



LOWNDES COUNTY
School District
CALEDONIA • NEW HOPE • WEST LOWNDES • CAREER TECH

PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

2023-2024

A Guide for Administrators,
Faculty, and Staff

CHALLENGING ALL STUDENTS TO ATTAIN THEIR GREATEST POTENTIAL



LOWNDES COUNTY
School District
CALEDONIA • NEW HOPE • WEST LOWNDES • CAREER TECH

CALEDONIA



NEW HOPE



WEST LOWNDES



CAREER TECH



LOWNDES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

LOWNDES COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

The Board of Education meets on the second Friday of each month at 12:30 p.m. The meeting is held in the board room of the Superintendent's Office, 1053 Highway 45 South, Columbus, MS 39701 (662-244-5000). Members of the board are:

Jane Kilgore, President	Bobby Barksdale, Secretary	Jacqueline Gray
Wesley Barrett, Vice-President	Jeff Smith, Attorney	Brad Flemming

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Sam Allison, Superintendent.	244-5005
Matt Keith, Assistant Superintendent – Support Services	244-5027
Stefanie Jones, Assistant Superintendent – Student Services	244-5019
Sayonia Garvin, Business Officer/Administrator.	244-5016
Veronica Hill, Personnel Director.	244-5010
Jeanise Andrews, Technology Coordinator.	244-5018
Dr. Christy Adams, Curriculum Coordinator	244-5007
Dr. Kristie Jones, Federal Programs Director	244-5030
Rhonda Locke, SPED Director	244-5024
Andrew Matthews, Director of Child Nutrition.	244-5021

SUPPORT STAFF

Roger Gaudet, Network Manager.	244-5006
Jeff Crocker, Maintenance Supervisor.	434-6123
Dennis Aldridge, Transportation Supervisor.	434-6299
Byron Weeks, Janitorial Supervisor	251-9847

LOWNDES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Caledonia Elementary School (K-5).....	Roger Hill, Principal
9509 Wolfe Rd, Caledonia, MS 39740.....	Phone 356-2050 – Fax 356-2065
Caledonia Middle School (6-8).....	Jeannie Jernigan, Principal
105 Cavalier Drive, Caledonia, MS 39740.....	Phone 356-2042 – Fax 356-2045
Caledonia High School (9-12).....	Gregory Elliott, Principal
111 Cavalier Drive, Caledonia, MS 39740.....	Phone 356-2001 – Fax 356-2036
New Hope Elementary School (K-5).....	Angela Wilcox, Principal
199 Enlow Drive, Columbus, MS 39702.....	Phone 244-4760 – Fax 244-4775
New Hope Middle School (6-8).....	Eric Guerrero, Principal
3419 New Hope Road, Columbus, MS 39702.....	Phone 244-4740 – Fax 244-4758
New Hope High School (9-12).....	Matt Smith, Principal
2920 New Hope Rd, Columbus, MS 39702.....	Phone 244-4701 – Fax 244-4725
West Lowndes Elementary School (K-6).....	Robert Sanders, Principal
1000 Gilmer-Wilburn Road, Columbus, MS 39701.....	Phone 244-5050 – Fax 328-2912
West Lowndes High School (7-12).....	Antonio Magee, Principal
644 South Frontage Road, Columbus, MS 39701.....	Phone 244-5070 – Fax 327-3353
LCSD Alternative School	Dr. Aaron Lee, Principal
3419 New Hope Road, Columbus, MS 39702.....	Phone 244-5060 – Fax 327-4857
Career Technology Center	Susan McClelland, Ed.S., Vocational & Tech Prep Director
1085 Lehmburg Road, Columbus, MS 39702.....	Phone 244-5038 – Fax 240-4108



LOWNDES COUNTY
School District
CALEDONIA • NEW HOPE • WEST LOWNDES • CAREER TECH

VISION

Provide a superior educational system that challenges all students to attain their greatest intellectual, social, and personal potential.

MISSION

Challenge all students to attain their greatest potential.

BELIEFS

- **Fully Engaged Students**
- **Productive and Purposeful Learning Environments**
- **Equity**
- **Shared Responsibility**
- **Mutual Respect**
- **Motivation Through a Wholistic Approach**
- **Individualistic and Challenging Instruction**

GOALS

- **Student achievement will increase annually.**
- **The district will utilize emerging technologies and programs at the highest level of achievement and accountability to ensure that students will be college and career ready.**
- **Promote standards-based, engaged learning environments that are guided by evident student need.**
- **Fully engage parents, community and staff in the education of our students.**
- **Recruit and train an effective workforce that is data driven and results oriented.**
- **Every school is rated C or higher.**



Visit Our Website

at

www.lowndes.k12.ms.us

FIND OUT ABOUT THE EXCELLENT LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES IN THE LOWNDES COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT!

View the LCSD Student Handbook Online!

Links to each campus can be found at this site.

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SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

POLICY MANUALS

The personnel handbook contains abbreviated versions of policies and procedures most relevant to administrative, instructional, and support staff. Divisions and policy codes are aligned with the Lowndes County School Board Policy Manual.

Complete policies have been compiled in the Lowndes County School Board Policy Manual. Copies of this manual may be found on the Lowndes County School District website (www.lowndes.k12.ms.us). Employees are welcome to read or review these at any time.

ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR (AE)

The school year will consist of a minimum of 180 teaching days. The school day shall be that portion of the calendar day that includes the teaching day, intermissions, and any additional time included in the employee contract. School day defines the normal working day for employees.

1. Each school day must have a minimum of 330 minutes of instructional time. If extracurricular activities prevent 330 minutes of instructional time, the day will not be counted as part of the required 180 school days.
2. Two of the 180 days may be 60% days provided there are 198 minutes of actual instruction or testing and the remainder of each day is used for staff development or other activities related to instruction.
3. Students may not participate in activities that require them to miss more than 20 class periods in courses for which grades and/or units of credit are earned.
4. During the school year, a student will not be allowed more than five planned absences in the same class period in courses for which grades and/or units of credit are issued.
5. Athletic activities (practice, competition, or travel) are prohibited during the teaching day, if the school is on a six-period day. If the teaching day in the school is comprised of seven periods, the student may participate in one class period which involves physical education or athletic practice. Travel time for the purpose of competition may be scheduled during the seventh period if the student involved is scheduled for athletic activities during that period.
6. The scheduling of competition in extracurricular activities (K-12), such as athletics, band, speech, debate, drama, choral groups, etc., is prohibited during days that tests included in the statewide testing program are administered. This prohibition extends to the day before testing begins, but does not include days scheduled for make-up testing.
7. The school district must schedule preparation for graduation ceremonies in such manner that graduating seniors are absent from classes for no more than three days prior to the end of the school year (177 days).
8. In the event an emergency situation results in the school district's not meeting the minimum instructional time specified, the State Superintendent of Education may declare a state of emergency and allow the school district to make up actual time lost in increments no less than the length of one class period.

EXTENDED SCHOOL (AE)

A summer school program or an extended year program requires prior approval from the Commission on School Accreditation and must meet the requirements of the Accreditation Commission.

This district offers extended school for promotion to students in grades 6-12 who meet the district's requirements for attendance. The district also offers extended school for enrichment to students in grades K-5 when federal funds are available.

TIME SCHEDULES

The school day for all instructional personnel for each school is posted below. (Exception: 60% days and early-release Wednesdays). Students are released early on Wednesdays to provide additional time for professional development. **Teachers must work until 4:00 p.m. on early-release Wednesdays.** Teachers must clock in and out in the office each day.

School	Teachers			Doors Open to Students	Students		
	Duty	Start	* Dismiss		Start	Tardy	Dismiss
CES	7:00 & 7:15	7:15	3:15	7:00	7:50	8:00	2:50
CMS		7:20	3:20	7:15	7:40	7:40	3:00
CHS	7:15	7:10	3:10	7:15	7:36	7:40	3:00
NHES	7:00 & 7:20	7:15	3:15	7:00	7:50	7:50	2:50
NHMS		7:15	3:15	7:20	7:40	7:40	3:00
NHHS	7:10	7:20	3:20	7:10	7:40	7:40	3:05
WLES	7:05	7:15	3:15	7:05	7:45	7:45	2:50
WLHS	7:10	7:15	3:15	7:10	7:34	7:38	3:15
ALT		7:15	3:15	7:20			
CTC	7:35	7:30	3:30	7:30	7:45	7:45	

* Principals may change arrival and dismissal times for individual employees to accommodate duty schedules. Students must not be left without supervision at any time.

Special activities and services may make additional demands on the teachers' workday. Teachers are, therefore, expected to assume reasonable duties over and above their regular teaching responsibilities. They should adhere to the hours set by the principal.

Students will not be allowed on the school premises until they are under the direct supervision of a principal, teacher, or other authorized, responsible adult.

SCHOOL CLOCKS

School clocks will be synchronized with time clocks at all times.

BULLETINS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bulletins/announcements shall be made during homeroom, after lunch, and just before the dismissal bell, if needed. All announcements should be turned in and approved prior to those times. Classroom instructional time should be interrupted only in emergency situations.

FLAG DISPLAY AND PATRIOTISM (AFA)

The Flag of the United States of America must be displayed in each classroom and/or other room areas, and the Pledge of Allegiance recited at the beginning of each day. Citizenship, patriotism, and Americanism are to be taught.

SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONS

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (BA)

The educational philosophy of the Lowndes School District is to provide each child with opportunities for intellectual stimulation, self-realization, and physical and emotional growth in an effort to prepare him/her, within his/her potential, to function effectively as a member of an ever-changing society. These educational opportunities must, therefore, be dynamic and diverse; continuously adjusted and improved; and appropriate to the needs of the community and society served.

The primary objective of each employee should be to do his/her part in seeing that this goal is achieved. To assist personnel, the Lowndes County School Board mandates that all employees read this personnel handbook and abide by the established policies and procedures contained within.

*****SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION*****

DUTIES OF SUPERINTENDENT (*CEB*)

The Lowndes County Board of Education delegates to the Superintendent the authority to carry out this district's policies and guidelines.

If a teacher would like an appointment with the superintendent on school-related matters, the teacher should, out of common courtesy, go through the principal for this request. Everyone, however, has the right to make an appointment with the superintendent himself/herself if the principal refuses or neglects to respond. No one shall go directly to the School Board without informing the superintendent.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL SEPARATION (*CGM and GBN*)

It is necessary, from time to time, to release from future employment administrative and/or other professional personnel whose performances fail to meet the standards established by the Mississippi Department of Education and/or this board or whose services are no longer needed.

In the event that a determination is made by this school district not to offer an employee a renewal contract for a successive year, written notice of non-renewal shall be given to a principal on or before March 1 and written notice shall be given to other professional educators on or before April 15.

Any non-reemployment decision of this school district shall be rationally related to a legitimate educational interest and not arbitrary and capricious or based upon some constitutionally impermissible reason such as race, sex, religion, handicap, or exercise of First Amendment rights.

Employees who have not been with a district for two (2) continuous years of employment, or one (1) year of employment with the district and two (2) continuous years of employment in a Mississippi public school district are not entitled to the protections of the Education Employment Procedures Law (MS Code § 37-9-101) and therefore are not entitled to a hearing.

The Education Employment Procedures Law applies to any teacher, principal, superintendent or other professional personnel employed by the local school district for a continuous period of two (2) years with that district and required to have a valid teaching license issued by the State Department of Education as a prerequisite of employment, or any teacher, principal, superintendent, or other professional personnel who has completed a continuous period of two (2) years of employment a Mississippi public school district and one (1) full year of employment with the school district of current employment, and who is required to have a valid teaching license issued by the State Department as a prerequisite of employment. According to MS Code § 37-9-101 any certified employee who falls under this category is entitled to a hearing.

An employee, by written request within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of notice of non-renewal, is entitled to:

- Written notice of the specific reasons for non-reemployment with a summary of the factual basis therefore, a list of witnesses, and a copy of documentary evidence substantiating the reasons intended to be presented at the hearing. This notice must be provided at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to any hearing.
- An opportunity for a hearing at which to present matters relevant to the reasons given for the proposed non-reemployment, including those alleged by the employee to be the reasons for non-reemployment.
- Receive a fair and impartial hearing before the school board or hearing officer.
- Be represented by legal counsel, at the employee's own expense.

