



# LAGO VISTA ISD **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**



# **Lago Vista Independent School District**

# **Employee Handbook**

*(Updated September 2025)*

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

*Laura Vincent, President*

*Kevin Walker, Vice President*

*Isai Arredondo, Secretary*

*Rich Raley, Trustee*

*Jerrell Roque, Trustee*

*David Scott, Trustee*

*Greg Zaleski, Trustee*

## **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

*Darren Webb*

## **ADMINISTRATION**

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*Tina Pasak, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning*

*Jason Stoner, Chief Financial Officer*

*Heather Kercheville, Director of Special Education/504*

*Rusty Maynard, Director of Technology*

*Janda Castillo, Principal of Lago Vista High School*

*Eric Holt, Principal of Lago Vista Middle School*

*Bonnie Sullivan, Principal of Lago Vista Intermediate School*

*Kerri Walker, Principal of Lago Vista Elementary School*

*Craten Phillips, Athletic Director*

## **DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

Lago Vista ISD will equip students for the rigors of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by preparing them for a global-based digital economy. Lago Vista ISD will be recognized as a leader in educational innovation through technology, facilities, curriculum, volunteerism, and instruction.

*It is the policy of Lago Vista Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in any programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. For information about your rights, or grievance procedures, contact Darren Webb, Superintendent, 8039 Bar-K Ranch Road, Lago Vista, TX 78645, 512-267-8300. If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of disability, please contact the District at (512) 267-8300.*

*Es norma de Lago Vista Distrito Escolar Independiente de no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo o impedimento, en sus programas, servicios o actividades, tal como lo requieren el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, según enmienda; el Título IX de las Enmiendas en la Educación, de 1972, y la Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmienda. Para información sobre sus derechos o procedimientos para quejas, comuníquese con Darren Webb, Superintendente, 8039 Bar-K Ranch Road, Lago Vista, TX 78645, 512-267-8300. Si tiene dificultades para acceder a la información de este documento debido a una discapacidad, comuníquese con el Distrito al (512) 267-8300.*

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# Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information for employees of Lago Vista ISD that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful school year. This document is not inclusive of all District policies and is provided to summarize those that are included. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be submitted to Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis at [sloftonbullis@lagovistaisd.net](mailto:sloftonbullis@lagovistaisd.net).

Please note that this handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for official District policy. Also, it is not intended to alter the at-will status of non-contract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of District policies and procedures related to employment. As District policies and procedures may change at any time, official policies shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with changes or adopted language.

For more information, employees should refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate District department.

District policies can be accessed on line at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/227912>.

# District Information

Lago Vista ISD is located in Travis County on the north shore of Lake Travis. LVISD is a 4A school district with approximately 1,850 students. Lago Vista Elementary is located on Dawn Drive and both Lago Vista Intermediate School and Lago Vista Middle School are located on FM 1431. Lago Vista High School is located on Lohman Ford Road. The LVISD Administration Building is adjacent to the middle school at the corner of Bar-K Ranch Road and FM 1431. The District encompasses 35 square miles and serves students who reside in Lago Vista, Point Venture, and South Jonestown Hills.

## District Mission

Lago Vista ISD will equip students for the rigors of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by preparing them for a global-based digital economy. Lago Vista ISD will be recognized as a leader in educational innovation through technology, facilities, curriculum, volunteerism, and instruction.

## District Vision

Lago Vista ISD prepares students to be adaptable and future ready by providing an engaging education, supporting their growth, and fostering a safe and inclusive environment. We value our staff, involve families and the community, and make transparent decisions for the betterment of our students.

## District Commitments

- **Commitment #1:** We will deliver engaging, high-quality instruction that promotes deep learning for all students.
- **Commitment #2:** We will support the whole child through academic, behavioral, social-emotional, and enrichment programs that foster student growth and success.
- **Commitment #3:** We will equip all students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences to succeed in college, career, or military pathways.
- **Commitment #4:** We will recruit, develop, and retain exceptional staff by offering competitive compensation, professional support, and a collaborative work environment.
- **Commitment #5:** We will strengthen partnerships with families and the community through meaningful engagement, open communication, and shared commitment to student success.
- **Commitment #6:** We will provide a safe and secure environment for all students, staff, and visitors.
- **Commitment #7:** We will ensure transparent, collaborative planning and decision-making that reflects district priorities and keeps stakeholders informed and involved.

## **Board of Trustees**

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

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

The members of the Board of Trustees are elected by the citizens of the District to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the District's children. Election of board members is by position or place in accordance with Texas law. Trustees shall be elected by position or place for three-year terms with elections held annually in November. Trustees serve without compensation, must be registered voters, and must reside in the District.

Current Board of Trustees members include:

- Laura Vincent, President
- Kevin Walker, Vice President
- Isai Arredondo, Secretary
- Rich Raley
- Jerrell Roque
- David Scott
- Greg Zaleski

The Board of Trustees usually meets the second Monday of the month at 6:00pm. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the District website 3 business days before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a two-hour notice.

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

Upcoming agendas are posted on the District website at  
<http://www.lagovistasisd.net/default.aspx?name=board.agendas>.

## Administration

**Superintendent**

Darren Webb  
[dwebb@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:dwebb@lagovistasisd.net)

**Deputy Superintendent**

Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis  
[sloftonbullis@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:sloftonbullis@lagovistasisd.net)

**Chief Financial Officer**

Jason Stoner  
[jstoner@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:jstoner@lagovistasisd.net)

**Assistant Superintendent of Teaching  
and Learning**

Tina Pasak  
[tpasak@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:tpasak@lagovistasisd.net)

**Director of Facilities (IQS)**

Kevin Lovell  
[iqs@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:iqs@lagovistasisd.net)

**Director of Food Service (Aramark)**

Jennifer Porter  
[jporter@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:jporter@lagovistasisd.net)

**Director of Maintenance**

Adam Robinson  
[a Robinson@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:a Robinson@lagovistasisd.net)

**Director of Special Education/504**

Heather Kercheville  
[hkercheville@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:hkercheville@lagovistasisd.net)

**Director of Technology**

Rusty Maynard  
[rmaynard@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:rmaynard@lagovistasisd.net)

**Director of Transportation  
(Goldstar Transit)**

Nathan Smith  
[nsmith@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:nsmith@lagovistasisd.net)

**Athletic Director**

Craten Phillips  
[cphillips@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:cphillips@lagovistasisd.net)

**Personnel Services Coordinator**

Lacolla Harper  
[lharper@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:lharper@lagovistasisd.net)

**Assistant to the Superintendent/  
Communications Coordinator**

Holly Jackson  
[hjackson@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:hjackson@lagovistasisd.net)

**Business Services Coordinator**

Jennifer Stasny  
[jstasny@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:jstasny@lagovistasisd.net)

**District Nurse (RN)**

Laura Rutledge  
[lrutledge@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:lrutledge@lagovistasisd.net)

**Elementary Principal**

Kerri Walker  
[kwalker@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:kwalker@lagovistasisd.net)

***Elementary Assistant Principal***

Brandi Sharrock  
[bsharrock@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:bsharrock@lagovistasisd.net)

***Intermediate School Principal***

Bonnie Sullivan  
[bsullivan@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:bsullivan@lagovistasisd.net)

***Middle School Principal***

Eric Holt  
[eholt@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:eholt@lagovistasisd.net)

***Middle School Assistant Principal***

Kim Bentley  
[kbentley@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:kbentley@lagovistasisd.net)

***High School Principal***

Janda Castillo  
[jcastillo@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:jcastillo@lagovistasisd.net)

***High School Assistant Principal***

Dusty Kinslow  
[dkinslow@lagovistasisd.net](mailto:dkinslow@lagovistasisd.net)

## **School Calendar**

The Lago Vista ISD calendar is distributed to employees and the public annually. Holidays may vary from year to year. The calendar includes days for instructional preparation. Refer to the approved District calendar for school holidays. The school calendar is posted on the District website at [www.lagovistasisd.net](http://www.lagovistasisd.net).

## **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.

Academic Programs

Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis

Accounts Payable

Jennifer Stasny

Attendance

Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis

Athletics

Craten Phillips

Budget/Finance

Jason Stoner

Bus Transportation

Nathan Smith

Curriculum & Instruction

Tina Pasak

Custodial Services

Kevin Lovell

District Vehicles

Jennifer Stasny

District Website

Holly Jackson

Eduphoria

Holly Jackson/Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis

Employee Assistance Program

Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis

Federal Programs

Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis

Food Service

Jennifer Porter

Human Resources

Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis

Insurance/Leave

Lacolla Harper

Instructional Materials

Tina Pasak

Maintenance	Adam Robinson
Payroll	Lacolla Harper
Professional Learning	Tina Pasak
Purchasing	Jennifer Stasny
Special Education	Heather Kercheville
State Testing	Tina Pasak
State Reporting (PEIMS, ECDS)	Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis/Jennifer Stasny
Textbooks	Tina Pasak
Technology	Rusty Maynard
Title IX	Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis

## Employment

### Equal Employment Opportunity

#### *Policies DAA, DIA*

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

In accordance with Title IX, the District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The prohibition against discrimination extends to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

The District designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator for employees to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis, Deputy Superintendent, 8039 Bar K Ranch Road, [sloftonbullis@lagovistasd.net](mailto:sloftonbullis@lagovistasd.net), (512) 267-8300. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, email, or phone. During District business hours, reports may also be made in person.

