

# **PRENTISS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **PERSONNEL HANDBOOK**

**2019-2020**

Randle Downs, Superintendent of Education

### **PRENTISS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Mrs. Shelia Johnson

Mr. Ronny Kesler

Mr. Jason McCoy

Mr. Randy Maness

Mrs. Teresa Botts

## Central Office Staff

**Randle Downs, Superintendent**

728-4911 Ext. 301

**Wanda Crow, Superintendent's Secretary**

728-4911 Ext. 301

**Andrea Allen, Network Administrator/ Student Data Coordinator**

728-4911 Ext. 303

**Tanya Morgan, Child Nutrition Director**

728-1550 Ext. 305

**Dana Hisaw, Payroll and Insurance**

728-4911 Ext. 307

**Alicia Shields, Business Manager**

728-4911 Ext. 308

**Sandy Johnson, Bookkeeping and Accounts Payable**

728-4911 Ext. 309

**Melba Crabb, Educational Service Center Secretary**

728-9408 Ext. 310

**Kim Hamm, Federal Programs Director/ Curriculum Director / Licensure Renewal**

728-9408 Ext. 313

**Luke Ledbetter, Technology Coordinator/Testing Coordinator**

728-4632 Ext. 311

**Leigh Estes, Special Education Director/Gifted**

728-9408 Ext. 315

**Richard Morgan, Bus Shop**

728-8534

**Chris Morgan, Transportation Director**

401-1280

## Schools and Principals

**HILLS CHAPEL SCHOOL (K-8)**  
728-5181 Fax: 728-1773

Nickey Marshall, Principal

**JUMPERTOWN SCHOOL (K-12)**  
728-6378 Fax: 728-9420

Anthony Michael, Principal

**MARIETTA SCHOOL (K-8)**  
728-4770 Fax: 728-0965

Jason Potts, Principal

**NEW SITE HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)**  
728-5205 Fax: 728-1965

Ronald Clark, Principal

**THRASHER SCHOOL (K-12)**  
728-5233 Fax: 728-8107

Kenny Sparks, Principal

**WHEELER SCHOOL (K-12)**  
365-2629 Fax: 365-2535

Todd Swinney, Principal

**PRETISS COUNTY VO-TECH**  
728-9259 Fax: 728-9899

Kim English, Director



## Prentiss County School District

### Mission

*Prentiss County School District is dedicated to ensuring world class academic excellence within a safe learning environment, while providing a variety of exceptional extra-curricular programs that foster the physical, social, and emotional growth of all students.*

### Vision

*Prentiss County School District will be regionally and nationally recognized as a system of superior performing schools that ignite a passion for learning while inspiring student success through instructional excellence and exemplary leadership.*

### Goals

1. *Ensure a **safe, secure, orderly environment** for all.*
2. *Improved student **achievement** through a guaranteed, viable curriculum.*
3. *Provide **extra-curricular** opportunities that foster the personal growth of all.*
4. *Recruit, develop, and retain a **workforce of individuals** committed to the district's vision and mission.*
5. *Develop principled, strong **instructional leaders**.*
6. *Develop strategies to increase the **graduation rate** and reduce the **dropout rate**.*
7. *Further develop productive **community and parental partnerships**.*
8. *Assist students in developing habits that promote a **healthy lifestyle**.*
9. *Continuously replace and update **technology**.*
10. *Manage the system's **facilities** in a **financially responsible manner**.*

## **Employee Handbook Purpose**

Welcome to Prentiss County School District (PCSD). We believe the contribution of your talents, skills, knowledge, and positive attitude is essential to the continued success of this district. All PCSD employees are valued and encouraged to notify your supervisors about awards and achievements as well as problems and your ideas on solving them.

This handbook was developed to provide information. It outlines the District's expectations, policies, and programs, serving as a resource for you during your employment. This handbook will serve as a reference and guide for teachers and staff in regard to the policies established by Prentiss County School Board concerning personnel. This handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive nor will it address every situation. Therefore, you are encouraged to address questions with your direct supervisor. The policies and other information contained in this handbook are subject to change at any time due to organizational needs. PCSD Board Policy supersedes all documented material published or unpublished.

## II. EMPLOYMENT

### Equal Employment Opportunity

PCSD is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination. It is the policy of PCSD that all applicants and employees are entitled to equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, religion or creed, gender (includes pregnancy or related medical conditions), national origin, age, disability, veteran status or other protected characteristics as required by local, state and federal law. In addition, the District's procedure specifically prohibits retaliation against any individual engaged in a protected activity. Protected activities include making an honestly believed complaint of discrimination; participating as a witness or otherwise in a discrimination investigation; or requesting accommodations based on religion or disability.

In compliance with the provisions of all applicable state and federal civil rights laws, every effort will be made to employ the most qualified individuals without regard to the above factors. Additionally, it is and shall continue to be the District's policy to provide promotion and advancement opportunities in a non-discriminatory fashion. PCSD is an equal opportunity employer. PCSD does not, and will not, permit any of its employees to engage in discriminatory practices involving individuals that they come in contact with as representatives of the District, or their co-workers.

PCSD requires immediate reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination. If you believe you are being discriminated against, or if you believe your employment is being affected by such conduct directed at someone else, you should immediately discuss your concerns with your immediate supervisor, the Principal, Superintendent or Personnel Office. Should employees know of an incident of discrimination, they are expected to immediately bring the incident to the attention of their supervisor, the Principal, Superintendent or Personnel Office.

**This District will not discriminate in its operation, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits, in accordance with federal and state laws.**

REF: Title VI and Title VII; 1964 Civil Rights Act Title IX; 1972 Education Amendments Section 503; and 504 1973 Rehabilitation Act *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*

## **Employment At Will**

While the District strives to make the employment relationship a mutually satisfying one, PCSD can make no assurances, either expressed or implied, concerning the duration of employment. Employees of the District, who are “At-Will”, mean that either the District or the employee can terminate employment at any time, with or without cause or notice. Progressive Discipline does not alter the “At-Will” status. “At-Will” employees are not entitled to a hearing. In addition, it should be noted that no one has the authority to make promises or guarantees of employment, which are not consistent with the District’s “At-Will” policy. Therefore, no statement or promise by a supervisor or department head may be interpreted as a change in policy nor will it constitute an agreement made with an employee. An “At-Will” employee is any employee who does not receive a contract of employment.