An employee requesting a hearing must provide the district, not less than five (5) days before the scheduled date of the hearing, a response to the specific reasons for non-reemployment, a list of witnesses, and a copy of documentary evidence in support of the response intended to be presented at the hearing.

If the employee does not request a hearing, the decision of the school board with regard to the re-employment of the employee shall be final.

It is the intent of this school district to establish procedures for providing principals and other professional educators with notice of the reasons for not offering him/her a renewal of his/her contract and to provide an opportunity for principals and other professional educators to present matters relevant to the reasons given for the proposed non-reemployment determination and to the reasons the employee alleges to be the reasons for non-reemployment. The board is required to determine whether the recommendation of non-reemployment is a proper employment decision and not contrary to law and whether the non-renewal decision is based upon valid educational reasons or noncompliance with school district personnel policies.

Any and all hearings shall be conducted pursuant to the "Rules of Procedure Under the Education Employment Procedures Law of 2001," Policy GBN-R, adopted by this board. All proceedings under this policy are and shall be governed by the "Education Employment Procedures Law of 2001," where applicable. §37-9-101 et seq. (1997)

The school board is hereby prohibited from denying employment or re-employment to any person as a principal or licensed employee, as defined in Section 37-19-1, for the single reason that any eligible child of such person does not attend the school system in which such principal or licensed employee is employed.

Failure of the school board to notify a principal of non-reemployment on or before March 1 and other professional educators on or before April 15 constitutes an automatic renewal of his/her outstanding contract for the ensuing year.

A school board is not required to justify its decision not to rehire a principal or other professional educator when the principal or other professional educator failed to show any impermissible reason for the school board's decision.

When a school board has acted in a manner which is arbitrary and capricious and when its actions are not supported by substantial evidence, the Chancery Court and ultimately the Supreme Court have the responsibility to intervene.

See Policy GBN in LCSD Policy Manual for "Specific Hearing Procedures."

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL INTERN PROGRAM (CI)

1. General Information

An administrative intern program may be established and maintained to provide the district with a group of well-trained personnel eligible for administrative positions. This program may also provide a means for personnel who want to become administrators to achieve training and experience that will prepare them to perform that function either within or outside the district.

School administrators shall possess a valid license in one of the four (4) categories of administrator licensure issued by the Mississippi Department of Education:

- a. *Administrator License -- Non-practicing.* Those educators holding administrative endorsement but having no administrative experience or not serving in an administrative position on Jan. 15, 1997.
- b. *Administrator License -- Entry Level.* Those educators holding administrative endorsement and having met the Department's qualifications to be eligible for employment in a Mississippi school district. It shall be issued for a five-year period and shall be non-renewable.
- c. *Standard Administrator License -- Career Level.* An administrator who has met all the requirements of the Department for standard administrator licensure.
- d. *Administrator License -- Alternate Route.* The State Board of Education may establish an alternate route for licensing administrative personnel. This alternate route shall be available for persons holding, but not limited to, a master of business administration degree, a master of public administration degree, or a master of public planning and policy degree from an accredited college or university. This person must also have five (5) years of administrative or supervisory experience. Successful completion of the requirements of alternate route licensure for administrators shall qualify a person for standard administrator license.

Beginning with the 1997-98 school year, individuals seeking school administrator licensure under paragraph (b), (c) or (d) shall successfully complete a training program and an assessment process prescribed by the State Board of Education. Applicants who sought school administrator licensure prior to June 30, 1997 and completed all requirements for provisional or standard administrator certification but never practiced shall be exempt from taking the Mississippi Assessment Battery Phase I.

Applicants seeking school administrator licensure during the period beginning July 1, 1997 through June 30, 1998 shall participate in the Mississippi Assessment Battery, and upon request of the applicant, the Department shall reimburse the applicant for the cost of the assessment process required. After June 30, 1998, all applicants for school administrator licensure shall meet all requirements prescribed by the Department under paragraph (b), (c) or (d), and the cost of the assessment process required shall be paid by the applicant. §37-3-2(7) 1997

2. Reciprocity

The Department shall grant a standard license to any individual who possesses a valid standard license from another state and has a minimum of two (2) years of full-time teaching or administrator experience.

3. License Renewal

The State Board of Education is authorized to establish rules and regulations for the renewal and reinstatement of educator and administrator licenses. In compliance with these rules, teachers are personally responsible for the renewal of their licenses. Within a five-year period, they are required to earn CEU's or three semester hours of course work as prescribed by the Office of Educator Licensure.

Any educator completing a master of education, educational specialist, or doctor of education degree in May 1997 to upgrade their educator's license to a higher class shall be given an extension of five (5) years plus five (5) additional years for completion of a higher degree. §37-3-2(9) (2000)

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CK)

The Superintendent, all principals, and other central office administrators/supervisors must attend required sessions of the School Executive Management Institute. MS Code 37-3-4.

PRINCIPALS' ABSENCES

If the principal must be absent from his/her school for more than 2 hours, he/she must report to the **Superintendent that he/she will be out of the building.**

****FISCAL MANAGEMENT****

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

All staff are allowed input into the district's annual operating budget. They should make their needs known to their immediate supervisor and/or building principal. The building principals and supervisors will present the requests to the superintendent, who will then submit recommendations to the Board.

OUT-OF-DISTRICT TRAVEL POLICY FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators in the Lowndes County School District will be allowed to attend the following types of out-of-district meetings/conferences:

- Meetings that are directly related to job responsibilities
- Meetings that require district representation
- Meetings that are mandated by the Mississippi Department of Education

Administrators may attend two other professional meetings/conferences of organizations to which they belong.

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS (DJD)

The financial records and statements of this school district will be kept and presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the requirement and procedures outlined in the Mississippi Public School District Financial Accounting Manual, July 1, 1992, as amended.

Administrative personnel and others who have first been authorized by the superintendent to travel in the performance of their duties shall be reimbursed or advanced their expenses. It is recommended that, when available, district vehicles be used for travel. All travel reimbursements are for miles actually and necessarily traveled. Mileage reimbursement is paid at two reimbursement rates, Rate A and Rate B.

Rate A - This is the reimbursement rate recommended by the Mississippi Department of Finance Administration if no government owned vehicle is available for use and a personal vehicle is used.

Rate B - This is the reimbursement rate recommended by the Mississippi Department of Finance Administration if a personal vehicle is used and there is a government owned vehicle available for use.

Travel reimbursements by the school district are indicated below:

IN DISTRICT TRAVEL

- A. For use of a district vehicle, a Fuelman card will be provided or actual fuel expenses will be reimbursed with submission of receipt(s).
- B. For use of private vehicle when a district vehicle is available, the employee will be reimbursed Rate B.
- C. For use of private vehicle when a district vehicle is not available, the employee will be reimbursed Rate A.

OUT OF DISTRICT TRAVEL

- A. For use of a district vehicle, a Fuelman card will be provided or actual fuel expenses will be reimbursed with submission of receipt(s).
- B. For use of private vehicle when a district vehicle is available, the employee will be reimbursed Rate B.
- C. For use of private vehicle when a district vehicle is *not* available and the employee chooses not to use a rental car, the employee will be reimbursed the lesser rate of the following:
 - The rate of a mid-size rental fee plus Rate B
 - or
 - Mileage reimbursement based on Rate A
- D. For use of rental car, a purchase order should be obtained after travel has been approved.
- E. Employees are expected by the board to carpool where two (2) or more employees are traveling to the same destination when reasonable.
 - 1. In such an event only one (1) travel expense allowance at the authorized rate per mile shall be allowed for any one (1) trip;
 - 2. When such travel is done by means of a public carrier or other means not involving a private motor vehicle, the employee shall receive as travel expense the actual fare or other expenses incurred in such travel;
 - 3. Employees shall be reimbursed for other actual expenses such as meals, lodging and other necessary expenses incurred in the course of such travel, subject to limitations placed on meals for intrastate and interstate official travel by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration and rules and regulations adopted by the Mississippi Department of Audit.

Current reimbursements are as follows:

- a. Single standard room rate for accommodations

- b. Maximum daily reimbursement for meals for in state and out of state travel as defined by the State Department of Finance and Administration.
- c. Mileage for private vehicle, *see above.
- d. Actual registration fees
- e. Actual fare or other expenses incurred in travel by public carrier
- f. Incidental expenses - reasonable gratuities, parking, etc. The superintendent shall comply with the rules and regulations of the Mississippi Department of Audit regarding itemized expense accounts upon return of the employee.

REGARDING TRAVEL ADVANCES

- 1. Only the Superintendent is authorized to approve travel advances.
- 2. The Superintendent shall comply with all rules and regulations of the Mississippi Department of Audit regarding travel advances.
- 3. The Superintendent shall comply with the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration daily limits on expenditures for meals.
- 4. All official travel must be preapproved.
- 5. Persons receiving advances must be officers or employees of the school district.
- 6. Travel advances may not be used for personal expenses or for any purpose other than the actual expenses of the authorized travel.
- 7. Accounting for any travel advance shall be made within five (5) working days after the end of the month in which the official travel was made.
 - a. Any money not used for travel related expenses shall be repaid the school district at this time.
 - b. The travel reimbursement form prescribed by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration shall be completed and submitted at this time for all money not refunded the school district.
 - c. Actual receipts for all travel expenses except meals and travel in personal vehicles are to be included.

PURCHASE ORDERS AND CONTRACTS

All purchases must follow the state purchasing laws. No purchases shall be made and/or charged to the school district without a proper, pre-approved purchase order. Only items listed on the purchase order, according to their designated prices, may be paid. No substitutions are allowed. For more information regarding purchasing, see the Business Office Manual; Purchasing and Accounts Payable.

CASH IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS (DL)

Principals shall make daily deposits of school funds in the appropriate bank accounts. Money shall not be left in school buildings overnight. Money stolen or lost from desk drawers, file cabinets, teachers’ purses, etc., shall be replaced by person responsible for such lost funds.

CAPITAL ASSET ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

All items/equipment valued over \$1,000, except cameras and camera equipment, computers and computer equipment if cost is greater than \$250; weapons, two-way radio equipment, televisions, lawn maintenance equipment, cellular telephones, chain saws, air compressors, welding machines, generators, motorized vehicles, iPods/MP3 players, PDA (personal digital assistant) regardless of cost must be tagged with official Lowndes County asset tag and placed on capital asset inventory. Such items/equipment should not be relocated unless the “proper paperwork procedure” is followed.

Should an asset become missing, the principal or other administrator in charge of the asset could be held personally liable for the replacement of said asset.

*****BUSINESS MANAGEMENT*****

BUILDING AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT (EB)

Teachers shall take care of all fixtures, furniture, etc., in their classrooms and in the school building. They should be careful not to deface the walls with tacks, staples, chalk, pencil marks, eraser cleaning, etc. They should, at all times, do their part to help keep the rooms neat and clean.

Any defacement to school property should be reported immediately to the school principal, who will assess and try to correct the damage. Teachers should also report persons responsible for the defacement.

Teachers and pupils are expected to help keep the school grounds free of litter, also. Teachers should discuss this issue with students at regular intervals. Care and respect for the school should be taught in all classes.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT: DISASTER EMERGENCY PLANS/DRILLS (EBBC)

The school district shall provide facilities that are safe. Every school must have a current disaster plan and must conduct at least (8) regular fire drills and (2) tornado drills each fiscal year. **These procedures must be posted in the schools.**

It shall be the duty of the principals and teachers in each building to practice fire drills until all pupils are familiar with the methods of escape. These fire drills shall be conducted often enough to keep students well drilled. It shall also be the duty of the principals and teachers to instruct the pupils in all programs of emergency management as may be designated by the State Department of Education. §37-11-5 (1980)

Emergency bus evacuation drills must be conducted at least two times each year.