The District designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator for employees for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis, Deputy Superintendent, 8039 Bar K Ranch Road, [sloftonbullis@lagovistasd.net](mailto:sloftonbullis@lagovistasd.net), (512) 267-8300.

Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent.

## **Job Vacancy Announcements**

### *Policy DC*

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

## **Employment After Retirement**

### *Policy DC series*

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed under certain circumstances on a full- or part-time basis without affecting their benefits, according to TRS rules and state law. Detailed information about employment after retirement is available in the TRS publication *Employment After Retirement*. Employees can contact TRS for additional information by calling 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. Information is also available on the TRS Web Site (<http://www.trs.texas.gov>).

## **Contract and Non-contract 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 or term contracts. Employees in all other positions are employed at-will or by a contract that is not subject to the procedures for nonrenewal or termination under Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code. The paragraphs that follow provide a general description of the employment arrangements used by the District.

**Probationary Contracts.** Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the District and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification will receive a probationary contract during their first two years of employment. Former employees who are hired after at least a two-year lapse in school district employment also may be employed by a two-year probationary contract. Probationary contracts in Lago Vista ISD are two-year contracts. For experienced professionals who are new to the District that have been employed in public education for at least five of the eight previous years, a probationary contract may be issued for up to two years (i.e., two one-year contracts).

For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three school years (i.e., three one-year contracts) with an optional fourth school year if the board determines it is doubtful whether a term or continuing contract should be given.

**Term Contracts.** Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses will be employed by term contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. Campus principals and central office administrators are employed under two-year term contracts. 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. Employment policies may be accessed through the District's website.

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

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

## **Certification and Licenses**

*Policies DBA, DF*

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to Lacolla Harper in a timely manner. Employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) must notify Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis when there is action against, or revocation of, their license.

A certified employee's contract may be voided without Chapter 21 due process and employment terminated if the individual does not hold a valid certificate or fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to renew or extend a temporary certificate, emergency certificate, probationary certificate, or permit. A contract may also be voided if SBEC suspends or revokes certification because of an individual's failure to comply with criminal history background checks. Contact Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

## **Recertification of Employment Authorization**

*Policy DC*

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

Employees whose immigration status, employment authorization, or employment authorization documents have expired must present new documents that show current employment authorization. Employees should file the necessary application or petition sufficiently in advance to ensure that they maintain continuous employment authorization or valid employment authorization documents. Contact Lacolla Harper if you have any questions regarding re-verification of employment authorization. Failure to verify employment authorization may result in termination.

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

*Policy CQ, DHE*

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

alcohol use. The District may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including District-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on District premises or work sites or used in District business. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may result if an employee refuses to submit to testing or is found to violate District policy.

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

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Random alcohol and drug tests will be conducted if reasonable suspicion exists 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 who are 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 testing policies and related educational material should contact Darren Webb.

## **Health Safety Training**

*Policies DBA, DMA*

Certain employees who are involved in physical activities for students must maintain and submit to the District proof of current certification or training in first aid, cardiopulmonary-resuscitation (CPR), the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), concussion and extracurricular athletic activity safety. The American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, University Interscholastic League, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification must issue certification or documentation of training. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to Regina Carmichael.

School nurses and employees with regular contact with students must complete a Texas Education Agency approved, online training regarding seizure disorder awareness, recognition, and related first aid.

## **Reassignments and Transfers**

*Policy DK*

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the Superintendent or designee when the Superintendent or designee determines that the assignment or reassignment is in the best interest of the District. Reassignment is a transfer to another position, department, or facility that does not necessitate a change in the employment contract.

Campus reassessments must be approved by the principal at the receiving campus except when reassessments 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 his or her request by May 1. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Superintendent's office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

## **Workload and Work Schedules**

*Policies DEAB, DK, DL*

**Professional Employees.** Professional employees and academic administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10-, 11-, or 12-month basis, according to the work schedules set by the District. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

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

**Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees.** Support employees are employed at will and will receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. See Overtime Compensation for additional information.

## **ADA Accommodations Policies**

*Policies DAA, DBB, DIA*

The District will provide reasonable accommodations to employees with a disability if the accommodation would allow the individual to perform the essential functions of their job, unless doing so would create an undue hardship. An employee or their supervisor may initiate a request for accommodation by contacting Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis and identifying an adjustment or change at work that is needed because of a disability. An employee also may submit a written request to HR using the ADA Accommodation Request Form, which is available by request.

Upon receiving the reasonable accommodation request, HR or the ADA coordinator will meet with the employee and conduct an informal, interactive discussion to identify an accommodation that will allow the employee to perform the essential functions of the job effectively. The district may request medical information concerning the employee's disability to assist in determining what accommodation(s) may be available and appropriate. The employee will be responsible for obtaining the information from their health care provider. Medical information received will be confidential and kept separate from the employee's personnel file.

After reviewing medical documentation, the ADA coordinator will determine whether the employee is a qualified individual with a disability and develop a reasonable accommodation plan for the employee. Accommodation will be determined on a case-by-case basis. HR or the ADA coordinator will work closely with the employee and supervisor to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided and effective.

## **Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk**

*Policies DEAB, DG*

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

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

The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections of Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) requires an employee to notify the District if they believe the District is out of compliance in providing breaks for a nursing mother. The employee must give the District 10 days to come into compliance before making any claim of liability against the District. An employee with concerns should contact Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis, Deputy Superintendent, at (512) 267-8300.

## **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA)**

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) provides consideration of accommodations to employees who have known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. An employee seeking a PWFA accommodation should contact Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis, Deputy Superintendent, at (512) 267-8300 to begin the interactive process.

## **Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications**

*Policies DK, DBA*

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

Texas law also requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) 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 Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis.

## **Outside Employment and Tutoring**

*Policy DBD*

All 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.

**Administrators.** An employee (other than employees primarily responsible for in-class instruction) who has significant administrative duties relating to the operation of a school district, including the operation for a campus, program, or other subdivision of the district may not receive financial benefits for performing personal services for any business entity that conducts or solicits business with the District. With exceptions as noted below, administrators are also prohibited from receiving financial benefits for performing personal services for any education business that provides services regarding the curriculum or administration of any school district or financial benefits for performing personal services for other school districts, open enrollment charter schools, and education service centers. Exceptions apply to an administrator who is not a superintendent, assistant superintendent, or member of a board of managers if the board approves as required by statute. To be approved, services must be performed on the administrator's personal time. Contact the superintendent for more information.

## **Performance Evaluation**

*Policy DN series*

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the District. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda also can be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, participate in a performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

Upon receiving a report, a nursing review committee may review a nurse's nursing services, qualifications, and quality of patient care, as well as the merits of a complaint concerning a nurse, and a determination or recommendation regarding a complaint. A nurse may request, orally or in writing, a determination by the committee regarding conduct requested of the nurse believed to violate the nurse's duty to a patient.

## **Employee Involvement**

### *Policies BQA, BQB*

At both the campus and District levels, Lago Vista 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 Superintendent.

## **Staff Development**

### *Policies DMA*

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the District. Staff development for instructional personnel is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, addressed in the campus improvement plan, and approved by a campus-level advisory committee. Staff development for non-instructional personnel is designed to meet specific licensing requirements (e.g., bus drivers) and continued employee skill development.

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

**Exchange Hours and Days.** The District utilizes exchange days to exchange District required professional development time for designated days off during the school year. Eligible employees may be required to accumulate professional development exchange hours by attending professional development summer sessions, online sessions, or after-school sessions. Eligible employees accumulate an equivalent number of hours outside of the regular workday and substitute the hours for the designated days on the calendar. All exchange hours must be completed during non-contractual or non-work time. Eligible employees earn credit by attending professional development activities that relate directly to content-area instruction that are approved by the campus principal. Employees should not receive supplemental stipends when earning exchange hour credit.

If appropriate credit hours for an Exchange Day are not earned for these days, pay will be docked at the employee's daily rate of pay in order to return the unearned compensation received for the day(s). In addition, a day of leave will be docked for each unearned Exchange Day. Appeals due to extenuating circumstances may be made by submitting a letter in writing to the superintendent.

Employees may attend more than the designated number of hours of professional development, however, only designated number of exchange hours will count toward exchange day credit hours. All hours, including hours that count for exchange day credit, may count toward additional certifications or certification renewals.

## **Mental Health Training**

### *Policy DMA*

All District employees who regularly interact with students are required to complete an evidenced-based mental health training program that is designed to provide instruction regarding the recognition and support of children and youth who experience mental health or substance use issues that may pose a threat to school safety. Employees must provide a certificate of completion to the District that includes the name of the training course, along with supporting documentation confirming that the training meets the requirements of the commissioner rules for mental health training.

Campus staff required to complete the training includes, but is not limited to, teachers, coaches, librarians, instructional coaches, administrators, administrative support personnel, school resource officers, paraprofessionals, substitutes, custodians, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, crossing guards, and District special program liaisons, and supervisors of personnel who regularly interact with students.

# Compensation and Benefits

## Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

*Policy DEA, DEAA, DEAB*

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 (contract) or non-exempt (non-contract) according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as non-exempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each overtime hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek. (See *Overtime Compensation*.)

All employees will receive written notice of their pay and before the first paycheck of each fiscal 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 Lacolla Harper for more information about the District's pay schedule or about their own pay.

## Paychecks

All professional and salaried employees are paid monthly. Hourly employees are paid monthly. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the District employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization.

