

# Quitman School District

## Staff Handbook

### 2023 - 2024



*Empowering Excellence*

**BOARD APPROVED: June 12, 2023**

**STAFF HANDBOOK**  
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## **SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE**

Welcome to the **2023 - 2024** school year in the Quitman School District. The skills and commitment each employee brings to our district makes a significant contribution to our goal of providing a quality education for all students. We are pleased that you are part of Team Quitman!

The information in this staff handbook has been assembled to guide you through your school year. It contains important information about rules, policies, procedures, and resources of the Quitman School District with which you should read and become familiar. Use it as a reference, and add other policy bulletins to it as they are released. Discussion of policies and procedures is welcomed by the administrative staff at each school and the central office. Do not hesitate to ask for information.

As you begin this school year, please know that we are here to support you. We know that you are a valuable resource of the district as you make an incredible difference in the lives of our students.

Please feel free to contact us if you need additional information. In the meantime, we hope that you enjoy working in the Quitman School District.

Dr. Minnie Dace  
Superintendent

# QUITMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Vision, Mission, and Goal Statement

### Vision Statement

*Empowering Excellence*

### Mission Statement

The mission of Quitman School District is to empower our students to graduate as productive, competitive citizens in a global society

### Goals

- Goal 1: Increase achievement for all students.
- Goal 2: Provide a safe, healthy, and orderly learning environment.
- Goal 3: Engage in open, honest, and responsive communication to build positive relationships with all stakeholders

### Core Values

- I. We believe that every person has value
  - II. We believe that a safe, healthy, and orderly environment is essential to learning
  - III. We believe that building relationships is integral to our success
  - IV. We believe that hard work and dedication are necessary for success
  - V. We believe that honest and open communication with all stakeholders is vital
  - VI. We believe that collaboration is a platform for educational growth
  - VII. We believe in providing every student access to a viable curriculum
  - VIII. We believe in integrity and mutual respect for all
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### **COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION**

The educators of Quitman School District accept the challenge of the profession. We have chosen, individually and collectively, to provide and support the total educational process.

### **COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS**

- Seek constantly to improve teaching strategies and opportunities.
- Make discreet use of available information about a student.
- Seek to improve learning opportunities to meet the needs of each child.
- Strive to develop a positive self- concept in each student.
- Provide a foundation to function as a productive citizen in an ever-changing society.
- Maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning in the classroom.

### **COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY**

- Share the responsibility for the improvement of educational opportunities for all.
- Promote parental involvement in all areas of a child's development.
- Initiate frequent parent contact to discuss grades, attendance, etc.
- Encourage involvement of the business community in our schools.
- Utilize available resources effectively.

### **COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION**

- Recognize that a profession must accept responsibility for the conduct of its members and understand that our conduct may be representative.
- Keep the trust under which confidential information is exchanged.
- Interpret and use the writing of others and the findings of educational research with intellectual honesty.
- Maintain integrity.
- Conduct professional business through the proper channels.
- Deal with other members of the profession in the same manner as he/she wishes to be treated.

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#### ***Handbook Disclaimer Notice***

*This Handbook is intended to cover the general day-to-day operations of the Quitman School District, and to address matters covered within frequently asked questions. While the administration and School Board have made every effort to review this Handbook for accuracy, there may still exist some unintended errors and omissions. If a conflict exists between the terms and provisions of this Handbook as opposed to the School District's Official Policies, then in said event the Official Policies will control. The School District's Official Policies can be accessed and reviewed at: <https://quitmansd.msba policy.org/DistrictHome/tabid/9626/Default.aspx>*

**QUITMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**104 East Franklin Street**

**Quitman, Mississippi 39355**

**Telephone: (601) 776-2186**

**Fax: (601) 776-1051**

**www.quitmanschools.org**

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**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

**Dr. Minnie Dace, Superintendent**

Tracy Dearing, Director  
Federal Programs, Grants

Adam Boyette, Director  
Special Education

Shevonda Truman, Curriculum  
and Intervention Specialist

Joyce Harris, Director  
Food Services

Elisa Mayo, Coordinator  
Financial Operations

Joseph Holloman, Director  
Maintenance

Ricky Graham, Director  
Transportation

Matt Champion, Director  
Technology

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**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Cheryl Waltman, President**

**William Price, Vice-President**

**Brenda McCormick, Secretary**

**Lewis Jefferson, Member**

**Vacant Seat, Member**

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**QUITMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Quitman Lower Elementary  
Grades: PreK - 2  
Amanda Allen, Principal  
101 McArthur Street  
Quitman, MS 39355  
(601) 776-6156  
Fax: (601) 776-1035

Quitman Upper Elementary  
Grades: 3-5  
Kristen Schrimshire, Principal  
300 East Franklin Street  
Quitman, MS 39355  
(601) 776-6123  
Fax: (601) 776-1043

Quitman Junior High  
Grades: 6-8  
Debbie Chapman, Principal  
501 Lynda Street  
Quitman, MS 39355  
(601) 776-6243  
Fax: (601) 776-1288

Quitman High School  
Grades: 9-12  
LaTasha Shaw, Principal  
210 South Jackson Street  
Quitman, MS 39355  
(601) 776-3341  
Fax: (601) 776-6136

Clarke Co. Career-Technology Center  
Grades 9 -12  
Eric Turbyfill, Director  
910 North Archusa Avenue  
Quitman MS 39355  
(601) 776 5219  
Fax: (601)-776-1282

Alternative School  
Tara Tucker, Director  
200 South Jackson Avenue  
Quitman, MS 39355  
(601) 776-1047  
Fax: (601) 776-6136

## Quitman School District School Calendar for 2023 – 2024

Board approved: 02/13/2023

<b>Jul 31</b>	<b>New teacher orientation @ schools</b>
<b>Aug 1</b>	<b>First day for teachers (opening convocation)</b>
<b>Aug 1, 2, 3, 4</b>	<b>Teacher days</b>
<b>Aug 7</b>	<b>First day for students</b>
<b>Sep 4</b>	<b>Labor Day holiday</b>
<b>Sep 7</b>	<b>Progress reports</b>
<b>Oct 5 - 6</b>	<b>Exams</b>
<b>Oct 9 - 10</b>	<b>Fall Break</b>
<b>Oct 11</b>	<b>End of 1st 9-wks (45 days)</b>
<b>Oct 12</b>	<b>Beginning of 2nd 9-wks</b>
<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Report Cards</b>
<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Parent Conf. Day (63% day for students)</b>
<b>Nov 9</b>	<b>Progress reports</b>
<b>Nov 20 - 24</b>	<b>Thanksgiving holidays</b>
<b>Dec 14 - 15</b>	<b>Exams</b>
<b>Dec 15</b>	<b>End of 2nd 9-wks (60%) (42 days)</b>
<b>Dec 18 - Jan 1</b>	<b>Christmas/New Year's holidays</b>
<b>Jan 2</b>	<b>Staff return</b>
<b>Jan 3</b>	<b>Students return</b>
<b>Jan 3</b>	<b>Beginning of 3rd 9-wks</b>
<b>Jan 11</b>	<b>Report Cards</b>
<b>Jan 15</b>	<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday</b>
<b>Feb 12</b>	<b>Progress reports</b>
<b>Feb 12</b>	<b>Parent Conf. Day (no students)</b>
<b>Mar 6 - 7</b>	<b>Exams</b>
<b>Mar 7</b>	<b>End of 3rd 9-wks (47 days)</b>
<b>Mar 8</b>	<b>Beginning of 4th 9-wks</b>
<b>Mar 11 - 15</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>
<b>Mar 21</b>	<b>Report Cards</b>
<b>Mar 29</b>	<b>Good Friday</b>
<b>Apr 1</b>	<b>Inclement weather makeup day</b>
<b>Apr 18</b>	<b>Progress reports</b>
<b>May 17</b>	<b>QHS Graduation (7:00pm)</b>
<b>May 21 - 22</b>	<b>Exams</b>
<b>May 23</b>	<b>Last day students (60%) (48 days)</b>
<b>May 24</b>	<b>Last day teachers</b>

### CODE OF ETHICS

#### Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

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

This code shall apply to all persons employed by the Quitman School District.

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

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

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

## **Code of Ethics Standards**

### **Standard 1: Professional Conduct**

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

#### **1.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
- b. Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment
- c. Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning
- d. Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner
- e. Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter and pedagogical practices
- f. Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establish appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children

#### **1.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Harassment of colleagues
- b. Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
- c. Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity
- d. Physical altercations
- e. Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions

### **Standard 2. Trustworthiness**

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

#### **2.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
- b. Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
- c. Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

#### **2.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following:
  1. employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
  2. information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
  3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
  4. reasons for absences or leave
  5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
- b. Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so

### **Standard 3. Unlawful Acts**

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

#### **3. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

The commission or conviction of a felony or sexual offense. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

### **Standard 4. Educator/Student Relationship**

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

#### **4.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy, and encouragement for students.
- b. Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students.
- c. Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- d. Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students

#### **4.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:**

- a. Committing any act of child abuse
- b. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment



- c. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
- d. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
- e. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
- f. Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationship with a student.

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

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

**Standard 5. Educator Collegial Relationships**

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

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

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

**Standard 6. Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession**

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

**6.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice

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

- a. Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
- b. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages. A school-related activity includes but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc. which involve students.
- c. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented using tobacco.

**Standard 7. Public Funds and Property**

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

**7.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds
- b. Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property

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

- a. Knowingly misappropriating, diverting or using funds, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain
- b. Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents or any school-related function
- c. Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
- d. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
- e. Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body 12

## **Standard 8. Remunerative Conduct**

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

### **8.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
- b. Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization

### **8.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body.
- b. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
- c. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. *(This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service)*

## **Standard 9. Maintenance of Confidentiality**

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

### **9.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a. Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a legitimate purpose or is required by law
- b. Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources

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

- a. Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information family status/income and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
- b. Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school board or state directions for the use of tests
- c. Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy

## **Standard 10. Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment**

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

### **10.1 Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

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

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, AND VISITORS**

**Policy: IFBGA**

Revised: 06/13/2016

### **Overview**

The Quitman School District is dedicated to the use of technology as a tool to enhance learning, increase academic productivity and achievement, and promote creativity. The Internet and the use of technology communication tools are extremely valuable for collaboration, publishing, and interacting with peers, experts, and other audiences. Specifically, the use of the Internet provides opportunities to access a wide variety of information, reference materials, and educational resources world-wide. However, by its very nature, the free-flowing, uncensored exchange of information and communication that characterizes the Internet has forced the issue of how and by whom the network should be used. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies on the proper conduct of each user who must adhere to strict guidelines. To this end, Congress has enacted the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), a federal law that address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-rate program – a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries.

### **What CIPA Requires**

- Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety policy and technology protection measures in place. An Internet safety policy must include technology protection measures to block or filter Internet access to pictures that are: (a) are obscene, (b) child pornography, or (c) harmful to minors (for computers that are accessed by minors).
- Schools and libraries must also certify that, as part of their Internet safety policy, they are educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including cyber-bullying awareness and response and interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms.

- Schools subject to CIPA are required to adopt and enforce a policy to monitor online activities of minors.
- Schools and libraries subject to CIPA are required to adopt and implement a policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking,” and other unlawful activities by minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; (e) restricting minors’ access to materials harmful to them; (f) the education of minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms; and (g) the education of minors about cyber bullying awareness and response.

In order to meet the requirements of CIPA, Quitman School District has put into place a technology protection measure for blocking access to content that is obscene, pornographic, or detrimental in general. Recognizing that no filtering solution can be 100 percent effective, it is understood that all technology protection measures do not and will not work perfectly. In complying with CIPA, schools are expected to engage in a “good faith effort” to abide by the requirements of CIPA. CIPA does not create a private right to action, meaning that the discovery of objectionable material on a computer cannot result in a lawsuit complaining that a school or district violated CIPA.

The availability of any information on the Internet does not imply endorsement by Quitman School District. The school board makes no assurances of any kind, whether expressed or implied, regarding any Internet services provided. Neither the individual school nor school district is responsible for any damages the student/user may suffer. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the students’/users’ own risk. This board and school district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information or software obtained through its services. Quitman School District cannot assume any liability arising out of the illegal or inappropriate use of technology resources. The District also reserves the right to monitor any users’ network activities. Therefore, users should have no expectation of privacy concerning the use of the Quitman School District network. This includes, but is not limited to, all electronic communication such as e-mail, blogging, instant messaging, chatting, etc.

Use of the district/school network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of that privilege. The superintendent or designee(s) shall make all decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated these procedures, and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time. All communications and information accessible via the network would not be assumed to be private property.

As a result of meeting the requirements set forth above, Quitman School District has created an acceptable use policy to ensure safe and legitimate uses of the Internet and the District’s network and computers. This policy is provided so that the user and/or parent (or guardian) of the user are aware of the responsibilities you are about to assume. In general, this requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources.

### **AUP Requirements**

All students will be required to submit a signed and completed Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) every academic year to their school’s administration before using any district computer or network. This policy will be sent home in the opening school packet and must be filled out and signed by students and their parent(s)/ guardian(s). The signed copy will then be forwarded to the Technology Department to keep on file. Staff members and district visitors will also be required to sign an AUP each academic year which will be collected at their specific site, before using any District computers and network. The signed copy will then be forwarded to the Technology Department to be kept on file. All users, with or without a signed AUP must comply with every aspect of this policy. Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary and/or criminal action. Users are also expected to report any security problems or misuse of district technology.

### **Acceptable Uses of the Quitman School District (QSD) Network**

The QSD network is provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the Quitman School District’s educational mission, goals, and business needs. Examples include classroom assignments, career development activities, educational research, extra-curricular activities, communication activities, and access to network resources.