Select positions within PCSD (i.e. Teachers) do receive employment contracts. Therefore, they do not fall under employment “At-Will”. Employees who have a contract with PCSD are expected to abide by the terms of their contract.

## **COMPLAINT/GRIEVANCE POLICY**

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

The following definitions shall apply in this grievance procedure:

1. A “grievance” is a complaint by an individual based upon an alleged violation of a person’s 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 or vacation days.

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

#### **Level One:**

1. All grievances, as defined in No. 1 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 the grievant will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
2. If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given by the principal or immediate supervisor the grievant shall, within five (5) days after meeting with the 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 allegedly violated. The statement must be signed by the grievant and presented to his/her principal or immediate supervisor. Also a copy shall be given to the superintendent.

3. In the event the grievant does not submit to his/her principal or immediate supervisor a written statement as required, his/her failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by the 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 their response to the grievant and/or their decision, as is applicable. At the same time, the principal or immediate supervisor shall also provide a copy of their written statement of the grievant.

#### Level Two:

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

#### Level Three:

1. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at step 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 board.
2. If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the 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 president and superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the board on the grievance.
4. The board shall render its decision within seven (7) days of the hearing.

## **Professional Staff Duties**

Every professional staff member will carry out the following duties:

- Demonstrate professional competency and qualities that create a classroom atmosphere in which learning can take place.
- Plan for teaching within the framework of the goals established by the Prentiss County School System including short range, intermediate, and long range goals.
- Collect and utilize a wide variety of information guiding the growth of each student in his/her academic experiences.
- At appropriate times, evaluate objectives (goals) and achievements with students.
- Select and prepare for students, meaningful exercises, projects, and activities appropriate to the developmental stage of the students, which will affect attainment of intended academic goals.
- Establish goals for individual students in terms of ability level. Use a variety of class activities to motivate students, to develop student curiosity and discovery. Implement and utilize the district's "Response to Intervention Guidelines" to promote student achievement in Tier I, II, and III.
- Create and maintain a classroom environment that will help students develop socially, emotionally, and morally. Be available to counsel and advise students when needed.
- Manage the classroom in such a manner as to control pupil behavior and activities so that the student may contribute in a positive way to the attainment of set goals.
- Interact with students in classroom activities by utilizing, with guidance, concept formation, generalizations, facts and principles in helping pupils to understand subject matter.
- File with the principal's office and superintendent's office; reports, requests and other forms at required times. Fill out book cards, report cards, and permanent records on appropriate occasions.
- Interaction with other staff members shall be in keeping with the highest ideals of the teaching profession.
- Participate in local and system in-service training programs.
- Work cooperatively and harmoniously with other members of the staff in relating their role to the school system's goals and objectives.
- Assist in identifying Title I and Special Education students and provide assistance in parent conferences, I.E.P.s evaluations, and implementing of individual student plans.
- Be punctual. Tardiness will result in loss of personal leave time.
- Collect money and keep appropriate records.
- Attend faculty meetings when called by the principal.
- Do not make negative, derogatory statements to students, co-workers, or others.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices may be used only during planning time.

## **Lesson Plans**

Each teacher will prepare a daily lesson plan that includes objectives, procedures, materials, and evaluation. Instructional procedures will involve hands-on activities as possible to involve the student in the practical application of the objective being taught. Lesson plans should be entered weekly into ELS – EZ Lesson Planner. Principals will establish schedules for checking weekly lesson plans.

## **Student Supervision**

Students must be supervised at all times. Teachers are not to leave students or work area unsupervised. No students are allowed to leave a supervised area unless assigned to another school personnel and must have a hall pass issued by the instructor.

## **Discipline**

Each teacher is required to maintain proper discipline in their area of supervision, file a discipline plan for their class with the school office, and maintain proper discipline documentation on students by keeping a discipline file on each student.

Referral for alternative school must be done through the school principal. Refer to the student handbook for proper disciplinary procedures.

Any student under DHS custody including foster children and/or students with IEP or 504 Plan will not receive corporal punishment.

Only principals or principals designee will administer corporal punishment.

## **Smoke and Tobacco Free Schools Policy**

It is the policy of the Prentiss County Board of Education that in accordance with the Pro-Children Act of 1994, there will be absolutely no smoking or the use of any form of tobacco or nicotine/synthetic nicotine (e-cig, vape, JUUL, etc...) in any Prentiss County School district indoor facility including school buses or on any school campus at any time. This policy applies to faculty, staff, students, visitors, and guests.

## Employee Dress Code

Employee Dress Code beginning Fall 2019:

Prentiss County School District employees are expected to reflect favorably on Prentiss County School District through their demonstrated personal integrity, job demeanor and personal appearance, including their community relations and the avoidance of behavior which is offensive, or infringes on the rights of others. The following dress code perimeters are applicable to the regular school day, professional development days, professional meetings, and special events such as awards days, banquets, graduations, etc.

All employees are expected to be in professional dress, neat and well-groomed at all times while at work.

Appropriate dress for female staff:

1. Dresses and skirts which are no shorter than three inches above the knee. The slit of a dress or skirt must come no higher than three inches above the knee.
2. Slacks and Capri pants may be worn in an appropriate manner. Capri pants must be below the knee. Physical education teachers may wear non-athletic shorts such as: khaki, golf, or dress shorts. All shorts must come no shorter than three inches above the knee. All other female staff will not wear shorts.
3. No blue denim jeans are acceptable. No skinny jeans or jeans with tears, rips, holes, or distressing of any kind are appropriate.
4. T-shirts are not allowed. Exceptions will be made for staff or school related shirts. Low cut blouses, see-through clothing, off the shoulder, halter style, tank tops, or clothing which reveals the midriff are not allowed. Sleeveless clothing must cover undergarments.
5. Earrings on females are the ONLY visible piercing allowed.
6. Hats are not to be worn inside nor are sunglasses to be worn on the head inside school buildings.
7. Tattoos that are considered offensive, racist, vulgar, show scenes of violence, drug-related, contain strong sexual imagery, gang related or contain obscene phrases may not be visible.
8. No tight fitting knit pants (leggings, jeggings, yoga, etc...) will be worn without a tunic/dress top that extends to a minimum of 3 inches above the knee.
9. No jersey, mesh, or any other athletic draw-string pants are permitted.