Employees are responsible for regularly reviewing the accuracy of their pay statement and should contact Lacolla Harper if they have any questions.

## Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of 30 days is necessary to activate this service. Contact Lacolla Harper for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

## **Payroll Deductions**

### *Policy CFEA*

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

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or Social Security employee contributions
- Federal income tax
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable

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

**Overpayments.** Employees are not entitled to any funds the District overpays. An agreement between an employee and the District must be in place in order to deduct any overpayment from one or more paychecks if an overpayment occurs.

## **Overtime Compensation**

### *Policies DEAB, DEC*

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

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:00 AM Sunday and ends at 11:59 PM on Saturday.

Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour work-week and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours.

Employees may be compensated for overtime (i.e., hours beyond 40 in a workweek) at time-and-a-half rate with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- 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 Superintendent must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage (only if a District vehicle is unavailable for use) and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the district. Employees must submit receipts, to the extent possible, to be reimbursed for allowable expenses other than mileage.

**Per Diem.** The District has an approved per diem reimbursement rate for meals when traveling on school business. District per diem rates are only approved for full-day travel outside the greater Austin area. Per diem funds will not be reimbursed for alcohol purchases or tips.

Employees will not be reimbursed for meals within the greater Austin area or any areas not within scope of the travel destination. In addition, employees who extend their trip beyond what is reasonably required to carry out the purpose of the trip, or who take leave during the trip, will not be reimbursed for meals incurred during that period. If any meals are provided as part of the conference, workshop or hotel they should not be included in the per diem. Reductions will be made accordingly.

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

### *Policy CRD*

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school employee health insurance program. The district's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

- Employees who are active, contributing TRS members
- Employees who are not contributing TRS members and who are employed for 10 or more regularly scheduled hours per week

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

## **Supplemental Insurance Benefits**

*Policy CRD*

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Detailed descriptions of supplemental insurance coverage (e.g., dental and vision), employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Open enrollment for supplemental coverage is the month of October with dates of coverage from 11/1 to 10/31. Employees should contact Lacolla Harper 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 dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, dental and additional term life insurance). A third-party administrator handles employee claims made on these accounts.

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

## **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

*Policy CRE*

The District, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The District has workers' compensation coverage from Edwards Risk Management. Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Depending on the circumstances of each case, law prescribes specific benefits.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to your principal or supervisor. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See *Workers' Compensation Benefits* 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 Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis.

## **Teacher Retirement**

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

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify Lacolla Harper and TRS as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the Web ([www.trs.texas.gov](http://www.trs.texas.gov)). See information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

## **Other Optional Benefit Programs**

For information on optional benefit programs, please contact Lacolla Harper.

**Accident Insurance.** Accident insurance helps to cover the expenses for emergency room costs, follow-up treatments, medical imaging, hospital confinement, and many other expenses associated with accidental injuries. This plan can help with medical expenses and living costs when you are injured unexpectedly.

**Cancer Insurance.** Cancer insurance is designed to be supplemental insurance that pays for many of the costs not covered by your major medical. This plan pays in addition to other coverage you may have.

**Dental Coverage.** Ameritas is the dental provider for Lago Vista ISD. Adult and child orthodontia coverage is available. You may select the dentist of your choice, however, the savings are greater by utilizing an in-network provider. There are two plans available so that you may choose the one that best meets your needs.

**Disability Income Insurance.** Disability income insurance is designed to protect your ability to earn an income. This plan will provide you with income (up to 70% of your gross monthly income) should you become disabled as a result of a covered accident or illness. There is a doctor bill benefit payable (if you are sick, miss a day of work, or go to a doctor) for out-of-pocket expenses up to \$50 for illness and \$150 for an accidental injury.

## **Flexible Spending Account**

Lago Vista ISD allows employees to set aside up to \$2,550 per year for unreimbursed medical expenses and/or up to \$5,000 per year for dependent day care expenses on a pre-tax basis. Federal regulations effective January 1, 2011 exclude over-the-counter medications from being eligible expenses.

**Group Life Insurance.** Lago Vista ISD offers their employees Group Life Insurance of \$15,000 through Dearborn National. In addition, coverage for spouse, and dependent children may be purchased.

**Individual Permanent Life Insurance.** Employees have the opportunity to purchase individual permanent life insurance through Texas Life. These policies are portable at the same price and coverage. Coverage can be purchased for dependents, including spouses, children, and grandchildren. Coverage is guaranteed to age 121.

**Medical Bridge Insurance.** Medical bridge insurance plans through Colonial Life can help to fill gaps and help protect against out-of-pocket expenses. Major benefits include: Wellness Benefit, Outpatient Surgical Benefit, Hospital Confinement Benefit, and Rehabilitation Unit Benefit.

**Retirement Annuities - Section 403(b).** Lago Vista ISD offers retirement programs to its employees through the use of 403(b) tax deferred annuities. These plans allow employees to save designated amounts out of their paychecks before tax and place them into a variety of mutual funds, variable annuities and fixed annuities. Any earnings grow tax deferred until withdrawn and are intended to supplement your TRS Pension Plan.

**Vision Coverage.** Lago Vista ISD offers their employees the opportunity to participate in two different plans with Eyetopia Vision Care that allow you to see a network eye care professional with low co-pays. You may choose the plan that best meets your needs and those of your family. Benefits for exams and materials are available every 12 months.

## **Additional Benefits**

Additional benefits include:

- Employee Assistance Programs - Contact Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis.
- Tuition-Free Attendance for Children of Non-Resident Employees - Contact Darren Webb.
- In-District Child Care - Contact Elvira Stravrowsky.
- Employee Wellness – Contact Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis.
- Free Athletic Passes – Contact campus principal.
- Travel Benefits (If you travel more than 100 miles from home) – Contact Lacolla Harper.

# Leaves and Absences

## Leaves and Absences

### Policy DEC, DECA, DECB

The District offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence.

Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of more than five days should call Lacolla Harper for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the District.

Paid leave must be used in no less than half-day increments. 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. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

1. Local leave.
2. State sick leave accumulated before the 1995–96 school year.
3. State personal leave.

Employees must follow District and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated or available paid leave shall result in deduction from the employee's pay.

If an hourly employee does not report or request leave of absence(s) according to District procedures, the incident is considered a "no call/no show". An employee who is absent for 3 consecutive days without notice is considered to have abandoned their job and may face disciplinary consequences up to and including termination.

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

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

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

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

The District may require medical certification due to an employee's questionable pattern of absences or when deemed necessary by the supervisor or superintendent. The District may also request medical certification when an employee requests leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for the employee's serious health condition, a serious health condition of the employee's spouse, parent, or child, or for military caregiver leave.

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

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Employees on an approved leave of absence other than family and medical leave may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under FMLA will be paid by the District as they were prior to the leave. Otherwise, the District does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave.

Under TRS-Active Care rules, an employee is no longer eligible for insurance through the District after six months of unpaid leave other than FML. If an employee's unpaid leave extends for more than six months, the District will provide the employee with notice of COBRA rights.

## **Personal Leave**

State law entitles all employees to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is available for use at the beginning of the year. A day of personal leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time. State personal leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. Personal leave may be used for two general purposes: non-discretionary and discretionary.

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

**Discretionary.** Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor 3 days in advance of the anticipated absence. 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. Discretionary leave may not be taken for more than three consecutive days. **No more than three discretionary leave days may be used during any one semester or more than five discretionary leave days during the school year.** Employees will have their pay docked at the daily rate for each day used in excess of these limits.

**Leave Proration.** If an employee separates from employment with the District before his or her last duty day of the year, or begins employment after the first duty day, state personal leave will be prorated based on the actual time employed. When an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck will be reduced by the amount of state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year.

## **Limits on Discretionary Leave**

The employee shall submit a written request for discretionary leave to the immediate supervisor or designee at least three days in advance. The supervisor or designee shall consider the effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or District operations, as well as the availability of substitutes. Discretionary leave may not be taken on days marked as Red X Days, i.e., on the day before or after a school holiday, on the first or last day of a semester, on days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams, on days scheduled for state assessment tests on your campus, and on professional or staff development days (See Appendix B). Exceptions may be made by the Superintendent for extenuating circumstances, including a death in the family or a wedding (if you are in the wedding party).

A supervisor or the Superintendent may require medical certification for individuals who utilize non-discretionary sick leave on these days. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated and available paid leave shall result in deductions from the employee's pay. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated and available paid leave shall result in deductions from the employee's pay equal to the employee's daily rate.

## **State Sick Leave**

State sick leave accumulated before 1995 is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. State sick leave 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**

Professional employees earn an additional five equivalent workdays of local sick leave per school year, concurrently with state leave. Paraprofessionals and support staff shall earn at the rate of one-half workday for each 18 days of employment up to the maximum per school year established by Policy DEC (LOCAL).

## **Local Leave Buy Back Policy**

### *Policy DEC (LOCAL)*

Prior to the last instructional day of a school year, an employee may request that the District buy back up to five days of unused local leave earned during the current school year. The request shall be made on a form provided by the District and no changes shall be allowed once the request has been submitted. Days for which reimbursement is made shall be deducted from the employee's leave

record. The usual deductions shall be made and payment shall be included in the July payroll check. For professional employees, the rate of reimbursement shall be \$75 per day; for paraprofessional and auxiliary employees, the rate of reimbursement shall be the employee's daily rate of pay up to \$50.