### **Unacceptable Uses of the Quitman School District (QSD) Network**

The user is responsible for all of his/her actions and activities involving the QSD network and the Internet. This list is not all-inclusive, but is intended to provide general guidance. Anything that would be considered inappropriate in "paper form" is also considered inappropriate in electronic form. Information, such as but not limited to personal data, accessed through school system technologies may not be used for any private business activity. The following are examples of inappropriate activities when using any Quitman School District’s network, email system, hardware, software, technology service, and/or Internet access:

- Accessing materials or communications that are:
  - Damaging to another’s reputation
  - Abusive
  - Obscene
  - Insulting
  - Embarrassing
  - Racist
  - Discriminatory
  - Sexually oriented
  - Threatening
  - Contrary to school/district policy
  - Harassing
  - Illegal

- Sending or posting materials or communications (to include email, chat rooms, instant messaging, pictures, and other forms of direct electronic communications) that are:
  - Damaging to another's reputation
  - Abusive
  - Obscene
  - Insulting
  - Embarrassing
  - Racist
  - Discriminatory
  - Sexually oriented
  - Threatening
  - Contrary to school/district policy
  - Harassing
  - Illegal
- Using the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright laws or other contracts or transmitting any material in violation of U.S. and State of Mississippi regulations.
- Copying or downloading copyrighted material on any system connected to the school or district system hardware/software without the owner's permission. Students may redistribute copyrighted programs only with the owner's permission. Such permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the owner in accordance with applicable copyright laws, school board policies, and administrative procedures.
- Failing to comply with resource quotas or disk usage quotas (data storage) as set by the superintendent, principal, or designee/designees or other identified staff. Any student who is not in compliance of disk space quotas after five (5) calendar days of written notification may have his/her files removed by the superintendent, principal, or designee/designees or other identified staff.
- Saving information on any network drive or directory other than your personal home directory or a teacher-specified and approved location.
- Use of any Quitman School District technology resource or the Internet for personal gain, commercial, or political purpose.
- Wastefully using resources.
- Utilizing any software having the purpose of damaging the school/district network, any district computer system, or any other entity's computer/network system.
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities.
- Invading the privacy of individuals.
- Trespassing in another user's files, folders, home directory, or work.
- Using or sharing another user's password or attempting to discover another user's password.
- Posting material authorized or created by another person without his/her consent.
- Posting anonymous messages.
- Forging of electronic mail (email) messages.
- Attempting to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users and deliberately interfering with the ability of other system users to send/receive mail.
- Using the network while access privileges are suspended or revoked.
- Using the network in a manner inconsistent with the directions from teachers and other staff and generally accepted network etiquette.
- Revealing personal addresses, telephone numbers, or other personal information of self, other students, or staff.
- Illegally installing copyrighted software for use on personal computers.
- Not conforming to the "Acceptable Use" policies of other sources accessed beyond the QSD network.
- Downloading, installing, or copying software of any kind onto a workstation, laptop, home directory, or any network drive (except for approved updates). The Technology department is responsible for determining if a product is compatible with the network/computer and installing it after purchase.
- Damaging any technology resources, including, but not limited to, printers, telephones, computers, computer systems, or computer networks (this includes changing workstation configurations such as screen savers, backgrounds, printers, BIOS information, preset passwords, etc.)
- Broadcasting network messages or participating in sending/perpetuating chain letters or engaging in any spamming practices.
- Plagiarism of materials that are found on the Internet.
- Use of technology resources to create illegal materials (i.e. counterfeit money, fake identification, etc.)
- Accessing any website or other resources by falsifying information.
- Using any software or other programming means that attempts to gain unauthorized access to any computer or network system by taking advantage of any vulnerability that may be found or to circumvent any protective measures, device(s), or software that may be installed as a protection device. This includes all forms of hacking. Penetration tests will only be conducted by the Technology department in order to audit the network or computer system for security flaws or weaknesses.
- Intentionally wasting limited resources such as Internet bandwidth, disk space and printing capacity.
- Using any peer-to-peer software to download music, videos, or other software.
- Downloading games or playing games on-line.

- Using a digital camera, camera phone, or any other device capable of storing a still or video image to take inappropriate embarrassing pictures.
- Using streaming video or audio not related to the educational purpose and research consistent with the district's educational mission and business needs. This includes Internet radio.
- Editing or modifying digital pictures with the intent to embarrass, harass, or bully.
- Accessing, sending, or posting inappropriate material or communication to/from web sites or attempting to bypass the Internet filter to access web sites that have been blocked (Examples: information that is violent; destructive; threatening; abusive; harassing; illegal; satanic; sexual; demeaning; racist; inflammatory; and/or categorized as a social networking, blogging, or journaling site, etc.)
- Participating in unsupervised or non-instructional on-line chat rooms without the permission/supervision of an adult staff member.
- Connecting or attempting to connect any computer device, smart phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or other wired/wireless devices to the District's network. Personal laptops and computers will not be connected without express permission from the technology department due to the security issues they may present (viruses, malware, spyware, key loggers, etc.).
- Posting any false or damaging information about other people, the school system, or other organizations.
- Accessing inappropriate material such as, but not limited to, digital cameras, flash drives, iPods, cell phones, etc.

### **User Rights and Responsibilities**

1. The Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to a school newspaper, and therefore Quitman School District may restrict user's right to free speech for valid educational reasons. Quitman School District will not restrict user's right to free speech on the basis of disagreement with the opinions expressed by the user.
2. User shall have the responsibility to use computer resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. The only exception will be for academic research by a staff member with the approval of school or district administration.
3. User should not expect files stored on school-based computer to remain private. Authorized staff will periodically inspect folders and logs of network usage and will be kept at all times. Routine review and maintenance of the system may indicate that user has violated this policy, school codes, municipal law, state law or federal law. Parents of minor users shall have the right to inspect the contents of user's files.
4. Under no conditions should a user provide his/her password to another person or use another person's password
5. Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Unacceptable and/or illegal use may result in denial, revocation, suspension, and/or cancellation of the user's privileges, as well as disciplinary action imposed by school officials.
6. Because of the fluid nature of the Internet and the increasing use of certain Web 2.0 technologies for educational purposes, a user may find that a website has been blocked by the content filter. A request for approval can be made to unblock the site in question as long as it provides the educational merit and intent for the parties involved without sacrificing the policies and guidelines set forth and contained within. The request must be made by a staff or faculty member of the District. This request will be reviewed by the appropriate school or district personnel and if found not to cause conflict with this policy, a change will be made to allow access to the site. A request to block a site can also be made if found to be of objectionable or harmful content.
7. Use of the Quitman School District system for management of businesses, websites not directly relating to the education of students in the Quitman School District, or for personal affairs is strictly prohibited.
8. Network security is a high priority. If a user identifies or perceives a security problem or a breach of these responsibilities on the Internet or on the QSD network, the user must immediately notify the appropriate faculty/staff member or designee or other identified staff. The user must not demonstrate the problem to other users or students.
9. Quitman School District will fully cooperate with local, state or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the user's Internet account.

### **Guest/Community Usage**

1. All users of the Quitman School District's networks and computer systems are bound to the same rights and privileges as listed above.
2. Misuse of the Quitman School District's networks and computer systems will not be tolerated. Privileges will be revoked for any user who is found to be in violation of these said practices.

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

### **Social Networking Websites**

*All employees, faculty and staff of the Quitman School District who participate in social networking websites (like MySpace or FaceBook) shall not post any data, documents, photos or inappropriate information on any website that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. This determination will be made by the Superintendent. Employees, faculty and staff should not give social networking website passwords to students. Fraternization via the internet between*

employees, faculty or staff and students is prohibited and violation of any of these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of educational websites, like [www.schoolnotes.com](http://www.schoolnotes.com) and [www.QuitmanSchools.org](http://www.QuitmanSchools.org) since these sites are used solely for educational purposes. Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited.

### **Consequences for Failure to Follow Terms and Conditions of the Acceptable Use Policy**

There will be consequences for any user who fails to follow the Quitman School District and school guidelines and policies. The consequences may include paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy, and state or federal law. At the discretion of the Quitman School District, law enforcement authorities may be involved and any violations of state and/or federal law may result in criminal or civil prosecution.

## **ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS**

### **PUBLIC RECORDS ACCESS PROCEDURES, policy CNA**      Revised: 05/09/2022

The following policies and procedures are adopted in order to comply with the requirements of the Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983 (hereinafter the "ACT").

#### **RECORDS ACCESSIBLE**

All "public records" maintained by the district, as defined by the Act, shall be made available for access and duplication, subject to the exceptions and requirements of these policies, and other state or federal laws.

#### **REQUESTS FOR ACCESS**

Requests for access to public records shall be filed in writing, on forms provided, with the Superintendent of Schools. The request must state with sufficient specificity the nature, location, and description of the public record sought in order to enable the appropriate official(s) of the district to obtain the records for review and/or duplication. In the event that the request lacks sufficient clarity or is otherwise unduly burdensome, it will be returned to the originator for classification or correction. All requests to inspect or duplicate public records must be filed between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on any working day in the superintendent's office. Requests for inspection and/or duplication of records shall be honored at such time during the day as the documents are not being used by the appropriate officials of the district. After the records are located and made available for inspection and/or duplication, the originator of the request will be notified of a time, place and date, not later than seven (7) business days from the date of the receipt of the pre-payment of all copying, retrieval, and mailing expenses. **In certain cases, public records can be sent electronically.**

#### **FEES CHARGED**

As allowed by statute, the district shall charge and collect fees to reimburse it for the actual cost of searching, reviewing, duplicating and mailing copies of public records. All applicable charges shall be paid to the district in advance of complying with any requests, pursuant to the following schedule:

- Photocopying: 30 cents per page, with a minimum charge of \$1.00 per search.
- Transcripts: A cost of \$1.00 will be charged for transcripts.
- CDs: A cost of \$10.00 will be charged for cds.
- Searching and Reviewing: An hourly charge of \$8.00 or in the event it is necessary for supervisory personnel to conduct the search and review then an amount which equals the actual wage per hour of such person. This charge will not apply when searching for and retrieving a student's educational records.
- Postage: Actual cost of postage shall be assessed for all records mailed.

Any request which will require considerable assistance of school personnel for searching and reviewing shall be subject to a minimum deposit of \$50.00. In the event that the actual cost is found to be less than \$50.00, the balance shall be refunded to the originator of the request at the appointed time for the inspection and/or duplication.

#### **EXEMPT RECORDS**

The following records are exempt from the Act and from this policy and shall not be subject to disclosure, except under other authority and under appropriate circumstances.

1. Records furnished to public bodies by third parties which contain trade secrets or confidential, commercial or financial information, as provided by the Act.
2. Records which are confidential or privileged, as provided by constitutional, statutory or case law of this state or of the United States.
3. Records which are developed among judges, judges and their aides, and juries.
4. Personnel records, including but not limited to applicants for employment, test questions and answers used in employment examinations, and letters of recommendation.
5. Test questions and answers in the possession of a public body which are to be used in future academic examinations.
6. Records which represent and constitute the work product of an attorney representing the district records which are related to litigation by or against the district, or in anticipation of prospective litigation, and communications

- between the district and the attorney in the course of an attorney-client relationship.
7. Records which would disclose information about a person's individual tax payment or status.
  8. Records concerning the sale or purchase of property for public purposes prior to the announcement of the purchase or sale where the release of the record would have a detrimental effect on the sale and purchase.
  9. All educational records of students and former students, as defined by Policy JCG and by the Federal Privacy Act; such exemption shall also apply to letters of recommendation respecting admission to any educational agency or institution.
  10. Records that are maintained regarding the process of detection and investigation of unlawful activity, in addition to such records as defined in Section 45-29-1 of the Mississippi Code of 1972.
  11. Commercial and financial information of a proprietary nature required to be submitted to the district.
  12. Certain information technology (IT) records in accordance with MS Code 25-61-11.2.
  13. School safety plan documents containing preventive services listed in Section 37-3-83.

#### DENIAL OF ACCESS

In the event that the district denies a request for access to or copies of public records, the denial will be in writing and contain a statement of the reasons for the denial. The district will maintain a record of all denials for a period of three (3) years.

LEGAL REF: Mississippi Code §25-61-1 et. seq.: §37-11-51 (1983)

#### ACCIDENTS

Teachers are responsible for the safety of all students under their supervision. Any injury to a student while they are the responsibility of the school must be given immediate attention. No procedure can be pre-formulated and completely applicable in all situations. The following is a general guideline and may be modified as individual situations occur.

- Follow the emergency plan for your school.
- Remain calm and promptly decide what needs to be done to prevent the situation from worsening.
- Act decisively – take charge.
- If the accident is serious, send someone to the office to ask for help.
- If first aid is indicated and if you are knowledgeable, administer first aid.
- Resume normal activities as soon as possible.
- Prior to leaving school, submit a written report to the office.

#### ACCOUNTING PROCEDURE

When money is collected by a teacher, a receipt should be provided. Careful attention should be given to the collection and handling of these funds. The following guidelines should be followed.

- Any collection of money must be received with prior approval of the principal and the superintendent.
- Receipt all money collected when it is collected.
- When you receive money each day, turn in the money and the copy of the receipts to the secretary. The money must agree with the receipts it covers. The secretary will write you a receipt and return it to you.

The principal is responsible for all funds collected in the school. For this reason, no collection of funds or purchases of any kind may be made without prior knowledge and approval of the principal.

#### ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

- **Students** - A current address, telephone number, and the name and telephone number of emergency contacts for each student should be kept on file in the school office. Changes should be reported within two days.
- **Teachers** - Name and address changes should be reported within two days to the school office, and to the Payroll Department at the Central Office.
- **All Staff** – should have emergency numbers on file in the school office.

#### ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Business and industry of Quitman School District is given an opportunity to support and supplement public education in the district. Goals of the programs are:

- Increase the self-esteem of students and teachers.
- Communicate understanding of the business world and community.
- Provide supplemental educational benefits.
- Offer community members opportunities to be involved in a worthwhile community-service project.

- Teach students the value of volunteering.
- Develop better understanding of the needs and responsibilities of the school systems by the community.

### **ARREST OF EMPLOYEE**

Any employee who is arrested, charged, indicted, or convicted for a felony or misdemeanor is required to notify his/her immediate supervisor and the superintendent or designee as soon as possible but no later than within 24 hours and prior to returning to duty. Failure to report incidents may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. (refer to policy GBKB, brd. appv'd 04/10/2017)

### **ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION UPDATE**

This annual notification is to advise you that the Quitman School District is in compliance with EPA's Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986. During the past school year, we have conducted the required annual six-month re-inspection of all buildings. The last Ahera inspection was conducted in March 2021. There was no abatement during school year 2022/2023. A two-hour awareness training was provided for maintenance. Management plans are located in the Quitman Public Library, as well as in each principal's office, maintenance office, and the district office. If you should have any questions, please contact the district's LEA designee, Mr. Carroll Rhodes, at 601-776-1045.

### **ASSISTANT TEACHERS**

Assistant teachers are paraprofessionals who work under the supervision of the classroom teacher to whom they are assigned. However, assistant teachers are ultimately responsible to the school principal. In no case shall the assistant teachers discharge duties assigned by the classroom teacher which are in conflict with the administrative policies, procedures, and requests.

Assistants are not to administer or prescribed punishment to students. Misbehavior should be reported to the teacher or principal.

Assistants are not responsible for planning a program of study for students. Assistants are to conform to the standards set for teachers in the areas of ethics, dress, etc. Assistants should feel free to discuss any problem they might have in regard to their employment with their principal.

### **ASSISTANT TEACHER EVALUATION**

Duties and responsibilities are reviewed at the beginning of each year with returning assistants. Assistants new to the system are to receive in-service training concerning duties and responsibilities. Assistant teachers are evaluated by the teacher and principal using the Quitman School District evaluation instrument for assistant teachers.

### **ATTENDANCE**

- Teachers, and all other staff members, are to report as scheduled by the principal and sign in immediately.
- If you are going to be absent due to illness, you must notify the principal or person designated by him or her as soon as possible.
- If you are to be late for any reason, contact the principal's office so arrangements can be made until you arrive.
- Employees who sign in after the scheduled time or have problems relative to timely arrival for scheduled duties shall, on that day, provide the office with a written, dated explanation of reason for failure to arrive on time.
- No employee is to leave campus during duty hours without permission of the principal.
- All employees are expected to be present during statewide testing.
- **All personal days need prior approval.**

### **BULLYING**

**STUDENT BULLYING** Policy JDDA Date Issued: 12/11/2017

The Board of Trustees of the Quitman School District prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students, school employees, or volunteers. The Quitman School District does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior and will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other students or other school employees.

#### Definitions



Bullying or harassing behavior to or by a student is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that

- (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or
- (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

The above conduct constitutes bullying if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the operation of the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupil(s) and teacher of such class as a whole.

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

The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official. Retaliation or reprisal against any person, including a victim, a witness, or another person, who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying or harassing behavior, is prohibited.

The Board of Trustees directs the superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors. The procedures should be appropriately placed in District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedure that deals with student or employee behavior. The discipline policies and procedures must recognize the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the Quitman School District defines "reasonable action" as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR - PROCEDURES**

**Policy JDDA-P**                      Date Issued: 12/11/2017

### **Procedures for Processing a Complaint**

1. Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior to or from a student, or has witnessed or who has reliable information that a student, school employee or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school official. The report shall be made promptly but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. (HB 263-D)
2. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the names of the victim of the misconduct, the names of any witnesses and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board chairman. The complaint shall be investigated promptly. (HB 263-F)
3. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) working days after initial receipt of the complaint by the District. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The District official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents as appropriate when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined. (HB 263-C)
4. If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the District official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and other affected parties as deemed

necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within ten (10) working days.

