yearly \$25.00 Building Use Fee to Alief ISD if tutoring on a district facility; send payment to Becky Hinojosa, Administration Building.
- Provide tutorial services only in subjects or content areas that will benefit a student mastering TEKS objectives.
- Provide services only to students NOT currently enrolled in any of the tutor's/teacher's classes.

### **Visitors**

Parents and other patrons of the district are welcome to visit our schools with the principal's approval. All visitors (1) must go to the office before proceeding to any other area and (2) must observe the law and the Alief Code of Civility and Conduct prohibiting disruption in the classroom. Inform the office staff when you have invited speakers or other guests and of the names of volunteers who may be assisting you. Notify the office at once if you are in doubt as to whether or not a person in or around the building has checked in with the office staff. Also notify the principal if instruction is being disrupted.

At no time should a staff member release a student to an individual without having verified with front office staff that the person has the authority and permission to assume responsibility for the child and take the child from the building. (See *Release of Students for full procedures and guidelines.*)