## **Extended Leave**

When an employee misses more days than they have accumulated through their local and State allocations, an extended leave benefit may be available to employees who meet criteria under the FMLA. Ten additional leave days will be provided, however the daily sub rate will be deducted from the daily rate. A written request for extended sick leave must be accompanied by medical certification of the illness or injury. For employees other than professionals, an amount equal to one-half the individual employee's daily rate of pay shall be deducted for each day of extended sick leave taken.

## **Local Sick Leave Pool**

### *Policy DEC (LOCAL)*

An employee who has exhausted all paid leave and who suffers from a catastrophic illness or injury or is absent due to the catastrophic illness or injury of a member of the employee's immediate family may request the establishment of a sick leave pool, to which District employees may donate **only local leave for use by the eligible employee**. If the employee is unable to submit the request, a member of the employee's family or the employee's supervisor may submit the request to establish a sick leave pool.

An additional thirty days are available to employees who exhaust the extended leave option. These additional days require donations from staff at a rate of one day per staff member. The pool shall cease to exist when the employee no longer needs leave for the purpose requested, uses the maximum number of days allowed under a pool, or exhausts all leave days donated to the sick leave pool.

## **Family and Medical Leave (FML)—General Provisions**

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

### **What is FMLA leave?**

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that provides eligible employees with job-protected leave for qualifying family and medical reasons.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) enforces the FMLA for most employees. Eligible employees can take up to 12 workweeks of FMLA leave in a 12-month period for:

- The birth, adoption or foster placement of a child with you,
- Your serious mental or physical health condition that makes you unable to work,
- To care for your spouse, child or parent with a serious mental or physical health condition, and
- Certain qualifying reasons related to the foreign deployment of your spouse, child or parent who is a military servicemember.

An eligible employee who is the spouse, child, parent or next of kin of a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness may take up to 26 workweeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember.

You have the right to use FMLA leave in one block of time. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, you may take FMLA leave intermittently in separate blocks of time, or on a reduced schedule by working less hours each day or week. Read Fact Sheet #28M(c) for more information.

FMLA leave is not paid leave, but you may choose, or be required by your employer, to use any employer-provided paid leave if your employer's paid leave policy covers the reason for which you need FMLA leave.

### **Am I eligible to take FMLA leave?**

You are an eligible employee if all of the following apply:

- You work for a covered employer,
- You have worked for your employer at least 12 months,
- You have at least 1,250 hours of service for your employer during the 12 months before your leave, and
- Your employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of your work location.

Airline flight crew employees have different "hours of service" requirements.

You work for a covered employer if one of the following applies:

- You work for a private employer that had at least 50 employees during at least 20 workweeks in the current or previous calendar year,
- You work for an elementary or public or private secondary school, or
- You work for a public agency, such as a local, state or federal government agency. Most federal employees are covered by Title II of the FMLA, administered by the Office of Personnel Management

### **How do I request FMLA leave?**

Generally, to request FMLA leave you must:

- Follow your employer's normal policies for requesting leave,
- Give notice at least 30 days before your need for FMLA leave, or
- If advance notice is not possible, give notice as soon as possible.

You do not have to share a medical diagnosis but must provide enough information to your employer so they can determine whether the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. You must also inform your employer if FMLA leave was previously taken or approved for the same reason when requesting additional leave.

Your employer may request certification from a health care provider to verify medical leave and may request certification of a qualifying exigency.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

State employees may be subject to certain limitations in pursuit of direct lawsuits regarding leave for their own serious health conditions. Most federal and certain congressional employees are also

covered by the law but are subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or Congress

### **What does my employer need to do?**

If you are eligible for FMLA leave, your employer must:

- Allow you to take job-protected time off work for a qualifying reason,
- Continue your group health plan coverage while you are on leave on the same basis as if you had not taken leave, and
- Allow you to return to the same job, or a virtually identical job with the same pay, benefits and other working conditions, including shift and location, at the end of your leave.

Your employer cannot interfere with your FMLA rights or threaten or punish you for exercising your rights under the law. For example, your employer cannot retaliate against you for requesting FMLA leave or cooperating with a WHD investigation.

After becoming aware that your need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, your employer must confirm whether you are eligible or not eligible for FMLA leave. If your employer determines that you are eligible, your employer must notify you in writing:

- About your FMLA rights and responsibilities, and
- How much of your requested leave, if any, will be FMLA-protected leave.

### **Where can I find more information?**

Call 1-866-487-9243 or visit [dol.gov/fmla](http://dol.gov/fmla) to learn more.

If you believe your rights under the FMLA have been violated, you may file a complaint with WHD or file a private lawsuit against your employer in court. Scan the QR code to learn about our WHD complaint process.



**WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION**  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

**SCAN ME**



## **Local Family & Medical Leave Provisions**

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period measured forward from the date an individual employee's first FMLA leave begins.

**Use of Paid Leave.** Family and medical leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, compensatory time, assault leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The District will designate the leave as family and medical leave, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently. Teachers have the option of not using paid leave during an FML absence for pregnancy or birth or adoption of a child.

**Combined Leave for Spouses.** Spouses who are employed by the District are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FML leave to care for a parent with a serious health condition; or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

**Intermittent Leave.** When medically necessary or in the case of a qualifying exigency, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. The District shall permit use of intermittent or reduced schedule FMLA leave for the care of a newborn child or for the adoption or placement of a child with the employee.

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

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

In certain cases, instructional employees desiring to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue on family and medical leave until the end of the semester. The additional time off is not counted against the employee's FML entitlement, and the District will maintain the employee's group health insurance and reinstate the employee at the end of the leave according to the procedures outlined in policy [see DECA (LEGAL)].

**Failure to Return.** If, at the expiration of FML, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the District may require the employee to reimburse the District's share of insurance premiums paid during any portion of FML when the employee was on unpaid leave. If the employee fails to return to work for a reason beyond the employee's control, such as a continuing personal or family serious health condition or a spouse being unexpectedly transferred more than 75 miles from the District, the District may not require the employee to reimburse the District's share of premiums paid.

**District Contact.** Employees that require FML leave or have questions should contact Dr. Suzy Lofton Bullis for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## Temporary Disability Leave

**Certified Employees.** 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. Temporary disability leave must be taken as a continuous block of time. It may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability.

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be accepted as a request for temporary disability leave. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days. If 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, their immediate supervisor and the Superintendent 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.

Certified employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned if an appropriate position is available. If an appropriate position is not available, the employee may be assigned to another campus, subject to the approval of the campus principal. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, the employee will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

## Workers' Compensation Benefits

*NOTE: Workers' compensation is not a form of leave. The workers' compensation law does not require the continuation of the District's contribution to health insurance.*

An employee absent from duty because of a job-related illness or injury may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits if the absence exceeds seven calendar days.

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

## **Assault Leave**

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to an employee who is injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An incident involving an assault is a work-related injury, and should be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor and the superintendent.

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 non-responsible for purposes of criminal liability.

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

## **Bereavement Leave**

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

## **Jury Duty**

*Policies DEC, DG*

The District provides paid leave to employees who are summoned to jury duty including service on a grand jury. The District will not discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate, or coerce any regular employee because of juror or grand juror service or for the employee's attendance or scheduled attendance in connection with the service in any court in the United States. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides. An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and may be required to provide the District a copy of the summons to document the need for leave.

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

## **Compliance with a Subpoena**

Employees will be granted paid leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding. Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

## **Truancy Court Appearances**

An employee who is a parent, guardian of a child, or a court-appointed guardian ad litem of a child who is required to miss work to attend a truancy court hearing may use personal leave or

compensatory time for the absence. Employees who do not have paid leave available will be docked for any absence required because of the court appearance.

## **Religious Observance**

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

## **Military Leave**

**Paid Leave for Military Service.** Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to 15 days of paid leave per fiscal year when engaged in authorized training or duty ordered by proper authority. An additional seven days of leave per fiscal year are available if called to state active duty in response to a disaster. In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service.

**Re-employment 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 re-employed in the position they would have held if employment had not been interrupted or reassigned to an equivalent or similar position provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. Employees returning to work following military leave should contact the Superintendent. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

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

# **Employee Relations and Communications**

## **Employee Recognition and Appreciation**

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the District. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the District newsletter, and through special events and activities, such as our annual Teacher of the Year and Support Staff Member of the Year recognitions.

## **District Communications**

Throughout the school year, the District 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.

Information on District events can be found on the District calendar at [www.lagovistaisd.net](http://www.lagovistaisd.net).

For more information on District communications, please contact Holly Jackson.

# Complaints and Grievances

## Employee 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 concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints may be accessed at: <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1153?filter=DGBA>.

# Employee Expectations, 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 up to and including termination.
- 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.
- The District prohibits the use, possession, or display of any firearm, illegal knife, club, or prohibited weapon, as defined at FNCG, on District property at all times.

All District employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, District policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a district investigation, may result in disciplinary action, up to and 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 knew of the incident. See *Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification*, 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 for your benefit:

## Code of Ethics for Texas Educators

### Purpose and Scope

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. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification. (19 TAC 247.1(b))

## **TITLE 19 EDUCATION**

### **PART 7 STATE BOARD OF EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION CHAPTER 247 EDUCATORS' CODE OF ETHICS**

#### **RULE §247.2 Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators**

##### **Enforceable Standards.**

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

- (A) **Standard 1.1.** The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
- (B) **Standard 1.2.** The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
- (C) **Standard 1.3.** The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- (D) **Standard 1.4.** The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- (E) **Standard 1.5.** The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
- (F) **Standard 1.6.** The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
- (G) **Standard 1.7.** The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.
- (H) **Standard 1.8.** The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.
- (I) **Standard 1.9.** The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.
- (J) **Standard 1.10.** The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
- (K) **Standard 1.11.** The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
- (L) **Standard 1.12.** The educator shall refrain from the illegal use or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.
- (M) **Standard 1.13.** The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

###### **(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.**

- (A) **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.