5. If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents as appropriate to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.
6. If, after investigation, a student is found to be a victim of bullying, such student shall not face disciplinary action on the basis of that student's use of "reasonable self-defense was in response to the bullying" (HB 263-G & 2)
7. If the victim of bullying is a student with disabilities, disciplinary action for the offended shall comply with the requirements of federal law including the individuals with Disabilities Act (20 USCS Section 1400 et seq). (HB 263-H)

The Quitman School District shall maintain and make available a list of counseling services to any student who is a victim of or a witness to bullying, or who engages in bullying. The following list of the types of counseling and support services are available to any victim of or a witness to bullying. This list is presented as a guide that by no means limits this district from including other additional support services. (HB 263-E)

- School/District Counseling
- Conflict resolution training
- Problem solving skills training (proactive, constructive, relationship-building)
- Social skills training

Support may be provided by the school district through the assistance of any of the following agencies:

- Mississippi Department of Education
- Mississippi Department of Health
- Mississippi Department of Human Services-Juvenile Services Department
- Community/Family Public or private community-based mental health services
- Faith-based services
- Law enforcement agencies

The procedures for reporting bullying shall also be posted on the district's website. (HB 263-3)

### **CARE OF CLASSROOM**

The classroom should be neat, colorful, interesting, and attractive. Old materials should be removed and discarded. Teachers might ask themselves:

- Are the surroundings cheerful and attractive?
- Does the appearance of the room stimulate the imagination and interest of the students?
- Are student work, pictures, drawings, collections, and other items of interest displayed?
- Are students surrounded by a variety of books, magazines, pamphlets, models, specimens, and materials for work?
- Are desk tops kept clean and free of marks?
- Is all trash in the wastebasket?
- Are chalkboards clean?
- Are students sitting too close to walls or chalkboards?
- Do students assume some of the responsibilities of the care of the room?
- Are floors cleared of paper, books, pencils, etc.?

### **CELL PHONES**

**Cell phones are to be turned off during instructional time.**

### **CONFERENCES**

*It is the practice and procedure of the Quitman School District that recording of meetings between parents and school personnel will not be allowed. The only exception to this rule is that if the parent has a physical or mental disability that otherwise prohibits him/her from appropriate participation in the meeting or if the parents lacks the ability to read or write.*

Three major categories of conferences should occur in Quitman Schools.

• **Principal - Teacher**

Conferences will be held at the discretion of the principal or upon request of the teacher. The principal shall keep records of all Principal-Teacher conferences.

• **Teacher – Parent/Guardian**

Since it has been proven that frequent teacher-parent/guardian communication opens many doors and creates a well-rounded educational atmosphere, it is the teacher's responsibility to take the initiative in setting up a parent/guardian conference at the first sign of a student's deviation from the norm. The procedures and time for scheduling these conferences will be determined by the principal. Prior notice to the teacher will be given when possible. Records of all teacher-parent/guardian conferences will be kept by the teacher in the form of a telephone log.

• **Teacher - Student**

A teacher who has frequent and direct communication with his/her students will find the profits to be overwhelming in the areas of student behavior and progress. It is recommended that teachers keep records where problems exist.

With sufficient advanced notice, Principals/Assistant Principals may be invited to attend Teacher-Parent/Guardian conferences when the teacher or parent/guardian requests it.

### **COVID-19 Statement**

It is essential for the school community to work together to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment and in the community while still providing a quality education program. To view the Quitman School District Reopening School Plan, visit our school website at [www.quitmanschool.org](http://www.quitmanschool.org).

## **CUMULATIVE RECORDS: PREPARATION AND USAGE**

### **A. Personal and Family Data**

- Name – Should be written or printed clearly
- Race – Record “W” for white; “B” for Black; “I” for Indian; “O” for other.
- Sex – Record “M” for Male, “F” for Female.
- Place of Birth – Record city or rural post office, county and state.
- Birth Certificate Number – Record and properly identify all numbers (such as State No., State File No., and Registrar No.) found on certificate. If a valid certificate is not numbered, specify and give any identifying information on the certificate.
- Date of Birth – Record month, day, and year indicated on birth certificate in this sequence with verifying initials in the appropriate space provided.
- Address and Phone – Pencil should be used to keep this section up to date. Check at the beginning of school and change each time the child moves during the school year.
- Father, Mother, or Guardian – Give full name of father, mother (including maiden name), step-father, step-mother, or guardian. For pupils under legal guardianship, enter names of parents if considered helpful; indicate however, that the guardian is the person with whom the school has contact.

### **B. Entrance Record**

- Date – Indicate month, day, and year in that order and with slanted lines for separation for entry date in your school.
- Grade – Indicate grade in which the pupil is placed.
- Name and Address of School – For pupils entering school for the first time, enter Quitman School District School District, then a dash and the name of the school.
- Transfers – With the district, repeat above except Quitman School District Schools entered by ditto marks. At the beginning of each year, do not duplicate these entries unless the pupil was permanently withdrawn prior to completion of the previous school year. In such cases, a record of permanent withdrawal would be indicated elsewhere on the cumulative record. If additional space is needed in the area, cut an unused record and staple directly over this filled section.
- Birth certificate registration form must be completed.
- Transfer – Withdrawal Record – The appropriate date should be placed in the proper blank showing transferring, if known. It is mandatory that every effort be made to determine the next location of enrollment. Parents must provide this information.

### **C. Attendance Record**

- At the end of the school year, record the pupil's grade level, days present, days absent, and chief cause of absences.
- Any child who has been absent for one week without notification should be reported to the school office for further investigation. A child is carried on the school's rolls until verified information indicates his/her enrollment in another school, or until he/she is officially withdrawn.

### **D. School Progress**

- Record the year, the grade, and the subjects in which the child receives a mark.
- In grades one through twelve, use number and letter grades.

- If a child enters during the school session and for such a length of time as an evaluation can be made, a final grade should be given even if the child has not been in the school district more than fifteen days. The final yearly grade will be determined by combining grades from previous schools and Quitman School District School District schools.
  - Write the word “Yes” or “No” on the line to indicate “Promoted.” If Transferred write in “Transferred.”
  - The last name of the teacher should be placed on the line to indicate the teacher of that particular grade and the name of the school entered on the line to indicate the school.
  - The name of the school will be the school in attendance at the end of the school session.
- E. Activities and Special Interest**
- Record only major activities and interest, making sure that the date and grade level are indicated.
  - Mere membership in a program is not considered sufficient to record.
  - These activities and special interests may include out-of-school activities as well as school activities if such is of particular note (i.e., Scouting honors, Safety patrol.)
- F. Cumulative Records**
- Cumulative records are not to be taken home or left in classrooms overnight. Cumulative records will be stored only in the designated area. Teachers may only work on cumulative records in areas designated by the principal.
- G. Record Usage**
- A record of all cumulative record usage is to be maintained in the school office.
- H. Personal Access**
- Parents have the right to view their child’s records.

## **DISCIPLINE GUIDE**

### **What Staff Should Do**

- Be fair and consistent. Treat each student equally.
- Be empathetic and accentuate the positive, avoid the negative.
- Be thoroughly prepared for all classes and have ample work for all students each period.
- Be cheerful, attractive and orderly; let your classroom reflect these qualities.
- Be professional in demeanor and maintain a sense of humor.
- Admit your errors and apologize if you make the mistake of treating a student unjustly.
- Establish a minimum number of simple rules and help students understand why they are necessary. Let the student assist in formulating the rules and in publicizing them.
- Correct students when needed to prevent minor problems from growing into larger ones. Remember that you are on duty all the time you are on campus.

### **What Staff Should Not Do**

- Punish the entire class for the misbehavior of a few.
- Argue with a student.
- Embarrass a student.
- Refuse to consider mitigating circumstances.
- Compare students with one another.
- Become overly friendly and familiar with students. This can cause loss of respect for you.
- Repeatedly show favoritism to certain students.
- Challenge students to repeat an undesirable act or get yourself in a position of “do it or else.”
- Administer unusual punishments.
- Punish by leaving a student alone and unsupervised in a classroom or hall.
- Punish by having a student write lines.
- Make physical contact in an attempt to discipline.

## **DONATING LEAVE**

Employees are instructed to refer to school board policy GADF-Donating Leave to Another Employee which is located in the Appendix of this handbook.

## **DONATIONS**

**All requests to solicit donations on behalf of Quitman School District must be approved by the Superintendent and School Board.**

### **Donation Steps to Follow:**

- Staff members must complete an activity request in e-forms
- Supervisor or administrator must approve the activity request and send to the superintendent
- Superintendent must send for board approval
- Supervisor or administrator will be notified of approval.

## **DRESS CODE POLICY FOR STAFF**

Many of you have expressed an interest in expanding your school wardrobe. Many of you have also voiced your support for the Imagination Library, which provides free books for preschoolers. Beginning in August 2014, I would like to announce that we will have a dress code exemption opportunity. This opportunity will allow all staff to wear jeans on Friday for a \$5 monthly donation to the QSD Imagination Library.

In order to participate, you must complete the Imagination Library Payroll Deduction Form and send to the QSD Payroll Office for the \$5 deduction to be payroll deducted from your paycheck beginning July 2014. Please remember that this dress code exemption policy will remain in effect on a month-by-month basis and success will be measured by everyone's ability to dress professionally.

Your participation in the exemption policy is not required. Any one may choose to continue following the QSD staff dress code policy which also remains in effect

### **DRESS CODE FOR STAFF MEMBERS**

**(Policy GABA)** board approved: 07/10/2017

#### **MEN**

Professional, career style dress

No shorts

No sleeveless tops

No pants with rips, holes, or frays are permitted. No pajama pants are permitted.

#### **WOMEN**

Professional, career style dress

No tank tops, strapless tops, halter tops, tops with spaghetti straps, tops with low necklines or backless, or tops that expose the midriff, with hands raised above the head, shall be worn.

Skirt and dress length must meet the top of the kneecap.

No pants with rips, holes, or frays are permitted. No pajama pants are permitted.

Leggings, skinny jeans, or skinny pants are not permitted

No shorts.

#### **ALL STAFF MEMBERS**

No sweatshirts or t-shirts unless school shirts worn on Friday for spirit days.

Staff with tattoos may be requested to keep them covered.

Neither female nor male staff shall be permitted to wear rings or studs in their noses, tongues or other body parts (other than the ear).

No jeans

No flip flops

No see-through clothing

## **DRUG ABUSE POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES**

In accordance with Public Law 100-690, Public Law 101-647, the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986, and the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace of the Quitman School District (QSD.) Pursuant to this law, all QSD employees will notify the Superintendent of Education if convicted for violation of any criminal drug statutes should said violation occur in the workplace, no later than five (5) days after such conviction.

## **DRUG FREE WORKPLACE**

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

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

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

## **DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS**

- To plan, organize, and conduct a program of instruction in the subjects or grades to which assigned.
- To assume custody of the pupils assigned to their care and to take precautions that will ensure the pupil's safety and general welfare. Students should never be left unsupervised.
- To participate in all pre-school conferences and in-service training programs, unless assigned school duty conflicts.
- To perform extra-curricular duties assigned by the principal, such as room, hall, playground and similar essential duties.
- To attend all faculty meetings called by the principal, coordinators, supervisors, or superintendent, unless excused by the person calling the meeting.
- To keep classes in session each day during school hours and not dismiss them for any time without the prior consent of the principal.
- To be responsible for all school property and equipment entrusted to them.
- To be responsible for the behavior of their pupils and all other pupils with whom they have contact on campus.
- To prepare all records as directed by the rules and regulations or required by the principal, supervisor, or superintendent.
- To make any and all requests to the School Board through the principal and superintendent.
- To be strictly accountable to the principal and superintendent for the performance of their teaching duties.
- To keep lesson plans and/or outlines of class procedures. These will aid principals in performing their duties and will serve as guidelines for substitute teachers.
- In all cases where a teacher terminates employment during the school year, said teacher shall provide lesson plans for at least two weeks in advance to the replacement teacher.
- To practice, and to require the pupils to practice, good housekeeping by forbidding litter; by storing books, work material, supplies and equipment in a neat and orderly manner; by keeping chalkboards and erasers functional; by having window shades properly hung; and by other practices designed to reflect good housekeeping.
- To notify the principal or his designee directly upon any anticipated absences, obtaining prior approval when required.
- To strive to interpret the work of the school fairly, honestly, and adequately to patrons at every opportunity.
- To avoid doctrinal sectarian, and denominational teaching.
- To keep up to date in their subject area.
- To strive at all times to maintain cordial relationships with the home and parent(s)/guardian, keeping the parent(s)/guardian informed of the student's progress and holding conferences whenever necessary.
- To perform other duties as may be assigned by the principal or assistant principal.

## **EEF FUNDS**

Each teacher receives a certain amount of money for purchase of instructional materials. See your principal for further details.

## **EMERGENCIES**

It is essential that the staff be knowledgeable of the school's emergency procedures found in the school's Crisis Management Plan. Remain calm during emergencies.

### **Fire Drill**

In the case of fire, you should know the fire evacuation routes and procedures for your school. You should know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher and how to use it.

### **Severe Weather**

- Severe Weather Watch – weather conditions are such that severe thunderstorms may develop.

- Severe Weather Warning – a severe thunderstorm has developed and will probably affect those areas stated in weather bulletin.
- Tornado Watch – weather conditions are such that a tornado may develop.
- Tornado Warning – a tornado has formed and been sighted and may affect those areas stated in the bulletin.

**Actions:**

- Severe Weather – Students will remain in classrooms unless notified by office personnel, who will continuously monitor the situation.
- Tornado Warning –Tornado watch and warnings will be indicated to school buildings over the emergency civil defense monitors in school’s offices. Monitors must be left on at all times. Signal that warning (or tornado drill) will occur will be 2 long rings of the bell system. Other effective means of communication will be used in the event the bells aren’t working. Students should proceed to their designated position against the wall and assume a kneeling position, head down, with hands or books covering their heads. Students in unsafe locations at the time of the drill will go to assigned locations at the direction of the teacher. Staff should check the map posted in the classroom. Teachers are to close classroom doors after students exit into the hallways. Quietness is extremely important so that any necessary directions may be called down the hallway. Teachers should keep their class rosters with them during the drill and/or warning. The all-clear signal will be a verbal announcement or one long ring of the bell system by the principal or designee.

**Earthquake**

The signal for an earthquake will be the fire alarm for evacuation or any other effective means of communication. Students and staff should protect face and head from flying debris with arms, books, coats, etc. Everyone should stay in position until building tremors and/or flying debris ceases. Await further instructions from the principal or designee. If the fire alarm sounds, evacuate the building and move at least 200 feet away.

**Personal Emergency**

In case of personal emergency, the teacher should notify the office immediately.

**EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECK**

Mississippi Code of 1972 Section 37-9-17 requires all new hire licensed and non-licensed employees to have a criminal records check performed by the FBI and the State CIC center. This bill requires that fingerprints be taken and submitted as part of the background check. The cost to process fingerprints and conduct the background check is **\$36.00** per applicant. Also, each applicant must take a drug test at his/her expense of **\$37.40**.

**FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

Employees are instructed to refer to the revised School Board policy on FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE which is policy GBRIA located in the Appendix of this handbook.

**FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or the eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy acts under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Quitman School District to amend a record should write the School principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record the want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has outsourced

services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

**A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.**

**Upon request the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. (NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)**

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office	(202) 260-3887
U.S. Department of Education	TTD: (202) 260-8956
400 Maryland Ave. SW	
Washington, D. C. 20202-4605	

### **Notice for Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal Law, requires that **Quitman School District**, with certain exceptions, obtain your consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, **Quitman School District**, may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Quitman School District to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories—names, addresses and telephone listings—unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without prior written consent.<sup>(1)</sup>

If you do not want **Quitman School District** to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Principal (of the Building in which your student attends) in writing by September 1<sup>st</sup> (of each year). **Quitman School District** has designated the following information as directory information: [Note: an LEA may, but does not have to, include all the information listed below.]

- **Student's name**
- **Address**
- **Telephone number**
- **Electronic mail address**
- **Photograph**
- **Date and place of birth**
- **Major field of study**
- **Dates of attendance**
- **Grade level**
- **Participation in officially recognized activities and sports**
- **Weight and height of members of athletic teams**
- **Degrees, honors, and awards received**
- **The most recent educational agency or institution attended**
- **Student ID number, used ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)**

Footnotes:



1. These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908), as amended, and 10 U.S.C. § 503©, as amended.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Teachers must submit a request for a field trip to the principal of the school. All trips should be educational and well planned. Time lines, set by the principal, must be followed. (A minimum of 15 days prior to trip.) The number of trips will be limited due to the complexity of arranging and the legal liability involved.

Field trips should not occur during statewide testing.

Teachers need to notify the Cafeteria Manager two weeks ahead of time when a class will need food for a field trip **or** if a class will not need food for a field trip.

Planning the field trip and arranging the details are the teacher's responsibility. All field trips must be approved by the Principal.

### **Field Trips and Excursions**

**policy IFCB board approved: 10/17/2016**

**Definition:** Any planned instructional activity which is aligned with curricular objectives and involves student(s) being away from the school but under the jurisdiction and supervision of the school.

The Trustees of the Quitman School District recognize that carefully planned and well-coordinated field trips and excursions can enrich and enhance the instructional program. Only those field trips and excursions which are of value in meeting educational objectives and which do not seriously interfere with the educational routine of students who must remain in school will be approved. Each approved field trip and excursion must be preceded by adequate classroom instruction and preparation appropriate to the understanding of students. This prior instruction and preparation must also be supported by follow-up instructional activities and assignments reflective of the learning gained through participation in the field trip or excursion. It should be clearly understood that field trips are educational in nature and not for recreational purposes or used as a reward.

**The following guidelines shall apply to all field trips and excursions:**

1. Field trips and excursions are trips which involve no overnight stays. (This does not include trips for MHSAA activities.)
2. No field trips will be permitted during weeks of term tests or state tests.
3. The principal must be notified in writing at least 15 days in advance.
4. The principal must approve all field trips and excursions and shall assign an appropriate number of staff members to have adequate supervision of the students.
5. Request for a field trip must be in writing, and the superintendent must give approval.
6. After approval by the principal written information pertaining to each specific field trip must be disseminated to the parents of involved students at least three school days prior to the date of the trip.
7. School buses should be used as much as possible. The principal must approve the use of private vehicles. All private vehicle drivers must have a Mississippi driver's license, and parents of all students who will ride in the private vehicle shall give written permission and follow policy.
8. Fees collected for a specific field trip may not be in excess of the actual cost of the trip, and all such fees shall be receipted and deposited as prescribed by policy EDAE.
9. Student attendance must be accounted for at all times. To take care of emergencies when parents have to be contacted, a list of all students who will be traveling and their home telephone numbers or other emergency numbers, will be submitted to the principal prior to departure.
10. Prior to departure all students must submit a signed Parent consent form to the staff member who is to be in charge of the trip. These forms must be kept on file in the principal's office.
11. In case of any emergency involving an accident or the health of the student, the staff member in charge shall take whatever steps necessary to provide for the needs of the students. In all cases, the parents of the student are to be contacted and apprised of the circumstances of the problem. If required, medical assistance will be sought as soon as possible pursuant to the authorization from the parent(s) on the Parent Consent form.

### **Student Overnight Trips and Out-of-State Excursions**

**Policy IFCBB board approved 06/29/2016**

The Trustees of the Quitman School District recognize that carefully planned and well-coordinated student trips can enrich and enhance the instructional program. Only those student trips out-of-state or overnight which are of value in meeting educational objectives and which do not seriously interfere with the educational routine of students who must remain in school will be approved.

**The following guidelines shall apply to all student activities involving overnight travel:**

1. All trips involving out-of-state travel or overnight travel shall be approved by the Board of Trustees.

2. Adequate supervision is required for all overnight trips.
3. A request for preliminary approval must be submitted to the principal, superintendent, and Board of Trustees before students and parents are so involved that disapproval of the request would be considered a cancellation of the trip.
4. All requests for trips shall state the purpose of the trip, group or class going, estimated number of students and staff, method(s) of travel, cost per student and who will pay such cost, preliminary itinerary with dates and places, and how the trip will be financed.
5. The written consent of the custodial parent or parents, or the custodian/guardian, with whom the student resides shall be obtained and the original lodged with the principal of the school attended by the student. The consent shall be given on the form styled Parental/Guardian Consent which is attached to and made a part of this policy section. Failure to complete any portion of the Parental Consent form shall be grounds for disapproval of a student's participation in that activity.
6. The staff/faculty member who is in charge, or who will accompany the student group as representative of the School District, will inform each student and the parent(s) that infractions of discipline committed by a student or students which in the sole judgment of that staff representative is of such detriment to the conduct of the student, students, or the educational activity may warrant the requirement of summarily return of the offending student(s) to their home by and at the expense of the parent.
7. In the event of emergency involving the safety and/or health of a participating student, the staff/faculty member in charge of the activity shall take such steps reasonably and necessarily appropriate to inform the parent(s)/guardian of the situation and of those things reasonably necessary to provide for the needs of the student under the circumstances. A true copy of the Parental Consent form above described for each participating student will be kept by the staff/faculty member in charge to aid and assist in the provision for the needs of the individual student. Except in the event of life threatening emergency or circumstance beyond the control of the staff member, the staff member will exert every reasonable effort to communicate the situation to the parent(s)/guardian before medical/hospitalization treatment expense is incurred. If required, medical assistance will be sought as soon as possible pursuant to the authorization stated in the Parental/Guardian Consent form.

### **FIXED ASSETS**

**The employees at each school/location are assigned the responsibility** of accounting for all fixed assets assigned to their areas (rooms, offices, etc.). At the beginning of each fiscal year, each employee within the school/location will review an inventory of the fixed assets located in his/her specific area (room, office, etc.) of responsibility. This form lists all of the fixed assets located in the specific area (room, office, etc.) and provides a space for the employee to confirm, by signature, the accuracy of the listing. This inventory is repeated at the end of the fiscal year **or** at any time the employee is permanently vacating the area (room, office, etc.). The administrator/supervisor and the employee must reconcile any discrepancy between the beginning and ending inventories. As an employee of QSD you agree to accept responsibility to care for all of the district's assets at all times.

Employees agree to immediately report any change in the status of any item in their work area to their administrator or fixed assets clerk. ***Failure to report changes or negligence in protecting assets could result in personal financial responsibility to replace the item, repair the item, or refund the cost to the district.***

### **GRADEBOOK**

- Teachers are to keep accurate, up-to-date records of the students' grades.
- Tests are to be graded only by the teacher.
- Grades are averaged in accordance with approved averaging guidelines.
- Grades are posted in gradebook within three school days after grading.
- Progress reports are completed on time.
- Report cards are completed with no inaccurate or incomplete information provided.

### **GRANTS**

**(Including Awards, Scholarships, and Programs Involving Financial Assistance)**

**Requests to apply for grants must be approved by the superintendent and the school board prior to submitting an application on behalf of Quitman School District.**

**Grant Steps to follow:**

- Must send written request to your supervisor or administrator (include a copy of the grant application and any necessary related documents)
- Supervisor or administrator must date and approve/disapprove the written grant request

- Supervisor or administrator send the approved/disapproved written request to the district grant coordinator or superintendent (in the absence of district grant coordinator)
- District grant coordinator notifies the administrator of board approval
- Administrator notifies grant applicant of approval
- Grant applicant must send a completed copy of the grant to district grant coordinator and finance office
- If the grant is awarded to Quitman School District, the letter of acceptance must be sent to the district grant coordinator to be approved by the Superintendent and School Board
- Upon receipt, all monetary funds must be immediately sent to the Finance Director

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE (Certified Staff)**

#### **Certified Staff Complaints and Grievances, Policy GDJ brd approved 06/13/2016**

##### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure at the first possible administrative level, an equitable solution to any grievance held by a certificated staff. The policy and the procedure provided herein are not intended to in anyway grant hearing rights to "At Will" Employees.

##### **DEFINITIONS**

The following definitions shall apply in this grievance procedure:

1. A "grievance" is a complaint by an individual based upon an alleged violation of his or her rights under state or federal law or board policy.
2. A "grievant" is a person or persons making the complaint.
3. The term "days" shall mean working school days and shall exclude weekends, holidays and vacation days.

##### **PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING GRIEVANCES**

Grievances shall be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

##### **Level One**

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

##### **Level Two**

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

##### **Level Three**

1. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at LEVEL TWO, or if the superintendent does not render a decision within five (5) days, the grievant may file the grievance with the secretary of the school board.
2. If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the school board within five (5) days of the hearing at LEVEL TWO, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
3. Within five (5) days after receipt of the grievance, the board secretary, in concert with the board chairman and superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the school board on the grievance.
4. The board shall render its decision within seven (7) days of the hearing.
5. If the grievance or complaint is against the superintendent the grievant may file their complaint with the school board.

### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

Students with documented long-term illness or injury, which prohibits school attendance, may be provided homebound instruction (policy IDDC), with approval of the principal. Teachers will be asked to assist the designated homebound instructor in providing educational services as needed.

### **HOMEWORK**

- Teachers may assign a reasonable amount of meaningful homework.
- All homework will be checked by the teacher.
- No homework will be given during achievement tests, on weekends or holidays without special permission from the principal.
- Teachers are expected to provide assignments and other assistance to absent students as specified by the principal.

### **ILLNESSES (STUDENT)**

Send the student to the office with a pass. Have another student accompany him/her if his/her condition so indicates. Even if you believe a student is feigning illness, it is still better practice to treat him/her as though he/she were sick. The office will assume responsibility for further action.

### **INSURANCE**

- All school employees are covered by a blanket liability policy.
- The only insurance deduction to be made on payroll will be group insurance approved by the insurance committee, the Superintendent, and the School Board. Insurance must be taken during the enrollment period only in order to qualify for payroll deduction. A new employee has 30 days after the first day of employment to enroll.

### **LEAVE**

Employees are instructed to refer to the revised School Board policy on SICK AND PERSONAL LEAVE which is located in the Appendix of this handbook.

### **MEDICATION**

**(Administered to Students)**

**In accordance with board policy JGCD, only school office personnel will dispense medication.**

### **MESSAGE TO ALL EMPLOYEES**

We realize that from time to time issues may arise that require assistance from school administrators. In an effort to facilitate cohesiveness between all staff, we request you follow the below chain of command to resolve these issues.

- 1st - Principal or Supervisor
- 2nd - Superintendent
- 3rd - School Board

### **NON-RENEWAL OF CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES**

As used within the District's policy, any reference to "employee" within policy GBN – **Professional Personnel Separation/Non-Renewal**, or otherwise, shall have reference to the following:

- a) Any teacher, principal, superintendent or other professional personnel employed by the local school district for a continuous period of two (2) years with that district and required to have a valid license issued by the State Department of Education as a prerequisite of employment; or

- b) Any teacher, principal, superintendent or other professional personnel who has completed a continuous period of two (2) years of employment in a Mississippi public school district and one (1) full year of employment with the school district of current employment, and who is required to have a valid license issued by the State Department of Education as a prerequisite of employment.

If a licensed employee of the District does not fall within one of the above categories, then in said event they are not entitled to a hearing before the School Board for any non-renewal recommendations.

### **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Outside employment will not jeopardize the effective performance of an employee to carry out his/her responsibility. Employment should be consistent with the moral and ethical aspects of teaching children.

### **PARKING DECALS FOR STAFF AND FACULTY**

The safety of our students, staff members, and visitors is a priority for Quitman School District. To identify unknown/unmarked cars on school campus we will now have parking decals. **ALL staff and faculty must have a parking decal.**

**Each school/department will receive parking decals that ALL staff and faculty must hang on their mirror. Only one parking decal will be provided. All decals must be signed out at the beginning of each school year.**

Each building will be given 5 visitor parking decals. Substitutes will need to be provided with a visitor parking decal upon signing in and return it when signing out each day. Substitutes are not allowed to take the visitor parking decal off school campus.

Any vehicle without a QSD parking decal may be towed/ticketed by the SRO at the owner's expense.

**Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year there will be a fee of \$10.00 for an additional vehicle parking decal. Parking without a parking decal will have a \$5.00 fine plus the purchasing of a parking decal.**

### **PARTIES**

Parties may be held only with prior approval of the principal.

### **PROPERTY/EQUIPMENT**

- Teachers are responsible for all school property and equipment and shall use public property with care and consideration. Any maintenance problem or malfunction of equipment should be reported to the principal promptly.
- Teachers should at all times require students to exercise care in use of school property and equipment. Any damages sustained to property or equipment must be assessed and paid for, no matter how minor. These occurrences must also be reported to the principal promptly.

### **REFRIGERATOR FEE**

A fee of \$35.00 annually will be assessed for all personal refrigerators operating in the district. This fee assists with offsetting the additional cost of electricity from the use of these appliances.

### **RELATIONSHIPS**

- **Teacher-Principal:** Exchanges of ideas in any area as curriculum, discipline, instruction, facilities, services, etc. are encouraged and appreciated. Democratic practices are the goal. The principal, through class visitation, assists the teacher in every possible way to ensure the most effective learning for each student. The teacher and principal continuously keep each other informed. In dealing with the office of the Superintendent, the proper channel is through the principal. This does not include personal calls you may wish to make to an office worker concerning your own personal data and actions related to it.
- **Teacher-Student:** Each student's request or problem is important and should be treated with respect. The principal is the final authority in matters pertaining to students. For this reason, teachers are responsible for preliminary work in the realm of problem solving before the principal can act.
- **Teacher-Parent/Guardian:** Teachers have the responsibility and authority to discuss an individual student's problems directly with the student's parent(s)/guardian. This may be done directly, keeping the principal informed beforehand as to the problem, and afterward, as to the result. To know the parent/guardian is to know the child better. Consult the principal when you are not sure. Teachers shall not discuss the student's performance with anyone other than the student, his/her parents/guardian or with legitimate authorized personnel. Report all evidence of child abuse to proper authorities and to the principal.

- Teacher-Teacher: Teachers are encouraged and urged to cooperate directly on matters of mutual constructive nature. Keep the principal informed.
- Teacher-Administrative Staff: Deal directly with any member of the school's administrative staff. Bring problem areas in this regard to the principal's attention. The administrative staff co-ordinates, supports and supervises the entire operation of the school.

## **REPORTING ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

### **I. THE LAW**

A. The Mississippi Code (1972 annotated) states: The following people are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| • Attorneys     | • Teachers   |
| • Doctors       | • Social Workers   |
| • Dentists      | • School Principals  |
| • Interns       | • Child's Caregiver  |
| • Residents     | • Ministers  |
| • Nurses        | • Law Enforcement Officers   |
| • Psychologists | • Or any other person having reasonable cause to suspect a child has been neglected or abused. |

B. Immunity

- Civil Liability – Persons making reports are protected by law from civil liability if they act in good faith.
- It is not necessary that you have absolute proof before reporting. It is the responsibility of Child Protective Services to make its own investigation.