All schools must have a crisis management plan that is reviewed and updated annually. It is the responsibility of all staff members to know and understand the plan.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS (EBBC)

Upon approval from the School Board, the Superintendent of Schools may close any school because of an emergency situation. However, all such schools so closed shall operate for the required full time after being reopened during the scholastic year. S37-13-65 (1987)

During inclement weather or other emergencies, personnel should refer to the following media concerning school closings:

<u>Television</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Website</u>	<u>AIM</u>
WCBI . . . 328-1224	WACR . . .328-1050	www.lowndes.k12.ms.us	Notification System
WTVA. . . 327-6464	WSMS . . .328-7124		(Please keep your school
WLOV. . . 494-8327	WKOR . . .327-1183		informed of changes to
			your cell phone number)

The district provides an automated notification system via telephone to advise of emergency/early dismissals and special notices. Each employee should have working numbers entered into the system. Employees are encouraged to immediately notify the office of any changes in contact information in order to be properly notified.

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act of 1986 (AHERA) requires the inspection of all buildings in the school district for asbestos. The district has complied with this act. A management plan documenting these inspections is on file for public review. Upon request, this plan may be viewed in the Superintendent's office.

The asbestos identified in the management plan will be checked regularly by a licensed asbestos company and by Lowndes County School District staff to scrutinize any changes in the material which could cause a health hazard. Asbestos will be monitored according to EPA guidelines. If changes occur, the asbestos coordinator will notify the appropriate people as prescribed by law.

USE OF TELEPHONES AND CELL PHONES (*IFBB*)

All long-distance calls must be monitored by the immediate administrator/supervisor responsible for the phone service. All long-distance calls charged to school numbers must be paid by the person or organization for whom the person is calling. No personal long-distance calls are allowed.

Staff should not use cell phones during instructional time. Only emergency phone calls may be received during class time. Messages will be taken so that other calls can be returned. Classes should not be interrupted unless it is an emergency.

USE OF DISTRICT-OWNED VEHICLES (*EDAG*)

The Lowndes County School Board has other vehicles under its control and possession. These vehicles are designated for use as school buses, maintenance vehicles, transportation vehicles, or school vehicles for individual schools. The vehicles shall be utilized during duty or work hours by employees only, and only for work-related purposes.

The Supervisor of the Department of Transportation and the Supervisor of the Department of Maintenance shall be allowed to take their vehicles home during the evening hours. However, they shall be totally responsible for these vehicles and shall insure they are utilized only for work-related purposes. Furthermore, these supervisors shall be “on call” and shall respond to emergencies and other circumstances, as required in the performance of their duties.

Any employee, including supervisors, violating this policy shall be disciplined. Furthermore, any violation such as, but not limited to, utilizing vehicles for non-work-related purposes, or having the vehicles away from school premises without permission, shall be a prima facie case for dismissal or termination, as the Board may see fit.

TRIANGLE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Triangle Federal Credit Union services the Lowndes County School District. Triangle Federal Credit Union is authorized by the National Credit Union Administration. The credit union has offices located on Columbus Air Force Base, 2330 Highway 45 North, Columbus, and 1101 Highway 182 East, Starkville. For more information, visit <http://www.trianglefcu.com/asp/home.asp>.

INSURANCE MANAGEMENT (*EG*)

All students in grades 9-12 participating in activities and athletics under the jurisdiction of the Mississippi High School Activities Association are automatically insured under a lifetime medical insurance plan for the catastrophically injured student that is paid for by the school district.

All public school boards may purchase group insurance coverage for the liability of all of its active full-time instructional and non-instructional personnel.

School districts shall provide liability insurance consistent with the provisions of the Tort Claims Act as outlined in '11-46-1 et seq.

The Board may also obtain liability insurance on any vehicle operated by the district.

School districts shall provide Workers' Compensation insurance consistent with the provisions of the Tort Claims Act as outlined in '71-3-1.

*****PERSONNEL RIGHTS AND GRIEVANCES*****

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES LAW (MS Code § 37-9-101)

“It is the intent of the Legislature to establish procedures to provide for accountability in the teaching profession; to provide a mechanism for the nonrenewal of licensed education employees in a timely, cost-efficient and fair manner; to provide public school employees with notice of the reasons for not offering an employee a renewal of his contract; to provide an opportunity for the employee to present matters in extenuation or exculpation; to provide the employee with an opportunity for a hearing to enable the board to determine whether the recommendation of non-employment

is a proper employment decision and not contrary to law and to require nonrenewal decisions to be based upon valid educational reasons or noncompliance with school district personnel policies. It is the intent of the Legislature not to establish a system of tenure.” § 37-9-101

1. To whom the law applies:

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

2. To whom the law does NOT apply:

Employees who have not been with a district for two (2) continuous years of employment, or one (1) year of employment with the district and two (2) continuous years of employment in a Mississippi public school district are not entitled to the protections of this law.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT (GAAA)

The Lowndes County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in the admission to and provision of educational programs, activities, and services or in employment opportunities and benefits.

Any complaints should be directed to Matt Keith, 1053 Highway 45 South, Columbus, MS 39701 (662-244-5027).

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

A prime goal of secondary (grades 7-12) athletic programs is to provide sporting programs that lead to the development of skilled, ethical, well-rounded student-athletes. It is recognized that the coach, as leader, is central to the achievement of this standard. To that end the coach should recognize and be given the opportunity to properly lead the student-athlete in a program that embodies far more than the “win/loss” record of seasonal competition. The coach should always display civility to all athletes, officials, media, spectators and other coaches. The coach serves as an educator and role model for student athletes by displaying the following attributes in their coaching styles:

- 1. Supporting the Overall Academic Mission** – The prime focus of the public schools is academics. A strong connection between the classroom and athletic field should exist if the ultimate goal of developing an educated youngster is to be achieved. The coach should do his/her best to monitor the academic progress of all athletes on the team and communicate with teachers and parents so the players know that a partnership exists within these groups. The coach should recognize the need to balance family time, school work, athletics and other extracurricular activities. The desired goal is not to place the athlete in the position of trying to please two adults at the same time when a conflict in scheduling arises. It is the coach who imparts a sense of worth and merit, in understanding the larger picture and proper perspective of athletic participation as the student-athlete develops and matures through adolescence into adulthood.
- 2. Using Good Behavior Management and Disciplinary Techniques** – The coach should lead athletes in the development of self-discipline through the use of proper behavior management techniques. The coach will set a tone that is positive and develop suitable behavior goals for the individual athlete and the team as a whole. These should be appropriate to the age and maturity level of the athlete/team. Physical conditioning and playing time in games could be used in a progressive disciplinary model. Physical or verbal acts that berate, intimidate or humiliate the athlete are not examples of good management techniques.
- 3. Developing Sportsmanship** – The coach should impart a sense of sportsmanship by demonstrating and encouraging “modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat”. This is accomplished by displaying proper respect to teammates, opponents, officials and spectators prior to, during and after the contest.

4. **Demonstrating Appropriate Behavior** – Whether in practice or the spirit of the contest, the coach should be in control of emotions, showing respect for players, officials, and spectators in word and deed. The coach should focus on the positive in their players with the use of praise in public and providing constructive criticism in private.
5. **Using Appropriate Language** – When communicating desires, the coach should use age appropriate, unambiguous and non-offensive language. There is no place in the Lowndes County School District athletic program for obscene, crass or sarcastic words when dealing with athletes, officials or spectators. Words that convey seriousness of intent and encourage athletes to reach a new level of performance are desirable.
6. **Supervising Athletes** – To foster a safe and healthy environment, the coach will be diligent in the supervision of athletes throughout practices and contests. Specifically the coach must maintain a strong presence in the locker room, weight room, gym foyer, practice areas and game sites.
7. **Building Individual and Team Leadership** – The development of leadership is desirable in the athletic program. As such, the selection of team captains is an area demanding considerable forethought by the coach. If the coach wishes to foster the establishment of a captain(s) for the team, criteria should be developed and shared with the team as to the function of that role and should include the selection process. Input from the team is valuable in the selection process but the coach should not relegate this decision to the athletes without providing oversight and guidance. The coach should meet frequently with captain(s) to review the success of the role and its effectiveness with the initially stated criteria. The coach should always show care and caution that those who may be selected for this leadership role are still maturing youngsters and should not be used as an “assistant” to the coach.
8. **Encouraging Helpful Community Involvement** – The coach should be aware of the relationship between the athlete, the team, the school and the wider community. Every effort should be made to assure that these components are aligned in positive ways to meet the needs of those who participate and those who watch the participants. The coach can and should develop activities that help to show our athletes that they can give back to our community. This will help the athletes understand what it means to be a positive contributing member of our community.
9. **Fostering Professional Development** – The coach should be involved with educational programs that will keep him/her current with the latest trends. Any professional development program or opportunity must be in balance with the tenets of this Code of Conduct.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY (GACN)

A. Part One

In accordance with Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as amended in 1972, Section 703, no employee in the Lowndes County School District shall be subject to sexual harassment.

It is the intent of the School Board to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Therefore, unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited.

B. Part Two

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when these criteria are met:

Criteria I - Terms or conditions of employment are linked to such conduct, either implicitly or explicitly.

Criteria II - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual.

Criteria III - Such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment, which interferes with the individual’s work performance.

Criteria I and II are examples of quid pro quo or conditional sexual harassment. Criteria III is an example of a hostile work environment.

C. Part Three

Complaints concerning violation of this policy may be submitted to Matt Keith, Assistant Superintendent, without fear of reprisal. If the complaints are proven to be legitimate, the offending employee will be subject to disciplinary action, including involuntary termination of employment.

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENT OF 1972 (GACN-P)

A. Section I: Sexual Harassment Law

Employees and students in academic institutions are protected from sexual harassment by Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972. This amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits sexual discrimination and sexual harassment in educational institutions that receive federal assistance.

Complaints concerning violation of this policy may be made to the appropriate administrative officer or the Title IX coordinator without fear of reprisal. If the complaints are proven to be legitimate, the offending employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

B. Procedures for Filing Complaints

1. Within 5 days of the violation, the employee must present an oral complaint to his immediate supervisor or the district's Title IX coordinator and complete the "Report of Violation of Title IX" form. The complainant does not have to report the incident to his/her supervisor before talking to the Title IX coordinator.
2. If the supervisor receives the complaint, he/she must present the "Report of Violation of Title IX" to the Title IX coordinator within 3-5 days of the time he/she receives the completed form.
3. Within 5 days after receiving the official complaint, the Title IX coordinator will review the complaint and personally question all parties involved. All statements will be officially documented. If the alleged harasser denies the allegation, the Title IX coordinator will secure additional facts before making a determination. This additional investigation must be completed within 5-7 days of the initial meeting between the Title IX coordinator and the alleged harasser.
4. After the Title IX coordinator renders his/her decision, the complainant and/or alleged harasser may request, in writing, a hearing before an unbiased panel of district employees. If a request is made, it will be the Title IX coordinator's responsibility to convene a panel of three to five district employees for the hearing.
5. Within 5 days of the written request, the panel of 3-5 district employees will review the presented facts and question all parties involved before making a determination. The complainant and the alleged harasser will be informed by registered mail of the date and time they are to appear before the panel. The proceedings of the hearing will be taped and kept on file in the personnel office. The complainant and the alleged harasser may not be represented by anyone other than themselves.
 - The panel will prepare a written summary of all relevant facts, being careful to state the facts fairly and objectively.
 - The panel will document its findings and conclusions.

The panel's summary of facts, findings, and conclusions will provide the basis for subsequent review in the event of further appeal by the complainant.

6. The complainant and/or alleged harasser has the right to appeal the panel's decision to the superintendent. This appeal must be submitted in writing within 5 days of the panel's decision. The superintendent will review the panel's written summary and render his/her written decision within 10 days.
7. The complainant and/or alleged harasser then has the right to appeal the superintendent's decision to the Board of Education. This appeal must be submitted in writing within 5 days of the superintendent's decision. The Board will review the panel's written summary and the superintendent's written decision

and render their decision within 30 days. The Board must render its decision by the conclusion of its next regularly scheduled board meeting.