- (B) **Standard 2.2.** The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- (C) **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.
- (D) **Standard 2.4.** The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- (E) **Standard 2.5.** The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.
- (F) **Standard 2.6.** The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
- (G) **Standard 2.7.** The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.
- (H) **Standard 2.8.** The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

**(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.**

- (A) **Standard 3.1.** The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- (B) **Standard 3.2.** The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.
- (C) **Standard 3.3.** The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.
- (D) **Standard 3.4.** The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.
- (E) **Standard 3.5.** The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.
- (F) **Standard 3.6.** The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.
- (G) **Standard 3.7.** The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.
- (H) **Standard 3.8.** The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.
- (I) **Standard 3.9.** The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:
  - (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
  - (ii) the subject matter of the communication;

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

*Source Note: The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective August 22, 2002, 27 TexReg 7530; amended to be effective December 26, 2010, 35 TexReg 11242*

## **Employee Dress**

### *Policy DH*

All faculty and staff are expected to dress in a manner that allows the individual to fulfill his/her job responsibilities while maintaining high standards of professionalism. It is our responsibility to dress in a manner that reflects the high standards that we hold for ourselves as educators. When a visitor enters a campus, classroom, or work area, it should immediately be clear who the professionals are. Coaches are expected to wear professional clothing while teaching in the classroom and athletic clothing while coaching. Employees shall not wear shorts or tank tops. Hats may not be worn indoors. If dyed, hair must be within the range of natural hair colors.

## **Cell Phones & Personal Electronic Devices**

Personal cell phones should be set to silent mode during instructional times. During instructional times, teachers and instructional staff should not take personal calls, check text messages, or engage in other personal messaging via personal or school-owned electronic devices. All faculty and staff should ensure that this type of communication occurs during personal time (lunch, conference periods, scheduled breaks, etc.).

**Social Media and/or Networking.** An employee who uses social media and/or networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.) for personal purposes shall limit use to **before and after scheduled work hours**, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct District business.

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

### *Policies DH, DIA*

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

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

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

Any District employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, or believes that another employee has experienced such prohibited conduct, should immediately report the alleged acts. The employee may report the alleged acts to his or her supervisor, the campus principal, the Title IX coordinator, or the superintendent. The District's Title IX coordinator's name and contact information is listed in the Equal Employment Opportunity section of this handbook.

The District's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is located at

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1153?filter=DIA>

## **Harassment of Students**

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

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and District employees are prohibited.

Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate District official. Any District employee who suspects or receives direct or indirect notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, of a student shall immediately notify the District's Title IX coordinator, the ADA/Section 504 coordinator, or superintendent and take any other steps required by District policy.

All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect occurred must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse* for additional information.

The District's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is located at

[http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1153?filename=DHB\(LEGAL\).pdf](http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1153?filename=DHB(LEGAL).pdf)

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

*Policies DG, FFG, GRA*

All employees with reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §261.001, are required by state law to make a report to a law enforcement agency, the Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering the facility) within 24 hours after the employee first has reasonable cause to believe that the child has been abused or neglected. Law enforcement agency includes the Texas Department of Public Safety, a municipal police department, a county sheriff's office, or a county constable's office and does not include the District police.

A person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child (including a teacher) is required to report alleged abuse or neglect to DFPS even if a report is made to law enforcement.

Employees are also required to make a report if they have cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or person with a disability.

Reports to DFPS can be made using the Texas Abuse Hotline at

<https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx> or 800-252-5400. State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the District is prohibited from taking an adverse employment action against a certified or licensed professional 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 make the required report may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect.

In addition, a certified employee's failure to report may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

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

Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with 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.

## **Sexual Abuse & Maltreatment of Children**

The District has established a plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at the superintendent's office. As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or otherwise maltreated. Abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined to include any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare, including conduct that constitutes the offense of continuous sexual abuse of a young child or disabled individual, indecency with a child, improper relationship between an educator and a student, sexual assault, or encouraging a child to engage in sexual conduct, as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Maltreatment is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

## **Reports to Texas Education Agency**

### **Policy DF, DHB, DHC**

The conduct of an employee must be reported to TEA if there is evidence that the employee was involved in any of the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor, or any other unlawful conduct with a student or a minor;
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual contact or a romantic relationship with a student or minor;
- Engaged in inappropriate communication with a student or minor; or
- Failed to maintain appropriate boundaries with a student or minor.

For a certified employee the conduct below must also be reported:

- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance;
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of district or school property or funds;
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit for the purpose of promotion or additional compensation; or
- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on District property or at a school-sponsored event.

The reporting requirements above are in addition to the superintendent's ongoing duty to notify TEA when a certified employee or an applicant for certification has a reported criminal history or engaged in conduct violating the assessment security procedures established under TEC §39.0301. "Reported criminal history" means any formal criminal justice system charges and dispositions including arrests, detentions, indictments, criminal information, convictions, deferred adjudications, and probations in any state or federal jurisdiction that is obtained by a means other than the Finger-print-based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT).

## **Reporting Crime**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Scope and Sequence**

### *Policy DG*

If a teacher determines that students need more or less time in a specific area to demonstrate proficiency in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for that subject and grade level, the District will not penalize the teacher for not following the District's scope and sequence.

The District may take appropriate action if a teacher does not follow the District's scope and sequence based on documented evidence of a deficiency in classroom instruction. This documentation can be obtained through observation or substantiated and documented third-party information.

## **Technology Resources**

### *Policy CQ*

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

- Imposes no tangible cost to the District;
- Does not unduly burden the District's technology resources;
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance; and
- Artificial intelligence (AI) should only be used as a support tool to improve student outcomes, not to replace the decisions made by teachers or students.

Access to the District's technology resources is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations governing use of the District's technology resources and shall agree in writing to allow monitoring of their use and to comply with such regulations and guidelines. Noncompliance may result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and other disciplinary action consistent with District policies. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the District.

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

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

## **Personal Use of Electronic Communications**

*Policies CQ, CY, DH*

Electronic communications includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.). Electronic communications also include all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

As role models for the District's students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as District employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for Web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic communications for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the District's computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct District business.
- The employee shall not use District and campus trademarks, including names, logos, mascots, and symbols or other copyrighted material on social media or in texts without express written consent.
- An employee who uses social media and/or networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.) for personal purposes shall limit use to before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct District business.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on District business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is include:
  - Confidentiality of student records. [See Policy FL]
  - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law. [See Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]
  - Confidentiality of District records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses. [See Policy GBA]
  - Copyright law [See Policy CY]
  - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system. [See Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]

See *Electronic Communications between Employees, and Students, and Parents* for regulations on employee communication with students through electronic media.

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

### *Policy DH*

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may communicate through electronic media with students who are currently enrolled in the District. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. Electronic communications between all other employees and students who are enrolled in the District are prohibited.

An employee is not subject to these provisions to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

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

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

- *Electronic communications* means any communication facilitated by the use of any electronic device, including a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. The term includes e-mail, text messages, instant messages, and any communication made through an Internet website, including a social media website or a social networking website.
- *Communicate* means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an

employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee's personal social network page or a blog) is not a communication; however, the employee may be subject to District regulations on personal electronic communications. See *Personal Use of Electronic Media*, above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not communication.

- *Certified or licensed employee* means a person employed in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, licensed therapists, and athletic trainers.

An employee who uses electronic media to communicate with students shall observe the following:

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the district unless a specific exception is noted below.
- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:
  - The employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message; or
  - The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
  - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee's District email address.
- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 11pm and 5am. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application in accordance with District regulations.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, including:

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

## **Public Information on Private Devices**

*Policy DH, GB*

Employees should not maintain District information on privately owned devices. Any District information must be forwarded or transferred to the district to be preserved. The District will take reasonable efforts to obtain public information in compliance with the Public Information Act.

Reasonable efforts may include:

- Verbal or written directive
- Remote access to District-owned devices and services

## **Criminal History Background Checks**

*Policy DBAA*

All employees are subject to a review of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted 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, DHB, DHC*

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 on school property or at a school-sponsored activity; or

Moral turpitude includes the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit
- Theft
- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor
- Crimes involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any mis-demeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance
- Felonies involving driving while intoxicated (DWI)
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code.

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

## **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention**

### *Policy DH*

Lago Vista 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 regarding employee drug use follows:

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1153?filename=DH\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1153?filename=DH(LOCAL).pdf)

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

*Policies DH, GKA, FNCD*

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

## **Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

*Policy CAA*

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

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

## **Conflict of Interest**

*Policies CB, DBD*

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

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

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

## **Gifts and Favors**

### *Policy DBD*

Employees may not accept gifts or favors that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor, or service by an administrator or teacher that might reasonably tend to influence the selection of textbooks 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, which convey information to students or contribute to the learning process.