Appropriate dress for male staff:

1. Men must wear a dress shirt and tie or a collared shirt/golf shirt.
2. All shirts must be tucked in at all times.
3. Slacks and casual dress pants are acceptable. Physical education teachers may wear non-athletic shorts such as: khaki, golf, or dress shorts. All shorts must come no shorter than three inches above the knee. All other male staff may not wear shorts.
4. No blue denim jeans are acceptable. No skinny jeans or jeans with tears, rips, holes, or distressing of any kind are appropriate.
5. T-shirts or tank tops are not allowed. Exceptions will be made for staff or school related shirts.
6. Facial hair must be kept neat and clean. Hair length should not impair vision.
7. Hats are not to be worn inside nor are sunglasses to be worn on the head inside school buildings.
8. Earrings on males are the ONLY visible piercing allowed.
9. Tattoos that are considered offensive, racist, vulgar, show scenes of violence, drug-related, contain strong sexual imagery, gang related or contain obscene phrases may not be visible.
10. No jersey, mesh, or any other athletic draw-string pants are permitted.

By enacting this dress code policy, Prentiss County School Board of Education recognizes that there are occasions when individuals may need to wear specific clothing due to medical reasons. When such is the case, the employee must provide the proper medical documentation that gives rise to the need for deviation from this dress code policy. This documentation must be presented to the building level administrator and kept in the employee's personnel file for reference.

Any employee deemed inappropriately dressed according to this dress code policy will be sent home until he/she returns with appropriate attire. Such instance will be documented in the employee's personnel file.

School based personnel shall follow this Policy on ALL days students are in attendance. Principals may designate up to one (1) day per week or 4 days per month when reasonable modifications to this Policy may be made. Exceptions to this would be Homecoming week, Halloween/Fall Festival Days, other events involving costumes, or etc. Please note: end of year or other celebrations where parents and community members are present require all employees to adhere to professional dress code. Principals may also determine the appropriate dress to be worn on workdays students are not in attendance. All other personnel shall follow the policy on all work days unless directed differently by their supervisor (such as cafeteria, maintenance, janitorial, transportation, and other support staff which are deemed non-instructional).

\*CTE/Shop instructors will follow the guidance of their supervisors when determining appropriate dress.

## **Employee Sick/Personal Leave and Hiring of Substitutes**

The school board of this district shall establish by rules and regulations a policy of sick leave with pay for licensed employees and teacher assistants employed in the school district, and such policy shall include the following minimum provisions for sick emergency leave with pay:

- A. Each licensed employee and teacher assistant, at the beginning of each school year, shall be credited with a minimum sick/personal leave allowance, with pay, of seven (7) sick days and two (2) personal days for absences during that school year. (240 day employees shall be credited vacation leave allowance, with pay, of ten (10) days per year.)
- B. Any unused portion of the total leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year and shall be unlimited. The law states that no sick leave is transferable from one school district to another except for retirement purposes.
- C. No deductions shall be made from the pay of an employee who is sick or disabled until all unused sick leave has been used.
- D. After the use of the accumulated leave, each employee will be allowed a total of ten (10) days per year with no accumulation. Certified personnel will have \$70.00 per date deducted from their salary for the ten days. Lunchroom and all other non-certified personnel will have \$35.00 per day deducted from the salary for ten days.
- E. 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 leave allowance credited to such licensed employee, there may 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. Thereafter, the regular pay of such absent licensed employee may be suspended and withheld in its entirety for any period of absence because of illness or physical disability during that school year.
- F. Effective March 3, 2008: Following the use of the accumulated leave and of the ten days described in paragraph (b.1) above, the take home pay of the absent employee will be withheld based on the employee's pay will be deducted from gross pay. No deductions will be used to compute take-home pay. No deduction from the pay of such licensed employee or teacher assistant may be made because of absence of such licensed employee or teacher assistant caused by illness or physical disability of the licensed employee or teacher assistant until after all leave allowance credited to such licensed employee or teacher assistant has been used.
- G. Where possible, fully qualified persons will be employed as substitutes. If fully qualified persons are not available, other suitable persons may be employed at the discretion of supervising personnel.
- H. The county Superintendent's Office will maintain leave records on each employee. Information for leave should be filed on Form SL-1, "Request for Leave".
- I. All substitutes will be paid from the county Superintendent's Office. Principals will submit vouchers in sufficient time to reach the office by the second Friday of each month. This date has been established as the cut-off day for substitutes' payroll. Substitutes will be paid once a month, on the last workday of each month. (This will

allow the County Superintendent’s Office 15 days to process monthly payrolls.)

- J. The school principal is the approving authority for leave. He/she may require a certificate from a physician if the absence is for four (4) consecutive days or more. Personal leave days shall not be taken the day before, the day after a holiday, or during state testing.
- K. In the event of a false statement by the employee as a cause of absence, penalties may include a full deduction of pay, entry on the work record of the employee, or other appropriate penalties.
- L. Unlimited accumulation of leave may apply toward retirement.

Prentiss County School District Employee Leave Days

<u>187- &amp; 182-day employee</u>	<u>7 Sick 2 Personal</u>
<u>240-day full time employee</u>	<u>7 sick 2 personal 10 vacation</u>
<u>240-day half time employee</u>	<u>4 sick 1 personal 5 vacation</u>

What you don’t use from each year will roll over to your next year into your sick and then at retirement time into retirement.

If you run out of days the first 10 days you will be docked \$70 a day for Certified and \$35 a day for Non-Certified. Any days missed after this you will be docked your take home pay. (Your salary will be divided by your number of days you work.)

## **SUBSTITUTES PAY**

Substitute pay is set at \$70.00 per day for certified teachers and \$60.00 per day for non-certified.

No teacher may pay a substitute for parts of a day. If a substitute is called in he/she will be paid for a full day. Principal's are to notify all substitutes and temporary teachers upon hire that their pay is subject to the Social Security, Federal, and state Withholding Laws.

Lunchroom: Effective March 3, 2007, substitute lunchroom pay is set at \$36.25 per day. No lunchroom substitute will be paid for parts of a day. If a substitute is called in he/she will be paid for a full day. Principals are to notify all substitute cafeteria worker upon hire that their pay is subject to the Social Security, Federal, and State Withholding Laws.

## **JURY DUTY/SUMMONS/SUBPOENAS**

An employee serving on Jury Duty shall receive regular pay. A copy of the summons must be attached to the Leave Form.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ATTENDANCE**

Professional development is not only a requirement for meeting accreditation, but also serves as a means for improving our schools in all areas of curriculum, instruction, safe schools, etc. It is the responsibility of every teacher and staff member of the district to attend and participate in professional development sessions.