### **II. STEPS TO FOLLOW AFTER SUSPECTING ABUSE.**

- Take the child to a private place and let the child tell you about the above. DO NOT interrogate the child. Encourage the child to express his/her feelings about the abuse. Avoid leading questions. Ask open-ended questions (i.e.: What happened next?)
- Try to remain calm and non-judgmental.
- Let the child know that you believe his or her story.
- Reassure the child he/she is not to blame for what happened.
- Respect the privacy of the child. DO NOT tell other people who do not need to know.
- Explain to the child what will happen next (i.e.: tell them you will call someone that will help them.)

### **III. REPORTING WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM**

- Inform the principal of your findings. The principal will establish protocol for who/how social services is contacted.

### **IV. REPORTING TO SOCIAL SERVICES**

- Name and address of child and parents or caretaker
- Date of Birth
- Nature of child's injury
- Identity and address of perpetrator, if known
- Any other information you believe social worker will find helpful
- Names and date of births of other children in the home

## **RESOURCE PERSONS**

Well-planned use of community resource persons makes a valuable contribution to the educational program. Teachers are encouraged to arrange for such persons to discuss appropriate topics with students. Your principal must approve all resource persons and topics prior to your extending an invitation.

## **SAFETY**

The teacher must take all possible steps to assure the safety of the student at school. The room environment, campus, and student activities must be in harmony with the requirements of safety.

- Do not allow running, chasing, excessive noise or other unruly behavior in the hall or classrooms.
- Do not allow pushing or fighting at any time.
- Immediately report any unsafe condition on campus to the principal.

## **SCHOOL BOARD DEADLINES and ADDRESSING THE SCHOOL BOARD**

The Quitman School District School Board meets the second Monday of every month at 5:00 p.m. in the Central Office Board Room, 104 East Franklin Street, Quitman, Mississippi. Board packets are released on the Tuesday prior to the Monday board meeting, therefore, any item to be on the Monday meeting agenda have to be to the superintendent's secretary by 12 noon on the Friday prior to the board packets being released on Tuesday.

Office of the Superintendent                      Fax# (601) 776-1051  
Attn: Superintendent  
Quitman School District  
104 East Franklin Street  
Quitman, MS 39355

Individuals or groups desiring to bring a matter before the Board of Education must first present the issue/matter to the Superintendent, sufficiently in advance of the board meeting to give the administration an opportunity to address the problem first, before Board consideration. Failure to comply with the requirements established under this policy (policy BCBI, Public Participation at Board Meetings) may result in denial of the request for placement in the board agenda until such time as the policy has been followed in its entirety. After discussion with the Superintendent you **may** be given a copy of the Public Participation at Board Meetings which includes the Agenda Request Form to fill out and required to be returned to the Superintendent's secretary no later than noon on the Friday preceding the regular board meeting. The administration and/or Board of Education requires that copies of any statement or prepared questions or comments accompany the request to be heard at the board meeting so that the board may be fully apprised in advance regarding the matter(s) to be addressed.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual Harassment is defined as "unwanted sexual or gender-based behavior that occurs when one person has formal or informal power over the other" (Thompson Publishing Group, Educators Guide to Controlling Sexual Harassment, 1993). There are three major elements in this definition:

- The behavior is unwanted or unwelcome.
- The behavior is sexual or related to the sex or gender of the person.
- The behavior occurs in the context of a relationship where one person has more formal power than the other (such as a supervisor over an employee or a faculty member over a student) or more informal power (such as one peer to another)." (Thompson Publishing Group, Educator's Guide to Controlling Sexual Harassment, 1993).

A Title IX report/grievance should be filed immediately with the appropriate supervisor. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated in the Quitman School District School District. If a student files a complaint of sexual harassment, refer to Policy JB-P in the Appendix.

## **SMOKING/VAPING/E-CIGARETTES POLICY**

Consistent with the provisions of Public law 103-227, 20 USC 6083, the Quitman Board of Education bans the use of all tobacco products or vaping/electronic cigarettes and products in all school buildings in the district and on all school vehicles by all persons at all times.

### **SMOKE-FREE BUILDINGS**

This ban extends to all employees, students, and patrons attending school sponsored athletic events and meetings. The ban extends to school-owned or operated vehicles and facilities. The board issues this ban in a sincere appeal to all employees, students and patrons to cooperate in helping to create within our faculties a healthy environment for all concerned.

Smoking is prohibited in all the public school facilities, and on all school vehicles by all persons at all times. This ban includes all employees, students, and patrons attending school sponsored athletic events and meetings.

### **VAPING/VAPING DEVICES/ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES**

Electronic cigarettes have recently surpassed conventional cigarettes as the most commonly used tobacco product among youths. The Board of Trustees of the Quitman School District recognizes that the use of electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices, or any tobacco products, is detrimental to the health and safety of students, staff and visitors and is therefore prohibited at all times. Miss. Code § 97-32-29

This applies to all students, school staff, parents, and any visitors while on school grounds, in school buildings and facilities, in any school bus, on school property or at school-related activities or school-sponsored events which includes, but is not limited to, athletic events.

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY**

Any employee of the District who participates in social networking websites such as Facebook shall not post any data, information, documents, photographs, or any other items that are inappropriate or that may disrupt the school environment, disrupt the educational process, or impair the employee's ability to perform his/her duties with the District. The Superintendent shall determine whether information and items posted on a website are inappropriate and whether or not they may result in disruption to the school environment or educational process or may impair the employee's ability to perform his/her duties with the District.

No employee of the District who participates in social networking websites, text-messaging or e-mails may use them to fraternize or socialize with students, including disclosure of information of an inappropriate nature about individual students or groups of students.

No employee of the District may access his/her social networking website for personal use during school hours.

Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including termination.

Employees should use only District-approved websites to communicate with students and then only about school matters.

## **STATEMENTS OF COMPLIANCE**

In compliance with federal law, including provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Quitman School District School District does not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, in the administration of its educational policies, programs, and activities, or in employment. Any inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 should be directed to:

Quitman School District School District  
Office of Superintendent  
104 East Franklin Street  
Quitman, MS 39355  
(601) 776-2186

The following person filling the position as indicated has been designated as the Section 504 /Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator and will handle

Adam Boyette, Special Education Director, Section 504/ADA, and IDEA Coordinator  
104 East Franklin Street  
Quitman, MS 39355  
(601) 776-3754

## **STUDENT INTERVENTION TEAMS**

The Quitman School District School District has implemented Student Intervention Team (Teacher Support Teams) in all elementary, middle, and high schools to assist teachers in determining instructional interventions for students with learning problems which interfere with their participation or performance in the classroom and the school environment. These problems may be academic or behavioral. Teachers should contact the Student Intervention Team chairperson at their school or the principal for more information regarding referral of a student.

## **STUDENT TEACHERS**

Student teachers will be assigned to a supervising teacher who will be charged with the development of the student teacher's classroom management, teaching/learning strategies, and professionalism.

Student teachers are not to administer or prescribe punishment to students. Student teachers will abide by the policies set forth by the Quitman School District School Board.

## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

The principal or designee should be notified immediately upon the teacher's anticipated absence. Classroom teachers will turn into the office an up- to- date substitute file containing lesson plans, seating chart, class roll, schedule, duty assignment, and any other pertinent information needed to assist substitutes with their duties.

## **TEACHER EVALUATION**

The evaluation of professional employees shall be in the form and manner prescribed by the State Department of Education. The School Board of this district directs the Superintendent to formulate and implement a formal annual performance appraisal system based on job description and on-the-job performance of every professional employee.



Using the school board and MDE approved Teacher Evaluation Instrument, every professional employee will be formally evaluated once a year.

### TESTING STATEMENT

Attendance on statewide testing days is extremely important. Please allow enough time on these days for your child to reach school on time, well-rested and well-fed. Since passage of these tests is critical to your child's educational future, your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, a student scoring at the lowest achievement level in reading on the established state assessment for 3rd grade will not be promoted to 4th grade unless the student meets the good cause exemptions for promotion.

### TEXTBOOKS

Teachers are to record book identification numbers, book title, and the student receiving the textbook. When a child moves from his/her school, the books are turned in to the classroom teacher before records are released.

Students will be charged for books that are lost. The fee will be based on the four-year average textbook life. Minimum charge is 25% of the contact price. All such losses and collections shall be reported to the principal.

Teachers, principals, and assistant principals distributing books to pupils are authorized to collect for any damage or excessive wear of the textbooks. The amount collected should be determined by the extent such damage has impaired the future use of the book and should be sufficient to impress upon parents and children the necessity for proper care and the use of the state-funded textbooks.

### TITLE VI AND TITLE IX COMPLIANCE POLICY

TITLE VI - Quitman School District will provide a free and appropriate public education to all handicapped school age children in accordance with State Law and Public Law 94-142 and Board of Trustees' policy.

TITLE IX- "No Person .....shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

TITLE IX- "unwanted sexual or gender-based behavior that occurs when one person has formal or informal power over the other" (Thompson Publishing Group, Educators Guide to Controlling Sexual Harassment, 1993).

The Title IX - Coordinator for the Quitman School District may be contacted at (601) 776-2186 or in writing at 104 East Franklin Street, Quitman, MS 39355. Inquiries to recipients concerning the application of Title IX and its implementing regulation may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or to OCR.

### TRANSFERS

The superintendent has the authority to change the grade or school assignment of all teachers and other employees. All such changes are subject to the approval of the School Board. Teachers who desire a transfer from their present teaching assignment must make such a request in writing to their principal. The current principal, the receiving principal, and the Superintendent must approve transfers. All transfers will be considered on their own merits. The principal has the authority to determine the assignment of any employee within the school. The principal has the authority to recommend to the superintendent the transfer of any employee.

### TRAVEL

All personnel attending workshops or training requiring overnight stays will be required to make hotel reservations and secure them with a personal credit card. Reimbursement for these costs will not be made until the employee returns, fulfills all documentation requirements, and submits documentation of all costs incurred. Prepayment of hotel, conference registration, or airline tickets may be requested. All prepayment requests will be approved during monthly Board meetings. Prompt submission of an online prepayment form is required to ensure that you receive a pre-paid check in a timely manner. You should allow at least one month prior to the event for approval.

***\*\*\*All Professional Leave Request Forms must be submitted electronically at least two weeks prior to requested leave date(s) QSD Board Policy GBRI, Professional Leave.***

**All personnel will follow the following procedure when applying for professional leave to attend training or other related activities.**

- 1) **At least two (2) weeks prior to event date**, complete an on-line *Day Travel Request* with all required information. Include costs for registration fees, travel, lodging, meals, and miscellaneous expenses and indicate if

a substitute is needed. Be certain to have budget codes on the leave form. **Be sure that the amounts you request are sufficient to cover all costs.**

- 2) Submit the on-line leave request to your principal or supervisor for approval.
- 3) Administrators will approve and forward all request forms to the Professional Development Coordinator.
- 4) The Professional Development Coordinator will review and approve all forms and forward to Federal Programs or Superintendent for final approval. **Incomplete forms will be returned via email to administrators for corrections.**
- 5) Once all approvals have been acquired, the form will be returned to you via e-mail.
- 6) Upon your return, complete a *Travel Expense Report* **within two (2) weeks** and have your principal/supervisor sign the form.
- 7) All requests for reimbursement to be paid with district funds must be forwarded to the Office of Curriculum/Staff Development after approval by building/program administrator.
- 8) All requests for reimbursement to be paid with Federal Program funds must be forwarded to the Office of Federal Programs after approval by building/program administrator. The FP Director will approve and submit for approval by PD Coordinator.
- 9) All requests for reimbursement to be paid by SPED must be forwarded to the Office of Special Education after approval by building/program administrator. The SPED Director will approve and submit for approval by PD Coordinator.
- 10) Incomplete forms **will not be processed and will be returned** resulting in delay of approval. It is essential that forms are submitted with all pertinent information to meet required submissions timeline prior to event (at least 2 weeks.)

### UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

Teachers who suspect or have direct knowledge of unlawful activity either by students or other district personnel should report their suspicions to their principal or immediate supervisor who will take appropriate action.

### VISITORS

All visitors to the school shall report to the principal's office for clearance and obtain written authorization to enter the building. Teachers shall report any unauthorized visitors to the office immediately.

### WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES (STUDENTS)

Any student withdrawing from school must have a parent contact the school and sign a record form before withdrawal procedures will be initiated. Teachers are responsible for providing and accurately recording all necessary information for the withdrawal procedure.

### WORKERS' COMPENSATION

All employees are covered for medical expenses and loss of income due to accidental injury on the job through Workers' Compensation. On the job injuries must be reported to the supervisor immediately in order that proper forms may be processed. Documentation is to be completed within two (2) days of accident and is to be submitted to the Finance Department at Central Office.

In order to maintain a safe environment for staff and students the following will apply:

- A. The teacher is legally responsible to act in a reasonable and prudent manner at all times. Specifically, the teacher must do the following:
  - Never leave students unsupervised.
  - Require students to conduct themselves in an orderly and safe manner, and administer such disciplinary actions as are reasonable and proper in any situation involving student misconduct.
  - Use discretion in the administration of corporal punishment.
  - Report any unsafe condition in the school plan or on campus to the principal so that it may be corrected.
  - Strictly adhere to all stated policies of the district and the individual school.
- B. Failure by teachers to meet their responsibilities may have severe consequences, and teachers may be held legally liable for negligence in the performance of their duties.

The injured employee shall not use accrued personal and/or medical leave and receive workers' compensation benefits simultaneously if the combined receipt of both benefits results in the employee being paid, while absent due to the work-related injury, a total amount that exceeds one hundred percent (100%) of his wages earned in employment at the time of injury. In such cases, the injured employee may use only as much of his accrued personal and/or medical leave as necessary, to constitute the difference between the amount of temporary disability workers' compensation benefits received and one hundred percent (100%) of his wages earned at the time of injury in state employment.

# Appendix

- ❖ Licensure – Page 35
- ❖ Policy GBRIA - FMLA Policy, page 37
- ❖ Policy GBRI – Absence from Duty, Certified - Contracted Employees, page 41
- ❖ Policy GCRG – Absence from Duty, Classified Employees, page 44
- ❖ Policy GADF – Donating Leave to Another Employee, page 46
- ❖ Policy JB-P – Students Complaints of Sexual Discrimination - Title IX Procedures, page 47
- ❖ Staff Agreement Form to be Signed by Staff Member, page 51

**REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSE RENEWAL**  
**CERTIFIED STAFF**  
**INDIVIDUAL COMPONENT**

Each certified staff member has the professional and contractual responsibility to participate in professional development options for certificate renewal. These options are intended to promote and enhance individual growth. The individual is responsible for selecting and monitoring his/her individual professional development program for license renewal. Certified staff members are also responsible for maintaining and submitting all documentation for license renewal to the Office of Educator Licensure in the State Department of Education.

Within each five-year cycle, an individual must complete the following for license renewal:

**Bachelor's Degree or Equivalent**

10 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) in content area or job/skill\* related area

**OR**

6 semester hours in content area of job/skill\* related area

**OR**

3 semester hours in content area or job/skill\* related area AND 5 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) in content area or job/skill\* related area

**OR**

Completion of National Board of Professional Teaching Standards process

**Master's Degree or Above**

3 semester hours in content area or job/skill\* related area

**OR**

5 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) in content area or job/skill\* related area

**OR**

Completion of National Board of Professional Teaching Standards process

\*Content area refers to the area of licensure (e.g., mathematics, science, special educations, etc.) Job/skill related areas include pedagogy and skills essential for effective teaching and leadership (e.g., computer technology, cooperative learning, learning styles, etc.)