## **Copyrighted Materials**

### *Policy CY*

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

## **Associations and Political Activities**

### *Policy DGA*

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

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

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

## **Charitable Contributions**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Safety and Security**

### *Policy CK Series*

The District has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety and security of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety and security program includes written guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. See *Emergencies* for additional information.

Employees must follow established protocols and response to emergencies for each campus and department. Refer to written security procedures specific to your location and work area.

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.

While driving on District business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on District business are prohibited from texting and using other electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgment on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

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

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

*Policies DH, FNCG, GKA*

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a concealed handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs or other prohibited weapons (i.e., taser or stun gun, or chemical dispensing devices used for personal protection, such as Mace or pepper spray) onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other District provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. 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 Superintendent's office 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.

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

*Policy CKA*

The District is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for each school. A copy of the District's management plan is kept in the administration office and is available for inspection during normal business hours. Campus specific plans are in the principal's office on each campus.

## **Pest Control Treatment**

*Policies CLB, DI*

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

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

# General Procedures

## Absence from Duty

### *Policy DEC*

An employee shall submit a written request for discretionary use of state personal leave to the immediate supervisor or designee in advance. Employees who wish to request discretionary use of personal leave must do so at least 48 hours in advance. In deciding whether to approve or deny state personal leave, a supervisor shall not seek or consider the reasons for which an employee requests to use leave. However, the supervisor shall consider the effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or District operations, as well as the availability of substitutes. A supervisor will not approve the discretionary use of personal leave if more than 10% of the campus staff is absent or if he/she feels that the absence will have a substantially negative impact on the campus operations. Requests for discretionary use of personal leave may be denied if an appropriate substitute cannot be arranged.

**Absence Due to Illness.** An employee must inform his/her supervisor as soon as he/she is aware of an impending absence. Teachers and other campus staff must report the absence through Aesop. Employees are asked to give at least 24 hours notice, if possible. Last minute, emergency substitute requests shall be made in Aesop and followed up with a phone call to the campus substitute coordinator and principal. Phone calls regarding emergency requests shall be made before 8:30 pm or after 6:00 am. Emergency substitute requests shall be made no later than the beginning of the employee's workday on the day of the absence. All campus absence requests must be submitted to:

<b>High School</b>	April Cmet, Substitute Coordinator Janda Castillo, Principal
<b>Middle School</b>	Sue Kunze, Substitute Coordinator Eric Holt, Principal
<b>Intermediate School</b>	Gabriela Mercado, Substitute Coordinator Bonnie Sullivan, Principal
<b>Elementary</b>	Bree Makowichuk, Substitute Coordinator Kerri Walker, Principal

Instructional staff must always inform the principal of an absence, regardless if a substitute has been arranged.

## 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, all local media (radio and television) will be alerted and information will be posted on the District web site. Days missed due to closing will be made up at a later point in the year according to the District calendar.

Lago Vista ISD utilizes Blackboard Connect, a communication tool, to assist in these efforts. In addition to the standard radio and TV notification systems already in use, Blackboard Connect enables the District to call the families of all students, as well as faculty and staff, in less than 5 minutes, if needed. Employees may also download a free Finalsight app from iTunes to receive push notifications.

It is important that phone numbers are kept up-to-date in the school's database so that these calls are accurate. If there is a change to your phone number, please contact the front office and report these changes as soon as they are known.

## **Building & Facility Use**

*Policies DGA, GKD*

Employees who wish to use District facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. The campus principal is the point of contact for use of school facilities after school hours. The athletic director is the point of contact for use of athletic facilities. The theater director is the point of contact for use of the Performing Arts Center. The administrative assistant to the superintendent is the point of contact for use of Viking Hall. Contact these individuals to request to use facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

## **Building and Classroom Care**

We take pride in our facilities in Lago Vista ISD. Employees should be respectful of colleagues and set a good example for students by keeping classrooms and common areas neat and tidy.

We encourage teachers to create an inviting classroom environment. Decorations must be neatly displayed and may not present any safety hazards. To prevent damage to walls, all posters and decorations must be displayed using removable materials. Walls must not be stapled. Walls may not be painted without approval from the campus principal.

To conserve energy costs, the use of personal appliances (refrigerators, microwaves, etc.) should be limited. The location and description of these items must be reported to campus administration annually.

At the elementary campus, chairs should be stacked at the end of every school day. They should NOT be placed on tables.

**Summertime Preparation.** Teachers should pack up all personal and classroom materials prior to departure for the summer. As classrooms are emptied for waxing, it is important that all items are appropriately labeled with the teacher's name and room number to ensure that items return.

Campuses are painted on a rotating basis. Teachers should expect to remove all materials from the walls during years the campus is being painted.

## Campus Safety

Any maintenance concerns related to campus safety should be reported immediately.

**Keys.** Keys will be checked out to employees for the entire school year. Employees must take great care not to lose keys. District keys may not be loaned or duplicated. Employees are responsible for replacing lost keys (\$25.00 per key).

Employees must ensure that all doors are properly secured. When exiting, teachers must ensure that classroom doors are locked. Staff members should secure closets, laptops, and other valuables at night. Any campus employee who suspects that a break-in has occurred in your room must notify the front office immediately.

Appropriate staff members are also provided an electronic swipe card to gain access to the building from the outside. Only administrative staff will have exterior keys. Employees must not loan exterior swipe cards to anyone. All employees are responsible for ensuring building security should they enter a building after hours. In the event that a staff member loans a swipe card, he/she is still responsible for any damages that might occur from the building not being properly secured.

**Campus Doors.** All exterior campus doors must remain locked and closed throughout the entire school day. Employees should ensure that exterior doors are promptly closed and secured. Never prop an exterior door open as it provides an opportunity for an intruder to enter the building or a child to leave unsupervised. All instructional classroom doors shall remain locked throughout the school day.

**Visitors.** The District welcomes visitors to our classrooms. Opening our doors and classrooms to parents is one way to share the wonderful things that are happening in Lago Vista ISD with the community. However, the presence of visitors must not disrupt instruction. All visits during instructional time are to be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance and must be approved by the principal or designee. Texas law prohibits unauthorized visitors in or around public schools.

**Guest Badges.** All visitors and volunteers on Lago Vista ISD campuses must report to the front office to receive a visitor badge. Visitors and volunteers shall wear the tag provided by the office. If an employee sees a person on campus without a visitor badge, he/she shall politely request that visitor to report to the office. Also, that employee shall notify the front office.

## Communication

**Email.** District email is provided for teachers to use within the scope of their professional responsibilities. Anything written or received on District email is subject to open records requests. Employees shall exercise extreme caution when using electronic communication to relay student information. To protect student privacy in the event that an email is forwarded, it is recommended that employees use only initials when referring to a specific student. Campus or staff-wide emails should be reserved for professional purposes only and should be approved by the campus administrator.

An employee shall be held to high professional standards in his or her use of District electronic communication. If an employee's use of electronic email violates state or federal law or District policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**Meetings.** Meetings will be scheduled to conduct business and share information. All attempts will be made to provide adequate notice of meetings. Furthermore, meeting facilitators should be mindful of starting and ending times.

Staff members are expected to attend all scheduled staff, grade-level, departmental, and other professional meetings--including PTO events. Staff should make arrangements to be present at all back-to-school, open house, and other annual evening events.

**Grade-Level/Department Meetings.** Grade level and departments shall meet at least once a week to plan, share ideas, and analyze data. Meetings may be held during planning periods, before school, or after school. Team leaders/department chairs are responsible for emailing notes from meetings to the campus principal. Minutes should include discussion items, actions, concerns, needs, and celebrations. Campus principals will meet with teams and departments periodically, as needed.

**Campus Improvement Council.** The Campus Improvement Council meets at least once a month at a time to be decided by the members of the committee. All meetings are open to the public. Agendas, sign-ins, and minutes must be submitted to and maintained by the campus principal.

**Campus Faculty Meetings.** Campus faculty will meet regularly according to the schedule set by the campus principal.

**Parent Communication.** Employees are encouraged to initiate positive communication with parents as soon as possible. Teachers are expected to contact parents any time a student is sent to the office for a discipline referral, or when a student is at-risk for failing a class for the school year. Parents will be sent a reminder every three weeks through our ParentLink system to check grades at progress-report intervals.

Phone calls, emails, and letters from parents that require a response should be returned within 24 hours.

Student report cards are distributed each 9 weeks. Progress reports are made available every 3 weeks for all students. Dates for report cards and progress reports may be found on the District calendar. Additional information regarding grades is printed in the Lago Vista ISD Grading Guidelines.

Employees should document all contact with parents. You are strongly encouraged to keep a written record documenting phone calls, notes, and conferences. Name, time, date, and nature of contact should all be documented.

**Staff Websites.** Teacher websites/LMS sites shall be up to date, including a calendar listing the dates of important assignments, quizzes, and tests. Lago Vista ISD curriculum unit maps should be up-to-date. During walkthroughs, administrators should be able to access curriculum snapshots and unit organizers using Google Drive.

**Staff Communication.** Campus principals will email regular staff bulletins/newsletters to ensure that faculty and staff are aware of campus events and information. Employees should check physical inboxes on a daily basis.