**Personal days can no longer be taken on designated professional development days.** Teachers and staff must be in attendance of their designated sessions, or they will be counted absent. Attendance on the school campus, but not at the session will not count as a contract day. Instead it will count against the employee's leave or must be made up. This decision will be made by the county office administration.

This School Board Policy was approved by Prentiss County School Board effective December 27, 1999.

**Licensure renewal** is the responsibility of the teacher and not that of the district. Renewal of license should be completed before April 15<sup>th</sup> if to be considered to be rehired for the next school year.

## **PERSONNEL APPRAISALS**

The Prentiss County School Board has adopted the personnel appraisal guidelines and procedures recommended by the State Department of Education which meets the requirements mandated by Section 37-3-46 of the Mississippi Code.

Guidelines for Professional Growth System for Teachers:

1. A minimum of two informal observations (unannounced)
2. A minimum of one formal observation (announced)
3. Post-observation conferences

Guidelines for Professional Growth System for Administrators:

1. A minimum of three school site observations.
2. One school site observation recommended before or at the beginning of the school year.
3. Feedback conference after each school site observation.

Additional Professional Growth System Rubrics can be found at

[http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OTC/professional-growth-system/additional-educator-growth-rubics:](http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OTC/professional-growth-system/additional-educator-growth-rubics)

- Counselor Growth Rubric
- Speech-Language Pathologist Growth Rubric
- Student Services Coordinator Growth Rubric
- Librarian Growth Rubric
- Librarian Growth Rubric Descriptors

Training is given when needed.

Additional resources and information maybe found using the link below

<https://www.mdek12.org/OTL/OTC/professional-growth-system>

NOTE: Any personnel complaint/grievance shall be dealt with by following the procedures set forth in Prentiss County School Board Policy Code: GAR-R.

## **INTERVENTION PROCESS**

Each school in Prentiss County School District will have a designated MTSS (formerly RTI/TST) committee comprised of selected faculty members and chaired by the school principal. These teams will meet monthly at the school or in the district office with members of the district level MET team for review of Tier II/III students and to assist with instructional/intervention planning. Teachers should refer any student for intervention to the principal or the school MTSS committee members. Any questions about referrals, progress monitoring, documentation, or interventions should be directed to your building level principal. Additional assistance and support is available from Kim Hamm or Leigh Estes at 662-728-9408.

## **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a leave entitlement for eligible employees enacted into law by congress in 1993. The Prentiss County School District (the District) is a covered employer under the FLMA and will provide leave for eligible employees in accordance with the Act. The FLMA is a controlling authority concerning the leave provided by that law and herin. This policy was drafted and adopted with the intent to comply with that Act and should be construed accordingly. To the extent that any of the provisions in this policy may be in conflict with that Act, those provisions should be disregarded since the Act controls. Also, should subsequent changes in the Act or regulations by the U.S. Department of Labor or otherwise government agency change in any material way any of those provisions of the Act or its application or implementation, then this policy should likewise be construed to reflect any such change.

### **DEFINITIONS**

1. An “eligible employee” is one who is employed at a school facility where at least 50 persons are employed, either there or within a 75-mile radius of that school facility as measured by road miles by the shortest route possible; and who has been employed for at least 12 months by the school district as of the date leave commences, and who has also provided at least 1250 hours service during that 12-month period. Fifty-two (52) weeks of casual, intermittent or occasional employment qualifies as “at least 12 months.” School district employees exempt from the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act requirements are presumed to have worked 1250 hours.
2. The District’s 12-month leave year period is a rolling 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee begins using any FMLA leave.
3. “Employee’s spouse” means a husband and wife as defined by the law of the State of Mississippi.
4. “Employee’s son or daughter” means a biological child, adopted child or foster child, legal ward or the child for whom the employee is standing in loco parentis who is either under the age of 18 years or above the age of 18 years and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
5. “Employee’s parents” means biological parent or an individual who stood (or now stands) in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child (does not include parents-in-law).
6. Employee’s “immediate family member” means spouse, son or daughter or parent as defined hereinabove.
7. For the purposes of FMLA, “serious health condition” means an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves either in-patient care (overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider.
8. A “key employee” is an employee whose restoration to his or her position on return from FMLA leave would cause substantial and grievous injury to the classroom and instructional program.

## LEAVE PROVISIONS

An eligible employee is entitled to 12 unpaid work weeks of leave during any 12-months leave year period for any one or more of the following reasons:

1. The birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn (within 12 months of the 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 (non parent-in-law).
4. Because of the employee's own serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform the function of his or her job.
5. Service Member Exigency Leave: For absences caused by an active duty exigency when the employee's spouse, child or parent is a service member.
6. Military Caregiver Leave: To care for the employee's spouse, child, parent or next of kin (if the employee is a nearest blood relative) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty.

## MILITARY CAREGIVER LEAVE UNDER THE FMLA

Eligible employees may take up to 26 weeks of job-protected "military caregiver leave" during a single 12-month leave year period. This leave must be used to care for a covered family member with a serious illness or injury that was: 1) incurred in the line of duty while on active duty in the regular Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves; or 2) that existed before the member's active duty that was aggravated by service in the line of duty in the regular Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves. In this context, a "covered service member". A covered service member is: 1) a person who is a member of the regular Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves and is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty while on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of the service members office, grade, or rank or rating; or 2) a veteran who was a member of the regular Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserve at any time during the five (5) preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes medical treatment, recuperation or therapy.

## QUALIFYING EXIGENCY LEAVE UNDER THE FMLA

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave for a "qualifying exigency" arising from the employee's spouse, child or parent who is in the National Guard, Reserves, or Armed Forces and notified of an impending federal call, order to active duty or deployment to a foreign country. There are eight situations when qualifying exigency leave may be taken:

1. in “short-notice deployment” situations, where a covered military member is notified of an impending call or order to active duty 7 or fewer days from the date of deployment, in which case an eligible employee may take military exigency leave for a period of 7 days beginning on the date when the covered military member is notified of the impending deployment;
2. to attend military events, ceremonies or programs sponsored by the military that are related to the active duty or the call to active duty of a covered military member, or to attend similarly related family support or assistance programs of informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military;
3. for certain childcare and school activities necessitated by active duty or the call to active duty status of a covered military member, including to arrange for alternative childcare, to provide childcare on an urgent, emergency need (but not routine, regular or everyday) basis, to enroll or transfer a child in a new school or daycare facility, or to attend meetings with school or daycare staff.
4. to make or update financial or legal arrangements to address a covered military member’s absence while on active duty;
5. to attend certain counseling arising from active duty or the call to active duty status of a covered military member;
6. to spend time with a covered military member who is on a short-term, temporary rest and recuperation leave during a period of deployment;
7. to attend certain post-deployment activities, such as arrival ceremonies and reintegrations briefings, and to address issues arising from the death of covered military member while on active duty status; and
8. for certain additional activities arising from a covered military member’s active duty or call to active duty where the employer and employee both agree on the timing and duration of the leave.