C. Additional Information

1. Since it is important that complaints be filed and processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated for each procedure are considered maximum. Every effort will be made to expedite the process. Time limits may, however, be extended when necessary.
2. All days are considered working days. Holidays and weekends are not included.
3. Facts elicited during the proceedings are confidential and do not become part of the employee's personnel file. All documents secured during the processing of the complaint will be kept in a separate file in the personnel office.
4. If the complainant or alleged harasser fails to appeal any decision within the set time limits, it will be deemed as an acceptance of the decision rendered. This will eliminate any further review of that particular complaint.
5. If the Title IX coordinator, panel, or superintendent fails to communicate their decisions to the complainant within the time limits, he/she may proceed to the next step of the procedure.
6. A complainant may withdraw his/her complaint at any time without prejudice. However, the same complaint may not be resubmitted once it is withdrawn.
7. No reprisal shall be invoked against any employee for filing a complaint or for participating in a complaint investigation.
8. If the complaint is against the employee's immediate supervisor, the complainant should begin his/her process with the Title IX coordinator.

BULLYING (JDDA)

The Lowndes County School District does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior. The Lowndes County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other school employees or students. Likewise, the District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person engages in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official. Adherence to the procedures of the Lowndes County School District 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.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GAD)

The Lowndes County School District implements a professional development program that complies with The Standards of Professional Learning as adopted by the Mississippi Department of Education. Part of the professional development time is used for work on the instructional program. MS Code 37-17-8

Students are released early on Wednesdays to provide additional time for professional development. **Teachers must work until 4:00 p.m. on early-release Wednesdays.**

SMOKING POLICY: TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT (GBRM)

1. Employees are prohibited from using or displaying tobacco products (including smokeless tobacco products) while they are on property owned by the school district or under the district's control. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, all school-sponsored functions and extracurricular activities.
2. Tobacco use, including smokeless tobacco products, is banned from all school system vehicles.
3. Along with employees, visitors are also prohibited from using tobacco products while in/on facilities or vehicles owned by the district. No smoking or use of other tobacco products will be allowed on the school premises at any time.

4. The principal of each school and the supervisor of each department shall be responsible for enforcing the tobacco free environment and documenting violations. In dealing with individual employee violators, the following rules and procedures shall govern the actions of administrators and supervisors.

1st violation: Oral reprimand with written documentation of violation of policy

2nd violation: Written reprimand stating that further violation will be considered employee insubordination

3rd violation: The employee shall be suspended without pay for ten (10) working days and must enroll in an approved tobacco cessation program prior to reinstatement.

4th violation: Dismissal procedures, subject to appropriate procedural requirements, shall be initiated.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES RELATED TO VIOLATION OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS (GAE-R)

The purpose of this District's grievance procedure is to secure an equitable solution to all grievances at the first possible administrative level. The following definitions shall apply in this grievance procedure:

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

A. Level One

All grievances must be presented orally to the principal or immediate supervisor of the grievant within five (5) days of the act of complaint. The principal or immediate supervisor and the grievant will meet and attempt to resolve the matter informally.

If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given, he/she shall, within five (5) days after the initial meeting, file a written appeal with the principal or supervisor explaining in detail how the grievant claims to have been discriminated against. This written statement must also contain the time, place, and nature of the alleged act and the state/federal law or board policy allegedly violated. The statement must be signed by the grievant.

If the grievant fails to submit a written appeal to his/her principal or immediate supervisor, it shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered.

B. Level Two

The grievant's written appeal shall be given to the superintendent by the principal or supervisor. Upon receipt of this notice, the superintendent shall notify the grievant in writing, within five (5) days, of the date and time in which the appeal will be heard. The superintendent shall schedule this hearing no later than ten (10) days from the receipt of the grievant's written notice of appeal.

The written statement submitted by the grievant to his/her principal or supervisor shall form the basis of the grievance before the superintendent. The grievant may, however, submit additional information on his/her behalf to the superintendent in writing no later than five (5) days prior to the date upon which the appeal is scheduled to be heard.

If the grievant does not personally attend the hearing scheduled by the superintendent, his/her failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by the principal or immediate supervisor at their initial meeting.

The superintendent shall render a written decision to the grievant within five (5) days of the date upon which the matter was heard and the grievance shall be considered resolved.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES RELATED TO EVALUATIONS

A. Step One

1. If a teacher disagrees with any of the evaluations assigned by the principal, he/she must inform the principal in writing within three (3) days after the post evaluation. A grievance conference shall be conducted between the principal and teacher within five (5) working days of the principal's receipt of the grievance. The principal will discuss the grievance with the teacher involved and attempt to resolve it.
2. All decisions pursuant to the conference shall be made in writing and signed by the principal and the teacher. All documentation must be kept on file for a period of two (2) years.

B. Step Two

If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the principal and teacher, the teacher may request that he/she be re-evaluated by an outside evaluator. This request must be sent to the principal, in writing, within five (5) days of the initial conference. The outside evaluator will be assigned by the superintendent's designee. A post conference will be held within five (5) days of the evaluation.

C. Step Three

If the teacher disagrees with the decision of the outside evaluator, he/she may appeal to the superintendent's designee through the principal. This appeal must be requested within three (3) days following the outside evaluator's decision. Reasons for appeal to the superintendent's designee must be explicitly stated in writing. The superintendent's designee will review the grievance and discuss it with all parties concerned. At the discretion of all parties, legal counsel may or may not be present. All decisions must be made in writing and signed by all parties involved.

D. Step Four

Final resolution of the grievance will be resolved at the assistant superintendent/superintendent level.

E. Step Five

Only after the earlier steps have been completed, may the employee petition the School Board for appeal.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES (GAHB)

The School Board recognizes and encourages the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in activities that exemplify good citizenship. However, the Board recognizes that the primary purpose of the school is to educate its students. Therefore, all political activity shall be governed by the following:

- A. No political materials may be handed out on school property (speeches, pamphlets, cards, etc.).
- B. No employee, except the superintendent or board members, may engage in political activity during school work hours.
 - Any employee may run for a political office provided that he/she notifies the School Board prior to the day he/she qualifies for or announces candidacy for the election.
 - Employees may not engage in political activity during school hours or on property owned by Lowndes County School District except during elections, as governed by Law.
- C. This policy shall not prevent the following:
 - The dissemination of information concerning school tax and/or bond elections
 - The discussion and study of political issues when they are appropriate to lessons in social studies, current events, or political science
 - The conducting and campaigning of student/employee elections related to school activities
 - The conducting and campaigning of elections associated with teacher education associations

Any employee who violates this policy shall, at the discretion of the Board, be subject to reprimand, demotion, or suspension.

SOLICITATIONS

No agents/persons may use the school premises to exhibit/sell articles or services to pupils or school employees unless permission is granted by the superintendent after approval of the School Board.

Teachers shall not collect funds from students for any purpose without permission of the principal. No fund raising is allowed by staff members, students, or any group without approval by the Board.

PERSONNEL RECORDS (GAR)

All employees must have the following records on file in the Central Office:

- A complete application which includes correct name, present address, home phone number, social security number, and other relevant information

Certified employees must also have these items on file in the Central Office:

- Up-to-date and valid copy of teaching/administrator certificate
- Complete transcripts

*****EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, AND CONTRACTS*****

SCOPE OF POLICY (GAAE)

One of the missions of the Lowndes County School Board is to recruit, employ, and maintain the most qualified and effective faculty and staff available. Thus, the regulations set forth in this policy shall apply to all personnel making application to or being employed by the Lowndes County School District. The requirements set forth herein became effective on the date of its adoption by the Board. This Policy GB replaces all former employment policies and procedures of the district.

It is the intent of the School Board through the adoption of this policy to insure that:

- All employment decisions promote the prime vision of the district – to provide a superior educational system that challenges all students to attain their greatest intellectual, social, and personal potential.
- A fair and uniform application and employment procedure is in place in the district.
- Dissemination of information relating to job vacancies is widespread and handled in a timely manner.
- All applicants considered for employment have valid, complete applications on file in the District Personnel Office, and proper screening of all applicants has taken place prior to recommendation.
- Administrators and/or supervisors who will oversee the work of a prospective employee are involved in the selection process.
- Employment decisions made by the administrative staff and School Board are made without regard to an applicant's race, religion, sex, national origin, or handicapping condition.

The employment procedures set forth in this policy shall govern the employment of all personnel whether the position to be filled requires a person to hold a professional certificate or not.

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

A. Certified Personnel

1. All applications for certified employment in the Lowndes County School District must be secured from the Personnel Office of the District Administrative Building and must be returned to this office. The applications may be completed in or away from the Personnel Office. Applications can also be downloaded from our website at www.lowndes.k12.ms.us.

2. The applications for certified personnel request biographical and professional information, along with three references. Applicants are provided three reference forms. It is the applicant's responsibility to send these forms to the persons listed as references on his/her application. The forms will not be mailed by the district. In addition, the district's administrative staff is authorized and encouraged to seek information from persons who may have knowledge of the applicant, even though these individuals may not be listed as references.
3. In order for an application to be valid, the following items must be on file in the District Personnel Office:
 - a. A completed application for certified employment
 - b. The three reference forms should be given to your principal, Superintendent, or others under whom you have worked or who have first-hand knowledge of your character, personality and working ability. All references must be mailed directly to the Office of Personnel Services and will be considered confidential information. If you just completed your college work, list college professors or others in major and minor fields who know you best. Please include your university supervisor or cooperating teacher(s) with whom you did student teaching.
 - c. A copy of the applicant's college transcript(s)
 - d. A copy of the applicant's professional license issued by the State of Mississippi with an endorsement in the area(s) of work for which the applicant is applying.
 - e. A copy of the applicant's CMEE, NTE or Praxis scores if the scores were required for certification
 1. Applicant with teaching experience must also provide verification of previous full time teaching experience in order to receive credit for salary purpose.
5. All applicants must sign a waiver which allows the district to conduct a background check on them through law enforcement and child welfare agencies. Failure or refusal to sign the waiver will invalidate the application.
6. When an application is not valid, the Director of Personnel will send the applicant written notification of the invalidation and an explanation of the steps needed to validate it. This correspondence will become part of the applicant's file.
7. Only those persons with a valid application on file will be considered for employment. Under no circumstance will a person be interviewed who does not have a valid application on file at the time of the interview. The Director of Personnel will certify that the application is valid when all requirements have been met by the applicant.
8. Applications will be valid during the current academic year. At the end of the academic year, applications will be placed in an inactive file and maintained for one additional academic year before they are destroyed. Persons wishing to keep their applications valid for an additional year may do so by sending a written request to the Personnel Office.
9. All applicants recommended by the superintendent and approved by the School Board must be fingerprinted within 5 days of Board approval at the cost of \$20. (\$20 to be paid by the new employee and \$20 by the district)
10. The deadline for submitting proof of past experience is 45 days after the initial employment date or the first day of the employment agreement each year thereafter.

B. Non-certified Personnel

1. All applications for non-certified employment in the Lowndes County School District must be secured from the Personnel Office of the District Administrative Building and must be returned to this office. The applications may be completed in or away from the Personnel Office.
2. The applications for non-certified personnel request biographical and professional information, along with three references. Applicants are provided three reference forms. It is the applicant's responsibility to send

these forms to the persons listed as references on his/her application. The forms will not be mailed by the district. In addition, the district's administrative staff is authorized and encouraged to seek information from persons who may have knowledge of the applicant, even though these individuals may not be listed as references.

3. In order for an application to be valid, the following items must be on file in the District Personnel Office:
 - a. A completed application for the non-certified position
 - b. The three reference forms should be given to your immediate supervisor, principal or others under whom you have worked or who have first-hand knowledge of your character, personality and working ability. All references must be mailed directly to the Office of Personnel Services and will be considered confidential information.
 - c. All instructional-related staff must have two-years of college, an associate degree, 48 semester hours or must have taken and passed the ACT Work Keys test.
4. All applicants must sign a waiver which allows the district to conduct a background check with law enforcement and child welfare agencies. Failure or refusal to sign the waiver will invalidate the application.
5. When an application is not valid, the Director of Personnel will send the applicant written notification of the invalidation and an explanation of the steps needed to validate it. This correspondence will become part of the applicant's file.
6. Only those persons with a valid application on file will be considered for employment. Under no circumstance will a person be interviewed who does not have a valid application on file at the time of the interview. The Director of Personnel will certify that the application is valid when all requirements have been met by the applicant.
7. Applications will be valid during the current academic year. At the end of the academic year, the applications will be placed in an inactive file and maintained for one additional academic year before they are destroyed. Persons wishing to keep their applications valid for an additional year may do so by sending a written request to the Personnel Office.
8. All applicants recommended by the superintendent and approved by the School Board must be fingerprinted within 5 days of Board approval at a cost of \$40 (\$20 to be paid by the new employee and \$20 by the district) except for substitutes who must pay to be fingerprinted before they are recommended for employment.
9. The deadline for submitting proof of past experience is 45 days after the initial employment date or the first day of the employment agreement each year thereafter.

EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE: CERTIFIED AND NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

- A. When a vacancy develops, the administrator/supervisor shall notify the central office administrator that oversees the area where the vacancy exists and obtain approval to proceed.
- B. The administrator/supervisor shall check with the Director of Personnel to see if the district needs to advertise for the position. Job descriptions should be submitted for all new positions.
 - *Any employee of the Lowndes County School District wishing to apply for an open position within the district must complete an in-district notification form at the time the employment application is submitted to the personnel office. The personnel office shall send the notification form signed by the employee to the employee's immediate supervisor for information purposes.*
- C. The administrator/supervisor shall retrieve the valid applications for the position from the Personnel Office. He/she will review the applications and determine which applicants to interview. No applications will be removed from the Central Office. Copies of applications will be made and interview forms will be issued with the names of the person the administrator/supervisor wants to interview. It will be the responsibility of the administrator to contact the persons to be interviewed and to schedule the interviews. In the event the prospective employee will work under two or more administrators, both will interview and recommend.

- D. All applicants shall be interviewed by an interview committee. Interview forms shall be properly documented.
- E. Once a selection is made, the administrator shall complete the personnel change order form in its entirety. Wage and hour concerns must be considered. ***The administrator must indicate on the form if the applicant has another job with the district and specify what that job is.***
- F. The personnel change form and interview form should then be forwarded to the central office administrator in charge of the specific program (i.e., Assistant Superintendent of Federal Programs, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, SPED Director, Vocational /Tech Prep Director, Transportation Supervisor, or Director of Child Nutrition).
- G. The approving central office administrator shall then forward the personnel change form and the interview form to the Personnel Office for the Director of Personnel's signature. The Director of Personnel's signature on the form will indicate that the applicant meets all qualifications for the position.
- H. The Director of Personnel will then forward the form to the Business Officer/Administrator for his/her signature.
- I. The superintendent shall be the last person to sign the form. Upon his/her approval, he/she will submit the recommendation to the Board for consideration and action.

Persons recommended and approved for a position are employed under the condition that proper certification be provided to the district prior to payment for any services rendered. If the employee fails to provide the required certification, he/she will be terminated immediately and will be paid at the substitute rate of pay for the days worked.

Lowndes County School District participates in E-Verify to verify the identity and employment eligibility of all persons hired to work in the district.

CONTRACTS (GBA)

The Lowndes County Superintendent shall enter into contract with certified staff approved by the Board on the prescribed form and in a manner specified by law. It shall be unlawful for any certified staff to work in the Lowndes County School District if he/she does not **hold** a proper certificate that is valid at the time of the execution of such contract.

Personnel will have 10 days to sign and return the contract after receiving it, or it shall be null and void. (MS law)

PAYMENT OF PERSONNEL (GBA)

All personnel employed by the Lowndes County School District will be paid on the last working day of each month (or what would be the last working day if school were in session) as governed by law. Exception: The law allows for payment on the last working day prior to Christmas holidays.

All licensed, exempt and non-exempt FLSA personnel will be paid in twelve installments per year in accordance with their contract or agreement. Anyone hired during the year shall be paid the number of pays left in the fiscal year in accordance with their contract or agreement. FLSA personnel pay shall be adjusted each pay period in accordance with FLSA standards.

Bus driver extra hours, personnel hired to work on an hourly basis, stipends and all substitute pay will be in accordance with the payroll cutoff calendar located on the Lowndes County School District webpage.

All employees will be paid through direct deposit.

PARTIAL CREDIT FOR NON-CERTIFIED WORK EXPERIENCE (GBDA)

The Lowndes County School District hereby recognizes that some non-certified personnel, when hired by this School Board, have worked at previous jobs for time periods less than 12 months during the calendar year. In such cases, credit shall be granted as follows:

- 0 - 89 days: no credit
- 90 - 170 days: 1/4 year credit

- 180 - 269 days: 2/4 year credit
- 270 - 359 days: 3/4 year credit
- 360 days: 1 year credit

This information and data are supplemental to the “Non-certified Personnel Policy” formerly adopted by this Board. This supplemental policy deals only with work-service that was not completed within a twelve-month period. It does not, in any way, increase the *percentage of experience or credit* granted to non-certified staff for work experience inside or outside a school setting.

This supplemental policy gives partial credit for work-service that was not completed within a twelve-month year. This credit or partial credit shall be multiplied times the percentage (%) contained under *Work Experience* in the “Non-certified Personnel Policy” already adopted by this Board:

- Work experience in any new position for a Lowndes County School District employee will count on a 100% basis.
- Work experience in a state position paying state retirement in the same job area will count on a 100% basis.
- Work experience inside a school setting in a related job area will count on a 50% basis.
- Work experience outside of a school setting (private section) in a related job area will count on a 50% basis.
- Work experience outside of the Lowndes County School District in a non-job related area will not be counted.

For purposes of clarifications the following terms are defined:

- Related job area: Employment within a designated area or field outlined in the School Board Policy Manual (ex., food service, transportation, etc.).
- Same job area: A particular position within a designated field or area (ex., Food Service Manager, Transportation Supervisor, etc.).

The deadline for submitting proof of past experience is 45 days after the initial employment date or the first day of the employment agreement each year thereafter.

SALARIES / WAGES (GBA-E)

All salaries are set by the Mississippi Department of Education and the local School Board. (Refer to salary schedule.)

All FLSA non-exempt employees are paid hourly wages. They are not to exceed 40 hours per week without advance permission by their immediate supervisor or from the superintendent.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS (GBBA)

All administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and classified personnel shall have a job description and shall understand what is expected in terms of work activities. Personnel will be evaluated on the basis of their job description and may be required to render a report of achievement of work assignments. Personnel should communicate with their immediate superior regarding their ability to discharge their prescribed duties.

All teachers and building administrators are expected to attend PTO meetings unless excused by the principal or superintendent. Non-certified staff are not required to attend PTO meetings. They may attend as a parent or supporter. They should not do anything that could be interpreted as work.

All teachers and administrators shall be required to maintain their certification requirements, including professional development activities, and to comply with all rules and regulations required by the Mississippi Department of Education.

EMPLOYEE INSURANCE

At the time of hire, employees are given the opportunity to enroll in the State Health and Life Insurance plans in accordance with State Law. Open enrollment for the State Health Insurance plan is in October. The effective date of changes that take place during open enrollment will be the following January. Employees can enroll in the State Life Insurance plan at anytime, but if application is made 30 days after initial hire date, employee will be subject to insurability.

As a part of the district's voluntary insurance program, employees are also given the opportunity to enroll in then dental and vision insurance plans at the time of hire. Other insurance products will be offered to new hires on a quarterly basis and annually during open enrollment set by Administration. Once salary reduction selections are made, they are to remain in effect until the next open enrollment opportunity, unless there is an approved family status change.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL HIRING (GBD)

The School Board has the power and authority to select all school district personnel in the manner provided by law. &37-7-301

All new personnel must be fingerprinted before starting their new position.

Specific procedures for the above may be found in Section GBD of the Board Policy Manual.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENT (GBE)

The Superintendent shall have the power and authority to make assignments of all certificated employees as provided in Sections 37-9-15 and 37-9-17 and to make reassignment of such employees to any area in which the employee has a valid certificate issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. Upon request from the employee so transferred, such assignments shall be subject to review by the School Board. S37-9-14(s)

LEGAL REF: Mississippi Code, as cited above

PERSONNEL EVALUATION (GBI)

All certified employees shall be evaluated annually in the manner prescribed by the Mississippi Department of Education and/or according to the Lowndes County Performance Appraisal Instrument. All non-certified employees shall be evaluated once each semester in the manner prescribed by the Lowndes County School District.

REDUCTION-IN-FORCE OF PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL (GBKAR)

The Lowndes County Board of Education will exercise the Reduction in Force (RIF) Policy only in extreme circumstances. When a circumstance occurs, such as a decrease of federal funds, a decrease in student enrollment, etc., all feasible alternatives will be exhausted before putting the RIF policy into effect. If it is determined that reduction-in-force is necessary in an area of work, re-election for the next school year and renewal of contracts shall be withheld for personnel having the least amount of experience in their area of certification in the Lowndes County School District.

A. Rules for Implementation

The following rules shall be used in declaring certified personnel excess pursuant to School Board Policy and in transferring certified personnel from one school to another to fill vacancies created by reduction-in-force:

1. For the purpose of determining excess personnel, *an area of work* shall be the same as the area of endorsement listed on the teacher's license, so long as the teacher is teaching in that area, and shall include any additional assignment area for which the teacher is paid a supplement.
2. Personnel will be declared excess on the basis of seniority. Personnel with the most recent date of initial employment in the district will be the first to be separated. Seniority will be based on uninterrupted service. Time lost during a leave of absence requested and/or sanctioned by the board for additional certification/licensure does not constitute interruption of service.
3. A teacher shall have seniority only in an area of work in which the teacher has taught in this school district and in which he/she holds a valid license or permit as of the first day of February of the current year.
4. In determining seniority the following items shall be considered in the order listed:
 - a. Date of letter of commitment from the superintendent or designee
 - b. Date of principal's recommendation
 - c. Date of board's action in hiring the professional employee

- d. In the event seniority cannot be determined by the criteria listed above, the names of all eligible personnel in an area of work who have the same tenure will be drawn from a container by a third party in the presence of those concerned.
- 5. The district's obligation to give staff members who have been declared excess priority over new candidates for positions that become available for the ensuing school year shall cease at such time as said excess staff shall sign a contract with another school district, or after the expiration of two years from the date declared excess.

B. Certified Personnel Recall

The Lowndes County School District is obligated to give certified personnel who have been declared excess priority over new candidates for positions that become available in the same area of work for two ensuing school years. Specific guidelines for recall are as follows:

- 1. Personnel with the most seniority in the area of work will be recalled first. Recall will proceed in the reverse order of the reduction-in-force policy.
- 2. In the event of simultaneous dismissal, the following criteria will be used in determining the order of the recall:
 - a. Level of certification within assignment areas
 - b. Number of valid teaching endorsement areas
 - c. Additional years of teaching experience outside the Lowndes County School District for which credit was given to establish salary

If seniority cannot be determined by the criteria listed above, the superintendent and principal will make a recommendation based on the results of performance appraisal.

- 3. In determining re-employment, only criteria met at the time of dismissal will be a factor. Additional qualifications earned during the time of layoff will not be considered.
- 4. All benefits which a certified person was entitled to at the time of layoff, including unused accumulated sick leave, will be restored to the employee upon his/her return to active employment.
- 5. Notice of recall will be sent to the employee by certified mail to the last address given to the central office by that person. If the employee fails to respond by certified mail within ten (10) days after receipt of this notice of recall, he/she will be deemed to have refused the position and will forfeit all rights in the recall process.

DISMISSAL OF A TEACHER DURING CONTRACTUAL PERIOD (GBK-E)

State law authorizes “dismissal or suspension of a...teacher...for breach of contract or abandonment of duty (37-9-57) and for incompetence, neglect of duty, immoral conduct, intemperance, brutal treatment of a pupil or other good cause.” (37-9-59) Further, as stated in 37-9-57 of Mississippi’s School Law, the license or certificate of such principal or teacher shall be suspended for a period of one year upon written recommendation of the majority of the members of the School Board of this district.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL SEPARATION (GBN)

Refer to Administrative and Professional Personnel Separation, **Policy CGM**, page 3, in this handbook and Policy GBN in the LCSD Policy Manual for “Specific Hearing Procedures.”