**Options for Professional Development**

In selecting activities to fulfill the requirements for organizational and individual professional development experiences, it is recommended that the following process be utilized to determine the appropriate professional development option:

- Identify needs
- Formulate a plan to meet the needs
- Engage in planned activity
- Assess professional development experience through reflection and sharing

The intent is to encourage individuals and organizations to pursue professional development experiences that are relevant.

**District Level Administrators**

Within each five (5) year cycle:

Career administrators must earn 70 School Executive Management Institute (SEMI) credits or complete a specialist or doctoral degree in educational leadership or six (6) hours of coursework, or 35 SEMI credits & three (3) hours coursework.

**Teacher Aides/Assistants**

Professional development opportunities for assistants are incorporated within current building activities. In addition to this, opportunities may be planned for assistants based upon specific grade level or building needs.

Process for Veteran Teachers Who Currently Hold a Valid Educator License to Determine "Highly Qualified" Status

\*\*Information current at time of print

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* requires that all veteran teachers of core academic subjects (English, Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Foreign Languages, History, Civics, Economics, Government, Geography and the Arts) be "highly qualified" by the end of school year 2005-2006. The following process will assist the teacher in determining "highly qualified" status and the options to be used in acquiring "highly qualified" status:

STEP 1. Review the current license to determine the endorsement(s) listed.

The teacher teaching in the elementary grades (K-6) will be considered "highly qualified" with a K-8 endorsement.

The teacher teaching in the middle grades (7-8, at a minimum) and high school grades (9-12) will be "highly qualified" in the specific core academic subject(s) listed on the license. If the specific core academic subject(s) currently being taught is listed as an endorsement on the license, then the teacher is considered "highly qualified."

If the license does not have a specific endorsement in the core academic subject(s) currently being taught, the teacher is not “highly qualified.”

If the teacher determines that he/she is not “highly qualified,” then the teacher needs to go to Step 2.

STEP 2. The teacher will need to review his/her college transcript(s) to determine if it shows the required number of hours (undergraduate or graduate) of pure content subject courses with a grade of “C” or higher (*18 hours before September 1, 2004; 21 hours after September 1, 2004*). If it does, the teacher can go to Step 3. If it does not, the teacher goes to Step 4.

STEP 3. The teacher needs to submit a *licensure application packet* (available on the Mississippi Department of Education website) to the Office of Educator Licensure requesting that the specific endorsement(s) be added to the teacher’s license. (Include all applicable transcripts in sealed envelopes.) Mail or bring the licensure application packet to the Office of Educator Licensure, Mississippi Department of Education, 359 North West Street, Post Office Box 771, Jackson, Mississippi 39205. The licensure staff will review application packets and respond within two weeks.

STEP 4. If the teacher does not have the required number of hours in a content area with a grade of “C” or higher (*18 semester hours before September 1, 2004; 21 semester after September 1, 2004*), the teacher has until the end of school year 2005-2006 to become “highly qualified.” The following options are available:

***Before September 1, 2004***

- Pass Praxis II in the subject area **OR**
- Take the additional hours to fulfill the content requirement (18 semester hours with a grade of “C” or higher) **OR**
- Complete an approved program to add an endorsement in the subject(s) the teacher teaches or would like to teach **OR**
- Become National Board Certified in the core academic subject that the teacher is teaching or would like to teach **OR**
- Hold a master’s degree in each of the core academic subject(s) that the teacher is teaching or would like to teach.
- Complete the Mississippi Department of Education Middle School Professional Development Institute in the core academic subject(s) that the teacher currently teaches or would like to teach (*Available in August 2003 and only to teachers in Grades 5-8 who hold a K-8 license*).

***After September 1, 2004***

- Pass Praxis II in the subject area **OR**
- Pass the Middle School Praxis II in the subject area (available in 2004) to teach grades 5-8 **OR**
- Take the additional hours to fulfill the content requirement (21 semester hours after September 1, 2004) **OR**
- Complete an approved program to add an endorsement in the subject(s) the teacher teaches or would like to teach **OR**
- Become National Board Certified in the core academic subject that the teacher is teaching or would like to teach **OR**
- Hold a master’s degree in each of the core academic subject(s) that the teacher is teaching or would like to teach **OR**
- Complete the Mississippi Department of Education Middle School Professional Development Institute in the core academic subject(s) that the teacher currently teaches or would like to teach (*Available in August 2003 and only to teachers in Grades 5-8 who hold a K-8 license*).

**Clarification Regarding the Interpretation of Mississippi’s  
Definition of Highly Qualified in Special Education**

Excerpts from the Federal Register: Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Final Regulations

The ESEA specifies that all teachers of core academic subjects are to meet the requirements set forth in the statute. Students with limited English proficiency or with disabilities are expected to meet the same standards as all other students, and their teachers should be expected to have met the same standards for content knowledge. On the other hand, special educators who do not directly instruct students on any core academic subjects or who provide only consultation to highly qualified teachers of core academic subjects.....do not need to meet the same highly-qualified” subject-matter competency requirements....

- Teachers with appropriate special education licenses are considered highly qualified to teach in grades K-6 regardless of the classroom structure.
- Teachers providing direct instruction in core academic subjects containing 7-12 core curriculum content to students placed in grades 7-12 must be highly qualified in the core academic subject areas being taught and special education regardless of classroom structure (i.e., resource or self-contained).

- Resource teachers who provide primary instruction in core academic subjects containing 7-12 core curriculum content to students placed in grades 7-12 must be highly qualified in the subjects taught. Resource teachers who provide tutorial assistance to students who receive primary instruction from a highly qualified academic subject area teacher only must be highly qualified in special education.
- Those who serve in regular settings (i.e., inclusion) need not be highly qualified in the core academic subject area regardless of grade level, but must hold the appropriate special education license.
- Teachers of occupational courses that only apply toward a Mississippi Occupational Diploma (i.e., Job Skills Math, Employment English, etc.) or GED courses do not need to meet the definition of highly qualified.
- Highly qualified status may be obtained by:
  - ✓ Passing the PRAXIS II specialty area assessment;
  - OR**
  - ✓ Being National Board Certified in each of the core academic subject areas;
  - OR**
  - ✓ Having a master’s degree in each of the core academic subject areas;
  - OR**
  - ✓ Obtaining continuing education units through the Mississippi Department of Education Middle School Professional Development Institutes (middle grades only);
  - OR**
  - ✓ Taking the additional hours to fulfill the content requirement for a major (a minimum of 21 hours with a grade of “C” or higher).

Veteran teachers have until the end of school year 2005-06 to become highly qualified.

Prior to September 1, 2004, 18 hours of coursework with a grade of “C” or higher from an accredited program will be required to obtain an endorsement in a core academic subject area. After September 1, 2004, a minimum of 21 hours of coursework with a grade of “C” or higher from an accredited program will be required for an add-on endorsement in the core academic subject area, and therefore be considered highly qualified.

Teachers who teach core academic subjects in middle grades in resource settings may become highly qualified in the core academic subject area by successfully completing the Middle School Professional Development Institute (under development by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction).

Veteran teachers who hold valid educator licenses will be considered highly qualified in the areas in which they have current endorsements. For example, a person who holds a K-8 license with an add-on in Special Education is considered highly qualified to teach Special Education as specified above OR a person who holds a Special Education license with a Math endorsement is considered highly qualified in Math.

Requests from districts for the One Year Educator License will be considered for a teacher who already hold a One Year License. When submitting the request for the One Year Educator License, include documentation showing evidence that the person has made progress toward obtaining a Five Year License.

## **THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993, As Amended POLICY**

**Policy: GBRIA Revised: 02/13/2023**

### **A. DEFINITIONS**

1. An “eligible employee” is an employee of a covered employer who: (a) has been employed for at least 12 months and (b) has been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of leave, and (c) is employed at a worksite at which the employer employs at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the worksite.
2. “Employee’s spouse” as defined by Mississippi Law.
3. “Employee’s son or daughter” means biological child, adopted child or foster child, a step child, legal ward, or the child for whom the employee is standing in loco parentis, who is either under the age of 18, or age 18 or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
4. “Employee’s parent” means biological parent, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood (or now stands) in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child (not to include parents-in-law).
5. “Employee’s immediate family member” means spouse, son or daughter, grandchild, or parent as defined herein above.

6. For the purposes of FMLA “serious health condition” means an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care (overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider.
7. “Healthcare provider” means a licensed medical physician, nurse practitioner, dentist, psychologist, and chiropractor.

#### **B. LEAVE PROVISIONS**

An eligible employee is entitled to 12 unpaid work weeks (60 work days) during any 12-month period for any one or more of the following reasons:

1. The birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child (within 12 months of birth).
2. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care (within 12 months of the placement).
3. To care for the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition (not “parent-in-law”).
4. The employee’s own serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform the function of his/her job.
5. The district encourages any person taking FMLA leave to utilize all paid leave benefits as part of the 12 weeks of leave. This use of paid leave does not extend the 12 weeks of FMLA leave.
6. The 12-month period is defined as a "fiscal" year, that is, that the 12-month eligibility period begins on July 1.

#### **C. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Employees must provide the district at least thirty (30) days advance notice before FMLA leave is to begin if the need for the leave is foreseeable, based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care, or planned medical treatment for a serious health condition of the employee or family member.
2. Due to lack of knowledge or a medical emergency, notice must be given as soon as practicable, which means as soon as both practical and possible or at least verbally within one or two working days when the need for leave becomes known to the employee. This verbal notice is to be followed by written notice
3. Failure to give 30 days’ notice for foreseeable leave may result in the denial of the taking of FMLA leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice.

#### **D. REQUIRED CERTIFICATION**

Eligible employees shall provide the district certification of a serious health condition for himself/herself or a family member. The certification, to be signed by the health care provider, shall be attached to the required written notice or submitted in a timely manner which shall be no more than fifteen (15) working days after providing written notice. No leave period may begin without the approval of the Superintendent or designee. No approval shall be granted by the Superintendent or designee without the required written notice and certificate.

#### **E. THE CERTIFICATION IS TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. The date on which the serious health condition in question began.
2. The probable duration of the condition.
3. Appropriate medical facts regarding the condition.
4. A statement that the employee is needed to care for a spouse, parent or child (along with an estimate of the time required), or that the employee is unable to perform his/her functions, and, in the case of intermittent leave, the duration of treatment to be given.
5. Signature (not stamped) of healthcare provider.

The district may require that a second opinion be obtained at the district’s expense. The second opinion may not be provided by a healthcare provider employed by the district. In the event of conflicting opinions, the district may pay for a third and final provider to offer a binding decision. The district may require subsequent written re-certification on a reasonable basis.

Quitman School District will comply with the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) which prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. QSD will not ask for any genetic information from medical persons when responding to a request for medical information. “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.

## **F. EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS PROTECTION**

1. An employee who completes a period of leave and has complied fully with the terms of this policy shall be returned either to the same position he/she had before the taking of leave or to a position which is genuinely equivalent (as compared to comparable or similar job) in pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment.
2. Taking of leave shall not result in the loss of any previously accrued seniority or employment benefits. Except for health benefits, no other benefits will accrue during the leave period.
3. Health benefits shall continue through an employee's 12-week leave period. The district may recover health coverage premiums paid for an employee who fails to return from leave, except no recovery will be made from an employee who fails to return from leave if the reason is the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or something else beyond the employee's control.
4. Special rules for taking leave by an instructional employee exist for leave taken near the end of a semester. In general, the district may require that more leave be taken than desired, depending on the length of leave sought and the timing in proximity to the end of a semester. If this situation occurs, the Superintendent or designee will advise as to these requirements.

## **RETURN TO WORK**

Employee must notify their immediate supervisor of their intent to return to work at least two weeks prior to leave exhaustion. An employee returning to work from a family or medical leave will be reinstated to the same or an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. If the leave was taken because of the employee's own serious health condition, the employee must provide a fitness-for-duty certification from his or her health care provider prior to returning to work.

The district may deny job restoration to key employees if the key employee is one who is among the highest-paid 10% of salaried employees. Upon requesting leave, the eligible employee must be given notice that he or she is a key employee and that he or she may be denied restoration of employment. If the employee was notified when leave was first requested, restoration of employment may be denied when the district determines that the taking of leave by the key employee would result in substantial and grievous economic injury to the district's operations.

If an employee is unable to return to work at the conclusion of the leave period, that employee must provide medical documentation to support that claim. The district will evaluate such claims on an individual basis.

## **FRAUDULENCE**

An employee who fraudulently obtains an FMLA leave is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **POLICY COMPLIANCE WITH FMLA LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

This policy is based on FMLA laws and regulations and is not intended to be interpreted to provide any protections or require restrictions not contemplated by the FMLA. The District reserves the right to require such other and further certification(s) as may be allowed under The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, As Amended.

## **MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**

A "covered military member" means the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status.

A "son or daughter on active duty or call to active duty status" means the employee's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stood in loco parentis, who is on active duty or call to active duty status, and who is of any age.

"Active duty or call to active duty status" means duty under a call or order to active duty (or notification of an impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation pursuant to: Section 688 of Title 10 of the United States Code or any other provision of law during a war or during a national emergency declared by the President or Congress so long as it is in support of a contingency operation.

A "serious injury or illness" means an injury or illness incurred by a covered service-member in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service-member medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank or rating.

"Outpatient status", with respect to a covered service-member, means the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient; or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients. In order to care for a covered service-member, an eligible employee must be the spouse, son, daughter, or parent, or next of kin of a covered service-member.



A “son or daughter of a covered service-member” means the covered service-member’s biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the covered service-member stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age.

A “parent of a covered service-member” means a covered service-member’s biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the covered service-member. This term does not include parents “in law.” The “next of kin of a covered service-member” is the nearest blood relative, other than the covered service-member’s spouse, parent, son, or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the service-member by court decree or statutory provisions, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered service-member has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA. When no such designation is made, and there are multiple family members with the same level of relationship to the covered service-member, all such family members shall be considered the covered service-member’s next of kin and may take FMLA leave to provide care to the covered service-member, either consecutively or simultaneously. When such designation has been made, the designated individual shall be deemed to be the covered service-member’s only next of kin. For example, if a covered service-member has three siblings and has not designated a blood relative to provide care, all three siblings would be considered the covered service-member’s next of kin. Alternatively, where a covered service-member has a sibling(s) and designates a cousin as his or her next of kin for FMLA purposes, then only the designated cousin is eligible as the covered service-member’s next of kin. An employer is permitted to require an employee to provide confirmation of covered family relationship to the covered service-member.

Employees are eligible to take FMLA leave because of a qualifying exigency when the covered military member is on active duty or call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation pursuant to one of the provisions of law identified above. An employee whose family member is on active duty or call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation as a member of the Regular Armed Forces is not eligible to take leave because of a qualifying exigency.

A call to active duty for purposes of leave taken because of a qualifying exigency refers to a Federal call to active duty. State calls to active duty are not covered unless under order of the President of the United States pursuant to one of the provisions of law identified in support of a contingency operation. The active duty orders of a covered military member will generally specify if the service-member is serving in support of a contingency operation by citation to the relevant section of United States Code and/or by reference to the specific name of the contingency operation.

An eligible employee is entitled to 26 workweeks of leave to care for a covered service-member with a serious injury or illness during a “single 12-month period”.