Qualifying exigency military leave is not available where the call to active duty comes from a state rather than the federal government.

#### EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DURING FMLA LEAVE

All group health benefits will continue during FMLA leave, provided that the employee continues to pay any regular employee premium contributions to the group health benefit plans for which the employee is responsible. Eligible employees on FMLA leave must make arrangements to pay their share of any group insurance premiums while on leave. Other benefits will be governed in accordance with the terms of their respective benefit plans. Employees should direct any questions concerning benefits during FMLA leave related to the employee or dependents to the District’s Business Office.

#### DESIGNATION OF FMLA LEAVE

Generally, the District will use the optional “Designation Notice” form issued by the U.S. Department of Labor to designate qualifying leave as FMLA leave (Form WH-382). The District has the legal right to designate FMLA-qualifying leave as FMLA leave, even if the employee does not wish it to be so designated. When the District designates time off from work as FMLA leave, it may provide the employee, upon request, with a copy of the optional “Notice of Eligibility and Rights & Responsibilities” for (WH-381) published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

#### USE OF PAID TIME OFF DURING FMLA LEAVE

FMLA leave cannot be used as a substitute for an extension of accrued personal, vacation, or sick leave. FMLA leave will run concurrently with all the employee's accrued, unused personal, vacation and sick leave. Once all accrued personal, vacation and sick leave is exhausted, the balance of the FMLA leave, if any, will be without pay. Therefore, for example, an employee who has 10 days total personal, vacation or sick leave remaining at the time the employee begins taking FMLA leave would be paid for the first 10 days of that leave, and any balance of FMLA leave time taken would be without pay.

#### CALCULATION OF THE FMLA 12-MONTH "LEAVE YEAR" PERIOD

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of FMLA leave (or up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member) during any 12-month leave year period. The applicable 12-month "leave year" period is a "rolling" 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave. Thus, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the employee's remaining entitlement to FMLA leave will be the balance of any portion of FMLA leave that the employee does not use it in the 12 months following the date to the employee begins any FMLA leave.

#### INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN TO EMPLOYEES WHO REQUEST FMLA LEAVE

Eligible employees may request FMLA leave by giving notice of the need for FMLA leave in writing to the District. The District may require that the request be made on a form or forms furnished by the District.

When an employee requests FMLA leave, a notice of eligibility and the rights and responsibilities of the employee for taking FMLA leave must be provided to the employee on U.S. Department of Labor Form WH-381 or an equivalent which contains a notice to the employee of his or her rights and responsibilities for taking FMLA leave. The employee shall be informed whether he or she is eligible for FMLA leave, who to contact to continue health insurance benefits while on FMLA leave and the consequences of non-payment of health insurance premiums, that the employee will be required to use his or her available paid sick, vacation and any other leave during the FMLA absence, that the employee's rights under the FMLA for measured forward from the date of first FMLA usage (i.e., the single 12-month leave year period begins on the first day the employee takes FMLA leave). The employee shall be further informed that a copy of conditions applicable provisions for use of paid leave.

Employees who take FMLA leave may be required to provide a completed, signed certification from a health care provider demonstrating that the leave is medically necessary and covered by the FMLA. In obtaining this certification, employees shall use one of the forms published by the U.S. Department of Labor for this purpose, copies of which are available from the business office of the District upon request from the employee. There are four such forms, each of which has a specific use as described below.

- Employees who wish to take FMLA leave because of their own serious health condition (including pregnancy) that makes them unable to perform their job duties should use the

“Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee’s Serious Health Condition” form (Form WH-380E).

- Employees who wish to take FMLA leave to care for a seriously ill spouse, son, daughter, or parent based on medical necessity should use the “Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee’s Serious Health Condition” form (Form WH-380E).
- Employees who wish to take FMLA leave based on a qualifying military exigency should use the “Certification of Qualifying Exigency” form (Form WH-384).

An employee’s failure to submit a completed a certification to the District prior the commencement of a foreseeable leave may result in the leave being denied or delay the commencement of the leave. If an employee fails to submit a completed certification to the District within a reasonable time (generally, within 15 days) after the commencement of an unexpected leave, District may deny the FMLA leave, including the FMLA’s reinstatement protections.

The District may, in its discretion seek clarification and authentication of completed certification forms. The District may also require that employees take appropriate steps to cure deficiencies in any certification form within 7 days. Employees requesting FMLA leave may be required to provide the District with subsequent re-certification of their continued serious health condition and inability to work as permitted by the FMLA. This includes recertification of their continued serious health condition and inability to work as permitted by the FMLA. This includes re-certification of ongoing conditions at least every six months in conjunctions with an absence, and more frequently in some instances. For medical conditions that last longer than a single leave year, the District may require that employees who wish to use FMLA leave for that ongoing condition provide a new medical certification each leave year. Employees who wish to return to work from an FMLA leave occasioned by their own serious health condition must first provide the District with a certification from a health care provider stating that they are able to return to work. Under certain circumstances, the District may require that this certification state that the employee can perform all of the essential functions listed in their job description. Where reasonable job safety concerns exist, the District may also require that employees who wish to return to work from intermittent FMLA leave provide certification from a health care provider that they are able to return to work. Employees may also be required to cooperate with the District’s request for a second or third opinion from health care providers designated by the District, at its discretion and expense, for purposes of confirming eligibility for FMLA leave. The District may also require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on his or her status and intent to return to work.