## Curriculum & Instruction

**Substitute Preparation.** Beginning the first week of school, each teacher shall have a substitute folder on file in the office. This folder shall contain information that will allow the substitute to function in the teacher's absence. The following items are suggested for inclusion in the folder:

Class roster	Name and room number of team members/nearby teachers
Current seating chart	Attendance procedures
Daily schedule	Special passes (nurse)
Daily Specials Rotation Schedule	Special class routines
Fire Drill, Lockdown Drill and Emergency Exit Procedures	Classroom management information
List of students who follow alternative schedules, special programs, or who have other documented needs, e.g., food allergies (first name and last initial only of these students)	Reliable students in each class
Location of all needed materials	Duty responsibilities (bus/car/playground/lunch/etc.)
PBIS Procedures	Special assignments
	End of day procedures: bus and car riders
	Updated list of method in which child goes home regularly

Substitute lesson plans should also include work for students to do in the event that teacher lesson plans are not available. If emergency plans include a worksheet for students to do, leave one copy of the worksheet in the folder and the office will make multiple copies. Teachers must review and update substitute folders at least once every nine weeks, whenever pertinent changes occur in the classroom, or when a substitute has used the plans.

**Tutorials.** Teachers shall provide tutorials before, during, or after school, as needed. It is recommended that teachers select a specified time and coordinate with other grade-level teachers. This will ensure that students have adequate opportunities to participate in tutorials across multiple content areas. Teachers shall communicate tutorial opportunities to parents and contact them directly when specific needs arise. Tutorials must be offered for students who are failing or are in danger of failing a subject.

**Retest/Reteach.** Students who receive an unsatisfactory grade may earn an opportunity to redo the assignment after completing a mandatory tutorial or teacher selected activity. Procedures for retest/reteach are outlined in the Lago Vista ISD Grading Guidelines.

**Textbooks.** Classroom teachers are responsible for the maintenance of all textbooks and are expected to maintain a student/textbook number record for all textbooks that are checked out to students. When issuing textbooks to students, teachers shall note any damage to the book before issuing it to students.

Upon completion of the textbook use, teachers will inspect the book and note any damage. If a student damages a book, he/she is expected to pay a fine. Students who damage or lose books should be sent to the office and the assistant principal will assess the fine or inform the student of the cost to replace a lost book.

If a teacher needs textbooks during the year, he/she should e-mail the assistant principal with the amount and type of books needed. Requested books will be delivered as soon as possible. Textbooks must be covered at all times.

Students must pay for any lost or damaged textbooks before new textbooks are issued. Students may use a textbook in the classroom if they lose or damage a book, but should not be allowed to take them home.

**Field Trips.** Field trips are a valuable part of the educational program and are budgeted for by grade-level/department. The purpose of any field trip must be justified by course curriculum and be explicitly aligned to state content standards. Field trips are limited to one per year. The campus principal must approve special circumstances.

To initiate the field trip request, a team leader/department chair must inform the campus principal in writing of proposed dates and locations for the trip and request permission via email. This process should begin at least 2 weeks prior to the proposed date of the field trip. Upon approval from the principal, the field trip organizer must submit a transportation request and a request for a check to the principal, if necessary. This should be requested at least two weeks in advance. The field trip organizer must also notify the cafeteria, front office, and other grade-levels that students will be off campus. All teachers should check with the school nurse for medication and any health issues.

Teachers are to make arrangements for trips through team leaders/department chairs. Please verify that a waiver of liability for each student is on file with the office before participating in any field trip. Parents should return an updated emergency contact form for each trip. This ensures that parents have been notified that their child is off campus and that the teacher has updated emergency information.

**Instructional Videos.** Well-selected instructional videos have the ability to enrich and support learning objectives. It is crucial that any selections meet high standards for quality in format, content, and production. It is expected that the classroom teacher previews any material prior to showing it in class. R rated materials will not be shown in Lago Vista ISD. All videos must have clear alignment to state standards. Movie clips may be shown only if they are pertinent to lesson content. Teachers shall obtain permission from the campus principal prior to showing any clips longer than 15 minutes in length.

**Classroom Celebrations.** Teachers shall obtain permission from the campus principal prior to holding any classroom celebrations. Classroom celebrations are only acceptable when they are tied to specific learning outcomes. Teachers should consult federal guidelines for nutrition prior to allowing food consumption in class.

## **Emergencies**

*Policy CKC, CKD*

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

all District buildings. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use.

## **Emergency School Closing**

### *Policy EG*

The District may close schools because of severe weather, epidemics, or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the District's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post a notice on the District's website and through Blackboard Connect (Parentlink). It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the District has updated contact information.

## **Fundraisers**

### *Policy FJ*

Fundraising activities by student groups and/or for school-sponsored projects shall be allowed, with prior administration approval and under the supervision of the project sponsor, for students in all grades. All fundraising projects shall be subject to the approval of the principal. Student participation in approved fund-raising activities shall not interfere with the regular instructional program. Funds raised shall be received, deposited, and disbursed in accordance with policy CFD(LOCAL).

Students representing their school may participate in charitable institution and/or community drives. Such participation, which shall be on a strictly voluntary basis and shall not disrupt the regular school day, shall be open to students in all grades. No outside organizations, commercial enterprises, or individuals may solicit contributions from students within the school. Charitable organizations shall be allowed to place collection boxes in the school buildings, provided no pressure to contribute is exerted on the students at any time.

The collection of monies that takes the time of the students or teachers during school hours is strictly forbidden, unless the monies collected represent payment for school lunches, monies that will benefit the school or its students, or other authorized fees.

## **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 and personal cell phone number
- Personal email address
- Information that reveals whether they have family members

The choice to not allow public access to this information or change an existing choice may be made at any time by submitting a written request to Lacolla Harper in the administration building. New or terminating employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public. Otherwise, personal information may be released to the public until a request to withhold the information is submitted or another exception for release of

information under law applies. An employee is responsible for notifying the District if he or she is subject to any exception for disclosure of personal or confidential information.

**Name and Address Changes.** It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify Lacolla Harper in the personnel 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 accessed through the New Form function in AppliTracks or downloaded from the Human Resources page on the District website.

## **Purchasing Procedures**

*Policy CH*

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the campus principal or immediate supervisor on an official District Purchase Order (DPO) 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 the Business Office for additional information on purchasing procedures.

## **Student Attendance Reporting**

*Policy FEB*

The Superintendent, principals, and teachers are responsible to the Board and the state to maintain accurate, current attendance records.

**High School Campus.** Attendance is taken 10 minutes into 90-minute classes, 5 minutes into 50-minute classes and at 9:40am. Attendance is not to be taken prior to that time. Attendance must be taken every period, every day, without exception. When a student returns to school after an absence, the student will turn in a written note, signed by their parent, to the front office.

**Middle School Campus.** Attendance is taken 5 minutes after the beginning of each period and at 9:40 a.m. Attendance is not to be taken prior to that time. Attendance must be taken every period, every day, without exception. When a student returns to school after an absence, the student will turn in a written note, signed by their parent, to the front office.

**Intermediate Campus.** Attendance is taken each day at 9:25am. Attendance is not to be taken prior to that time. A student is present for the day if he/she is in attendance at 9:25am. Attendance is to be taken every day, without exception. When a student returns to school after an absence, the student will turn in a written note, signed by their parent, to the classroom teacher.

**Elementary Campus.** Attendance is taken each day at 9:25am. Attendance is not to be taken prior to that time. A student is present for the day if he/she is in attendance at 9:25am. Attendance is to be taken every day, without exception. When a student returns to school after an absence, the student will turn in a written note, signed by their parent, to the classroom teacher. Attach this note and put it with items to be picked up by office staff.

## **Student Grading**

### *Policy EIA*

Policy requires the District to adopt a grading policy, including provisions for the assignment of grades on class assignments and examinations, before each school year. The District Grading policy:

- Must require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of an assignment;
- May not require a classroom teacher to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to the student's quality of work; and
- May allow a student a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade.

Classroom teachers will follow the Lago Vista ISD Grading Guidelines. Grades must be entered into the District grade book program on a weekly basis. Posted grades can and will be viewed by parents.

**New Students.** Students entering Lago Vista High School from another school must have their grades transferred to the Lago Vista ISD gradebook system. Without this information, the student will not receive an end-of-year grade for a course. Teachers are responsible for entering mid-period transfer grades into the system. In cases where students transfer from a school on a 6-week grading period, teachers will weigh the transfer grade appropriately. In cases where students transfer from a school that uses letter grades, the following scale will be used:

A+=97	B+=87	C+=79	D+=74	F=69 or below
A=94	B =84	C = 77	D=72	
A-=90	B-=80	C-=75	D=70	

## **Supervision of Students**

Lago Vista ISD students must be under the direct supervision of an agent of the school at all times. Employees are responsible for ensuring the safety of students and must never allow a student to be injured or lost as a result of inadequate supervision. The classroom teacher must know the location of any student for whom he/she is responsible. Students who leave the supervision of the responsible teacher must do so only with appropriate documentation. Under no circumstances should a class be left unattended.

**Duty.** Campus principals will assign duty to employees to ensure appropriate student supervision during periods of transition, such as arrival, lunch, and dismissal. Employees are expected to arrive on time to assigned duty stations. In the event that an employee is unable to be present at an assigned duty station, he/she is responsible for arranging coverage.

**Hallways.** Students should not be in the hallways during class periods without a hall pass. During passing periods on secondary campuses, teachers are expected to be in the hallways or at their doors greeting students upon entry into their classroom.

**Recess.** Teachers should station themselves around the playground/common areas in a manner that ensures all areas are adequately supervised.