The “single 12-month period” described above begins on the first day the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for a covered service-member and ends 12 months after that date, regardless of the method used by the employer to determine the employee’s 12 workweeks of leave entitlement for other FMLA-qualifying reasons. If an eligible employee does not take all of his or her 26 workweeks of leave entitlement to care for a covered service-member during this “single 12-month period”, the remaining part of his or her 26 workweeks of leave entitlement to care for the covered service-member is forfeited.

The leave entitlement described above is to be applied on a per-covered-service-member, per-injury basis such that an eligible employee may be entitled to take more than one period of 26 workweeks of leave if the leave is to care for different covered service-members or to care for the same service-member with a subsequent serious injury or illness, except that no more than 26 workweeks of leave may be taken within any “single 12-month period”. An eligible employee may take more than one period of 26 workweeks of leave to care for a covered service-member with more than one serious injury or illness only when the serious injury or illness is a subsequent serious injury or illness. When an eligible employee takes leave to care for more than one covered service-member or for a subsequent serious injury or illness of the same covered service-member, and the “single 12-month periods” corresponding to the different military caregiver leave entitlements overlap, the employee is limited to taking no more than 26 workweeks of leave in each “single 12-month period”.

An eligible employee is entitled to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave for any FMLA-qualifying reason during the “single 12-month period”, provided that the employee is entitled to no more than 12 weeks of leave for one or more of the following: because of the birth of a son or daughter of the employee and in order to care for such son or daughter; because of the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care; in order to care for the spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; because of the employee’s own serious health condition; or because of a qualifying exigency. Thus, for example, an eligible employee may, during the “single 12-month period”, take 16 weeks of FMLA leave to care for a covered service-member and 10 weeks of FMLA leave to care for a newborn child. However, the employee may not take more than 12 weeks of FMLA leave to care for the newborn child during the “single 12-month period”, even if the employee takes fewer than 14 weeks of FMLA leave to

care for a covered service-member.

In all circumstances, including for leave taken to care for a covered service-member, the employer is responsible for designating leave, paid or unpaid, as FMLA-qualifying, and for giving notice of the designation to the employee. In the case of leave that qualifies as both leave to care for a covered service-member and leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition during the “single 12-month period”, the employer must designate such leave as leave to care for a covered service-member in the first instance. Leave that qualifies as both leave to care for a covered service-member and leave taken to care for a family member with a serious health condition during the “single 12-month period” must not be designated and counted as both leave to care for a covered service-member and leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition. As is the case with leave taken for other qualifying reasons, employers may retroactively designate leave as leave to care for a covered service-member.

Spouses who are eligible for FMLA leave and are employed by the same covered employer may be limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave during the “single 12-month period” if the leave is taken for birth of the employee’s son or daughter or to care for the child after birth, for placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care, or to care for the child after placement, to care for the employee’s parent with a serious health condition, or to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness. This limitation on the total weeks of leave applies to leave taken for the reasons specified as long as spouses are employed by the “same employer”. It would apply, for example, even though the spouses are employed at two different worksites of an employer located more than 75 miles from each other, or by two different operating divisions of the same company. On the other hand, if one spouse is ineligible for FMLA leave, the other spouse would be entitled to a full 26 workweeks of FMLA leave.

#### **Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)**

Under the FFCRA, an employee qualifies for paid sick time if the employee is unable to work (or unable to telework) due to a need for leave due to COVID-19, as specified.

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## **SICK & PERSONAL LEAVE FOR CERTIFIED/CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES**

Policy: GBRI Revised: 04/11/2022

### **ABSENCE FROM DUTY (Certified Staff)**

#### **1. LICENSED/CONTRACTED EMPLOYEE**

The term licensed employee means any employee of a public school district required to hold a valid license by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development. (37-7-307) Contracted employees are those who perform his/her duties and responsibilities contingent upon a written contract.

#### **2. SICK LEAVE ALLOWANCE**

The school board of the Quitman School District shall establish by rules and regulations a policy of sick leave with pay for licensed/contracted employees employed in the school district, and such policy shall include the following minimum provisions for sick emergency leave with pay:

- a. Each licensed/contracted employee, at the beginning of each school year, shall be credited with a minimum sick leave allowance, with pay of seven (7) days for absences caused by illness or physical disability of the employee during that school year.
- b. Any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such licensed/contracted employee if the licensed/contracted employee remains employed in the same school district. In the event any public school licensed/contracted employee transfers from one public school to another, the unused portion of the sick leave allowance shall be credited to such licensed/contracted employee in the computation of unused leave for retirement purposes under Section 25-11-109, Mississippi Code of 1972. Accumulation of sick leave allowed in the school district shall be unlimited.
- c. No deduction from the pay of such licensed/contracted employee may be made because of absence of such licensed/contracted employee caused by illness or physical disability of the licensed/contracted employee until after all sick leave allowance credited to such licensed/contracted employee has been used.
- d. For the first ten (10) days of absence of the licensed employee because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee, there shall be deducted from the pay of such licensed employee the established substitute amount of licensed employee compensation paid in that local school district, necessitated because of the absence of the licensed employee as a result of illness or physical disability. In lieu of deducting the established substitute amount from the pay of such licensed employee, the policy may allow the licensed employee to receive full pay for the first ten (10) days of absence because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee. Thereafter, the regular pay of such absent licensed employee shall be suspended and withheld in its entirety for any period of absence because of illness or physical disability during that school year.

- e. When an employee is absent for three (3) or more consecutive days, or the day immediately prior to or following a holiday, the employee shall furnish his/her immediate supervisor a certificate from a physician or dentist or other medical practitioner as to the illness of the absent employee, in accordance with the law. At the discretion of the superintendent, an employee may be required to supply verification of illness from a medical practitioner for any leave for illness.
- f. In accordance with law, employees who make materially false statements as to the cause of any absence shall be liable for full deduction from their regular pay and an appropriate entry shall be made on the work record of the employee. If the absence of the employee is caused by OPTIONAL dental or medical treatment or surgery which could, WITHOUT MEDICAL RISK, have been provided, furnished, or performed at a time WHEN SCHOOL WAS NOT IN SESSION, the employee shall forfeit future sick leave in an amount equivalent to the period taken under accumulated sick leave.

### 3. PERSONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE

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

- a. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee is being on a day previous to a deployed for military service.
- b. Personal leave may be taken holiday or a day after a holiday if an employee of a school district has either a minimum of ten (10) years' experience as an employee of that school district or a minimum of thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave that has been earned while employed in that school district.
- c. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, the employee has been summoned to appear for jury duty or as a witness in court.
- d. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee dies or funeral services are held. Any personal leave days taken shall be taken as described in Section 37-7-307 of the Mississippi code. No additional bereavement leave is created by Section 37-7-307.

Personal leave may be used for professional purposes, including absences caused by attendance of such licensed/contracted employee at a seminar, class, training program, professional association or other functions designed for educators. No deduction from the pay of such employee may be made because of absence of such licensed/contracted employee caused by personal reasons until after all personal leave allowance credited to such employee has been used. However, the superintendent of a school district, in his discretion, may allow a licensed/contracted employee personal leave in addition to any minimum personal leave allowance, under the condition that there shall be deducted from the salary of such licensed/contracted employee the actual amount of any compensation paid to any person as a substitute, necessitated because of the absence of the licensed/contracted employee. Any unused portion of the total personal leave allowance up to five (5) days shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such licensed/contracted employee if the licensed employee remains employed in the school district.

Personal leave requests must be made not less than one week in advance of the planned absence and will be at the discretion of the supervisor.

### 4. PROFESSIONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE

Each licensed/contracted employee shall be credited with a professional leave allowance, with pay, for each day of absence caused by reason of such employee's statutorily required membership and attendance at a regular or special meeting held within the State of Mississippi of the State Board of Education, the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development, the Commission on School Accreditation, the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television and the meetings of the state textbook rating committees or other meetings authorized by local school board policy.

From time to time licensed staff members will be requested to attend professional meetings at the request and for the benefit of the school district. District professional leave must be requested at a minimum of 2 weeks in advance by the direct supervisor and must be approved by the superintendent. Days missed due to district professional leave will not count as absences and will not result in any deduction in pay.

### 5. RETIREMENT

Upon retirement from employment, each licensed/contracted shall be paid for not more than thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave earned while employed by the school district in which the employee is last employed. Such payment for licensed/contracted employees shall be made by the school district at a rate equal to the amount

paid to substitute teachers and for non-licensed employees, the payment shall be made by the school district at a rate equal to the federal minimum wage. The payment shall be treated in the same manner for retirement purposes as a lump sum payment for personal leave as provided in Section 25-11-103 (f). Any remaining lawfully credited unused leave, for which payment has not been made, shall be certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System in the same manner and subject to the same limitations as otherwise provided by law for unused leave. No payment for unused accumulated leave may be made to either a licensed or non-licensed employee at termination or separation from service for any purpose other than for the purpose of retirement.

## 6. RULES AND REGULATIONS

The school board may adopt rules and regulations which will reasonably aid to implement the policy of sick and personal leave, including, but not limited to, rules and regulations having the following general effect:

- a. Requires the absent employee to furnish the certificate of a physician or dentist or other medical practitioner as to the illness of the absent employee, where the absence is for four (4) or more consecutive school days, or for two (2) consecutive school days immediately preceding or following a non-school day;
- b. May provide penalties, by way of full deduction from salary, or entry on the work record of the employee, or other appropriate penalties, for any materially false statement by the employee as to the cause of absence;
- c. May require forfeiture of accumulated or future sick leave, if the absence of the employee is caused by optional dental or medical treatment or surgery which could, without medical risk, have been provided, furnished or performed at a time when school was not in session;

## 7. VACATION AND PERSONAL LEAVE

Vacation leave granted to either licensed or non-licensed employees shall be synonymous with personal leave. Unused vacation or personal leave accumulated by licensed/contracted employees in excess of the maximum five (5) days which may be carried over from one (1) year to the next may be converted to sick leave. The annual conversion of unused vacation or personal leave to sick days for licensed or unlicensed employees shall not exceed the allowable number of personal leave days as provided in Section 25-3-93. The annual total number of converted unused vacation and/or personal days added to the annual unused sick days for any employee shall not exceed the combined allowable number of days per year provided in Sections 25-3-93 and 25-3-95. Local school board policies that provide for vacation, personal and sick leave for employees shall not exceed the provisions for leave as provided in Sections 25-3-93 and 25-3-95. Any personal or vacation leave previously converted to sick leave under a lawfully adopted policy before May 1, 2004, or such personal or vacation leave accumulated and available for use prior to May 1, 2004, under a lawfully adopted policy but converted to sick leave after May 1, 2004, shall be recognized as accrued leave by the local school district and available for use by the employee. The leave converted under a lawfully adopted policy prior to May 1, 2004, or such personal and vacation leave accumulated and available for use as of May 1, 2004, which was subsequently converted to sick leave may be certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System upon termination of employment and any such leave previously converted and certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System shall be recognized.

The following conditions will apply to staff working on a 235 day schedule:

- a. These days will be in addition to the 2 regular personal leave days earned by 235-day staff
- b. Personal vacation leave for 235 day employees will be 10 days each fiscal year, pro-rated for any time served less than a full year.

## 8. JURY DUTY / BEREAVEMENT / OTHER LEAVE

The Quitman School District Board of Trustees shall provide leave for employees who serve on juries and/or serve as a witness under subpoena. Employees who are called to serve or who do serve on jury duty must fulfill specific obligations. A copy of jury duty attendance forms must be attached to the staff absence report. However, when a staff member is released from jury duty during the day, prior to the end of his/her customary and usual working day, said staff members shall report directly to work for the remainder of the day. Employees not returning to work after being released from jury duty prior to the end of their regular working day will be granted leave without pay. Employees serving on jury duty will be granted administrative leave with pay if appropriate documentation is provided for absence.

Staff members who must appear in court under subpoena as a witness may do so provided they use personal business leave or miss only a short part of the school day (less than half a day or three periods), returning immediately to their duties. Part-day absences must receive prior approval from the building principal and/or the superintendent.

The school board cannot recover jury fees from employees who serve on juries. (Attorney General Opinion, Middleton, 1991)

Paid leave for family illness or bereavement is limited to a maximum of three consecutive leave days for each occurrence. **Employees must use their sick or personal leave balance for leave due to bereavement.**

## 9. LEAVE DUE TO DECLARED EMERGENCY CLOSURES

The school board may, in its discretion, provide additional administrative leave with pay for all employees (professional, certified, and classified) in the event of declared emergency closures.

10. **For licensed/certified staff, in years when needed, the following days shall be considered paid holidays:**

- Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Independence Day
- Fall Break (2 days)

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**LEAVE FOR CLASSIFIED HOURLY RATE EMPLOYEES**

**Policy GCRG, board approved: 10/11/2021**

**ABSENCE FROM DUTY FOR CLASSIFIED STAFF**

1. **SICK LEAVE ALLOWANCE**

The school board of the Quitman School District shall establish by rules and regulations a policy of sick leave with pay for classified employees employed in the school district, and such policy shall include the following minimum provisions for sick emergency leave with pay:

- a. Each classified employee, at the beginning of each school year, shall be credited with a minimum sick leave allowance, with pay of seven (7) days for absences caused by illness or physical disability of the employee during that school year. Any part-time employee of the district who is employed for 4 hours per day or 20 hours per week shall be credited with (3) days of regular leave for illness. Absences of ½ of the working day or less, constitutes the taking of ½ day of leave. However, if an employee missed more than ½ of the working day, regardless if he/she is absent the entire, then a full day of leave must be taken. The taking of leave which exceeds the normal working hours of the position will not be paid as additional and/or overtime for the work week.
- b. Any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such classified employee if the classified employee remains employed in the same school district. In the event any public school classified employee transfers from one public school district in Mississippi to another, any unused portion of the total sick leave shall be credited to such classified employee in the computation of unused leave for retirement purposes under Section 25-11-109, Mississippi Code of 1972. Accumulation of sick leave allowed in the school district shall be unlimited.
- c. No deduction from the pay of such classified employee may be made because of absence of such classified employee caused by illness or physical disability of the classified employee until after all sick leave allowance credited to such classified employee has been used.
- d. At the discretion of the superintendent, an employee may be required to supply verification of illness from a medical practitioner for any leave for illness. If a classified employee is ineligible for Family and Medical Leave (Policy GBRIA) but has been absent for three (3) or more consecutive days, the following procedure will be followed:
  1. A Certification of Health Care Provider (non-Eligibility for FMLA) will be sent to the employee for completion by the health care provider as soon as possible. Failure on the part of the employee to return the completed form within 15 days may result in immediate termination.
  2. When the employee has missed 8 weeks of leave the employee will be responsible for paying his/her insurance premiums.
  3. An employee who is absent for 40 days will be subject to termination.

Should the employee be rehired in the same fiscal year, no pro-rated leave days for that fiscal year will be given upon re-employment.

- e. In accordance with law, employees who make materially false statements as to the cause of any absence shall be liable for full deduction from their regular pay and an appropriate entry shall be made on the work record of the employee. If the absence of the employee is caused by OPTIONAL dental or medical treatment or surgery which could, WITHOUT MEDICAL RISK, have been provided, furnished, or performed at a time WHEN SCHOOL WAS NOT IN SESSION, the employee shall forfeit future sick leave in an amount equivalent to the period taken under accumulated sick leave.