#### SPECIAL NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO EMPLOYEES REQUESTING FMLA LEAVE

An employee who has given the District notice of the need for FMLA leave must be provided notice of the District’s specific expectations with regard to that employee, as well as the employee’s obligations. Such notice must detail all consequences for failing to meet these obligations. This notice must include the following information as is appropriate to the leave request being considered:

1. Whether the District will require a medical certificate of a serious health condition or re-certification and what will happen if the employee fails to do so;
2. That the District will require the employee to furnish, prior to being restored to employment, a fitness for duty certificate;
3. That the taking of this leave will count against the employee's annual FMLA leave entitlement;
4. That the employee has a right to substitute paid leave (personal, vacation, and sick days) for FMLA leave, and that the District will require the substitution of paid leave, and any conditions related to substitution;
5. That the employee has a right to restoration to the same or equivalent job upon return from leave, unless the employee is a "key employee", and that restoration will or could possibly be denied after taking FMLA leave, explaining the condition or conditions required for the denial restoration. If the employee is designated a key employee or maybe so designated during the leave period, he or she shall be notified if it is the District's intention not to restore him or her to his or her current position at the time of the request for leave, or when the determination is made.
6. That the employee will be required to pay any health insurance premiums to maintain benefits while on leave and the arrangements for making the payments;
7. That if the employee fails to return to work after taking unpaid FMLA leave, he is potentially liable for payment of health insurance premiums paid by the District.

#### EMPLOYEE'S NOTICE REQUIREMENTS WHEN REQUESTING FMLA LEAVE

Employees must adhere to the following notice requirements when they request FMLA leave: If a requested FMLA leave is planned in advance or is reasonable foreseeable, the employee must provide the District with at least 30 days' notice prior to the anticipated leave date. If the leave is unexpected or is not reasonable foreseeable more than 30 days in advance, the employee should notify the District as soon as is practicable. This should normally be the same day or the next business day after the employee becomes aware of the need for the leave. 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.

#### CONSECUTIVE AND INTERMITTENT FMLA LEAVE

Leave taken to care for a child after birth, adoption or placement in an employee's home for foster care must be taken in consecutive workweeks. Leave taken for the employee's or a covered family member's serious health condition or leave that is medically necessary to care for a covered service member as described above may be taken consecutively, intermittently, or on a reduced work or leave schedule based on certified medical necessity. Leave that is taken because of qualifying exigencies arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter or parent of the employee is on or has been notified of an impending call to active duty military service may be taken consecutively, intermittently, or on a reduced work or leave schedule to the extent appropriate, based on the circumstances.

Employees must make a reasonable effort to schedule leave for planned, medically necessary treatment so that it will not unnecessarily or unduly disrupt the administrative and educational activities of the District.

#### CONDITIONS FOR RETURNING TO WORK AND REINSTATEMENT RIGHTS FOLLOWING FMLA LEAVE

Before an employee on FMLA leave for his or her own serious health condition (including pregnancy) will be permitted to return from leave, the employee will be required to present the District with a statement from the employee's health care provider certifying that the employee is able to resume work and perform the essential functions of his or her position, with or without reasonable accommodation. Where required, the District will consider making reasonable accommodation for any disability an employee may have in accordance with applicable law.

An eligible employee is entitled, on timely return from FMLA leave, to be reinstated to his or her former position or an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay and other terms and conditions of employment. Exceptions to this provision may apply if business circumstances have changed (for example, if the employee's position is no longer available due to job elimination). Employees who are on a leave extension beyond the period of job protected leave provided by the FMLA are not guaranteed reinstatement.

Exceptions may also apply for certain "key" employees. The District through its Superintendent may designate certain employees as key employees. The District may exempt from the restoration requirement an employee who is in the highest paid 10 percent of the District workforce within a 75- mile radius of the school facility if restoring the employee would cause substantial and grievous injury to the classroom and instructional program.

The District shall notify the key employee of its intention not to restore him or her to his or her current position at the time of the request for leave or when the determination is made. If the leave has begun, the key employee shall have the option of deciding whether or not to return to work after receiving the notice. An employee who is not restored shall be considered to be on leave for the duration of his or her leave period.

#### SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN ELIGIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

Special rules apply to the District which allow it to require eligible instructional personnel only to take FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, or to take leave near the end of a semester. Instructional employees are those employees whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, small group or individual setting. Instructional employees include teachers, teacher aides, and assistant teachers who actually teach, coaches, driver's education instructors and special education assistants. All other eligible employees may request intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule to care for a family member or for the employee's own serious health condition.

## FMLA LEAVE FOR ELIGIBLE SPOUSAL OR SIBLING EMPLOYEES

Where husband and wife are both employees of the District, those employees have a 12-week aggregate leave limit, except for personal illness or the illness of a child or the other spouse; therefore for example, if each spouse takes 6 weeks of leave for the birth of a child, each could later use an additional 6 weeks due to personal illness or to care for a sick child.

Where brothers and sisters are employees of the District, those employees will have an aggregate limit of 12 weeks in any 12-month leave period to care for their parent or parents.

## POSTING AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

The key provisions of FMLA shall be conspicuously posted in all schools and offices where employees are employed and where applications for employment are taken. The notices should explain FMLA's provisions and provide information concerning the procedures for filing complaints of violations of FMLA with the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor. The notice form may be that furnished by the Wage and Hour Division or an equivalent and must not be any smaller in size than 8 1/2" x 11", and the text must be fully legible.

## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK INFORMATION

Information concerning FMLA entitlements and employee obligations must be included in the District's employee handbook or other documents providing written guidance, and must explain the obligations and rights of an eligible employee whenever that employee requests leave under FMLA. The information provided may be that contained in a fact sheet available from the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor. The handbook should also advise employees that additional guidance explaining the obligations and rights of eligible employees concerning FMLA leave, is available to them in the District's Business Office.

## RECORD-KEEPING

The District shall make, keep and preserve records pertaining to its obligations under FMLA in accordance with the record-keeping requirements of Section 11 C of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the FMLA. No particular order of form of records is required. Violation of these policies may subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge, in accordance with the District policies, federal and state law.

This District shall not interfere with or restrain an eligible employee's right to exercise the provisions of the FMLA or this policy.

This policy shall take effect and be in force from and after its adoption by the Board of Trustees of the Prentiss County School District. An employee's service prior to August 5, 1993, shall be counted in determining whether the employee is eligible for leave under the FMLA and this policy.

## Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics: Standards of Conduct

### 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:
  - i. employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
  - ii. information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
  - iii. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
  - iv. reasons for absences or leave
  - v. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
- b. Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so.