VOLUNTARY TRANSFER WITHIN THE DISTRICT

A. Teachers

If a teacher wishes to make a lateral transfer from one school to another within the district, he/she must first seek the approval of the two principals involved. If both principals agree, they will send a recommendation to the superintendent, who may then make the recommendation to the School Board. If the request is made two weeks or less before school starts, the teacher must first ask the superintendent if he/she may seek approval from the principals.

B. Assistant Teachers

Title I paraprofessionals may transfer to the position of minimum-program reading-assistant teacher with approval from the principals involved, the Title I coordinator, and the superintendent.

RESIGNATIONS (GBO)

Resignations from employment in the Lowndes County School District **must be made in writing** and submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor. The administrator/supervisor will submit the resignation, along with a personnel change form, to the appropriate assistant superintendent, who will provide the Director of Personnel with the resignation and the personnel change form. The original resignation will be placed in the employee's personnel file. Resignations from the district will be provided to the School Board at its next regular meeting for consideration and action.

STRIKES (GBQA)

The much discussed and maligned 'no strike' language in the 1985 teacher pay bill has provisions that address far more than an employee's decision to protest by going on strike. A strike in Mississippi by teachers is illegal, unprotected, and contrary to public policy of the state.

A strike includes any effort to interfere with the full, faithful, and proper performance of the duties of employment, any slowing down of work, any willful absence, or a stoppage of work in whole or in part.

No teacher, group of teachers, or teacher organization shall promote, encourage, or participate in any strike against a public school district, the State of Mississippi, or an agency thereof. "Certified teacher" is defined as any classroom teacher, supervisor of programs, librarian, guidance personnel, audiovisual personnel, or vocational director.

No person exercising authority, supervision, or direction may approve, authorize, or consent to a strike.

No School Board or person in authority shall attempt to close or curtail school operations, or to change or alter the schedule of the school, to avert the full force and effect of the law.

Any board member or administrator who violates the law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined no less than \$100 or no more than \$250 for each day a violation continues.

Chancery Courts have the authority to determine all actions alleging violations of the law.

In the event of a strike, the School Board shall continue to have school as long as practicable to ascertain the name of teachers on strike and to submit the list to the Attorney General.

If a strike occurs or the threat of a strike is a clear, real, and present danger, the School Board involved shall file suit to enjoin the strike in either the Chancery Court of the First Judicial District of Hinds County or the Chancery Court having proper jurisdiction. If the court injunction is not complied with, upon application of the complainant, the court shall initiate charges against those who are in contempt.

A teacher organization found to be in contempt of violating the injunction against a strike shall be fined \$20,000 for each such day. The fines shall accrue to the school district and shall be used to replace services denied the public as a result of the strike.

If a teacher is found to be in violation of the prohibition against strikes, the court shall order the termination of that teacher's employment with the school district. Furthermore, that teacher cannot be employed by any school district in the state unless a court rules there is a public necessity to employ the teacher.

The provisions of the law apply to all public employees and employers.

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Refer to **Policy DJD**, page 6, of this handbook.

ABSENCES

If a teacher or other staff member must be absent, he/she must notify the principal, assistant principal, or designee or immediate supervisor by a time established by the principal.

For unexpected absences, teachers are to notify the school secretaries when school opens and the secretary secures a sub. The teacher may request certain substitutes for planned absences.

TARDIES

Each employee is given four tardies per semester without repercussion.

5th Tardy: Written reprimand on the Employee Discipline form

6th Tardy: Suspension without pay (1 day)

7th Tardy: Suspension without pay (3 days)

8th Tardy: Suspension (3 or more days) and recommendation for non-renewal/termination.

If an employee continues to be tardy after being notified of non-renewal of contract, immediate termination will be recommended.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS (*GBRJ*)

A substitute teacher should be used when the regular teacher is absent. Substitute teachers should adhere to the following rules:

- Substitutes must report to the principal's office upon arrival at school.
- A copy of the teacher's lesson plans and materials should be obtained in the principal's office.
- Substitutes should conduct classes in as normal a manner as possible.
- Substitutes must assume all duties of a regularly employed teacher.
- Substitutes must follow all rules and policies of the school.

At no time shall federally funded staff or assistant teachers be used as substitutes for regular classroom teachers without approval of the superintendent.

Substitutes cannot work dual positions due to wage and hour rules.

The Personnel Office shall maintain a master list of all substitute teachers to be used in this school district. Principals shall select substitute(s) from the approved list. Substitutes for teachers on leave for over 60 days should be certified.

All substitutes must be fingerprinted, at a personal cost of \$20, and approved by the Board before entering the classroom.

SUBSTITUTE PAY (*GBRJ-R*)

Substitute pay shall be determined by the School Board prior to the beginning of the school term.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY (*GBRM-2*)

The following is Lowndes County School District's Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy. This policy is effective August, 1998. After this date, the district will begin testing personnel if it reasonably suspects that an employee is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. In addition, the district will begin conducting random testing of all employees and pre-employment testing of all prospective bus drivers. This policy will be enforced uniformly with respect to all personnel. All of the district's personnel, including administrators, will be subject to testing.

The purposes of this policy are as follows:

- A. to maintain a safe, healthy working environment for all employees;
- B. to maintain the highest quality educational program for our students by insuring that no personnel of the district are users of illegal drugs or under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
- C. to reduce the number of accidental injuries to person or property; and
- D. to reduce absenteeism and tardiness and improve the quality of educational services.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The following are rules representing the district's policy concerning substance abuse:

1. All employees are prohibited from being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty or on district premises. All employees are prohibited from using illegal drugs, or prescription medication for which they do not have a proper prescription.
2. The use, sale, possession, transfer, or purchase of illegal drugs, non-prescription drugs, medical marijuana, or controlled substances while on district property or while performing district business is strictly prohibited and is cause for immediate termination. Such action will be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials.
3. No alcoholic beverage will be brought or consumed on district premises.
4. No prescription drug will be brought on district premises by any person other than the person for whom the drug is prescribed. Prescription drugs will be used only in the manner, combination, and quantity prescribed.
5. The district is not prohibited from establishing or enforcing a drug-testing policy under the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act. The district is not required to permit, accommodate, or allow the use of medical cannabis, or to modify any job/working conditions of any employee who engages in the medical use of medical cannabis or who for any reason seeks to engage in the medical use of medical cannabis.
6. The district is not prohibited from taking an adverse employment action against an employee, up to and including termination, as a result, in whole or in part, of that individual's use of medical cannabis, regardless of the individual's impairment or lack of impairment resulting from the medical use of cannabis.
7. Any employee whose off-duty use of alcohol, medical marijuana, illegal, or non-prescription drugs results in excessive absenteeism, tardiness, poor work, or an accident will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

1. Effective August, 1990 the Lowndes County School District will begin conducting pre-employment testing for bus drivers, reasonable suspicion testing and random testing of all personnel.
2. An employee will be allowed to provide notice to the Lowndes County School District of currently or recently used prescription or non-prescription drugs prior to the time of the test.
3. Random testing of bus drivers will be implemented using a neutral selection basis. The Lowndes School District will not waive the selection of any employee chosen pursuant to the random selection procedures.
4. a. Reasonable suspicion is defined under this policy as the belief by the Lowndes County School District that an employee is using or has used drugs or alcohol in violation of Lowndes County School District's policy. Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, among other things:
 - i. Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug use and/or the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug;
 - ii. Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at work, absenteeism, tardiness, or deterioration in work performance;
 - iii. A report of drug use provided by reliable and credible sources and which has been independently corroborated;
 - iv. Evidence that an individual has tampered with a drug and alcohol test during his employment with the current employer;

- v. Information that an employee has caused or contributed to an accident while at work; and
- vi. Evidence that an employee is involved in the use, possession, sale, solicitation, or transfer of drugs while working or while on school premises or while operating one of the school's vehicles, its machinery, or its equipment.

b. If there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is using or has used drugs or consumed alcohol in violation of the District's policy, that employee will be required to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test. The superintendent (or in his or her absence an appointed replacement) must approve in advance all reasonable suspicion testing. If the test result is confirmed positive for drugs or alcohol in violation of District's drug and alcohol policy, the employee will be subject to immediate termination of his or her employment with the district.

5. Any employee who refuses to take a drug and alcohol test will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

6. The following are drugs for which the district may test: alcohol, opiates, amphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP), marijuana, and cocaine.

7. An employee who receives a positive confirmation drug and alcohol test result may contest the accuracy of the result or explain the results within ten days of the date of such result by filing a written statement with the superintendent. An employee, at his or her own cost, also may request that the specimen be retested at a certified laboratory of his or her own choosing.

An employee who receives a positive confirmation test result and who fails to present a satisfactory contest or explanation to such result, or a contrary result from a certified laboratory of the employee's own choosing, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

A copy of this policy, and state law regarding drug testing can be obtained from the district office.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS POLICY (GCRAA)

A. Overview

All personnel should carefully read this entire policy, which may be found in *Section GCRAA* of the District Policy Manual. The policy addresses each of the following: exempt employees; covered employees; employee relationships between student teachers, volunteers, and off-duty policemen/deputies; hours worked; breaks and meals; minimum wage; and overtime pay.

In accordance with this policy, supervisors must provide cross/training of employees and monitor work to prevent the necessity of an employee working more than 40 hours in that work week. A work week is from 12:00 AM Monday until 12:00 AM Sunday. The superintendent shall require all records on wages, hours and other items to be maintained in accordance with the FLSA.

This District shall, at all times, cooperate with authorized representatives of the Department of Labor to insure that employees have an avenue to be paid for time worked.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Lowndes County School District is in compliance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), 29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.

C. Exempt Employees

Certain employees are exempt from coverage of the FLSA and are not subject to compensation for overtime work. Exempt employees include executive, administrative and professional employees. Examples include, but are not limited to, certified professional employees such as teachers, counselors, supervisors and administrators. Certain non-certified administrators are also exempt and include transportation directors, maintenance directors and other similar administrative and supervisory positions.

D. Covered Employees

Employees in the job classifications listed below are generally considered to be non-exempt and are covered by the FLSA unless a specific exception exists. In those instances the reasons for the exempt status will be specifically outlined.

Secretaries	Bookkeepers	Clerks	Mechanics
16 th Section Coordinator	Janitors	Cafeteria Personnel	Assistant Teachers
Substitute Teachers	Bus Drivers	Maintenance Personnel	Security
Data Entry Operators			

In some instances employees may perform dual jobs for the District, such as bus driver/maintenance worker. If duties of the two jobs require the employee to work overtime, the amount due will be calculated using the method described below under OVERTIME PAY.

E. Employment Relationships

No employment relationship is created between student teachers or students and the District due to the circumstances surrounding their activities.

No employment relationship is created between the District and individuals who volunteer and donate their services to the District as a public service without contemplation of pay.

The hiring of off-duty policemen or deputies on a part time basis by the District for crowd control or for security purposes does not create a joint employment relationship between the District and the city or county with which the policemen or deputies are employed. The District is separate and distinct and acts entirely independent of other governmental entities.

F. Hours worked

The work week for the Lowndes County School District begins at 12:00 AM Monday and ends at 11:59 PM on Sunday. Each employee subject to the FLSA shall be paid for all hours worked. Compensable time includes all time that an employee is required to be on duty. Coffee breaks, waiting time and meal periods, which are frequently interrupted by calls to duty, are hours worked and are compensable.

All covered employees are required to clock in and out each day at the time specified by their supervisor or principal unless requested to work overtime by his/her immediate supervisor. It is the employer's responsibility to monitor the employees' work times to assure that employees do not exceed 40 hours per week. Employees shall furnish all information requested and shall record the exact time of arrival and departure from work. All overtime shall be recorded by each employee in the electronic time keeping system and reflective on the employee's timesheet. Employees shall not elect to take work home or stay and work late.

No overtime shall be worked without prior written permission by the employee's immediate supervisor. In the event of emergencies requiring work in excess of 40 hours in a work week, the employee shall inform his/her supervisor as soon as practicable regarding the overtime worked.