Paid leave for family illness or bereavement is limited to a maximum of three (3) consecutive leave days for each occurrence. **Employees must use their sick or personal leave balance for leave due to bereavement.**

2. **PERSONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE**

Each classified employee at the beginning of each school year shall be credited with a minimum personal leave allowance, with pay, of two (2) days for absences caused by personal reasons during that school year. Any part-time employee of the district who is employed for 4 hours per day or 20 hours per week shall be credited with (1) day of

regular leave for personal reasons. Absences of ½ of the working day or less, constitutes the taking of ½ day of leave. However, if an employee missed more than ½ of the working day, regardless if he/she is absent the entire, then a full day of leave must be taken. The taking of leave which exceeds the normal working hours of the position will not be paid as additional and/or overtime for the work week.

Except as otherwise listed below, such personal leave shall not be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday. Notwithstanding the restrictions listed above on the use of personal leave, a classified employee may use personal leave as follows:

- a. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term; the last day of the school term, on a day applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee is being deployed for military service.
- b. Personal leave may be taken on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if an employee of a school district has either a minimum of ten (10) years' experience as an employee of that school district or a minimum of thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave that has been earned while employed in that school district.
- c. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, the employee has been summoned to appear for jury duty or as a witness in court.

Personal leave may be used for professional purposes, including absences caused by attendance of such classified employee at a seminar, class, training program, professional association or other functions designed for educators. No deduction from the pay of such employee may be made because of absence of such classified employee caused by personal reasons until after all personal leave allowance credited to such employee has been used. Any unused portion of the total personal leave allowance up to five (5) days shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such classified employee if the classified employee remains employed in the school district.

Personal leave requests must be made not less than one week in advance of the planned absence and will be at the discretion of the supervisor.

### 3. PROFESSIONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE

From time to time classified staff members will be requested to attend professional meetings at the request and for the benefit of the school district. District professional leave must be requested at a minimum of 2 weeks in advance by the direct supervisor and must be approved by the superintendent. Days missed due to district professional leave will not count as absences and will not result in any deduction in pay.

### 4. RETIREMENT

Upon retirement from employment, each classified shall be paid for not more than thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave earned while employed by the school district in which the employee is last employed. Such payment for classified employees shall be made by the school district at a rate equal to the federal minimum wage. The payment shall be treated in the same manner for retirement purposes as a lump sum payment for personal leave as provided in Section 25-11-103 (f). Any remaining lawfully credited unused leave, for which payment has not been made, shall be certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System in the same manner and subject to the same limitations as otherwise provided by law for unused leave. No payment for unused accumulated leave may be made to a classified employee at termination or separation from service for any purpose other than for the purpose of retirement.

### 5. RULES AND REGULATIONS

The school board may adopt rules and regulations which will reasonably aid to implement the policy of sick and personal leave, including, but not limited to, rules and regulations having the following general effect:

- a. Requires the absent employee to furnish the certificate of a physician or dentist or other medical practitioner as to the illness of the absent employee, where the absence is for four (4) or more consecutive school days, or for two (2) consecutive school days immediately preceding or following a non-school day;
- b. May provide penalties, by way of full deduction from salary, or entry on the work record of the employee, or other appropriate penalties, for any materially false statement by the employee as to the cause of absence;
- c. May require forfeiture of accumulated or future sick leave, if the absence of the employee is caused by optional dental or medical treatment or surgery which could, without medical risk, have been provided, furnished or performed at a time when school was not in session

### 6. VACATION AND PERSONAL LEAVE

Vacation leave granted classified employees shall be synonymous with personal leave. Unused vacation or personal leave accumulated by classified employees in excess of the maximum five (5) days which may be carried over from one (1) year to the next may be converted to sick leave. The annual conversion of unused vacation or personal leave to sick days for classified employees shall not exceed the allowable number of personal leave days as provided in Section 25-3-93. The annual total number of converted unused vacation and/or personal days added to the annual unused sick days for any employee shall not exceed the combined allowable number of days per year provided in Sections 25-3-93 and 25-3-95. Local school board policies that provide for vacation, personal and sick leave for

employees shall not exceed the provisions for leave as provided in Sections 25-3-93 and 25-3-95. Any personal or vacation leave previously converted to sick leave under a lawfully adopted policy before May 1, 2004, or such personal or vacation leave accumulated and available for use prior to May 1, 2004, under a lawfully adopted policy but converted to sick leave after May 1, 2004, shall be recognized as accrued leave by the local school district and available for use by the employee. The leave converted under a lawfully adopted policy prior to May 1, 2004, or such personal and vacation leave accumulated and available for use as of May 1, 2004, which was subsequently converted to sick leave may be certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System upon termination of employment and any such leave previously converted and certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System shall be recognized.

The following conditions will apply to staff working on a 235-day schedule:

- a. These days will be in addition to the 2 regular personal leave days earned by 235-day staff,
- b. Personal vacation leave for 235 day employees will be 10 days each fiscal year, pro-rated for any time served less than a fiscal year.

#### 7. JURY DUTY / OTHER LEAVE

Employees who are called to serve or who do serve on jury duty must fulfill specific obligations. A copy of jury duty attendance forms must be attached to the staff absence report. However, when a staff member is released from jury duty during the day, prior to the end of his/her customary and usual working day, said staff members shall report directly to work for the remainder of the day. Employees not returning to work after being released from jury duty prior to the end of their regular working day will be granted leave without pay. Employees serving on jury duty will be granted administrative leave with pay if appropriate documentation is provided for absence.

Staff members who must appear in court under subpoena as a witness may do so provided they use personal business leave or miss only a short part of the school day (less than half a day or three periods), returning immediately to their duties. Part-day absences must receive prior approval from the building principal and/or the superintendent.

The school board cannot recover jury fees from employees who serve on juries. (Attorney General Opinion, *Middleton*, 1991)

#### 8. LEAVE DUE TO DECLARED EMERGENCY CLOSURES

The school board may, in its discretion, provide additional administrative leave with pay for all employees (professional, certified, and classified) in the event of declared emergency closures.

#### 9. For licensed/certified staff, in years when needed, the following days shall be considered paid holidays:

- Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Independence Day
- Fall Break (2 days)

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### **DONATING LEAVE TO ANOTHER EMPLOYEE**

#### **Policy GADF, board approved: 06/27/2019**

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

1. The employee donating the leave (the "donor employee") shall designate the employee who is to receive the leave (the "recipient employee") and the amount of unused accumulated personal leave and sick leave that is to be donated, and shall notify the school district superintendent or his designee of his or her designation.
2. The maximum amount of unused accumulated personal leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed a number of days that would leave the donor employee with fewer than seven (7) days of personal leave remaining, and the maximum amount of unused accumulated sick leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the unused accumulated sick leave of the donor employee.
3. An employee must have exhausted all of his or her available personal and sick leave, including ten days at sub rate of pay, before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee. Eligibility for donated leave shall be based upon review and approval by the superintendent.
4. Before an employee may receive donated leave, he or she must provide the school district superintendent or his designee with a physician's statement that states that the illness meets the catastrophic criteria established under this section, the beginning date of the catastrophic injury or illness, a description of the injury or illness, and a prognosis for recovery and the anticipated date that the recipient employee will be able to return to work.

5. Before an employee may receive donated leave, the superintendent of education of the school district shall appoint a review committee to approve or disapprove the said donations of leave, including the determination that the illness is catastrophic within the meaning of this section.
6. Donated leave will be transferred from the donor to the recipient employee on a per pay period basis. If the total amount of leave that is donated to any employee is not used by the recipient employee, the whole days of donated leave shall be returned to the donor employee on a pro rata basis, based on the ratio of the number of days of leave donated by each donor employee to the total number of days leave donated by all donor employees.
7. Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement. 37-7-307
8. No person through the coercion, threats, or intimidation shall require or attempt to require any employee to donate his or her leave to another employee. Any person who alleges a violation of this policy shall report the violation to their immediate supervisor who shall then report the violation to the superintendent. If the alleged violator is the employee's immediate supervisor, then the employee shall report the violation directly to the superintendent. Any employee who is found to have violated this policy shall be subject to disciplinary actions leading up to and including termination.
9. No employee can donate leave after tendering notice of separation for any reason nor after employment has been terminated

For the purpose of this policy:

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

## **STUDENTS COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT -- TITLE IX PROCEDURES**

### **Policy JB-P board approved 10/12/2020**

Employees and students in the Quitman School District are protected from sexual discrimination, including sexual harassment, by Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 to the Civil Rights Act. It is the intent of the Board to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Therefore, unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited.

Each employee in the District is a mandatory reporter of child abuse. The District will respond whenever any employee has notice of sexual harassment, including allegations of sexual harassment.

The District will ensure reasonable prompt time-frames are met for the completion of the grievance process, this includes filing and resolving appeals while accounting for delays such as law enforcement involvement, absence of a witness, party, etc. with written notice to both parties explaining the reasons for delay.

Parents/guardians of students have the right to act on behalf of the complainant, the respondent, or other individuals at any time.

### **GENERAL RESPONSE**

The District will respond promptly to actual knowledge of sexual harassment in an educational program or activity in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. The records should reflect that the district's response was not deliberately indifferent and that measures were taken to restore or preserve equal access to the educational program or activity. The District will treat complainants and respondents equitably by:

1. Offering supportive measures to a complainant, and
2. Following a grievance process before imposing any disciplinary sanctions on a respondent.

The Title IX Coordinator is required to contact the complainant promptly, even if a formal complaint has not been filed, to:

1. Discuss the availability of supportive measures,
2. Consider the complainant's wishes regarding supportive measures,
3. Inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and
4. Explain the process for filing a formal complaint.



The District will provide the equitable treatment of the parties which includes:

1. Providing remedies to a complainant after a determination of responsibility against a respondent, and
2. Following a grievance process before imposing any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures.
3. Remedies may include supportive measures but may also include punishing the respondent.

### **INFORMAL RESOLUTION**

At any point during the formal complaint process, the district may offer to facilitate an informal process that does not require a full investigation as long as both parties receive written notice of their rights and the parties provide written, voluntary consent.

The District will obtain consent from the parents/guardians of a student in order to initiate an investigation where the complainant or alleged victim is under the age of eighteen (18), and will inform parents/guardians of the complainant that the complainant may be accompanied by a parent/guardian during all steps of the complaint procedure. If the complainant, school staff or others with professional knowledge relating to the complainant's health and well-being indicate that notifying the parents/guardians could cause serious harm to the health or well-being of the complainant or other person(s), the Title IX Coordinator will determine, in consultation with such individuals and upon advice of legal counsel, whether to withhold or delay notification of the report from the complainant's parents/guardians.

The District will ensure that no conflict of interest exists against a complainant or respondent by the Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker or any person designated to facilitate an informal process.

1. These individuals will be trained on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the district's program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process, hearings, appeals, and informal processes.
2. Investigators will be trained on how to prepare an investigation report.
3. Decision-makers will be trained on issues of evidence and questioning.

No offer can be made to facilitate an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint has been filed.

No offer can be made for an informal resolution in the context of a complaint alleging that an employee harassed a student.

### **FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS**

For all formal complaints, a preponderance of the evidence standard will be used.

The Title IX Coordinator shall contact the parents/guardians and provide them with information regarding the report and Title IX sexual harassment procedures and grievance process for formal complaints.

The complainant may file a formal complaint with the Title IX Coordinator by any method made available by the district. At the time of filing, the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the educational program or activity of the educational institution. The Title IX Coordinator may sign a complaint which would trigger an investigation, however, this does not make the Title IX Coordinator a part in the grievance process. A formal grievance procedure in some cases may need to be implemented over the complainant's objection. Even if the complainant is not a willing participant in the investigation, the complainant will be informed of supportive measures and will be provided written notice of the steps in the grievance procedure.

No hearing is required. School officials may determine that hearings will be held in certain circumstances. With or without a hearing, the district will provide each party the opportunity to submit, after completion of the investigative report, written, relevant questions that the party wants asked of another party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and provide for limited follow-up questions. No evidence or questions will be allowed that constitute or seek legally privileged information, unless that privilege is waived.

The district will:

1. Ensure that the burden of proof and gathering evidence rests on the district rather than the parties
2. Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and evidence.
3. Not restrict either party's ability to discuss the allegations or gather and present evidence.
4. Provide the same opportunity to have others present during interviews or other proceedings, including an advisor.
5. Provide written notice, to a party who is invited or expected to attend, the date, time, participants, purpose, and location of any investigative interview or other meeting with enough time to allow the party to prepare or participate.
6. Provide both parties and their advisors, if any, an equal opportunity to review all evidence that is directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint, including evidence on which the educational institution does not intend to rely and any exculpatory or inculpatory evidence from any source; must be provided prior to the completion of the final investigative report and in time to give the parties at least ten (10) days to prepare a written response, which investigator must consider before completing the investigation report.
7. Prepare a written investigation report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence and provide the report to the parties and their advisors at least ten (10) days before a determination of responsibility.

The District will also provide written notice to all known parties, and the parents/guardians of know parties, where applicable, upon receipt of a formal complaint in sufficient time to give the respondent time to prepare a response before an initial interview. Notice will include the following:

1. Notice of the grievance process, including any informal resolution process.
2. Notice of the allegations with sufficient detail to allow the respondent to prepare a response (names, dates, conduct, location, etc.)
3. A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the conduct and responsibility will be determined at the conclusion of the grievance process.
4. Notice of the parties' right to have an advisor (may be an attorney) and to inspect and review evidence.
5. Notice of any provision in the code of conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or providing false information.

### **APPEAL**

The District will offer both parties the right to appeal a determination of responsibility and the district 's dismissal of a complaint or any allegations for the following:

1. A procedural irregularity that affected the outcome
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the determination and could affect the outcome, or
3. Conflict of interest on the part of the Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker that affected the outcome.

The District will ensure that any appeal process is conducted in a timely manner and that the appeal decision-maker is free from any bias or conflicts of interest.

The decision-maker cannot be the investigator or the Title IX Coordinator. The decision-maker must issue a written determination of responsibility that:

1. Identifies the allegations that potentially constitute sexual harassment
2. Describes the district's procedural steps taken from the receipt of the complaint to the determination
3. Includes findings of fact supporting the determination
4. Includes conclusions regarding application of the code of conduct to the facts
5. Includes a statement of, and a rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination of responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions, and whether remedies to restore or preserve equal access to the district's program or activity will be provided to the complainant, and
6. Includes procedures for appeals.

The District will issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

The District will also ensure that written notice is provided to both parties of the appeal and provide both parties an equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the determination. A written statement will be provided to both parties simultaneously.

### **RESPONDENT**

A presumption will be given to the respondent that he/she is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination has been made at the conclusion of the grievance process. The district will objectively evaluate all available evidence without making credibility determinations based on a party's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

Title IX regulations allow the district to immediately remove a respondent from the education program or activity on an emergency basis if:

1. The district conducts an individualized safety and risk analysis, and
2. Determines that an emergency removal is necessary to protect a student or other individual from an immediate threat to physical health or safety
3. The district must provide the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately after removal.

### **CONSOLIDATION**

Where allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances, formal complaints can be consolidated against more than one respondent, by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against another party.

### **DISMISSAL**

The formal complaint must be dismissed if the allegations do not constitute sexual harassment as defined, the action did not occur in the district's program or activity, or the action did not occur against a person in the United States.

The formal complaint may be dismissed if:

1. The complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator at any time that he/she wishes to withdraw the complaint or allegation,

2. If the respondent's enrollment or employment ends, or
3. If specific circumstances prevent the district from gathering evidence.

Notice of dismissal must be provided to both parties, including the reasons for dismissal.

# **Staff Agreement School Year 2023 - 2024**

**This is to certify that I have reviewed the contents of this handbook.**

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**Printed Name**

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**Signature**

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**Date**

**Please detach and return to your school secretary.**

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