### **Standard 3: Unlawful Acts**

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

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

### **Standard 4: Educator/Student Relationships**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Standard 5: Educator/Collegial Relationships**

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

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

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

## **Standard 6: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Standard 7: Public Funds and Property**

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

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

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

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

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

## **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. 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.

## Prentiss County School Staff Acceptable Use Policy

### INTERNET ACCESS

The internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Internet access is now available to students and teachers in the Prentiss County School District (PCSD). We are very pleased to bring this access to PCSD and believe the Internet offers vast, diverse and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence in our schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. This computer technology will help propel our schools through the communication age by allowing students and staff to access and use resources from distant computers, communicate and collaborate with other individuals and groups, and significantly expand their available information base.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional state networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the users who must adhere to strict guidelines. To this end, Congress has passed and President signed into law, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

CIPA requires that schools receiving certain federal funds, including E-Rate discounts and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, put into place Internet Safety policies. These internet safety policies must include a technology protection measure for blocking access to visual depictions of obscene material, child pornography, and material that is harmful to minors when minors are accessing the computer. CIPA also requires that the Internet safety policy include monitoring of all online activities of minors.

Additionally, the policy must address all of the following: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web, (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; and (e) measures designed to restrict minors access to materials harmful to minors.

### NETWORK RULES

Prentiss County School District provides adequate Wi-Fi on all campuses. This includes wireless access across all academic areas and classrooms. Students and Employees are required to use Wi-Fi provided by the district when using devices owned by PCSD. **THE USE OF WIRELESS HOTSPOTS IS PROHIBITED ON ALL PCSD CAMPUSES. THESE INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO CELL PHONES AND MI-FI DEVICES THAT CAN BE USED AS PERSONAL WIRELESS ACCESS POINTS.**

Prentiss County School District provides content filtering to comply with CIPA requirements for safe Internet browsing of minors. Any attempt to bypass this content filter with the use of proxies or any other method is a direct violation of this agreement.

#### ACCEPTABLE/ UNACCEPTABLE USES OF TECHNOLOGY:

Prentiss County School District technology resources will be used only for learning, teaching, and administrative purposes consistent with the District's mission and goals.

- Accessing, transmitting or retransmitting:
  - Any material(s) in furtherance of any illegal act or conspiracy to commit any illegal act in violation of United States, Mississippi, local government, or Mississippi State Department laws, policies and regulations.
  - Copyrighted materials (including plagiarism), threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, or material protected by trade secret, and /or other material that is inappropriate to minors.
  - Any material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by devices including, but not limited to, the use of firearms, explosives, fireworks, smoke bombs, incendiary devices, or any similar materials.
  - Language that may be considered offensive, defamatory, abusive, or any forms of cyberbullying.
  - Information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
  - Information that harasses another person or causes distress to another person.
- Using the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
- Participating in chat sessions outside of classroom activities.
- Install software not approved by the Technology Department.
- Downloading files from the Internet that do not relate to classroom activities or administrative tasks.
- Purchasing or selling goods and/or services via the Internet.
- Disclosing, using, disseminating or divulging personal and/ or private information about himself/ herself, minors or any others including personal identification information.
- Attempting to bypass the PCSD content filter.
- Attempting to "hack" network resources including, but not limited to servers, switches, access points, routers, and printers.

#### DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Prentiss County School District will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms as well as cyber bullying awareness and response.

## E-MAIL

Prentiss County School District provides a Google GSuite account for student and employee email services. PCSD creates and manages account information. Employees and students are responsible for maintaining the information inside their account. PCSD does not archive employee or student email.

## SECURITY

Prentiss County School District has measures in place to protect end users on our network through the use of Firewalls, Content Filters, and Malware/Antivirus software. These measures are not always 100% effective and users should take reasonable safeguards against security threats over the PCSD network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. Users should not share personal information over the PCSD network.

In the event a user feels their device has been compromised or infected, they should immediately notify the Technology Department. Employees and Staff are never to attempt to remove a virus or malware on their own. This includes deleting files, downloading Malware/Virus removal tools, or installing Antivirus software.

## MONITORING

Prentiss County School District has the ability to monitor data transmitted over the PCSD network at any time. Data transferred can be tracked and identified and users held liable if their use of the network violates established policies, regulations, or laws. The content filter used at PCSD has the ability to flag and notify the Technology Department if a user searches for or accesses sites that contain certain keywords. Computers that continue to be flagged for inappropriate sites can be remotely monitored and screen captured or recorded. Data stored on devices owned by PCSD are the property of PCSD. This data includes, but is not limited to email, text documents, images, music, and other digital or electronic files.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content such as videos.

All students of the Prentiss County School District who participate in social media, more specifically, social networking websites such as, but not limited to, blogs, YouTube, FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. Shall not post any data, documents, photos or inappropriate information on any website that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. The determination of appropriateness will be made by the school administration and/or Superintendent.

Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited. Nothing in this policy prohibits students from the use of educational websites.

#### LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

Recognizing that no filtering solution can be 100% 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 violated CIPA.

The Prentiss County School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it provides. The PCSD will not be responsible for any damages suffered while on this system. These damages include loss of data as a result of delays, non-deliveries, miss-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the system or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the information system is at your own risk. PCSD specifically disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy of information obtained through its services.

Prentiss County School District will not disclose personal information about students on websites - such as their full name, addresses, telephone number, or social security number.

#### EXCEPTION OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

These guidelines are provided so that you, the user and / or parent 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. If a PCSD user violates any of these provisions, his or her account will be terminated and future access could possibly be denied.

The signature(s) at the end of this document is (are) legally binding and indicated the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance.

All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to the PCSD. These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement of the parties and supersedes all prior oral or written agreements and understandings of the parties. These terms and conditions shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Mississippi, and the United States of America.

**Please print the last page of this handbook and sign the statement verifying you have read and will abide by the terms and conditions of this acceptable use policy.**

Adults who have contact with children and adolescents through school activities have the responsibility not to betray or misuse their privileged position and shall never take advantage of students' vulnerability or of their confidence.

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

**Staff Guidelines for Non-Fraternization**

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

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school and/or staff.
2. Staff-sponsored parties, at which students are in attendance, unless they are a part of the school's extracurricular program and are properly supervised, are prohibited.
3. Staff members shall not fraternize, written or verbally, with students except on matters that pertain to school-related issues.
4. Staff members shall not text students nor participate in any student blogs.
5. Staff members shall not associate with students at any time in any situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
6. Staff members shall not date students. Sexual relations with students, regardless of age And/or consent, are prohibited and will result in dismissal and criminal prosecution.
7. Staff members shall maintain a reasonable standard of care for the supervision, control and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.
8. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
9. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.

10. Staff members shall not attempt to counsel, assess, diagnose or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships but instead, should refer the student to appropriate school personnel or agency for assistance, pursuant to law and Board policy.
11. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family background.