**Students Staying After School.** If a teacher/coach keeps students after school, he/she must always inform the parent or guardian by phone call or acknowledged written message and make sure that arrangements have been made for the student to get home. Employees may never leave an unsupervised child at school at the end of the day.

Staff members' children are to be supervised at all times, as well. If an employee's children stay after school, they are to be closely monitored.

**Student Assistance with Physical Tasks.** Employees must be ever mindful of our responsibility for ensuring student wellbeing and must not ever put a student in a position that might jeopardize his/her health or safety. Employees should not ask a student to perform any task without appropriate supervision and without strong consideration for the student's mental and physical capacity. Employees should not allow elementary students to move televisions/television stands, lunchroom tables, or other heavy equipment/objects.

**Students Leaving Early.** If a student leaves his/her campus during the school day, he/she must be checked out with approval that is granted through the school office. The front office staff is responsible for ensuring that a student leaves campus with the appropriate parent/guardian permission. Furthermore, as appropriate, front office staff members are responsible for ensuring that a student is picked up only by an approved adult. Under no circumstances shall a student be allowed to leave campus without approval from the front office.

**Elementary and Intermediate Transportation Changes.** All notes and emails regarding transportation changes should be sent to the office at the beginning of the day. The front office will enter the transportation change into a database and a transportation change will be created. These paper transportation change forms will be delivered by the specified time each day. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that each student receives his/her change and goes home the correct way each day. Transportation changes will only be accepted during the specified time periods. After that, the campus principal must approve all transportation change requests. Only emergency situations will be approved. Students must never be allowed to leave the building with someone who is not listed on their contact list without express permission from a parent or guardian.

**Elementary Student Dismissal.** Students should be picked up in the designated car rider areas. If a parent is picking up more than one student, the oldest child should join the youngest child's group so that the students are picked up together.

All parents should display a large name card on their car's visor. This card should have the child's first name, last name, and grade level on it. For safety reasons, parents are not allowed to get out of their vehicles to retrieve their students from the car rider line. In the front of the school the buses will be parked in the circular drive to load students. They will NOT move the buses for drivers of cars parked in this parking lot.

Parents are not permitted to retrieve their child from the bus or walk out of the school with them until they receive a checkout pass from the front office. This pass alerts the bus driver and/or teacher that it is safe to remove the child from the bus or campus. Parents must have a driver's license or state ID to check out a student.

Any child that has not been picked up will be in the front office. Parents must come to the office and sign them out. Siblings are not allowed to stay and wait for a child attending after school activities.

# 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 campus principal or direct supervisor.

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

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of an educator's resignation within seven business days of the following:

- Certain misconduct, abuse, unlawful act;
- Involvement or solicitation of a romantic relationship with a student or minor;
- Solicitation or engaging in sexual conduct with a student or minor;
- Inappropriate communications with a student or minor;
- Failure to maintain appropriate boundaries with a student or minor;
- Possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance;
- Illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of district or school property or fund;
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit for the purpose of promotion or additional compensation; or
- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on District property or at a school-sponsored event.

The Superintendent is required to report such conduct to SBEC.

**Non-contract Employees.** Noncontract employees may resign their positions at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to campus principal or supervisor 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.

The principal or director is required to notify the superintendent of a non-certified employee's resignation or termination within seven business days for any of the following:

- Alleged incident of misconduct of abuse or otherwise committed an unlawful act with a student or minor;
- Was involved in or solicited a romantic relationship with a student or minor;
- Engaged in inappropriate communications with a student or minor; or
- Failed to maintain appropriate boundaries with a student or minor.

The superintendent is required to report such conduct to SBEC.

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

### *Policy DF Series, DHB, DP*

Employees on probationary, term, and continuing contracts can be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Employees on probationary or term contracts can be nonrenewed at the end of the contract term. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay, or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The timelines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or nonrenewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to an employee.

The reporting requirements for termination of a contract employee are the same as those listed above in **Resignations/Contract Employees**.

Advance notification requirements do not apply when a contract employee is dismissed for failing to obtain or maintain appropriate certification or when the employee's certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the DF series policies that are provided to employees or are available online.

## **Dismissal of Noncontract Employees**

### *Policy DHC, DP*

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*.)

The reporting requirements for termination of a noncertified employee are the same as those listed above in **Resignations/Noncontract Employees**.

## **Discharge of Convicted Employees**

### *Policy DF*

The District shall discharge any employee who has been convicted of a felony under Title 5 Penal Code or convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for the following:

- An offense requiring the registration as a sex offender;
- Improper relationship between an educator and a student;
- Sale, distribution, or display of harmful materials to a minor;
- Public indecency; or
- A felony offense involving school property.

If the Title 5, Penal Code offense is more than 30 years before the date the person's employment began or the person satisfied all terms of the court order entered on conviction the requirement to discharge does not apply.

## **Exit Interviews and Procedures**

Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided by Lacolla Harper. Separating employees are asked to provide the District with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the District with feedback on his or her employment experience. All District-owned or purchased keys, books, property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

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

The District is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal. Notice of the following must be sent to the support recipient and the court or, in the case of child support, the Texas Attorney General Child Support Division:

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

# Student Issues

## Equal Educational Opportunities

*Policies FB, FFH*

In an effort to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Lago Vista ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination of students based on any of the reasons listed above should be directed to Dr. Suzy Lofton-Bullis.

## Student Records

*Policy FL*

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

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

The Lago Vista ISD 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 secretary for assistance.

## Parent and Student Complaints

*Policy FNG*

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

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

## **Administering Medication to Students**

### *Policy FFAC, FFAF*

Only designated employees may administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. Exceptions apply to the administration of medication for respiratory distress, medication for anaphylaxis (e.g., EpiPen®), opioid antagonists, and medication for diabetes management, if the medication is administered in accordance with District policy and procedures. 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. Contact the principal or school nurse for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

## **Dietary Supplements**

### *Policies DH, FFAC*

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

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

### *Policy FFAC*

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

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

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

## **Student Conduct and Discipline**

### *Policies in the FN series and FO series*

Students are expected to follow the classroom rules, campus rules, and rules listed in the Lago Vista ISD Student Handbook and Lago Vista ISD 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.

## **Discipline Referrals**

### *Policy FOA*

At times, it is necessary to send a student to the office for disciplinary reasons. Please reference the campus discipline matrix for specific information on infractions and consequences. All students sent to the office to be disciplined must have an office referral. The only exception would be an emergency situation where a student required immediate removal. If a student is sent to the front office, it is the responsibility of the teacher to notify the parent that the student was sent to the office and to the nature of the referral.

Teachers shall not send students to the office for repeated minor classroom disruptions unless the parent(s) have been notified of the problem. It is expected that teachers communicate any and all discipline concerns with parents before they escalate into larger issues.

## **Dress Code**

### *Policy FNCA*

The student dress code is outlined in the Lago Vista ISD Student Handbook, with authority provided through local board policy. It is an expectation that employees enforce the dress code. If a teacher has a student who is not in compliance with the dress code, that student should be sent to the front office. Campus administration will either provide students with clothing that meets the dress code or notify parents to bring appropriate clothes for the student. A copy of the dress code is included in the student handbook and is posted online at [www.lagovistaisd.net](http://www.lagovistaisd.net).

## **Bullying**

### *Policy FFI*

Bullying is defined by TEC §37.0832. All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying, including cyber bullying, to the campus principal. The District's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and is reprinted below:  
[http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1153?filename=FFI\(LOCAL\).pdf](http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1153?filename=FFI(LOCAL).pdf)

## **Hazing**

### *Policy FNCC*

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

# Appendix A: Request for Paper Copy of Employee Handbook

## Lago Vista Independent School District Request for Paper Copy of the Employee Handbook

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus/Department: \_\_\_\_\_

All employees receive a copy of the employee handbook in electronic format. The electronic version of the handbook can also be found on the District's website on the Human Resources page and on the Publications and Forms page.

At the beginning of each school year, employees will submit an electronic form acknowledging the following:

*I have received an electronic copy of the Lago Vista ISD Employee Handbook. I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced within the handbook.*

*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 this handbook intends no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will employment relationships.*

*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 campus principal if I have questions or concerns or need further explanation.*

Employees do have the option to receive a paper copy of the Lago Vista ISD Employee Handbook. If you wish to receive a paper copy of the handbook, please print this form and indicate your choice below:

- I have received the employee handbook in electronic format and have accepted responsibility for accessing the handbook according to the instructions provided. I also choose to receive a hard copy of the employee handbook.

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Employee Signature

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Date

*Please sign and date this receipt and forward it to your supervisor.*



# Lago Vista Independent School District

*Excellence in **All** We Do!*

8039 Bar-K Ranch Road  
P.O. Box 4929  
Lago Vista, TX 78645

(512) 267-8300  
[www.lagovistasisd.net](http://www.lagovistasisd.net)

*It is the policy of Lago Vista Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap in any programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. For information about your rights, or grievance procedures, contact Darren Webb, Superintendent, 8039 Bar-K Ranch Road, Lago Vista, TX 78645, 512-267-8300.*

*Es norma de Lago Vista Distrito Escolar Independiente de no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo o impedimento, en sus programas, servicios o actividades, tal como lo requieren el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, según enmienda; el Titulo IX de las Enmiendas en la Educación, de 1972, y la Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmienda. Para información sobre sus derechos o procedimientos para quejas, comuníquese con Darren Webb, Superintendente, 8039 Bar-K Ranch Road, Lago Vista, TX 78645, 512-267-8300.*