**Annual Reminder to Staff**

The Superintendent and the school principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol
4. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid
5. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology
6. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct

**Periodical Searches**

The Superintendent or designees will periodically conduct internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and/or websites is discovered, the school principals and/or Superintendent will download the offensive material and promptly take proper administrative action.

## Social Networking Websites

GABBA

Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited. Employees, faculty and staff should not give social networking website passwords to students. The employee is responsible for all activities in his/her account.

All employees, faculty and staff of this 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.

Fraternization via the internet between employees, faculty or staff with 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.abcdistrict.org](http://www.abcdistrict.org) since these sites are used solely for educational purposes.

Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited.

### STUDENT COMPLAINTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR

Students and employees in Prentiss County School District are protected from bullying or harassing behavior by other students or employees. It is the intent of the Board and the administration to maintain an environment free from bullying and harassing behavior. This complaint procedure provides a process for filing, processing and resolving complaints of such conduct. Adherence to these procedures is mandatory. The failure of any person to follow these procedures will constitute a waiver of the right to pursue a complaint at any level, including review by the Board.

#### I. Definitions

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act of 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.

Bully 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 educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

Every student has a fundamental right 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. However, no student or school employee shall engage in any act of reprisal or retaliation after the bullying or harassing behavior has stopped. Any student or school employee guilty of such conduct may be punished in the same manner and to the same extent as for bullying or harassing behavior.

## II. Procedures for Processing a Complaint

Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, 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. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form, which shall include the names of the reporting person, 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 principal.

The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary will 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.

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

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents as appropriate to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.

\* Superintendent and /or principal has discretion to determine degree of "abuse" dependent upon "act" and grade level of student.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense – Corporal punishment or OSS
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – Alternative School for 9 weeks
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Alternative School for semester
- 4<sup>th</sup> offense – Expulsion

**FORMS**

LEAVE REQUEST FORM

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE REQUEST FORM

APPROVAL FOR FUNDRAISER FORM

APPROVAL FOR FIELD TRIPS OR CLASS TRIPS FORM

PERMIT FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITY TRIP

LEAVE REQUEST FORM  
PRENTISS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Submission Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # : \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Day Requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/s to be off: \_\_\_\_\_

Sick Leave: \_\_\_\_\_

Explanations: Personal Illness or in immediate family, Maternity leave, Doctor's appointment, Death of immediate family

Personal Leave

Vacation - (12 month people only)

Military leave - (Orders attached)

Jury Duty - (Document attached)

Out of Days -to be docked-

certified 1-10 @ \$70 a day after that take home pay  
non-certified 1-10 @ \$35 a day after that take home pay

# OF DAY/S TO DOCK APPLICANT: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL AMOUNT TO DOCK PAYCHECK: \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Day \_\_\_\_\_  
Note here the name of workshop or title of school related trip

Substitute Requested

Name of Sub: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Days Worked \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that I have submitted the above request:

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

~~~~~  
 Approved       Not Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent / Principal

Date

~~~~~  
Note:  
Requests for Professional Day, Personal Leave (other than emergencies) and Vacation must be submitted PRIOR to the absence to be Approved.



APPROVAL FOR FUNDRAISER FORM  
PRENTISS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

*This form must be submitted to the Superintendent for approval. Fax to 662-728-2000*

TO: SUPERINTENDENT RANDLE DOWNS  
FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
RE: BOARD APPROVAL FOR FUNDRAISER

I am requesting board approval for the following fundraiser:

School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Group or Club: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsor of Club: \_\_\_\_\_  
Start & Ending Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Fundraiser: \_\_\_\_\_  
Selling Price of Product: \_\_\_\_\_  
Per Cent of Profit: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved for submission: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Sponsor's signature)*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Principal's signature)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of School Board Approval

APPROVAL FOR FIELD TRIPS OR CLASS TRIPS FORM

PRENTISS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

*This form must be submitted to the Superintendent for approval. Fax to 662-728-2000*

TO: SUPERINTENDENT RANDLE DOWNS

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Name of Employee Making Trip Request*

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

RE: BOARD APPROVAL FOR FIELD TRIPS OR CLASS TRIPS

I am requesting board approval for the following field trip or class trip:

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Class, Group, or Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Trip Title or Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Students to go on Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of ALL CHAPERONS (Board requires a MINIMUM of (1) CHAPERON PER 10 STUDENTS. Educational Personnel to serve as chaperons are limited to the Bus Driver and the Teachers/Teacher's Assistants directly involved and/or responsible for the students.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Field Trips and Class Trips need required objective number and a brief explanation of how requested trip pertains to this specific objective:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Principal's signature)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Superintendent's signature)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of School Board Approval

~~~~~

PERMIT FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITY TRIP

PRENTISS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

This form must be submitted to the Superintendent for approval. Fax to 662-728-2000

**ALL ACTIVITY TRIPS MUST BE APPROVED 3 DAYS PRIOR TO TRIP**

Date Submitted for Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ School Bus Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned Bus No: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_

Grades of Students: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_ Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

State Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure from: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure time: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: \_\_\_\_\_ Return time: \_\_\_\_\_

Route to destination:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return Route (*Deviation from approved route must be authorized by the Superintendent*):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of ALL CHAPERONS (Board requires a MINIMUM of (1) CHAPERON PER 10 STUDENTS. Educational Personnel to serve as chaperons are limited to the Bus Driver and the Teachers/Teacher's Assistants directly involved and/or responsible for the students.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This trip is duly authorized by the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education and the School Board of Prentiss County School District. The bus driver shall keep these instructions with him when he/she is making the authorized trip. Upon completion of the trip, the driver shall file this order with the Superintendent within 5 school days.

Odometer Reading  
Ending Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beginning Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Trip Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount due to District \_\_\_\_\_ miles X \$0.50 = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent Date

**ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AFFIDAVIT**

**EMPLOYEE:**

I (user name please print) \_\_\_\_\_ understand and will abide by the terms and conditions of the acceptable use policy. I understand that any violation of the regulation is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action.

User Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PRENTISS COUNTY PERSONNEL HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**

The PCSD Personnel Handbook contains important information about PCSD. I accept the terms of the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this personnel handbook.

I understand that I read the entire handbook. Additionally, I will sign the two copies of this Acknowledgment of Receipt, retain one copy for myself, and return one copy to my building level principal. I understand that this form will be retained in my personnel file.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Name - Printed