Supervisors may be asked to reimburse the payment of overtime wages paid to their employees through other available budgets lines.

G. Breaks and meal periods

FLSA does not require breaks but recommends 15 minutes or less each morning and each afternoon. The time of day for breaks and their length shall be determined by each employee's supervisor.

Meal periods for covered employees shall be counted as hours worked since they are frequently interrupted by calls to duty and therefore are compensable. These meal periods are usually taken inside of the building.

Supervisors or principals may allow covered employees to take bona fide meal periods of 30 minutes or more to eat a regular meal, and employees shall not be required to perform any work during that meal. The employee must clock out to take a bona fide meal period and clock back in afterwards. A bona fide meal period is usually taken outside of the building and is not compensable.

H. Minimum wage

All employees subject to the FLSA shall be paid not less than the current minimum wage.

I. Overtime pay

It is the policy of the Lowndes County School District to pay for overtime work in the form of monetary remuneration, the employee shall be paid not less than 1 1/2 times his/her regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 hours in a work week. Overtime pay due an employee shall be computed on the basis of hours worked in each work week.

For employees paid on an hourly rate, the overtime will be based on that hourly rate. For employees paid on a salaried basis, the monthly salary will be reduced to its weekly hourly rate, from which overtime compensation will be calculated. Employees shall be paid for each and every hour worked. For those employees working 2 or more jobs for the District, overtime pay shall be calculated on the basis of a blended hourly rate on all jobs worked calculated by dividing the total amount of remuneration received in a work week by the total hours worked in that work week. The employee shall be paid one-half of the blended hourly rate times the number of hours worked over 40.

J. Adjustment of schedules

Supervisors may adjust schedules within a work week to prevent the necessity of an employee working more than 40 hours in that work week.

K. Record keeping

The Superintendent shall require all records on wages, hours and other items to be maintained in accordance with the FLSA. Wage and Hour posters shall be displayed at each District worksite.

L. Enforcement

The Lowndes County School District shall, at all times, cooperate with authorized representatives of the Department of Labor who may visit a work site. If an employee believes he/she has not been paid in accordance with the FLSA, the employee shall notify his/her supervisor and the Superintendent. Employees who believe they have not been paid in accordance with the FLSA may file a complaint with the United States Department of Labor. The District shall not retaliate in any manner whatsoever against an employee for the filing of such complaints.

District employees responsible for supervising employees subject to the FLSA who willfully violate the terms of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action by the District. Any disciplinary action taken by the District will be in addition to any relief granted an employee by the U. S. Department of Labor or a court of law.

NON-SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT

No employee shall engage in any work that will conflict with his/her assigned duties.

*****LEAVE POLICIES*****

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993 (GBRIA)

The Lowndes County School District adheres to the provisions set forth in the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993. Although employees are not paid for absences taken under the act, they are entitled to leave without jeopardy of forfeiting their jobs. Each school must post a compliance statement concerning family and medical leave.

This District believes in and supports the Family Medical Leave Act. In order for an employee to be eligible for these benefits, however, he/she must have been employed by the district for the previous 12 months. Forms to apply for family or medical leave may also be secured from the District Personnel Office.

The district has elected to use the “rolling” 12 months, measuring backward from the date the employee uses FMLA. Under this method, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, entitlement would be any balance of the 12 weeks that has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months.

For example:

- If an employee has taken eight weeks of leave during the past 12 months, an additional four weeks of leave could be taken.
- If an employee used four weeks beginning February 1, 1994, four weeks beginning June 1, 1994, four weeks beginning December 1, 1994, the employee would not be entitled to any additional leave until February 1, 1995.

❖ *All Family Medical Leave shall run concurrently with all other employee leave including worker compensation absences.*

GENERAL LEAVE POLICY – ABSENCE FROM DUTY (GBRI)

1. DEFINITIONS

Licensed Employee:

The term “licensed employee” means any employee of a Mississippi public school district required to hold a valid license by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development.

Full-Time Employee:

The term “full-time employee” means any person employed by the district on a regular basis and working at least the number of hours required by the Mississippi Public Employees’ Retirement System to be considered a full time employee.

The term “immediate family member” means a spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child, stepchild or other legal dependent, unless otherwise specified herein or by applicable law.

2. SICK AND EMERGENCY LEAVE ALLOWANCE

- a. At the beginning of each school year, each full-time employee shall be credited with the number of days of sick leave as indicated below, for absences caused by illness, injury or other physical disability of the employee or the employee’s immediate family member.

Leave will be credited as follows:

LICENSED PERSONNEL AND OTHER FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA) EXEMPT PERSONNEL

Contract Work Days	Sick Day Allowance
187-198	9
199-216	10
217-234	11
235 plus	12

ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND OTHER FLSA NON-EXEMPT PERSONNEL

Contract Work Days	Sick Day Allowance
182 (Bus Drivers)	2
184	6
185-216	7
217-234	8
235 plus	10

- b. Notwithstanding anything in this policy to the contrary, all licensed employees and teacher assistants shall be credited with a minimum sick leave allowance, each year, of seven (7) days with pay. A full-time employee who begins work after the specified start date for a position will be credited with a pro rata number of sick days, with pay, depending upon the number of days remaining in the district's work calendar.
- c. Any absence from work resulting from illness, injury, physical disability or other good cause as set forth in this policy shall be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately. Leave requests, absence reports and/or any other accompanying documentation must be received by the payroll department by the end of the pay period in which the absence(s) occurred for the employee to be paid timely.
- d. Any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year and credited as sick leave to the full-time employee if he or she remains employed in the district. In the event any full-time employee transfers from the district to another Mississippi public school district, any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance credited to such full-time employee shall be credited to such employee in the computation of unused leave for retirement purposes under Miss. Code Section 25-11-109. The Director of Personnel shall certify the unused leave to the MS Public Employees Retirement System on the appropriate form. Accumulation of sick leave allowed under this section shall be unlimited.
- e. No deduction from the pay of any full-time employee may be made because of the absence of such employee caused by illness, injury or physical disability of such employee until after all sick and personal leave days credited to such employee have been used.
- f. For the first ten (10) days of absence of a licensed or other FLSA exempt employee because of illness, injury or other physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such full-time employee, there shall be deducted the non-degreed substitute teacher rate of pay, necessitated because of the absence of the licensed or other FLSA exempt employee as a result of illness, injury or other physical disability. The non-degreed substitute teacher rate of pay will be withheld whether or not a substitute is used in the absence of the licensed or other FLSA exempt employee. Thereafter, the regular pay of such full-time employee shall be suspended and withheld in its entirety for any period of absence due to illness, injury or physical disability during that school year.
- g. Full-time employees may use up to three (3) days of sick or personal leave for the death of an immediate family member. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "immediate family member" shall mean spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child, stepchild, grandchild, grandparent, son- or daughter-in-law, mother- or father-in-law or brother- or sister-in-law, and the term "child" shall mean a biological, adopted or foster child or child for whom the employee stands or stood in loco parentis. Supporting documentation, such as an obituary or death certificate, must be provided.
- h. Full-time employees may use up to three (3) days of sick leave for the destruction of personal home. Verification must be submitted.
- i. The employee shall have the option to use accumulated sick leave for absences due to work related-injuries.
- j. Any full-time employee absent for the purpose of illness, injury or other physical disability:
 - 1. for four (4) or more consecutive school days (excluding a death in the immediate family)
 - 2. for two (2) consecutive school days immediately preceding or following a non-school day or holiday break

- 3. on a day prior to or after a non-school day or holiday break, unless absence caused by the death of an immediate family member
- 4. on the first or last day of school term

shall furnish to his or her immediate supervisor a certificate of an appropriate physician, dentist or other medical practitioner as to the illness of the absent employee or employee’s immediate family member. Failure to provide such certificate shall result in 100% loss of pay because the provisions to use sick leave in these situations have not been met.

- k. Employee may forfeiture accumulated or future sick leave, if the absence of the employee is caused by optional dental or medical treatment by this section in the discretion of the school board.
- l. All rights to compensation shall cease as of an employee’s date of death, even if all accrued leave has not been exhausted.
- m. See section below on Rules and Regulations for further information regarding the use of sick leave.

3. EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM

The school and the learning environment are negatively impacted by excessive absenteeism by an employee. If full-time employees are absent for the purpose of illness, injury, or other physical disability for four (4) or more consecutive school days (excluding a documented death in the immediate family) the employee must furnish to his or her immediate supervisor a certificate (medical excuse) of an appropriate physician, dentist or other medical practitioner as to the illness of the absent employee or employee’s immediate family member. If the annual contractual sick days have been exhausted, the employee must provide a medical excuse for each additional day absent and those days are non-paid absences. If no medical excuse is presented disciplinary action will ensue and may result in termination if unpaid absences cannot be justified (medical, natural disaster or other extenuating circumstance). After all leave provided for the contractual year has been exhausted, the employee may accrue three (3) additional non-paid absences within the contractual period. A fourth (4th) leave (a total of 15 days in a contractual year for a certified employee or a total of 12 days in a contractual year for a non-certified employee) may result in termination or non-renewal of the contract. This policy does not include FMLA.

4. PERSONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE

- a. At the beginning of each school year, licensed and other FLSA exempt employees, contracted to work a minimum of 187 days, shall be credited with two (2) personal leave days, with pay, for absences caused by personal reasons during the year.

At the beginning of each school year, non-licensed and other FLSA non-exempt employees shall be credited with one (1) personal leave day, with pay, for absences caused by personal reasons during the year.

All full-time employees contracted to work 235 plus days will be credited each year with an additional ten (10) personal days, for a total allowance of 12 for licensed and other FLSA exempt employees, and a total allowance of 11 for non-licensed and other FLSA non-exempt employees, with pay.

A full-time employee who begins work after the specified start date for a position will be credited with a pro rata number of personal days, with pay, depending upon the number of days remaining in the district’s work calendar.

CERTIFIED, EXEMPT

Contract Work Days	Personal Day Allowance
187-198	2
199-216	2
217-234	2
235 plus	12

ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND OTHER FLSA NON-EXEMPT PERSONNEL

Contract Work Days Personal Day Allowance

182 (Bus Drivers)	1
184	1
185-216	1
217-234	1
235 plus	11

- b. Personal leave may be used for professional purposes, including absences caused by attendance of a full-time employee at a seminar, class, training program, professional association or other functions designed for educators. No deduction from the pay of such employee may be made because of absences of such employee caused by personal reasons until after all personal leave allowance credited to such employee has been used.
- c. All personal leave must be used before a licensed or other FLSA exempt employee uses the 10 extended leave days allotted to them for absences caused by illness, injury or other physical disability.
- d. A licensed employee may use personal leave as follows: Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee is being deployed for military service in which documentation is required. Personal leave may be taken on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if an employee of a school district has either a minimum of ten (10) years' experience as an employee of that school district or a minimum of thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave that has been earned while employed in that school district. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, the employee has been summoned to appear for jury duty.
- e. Employees must submit a leave request to their immediate supervisor at least three (3) days in advance, except in case of unforeseen circumstances. In cases of unforeseen circumstances, employee shall complete leave request on the day the employee returns to work.
- f. The superintendent, in his discretion, may allow a licensed and other FLSA exempt employee personal leave in addition to such employee's credited personal leave allowance, under the condition that there shall be deducted from the salary of such employee the actual amount of any compensation paid to any person as a substitute, necessitated because of the absence of the employee.
- g. Any unused portion of the total personal leave allowance up to five (5) days shall be carried over to the next school year and credited as personal leave to such full-time employee if the employee remains employed in the district. Unused personal leave accumulated by the full-time employees in excess of the maximum five (5) days, which shall be carried over from one year to the next as personal leave, shall be converted to sick leave. The annual conversion of unused personal leave to sick leave for all full time employees shall not exceed the allowable number of personal leave days as provided in Miss. Code Section 25-3-93. The annual total number of converted, unused personal days added to the annual unused sick days for any employee shall not exceed the combined allowable number of days per year provided in Miss. Code Sections 25-3-93 and 25-3-95.
- h. Personal and Vacation leave shall be synonymous.
- i. See section Rules and Regulations for further information regarding the use of personal leave.

5. PROFESSIONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE

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

- b. Non-certified and other FLSA non-exempt may be credited with professional leave, with pay, for each day of absence caused by reason of such employee's professional development related to such employee's job. Leave will be credited for the time absent up to employee's normal working hours.
- c. All professional leave must be pre-approved by immediate supervisor and superintendent before the absence. Out of state travel must also be approved by the school board.
- d. The request to use professional leave must be submitted on the district's travel requisition and must be accompanied by documentations to support any related expenditures.
- e. Professional leave taken without approval will be charged against an employee's personal leave balance. If no personal leave is available, the employee will be docked a full's day pay for each day of absence.
- f. **Sabbatical Leave:**

Sabbatical leave is defined as a leave of absence taken for professional development that will benefit the school district. Upon written request to the superintendent, a licensed employee may receive one-year, not to exceed two consecutive summers and one academic year, sabbatical leave. The employee shall not be entitled to receive any compensation from the district during the leave time and such employee shall return to the position vacated or shall be assigned to an equivalent position for which the employee qualifies. Failure to comply with these conditions nullifies any obligation of the district.

Licensed employees must meet the following criteria:

1. Employed by the Lowndes County School District a minimum of six (6) consecutive contract years;
2. Has completed at least 6 years of teaching and/or administrative experience;
3. Has attained an overall rating of at least satisfactory on all the employee's evaluations for the prior year and any evaluations completed during the current year, including attendance;
4. Has been accepted in a graduate program of study leading to a Masters, Specialist or Doctorate Degree;
5. Will be engaged in full-time academic study in the field of education, defined as requiring the completion of a minimum of nine (9) semester or twelve (12) quarter hours of college credit each academic period and remaining in good standing in the graduate program.

The request for Sabbatical leave must be made before spring break for sabbatical leave to begin the following July 1 fiscal year. The leave must be approved by appropriate school officials and by the school board. The school board shall limit the number of employees simultaneously out on sabbatical leave to five (5).

If approved for sabbatical leave, the following benefits will be frozen for the duration of the leave:

1. Retirement
2. Sick and Personal leave accumulation
3. Experience in the district
4. Group insurances shall remain in effect as long as the staff member on leave makes all premium payments timely and is agreeable with the insurance company. The staff member must make these arrangements with the Business Office.

Any employee approved for sabbatical leave must not be approved for another sabbatical leave prior to completing another six (6) working contract years.

6. RETIREMENT

- a. Upon retirement from employment, each licensed and non-licensed employee shall be paid for not more than thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave earned while employed by the district in which the employee is last employed. Such payment for licensed employees shall be made by the district at a rate equal to the amount paid to degreed substitute teachers, and for non-licensed employees, the payment shall be made by the district at a rate equal to the federal minimum wage. The payment shall be treated

in the same manner for retirement purposes as a lump sum payment for personal leave as provided in Miss. Code Section 25-11-103(e). Any remaining, lawfully-credited, unused leave for which payment has not been made, shall be certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System in the same manner and subject to the same limitations as otherwise provided by law for unused leave. No payment for unused accumulated leave may be made to either a licensed or non-licensed employee at termination or separation from service for any purpose other than for the purpose of retirement.

- b. Upon termination of employment, voluntarily or involuntarily, unused personal leave days for which the employee is entitled to full pay may be counted as creditable service for the purpose of the retirement system to the extent provided in Miss. Code Section 25-11-103 and the policies of the Public Employees' Retirement System.

7. RULES AND REGULATIONS/GENERAL

- a. Any materially false statement made by a licensed or non-licensed employee as to the cause of absence shall result in 100% loss of pay, or entry on the work record of the employee, or other appropriate penalties, as determined by the superintendent.
- b. If an employee leaves the district and has used more sick or personal days than earned, said employee will be charged back with unearned leave days on their final pay.
- c. No employee claiming sick or personal leave may accept other employment during leave time. Legal means will be used to regain any pay claimed in violation of this policy.
- d. Unauthorized leave shall be interpreted to mean an absence not authorized by this policy. The taking of such leave shall result in 100% deduction of pay and may result in termination.
- e. The school board reserves the right to increase or provide greater sick or personal leave allowances than the minimum standards established by Miss. Code 37-7-307.
- f. Notwithstanding anything in this policy to the contrary and as provided in Miss. Code Section 37-7-307, in no event shall the personal and sick leave granted employees exceed the leave provisions provided in Miss. Code Sections 25-3-93 and 25-3-95.
- g. Leave is used and charged in increments of 15 minutes.
- h. The use of all leave must be requested and approved by immediate supervisor.

8. PAYMENT OF SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYEES

Substitute employees shall be paid wholly from district funds, except as otherwise provided for long-term substitute teachers in Miss. Code Section 37-19-20. If approved by the school board, the district may pay, from district funds other than adequate education program funds, the whole or any part of the salaries of all employees granted leaves for the purpose of special studies or training.

9. JURY DUTY

The Lowndes County School District shall provide leave with pay for employees who are called for or who serve on juries. The district shall not seek to recover jury fees from employees who serve on juries. A copy of the summons for jury duty must be attached to the staff absence report. The district reserves the right to verify attendance through the court clerk's office. When excused from jury duty prior to 1 PM on any day, the employee must report to work at the district.

The district shall provide leave with pay for employees who serve as witnesses on behalf of the district in any district employment or other administrative proceeding or in any court hearing or proceeding. Employees under subpoena to provide court testimony or to testify in court hearings for non-district related matters must use their personal leave. Absences extending beyond accrued personal leave will result in loss of pay.

10. POLITICAL LEAVE

Any employee who becomes a candidate for elected political office must refrain from all forms of political activity during normal working hours and may not use any school facilities or other school resources for political purposes. Any employee planning to become a candidate for political office may request leave of absence for campaign purposes, provided such request is made prior to announcing or filing qualifying papers, whichever is sooner. The board may grant or deny the request, considering the amount of leave time requested and the nature of the employee's duties. If granted, political leave shall be without pay. No compensation shall be paid during such leave and no sick or personal leave will be earned during the period for which leave is granted. Employees who take leave for political campaigning must return to work immediately upon conclusion of the leave time or forfeit their employment. Any licensed employee who becomes a candidate or who is elected to public office may request a release from contract. An employee who requests release from contract shall cease to be a district employee upon the request being granted.

MILITARY LEAVE (*GBRID*)

Mississippi law on the subject of employees called to military service is covered in Mississippi Code 1972, §33-1-21. Employees called for active duty must notify their immediate supervisor and submit a copy of their orders to human resources immediately. Also, employees shall ensure all paperwork has been completed in relation to leave and employee benefits.

The law provides that state employees and employees of "any county, municipality, or other political subdivision" are entitled to a leave of absence from their respective duties for periods not to exceed 15 days without loss of pay, time, annual leave, or efficiency rating when ordered to military duty. Districts do not have to pay such employees after the 15-day absence, but all other benefits must remain intact until the employee "is relieved from duty."

Employees released from military service have 90 days to apply for re-employment and cannot be discharged "without cause" within one year after reinstatement to their school positions. The law adds that re-employment protection is not extended to employees dishonorably discharged from military service.

If the time for reporting to active duty is optional for the employee, the school district expects the employee to choose a time that is least disruptive to the district.

This district shall comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994 ("USERRA") which, among other things, removes the distinction between active service personnel and reserve personnel from the employer's perspective. Further, the Act prohibits an employer from denying "initial employment, reemployment, retention in employment, promotion, or any benefit of employment" to a person who is a member of (or applies to be a member of) the uniformed services or who is performing, has performed, or has applied to perform services in a uniformed service.

DONATED LEAVE

- A. For the purposes of this section dealing with donated leave, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning ascribed in this paragraph unless the context requires otherwise:
 1. "Catastrophic injury or illness" means a life-threatening injury or illness of an employee or a member of an employee's immediate family that totally incapacitates the employee from work, as verified by a licensed physician, and forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee, resulting in the loss of compensation from the district for the employee. Conditions that are short-term in nature, including, but not limited to, common illnesses such as influenza and the measles, and common injuries, are not catastrophic. Chronic illnesses or injuries, such as cancer or major surgery, that result in intermittent absences from work and that are long-term in nature and require long recuperation periods may be considered catastrophic.
 2. "Immediate family" means spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child and stepchild.

- B. Any district employee may donate a portion of his or her unused accumulated personal or sick leave to another employee of the same school district who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness or who has a member of his or her immediate family suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with the following:
1. The employee donating the leave (the “donor employee” shall designate the employee who is to receive the leave (the “recipient employee”) and the amount of unused accumulated personal leave and sick leave that is to be donated, and shall notify the school district superintendent or his designee of his or her designation.
 2. The maximum amount of unused accumulated personal leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed a number of days that would leave the donor employee with fewer than seven (7) days of personal leave remaining, and the maximum amount of unused accumulated sick leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the unused accumulated sick leave of the donor employee.
 3. An employee must have exhausted all of his or her available leave before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee. Eligibility for donated leave shall be based upon review and approval by the donor employee’s supervisor, as verified by the Personnel Office.
 4. Before an employee may receive donated leave, he or she must provide the superintendent or his designee with the request to receive donated leave form and the licensed physician report. The licensed physician report will state that the illness meets the catastrophic criteria established under this section, the beginning date of the catastrophic injury or illness, a description of the injury or illness, and a prognosis for recovery and the anticipated date that the recipient employee will be able to return to work.
 5. Before an employee may receive donated leave, the superintendent of education shall appoint a review committee to approve or disapprove the said donations of leave, including the determination that the illness is catastrophic within the meaning of this section. The committee will consist of four voting members: one Registered Nurse and one staff member to represent the Elementary, Middle and High schools. Two Ex Officio members, Business Administrator and Personnel Director, will also be included.
 6. If the total amount of leave that is donated to any employee is not used by the recipient employee, the whole days of donated leave shall be returned to the donor employees on a pro rata basis, based on the ratio of the number of days of leave donated by each donor employee to the total number of days of leave donated by all donor employees.
 7. No person through the coercion, threats, or intimidation shall require or attempt to require any employee to donate his or her leave to another employee. Any person who alleges a violation of this policy shall report the violation to their immediate supervisor who shall report the violation to the superintendent. If the alleged violator is the employee’s immediate supervisor, then the employee shall report the violation directly to the superintendent. Any employee who is found to have violated this policy shall be subject to termination.
 8. No employee can donate leave after tendering notice of separation for any reason or after termination.
 9. Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement.

*****INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM*****

EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS & STANDARDS OF CONDUCT (GAA)

All employees of the Lowndes County School District shall comply with the Mississippi Professional Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct as outlined in Mississippi Department of Education policy 1710 and 1717.

The Superintendent shall establish procedures to assure that all school district employees comply with this policy. The procedures shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Providing all employees with a copy of the *Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct*;

2. Maintaining a signed statement in each employee's personnel file verifying that he or she has been given notice of the *Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct*;
3. Advising all employees that his or her contract with the school district is subject to the *Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct*; and may be revoked or suspended pursuant to its terms; and
4. Providing annual in-service training for all employees on the *Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct*.

The Superintendent shall report to the Mississippi Department of Education all license holders and employees who engage in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship.

SOCIAL MEDIA (GAB)

School employees including certified staff and non-certified staff should refrain from using social media to discuss students, school personnel and school business. School employees should maintain high standards of conduct when representing the school and the district in which they are employed. School employees should not post to social media during the work day.

Participation in social media that could negatively affect the district's or the school's reputation or the reputation of an employee or student will be considered a violation of this policy.

PERSONNEL DRESS CODE

School personnel shall dress professionally and appropriately at all times. Staff members shall not wear articles of clothing that are unacceptable for students according to the student dress code of this district. Certified and non-certified staff should dress and groom in a manner to ensure safety and well-being of students, and that permits the employee to carry out the assigned duties of his/her job descriptions.

Teachers are expected to be well groomed and to dress to reflect credit upon themselves and the teaching profession. Teachers must set examples for the students they teach, therefore they must dress professionally and wear clothing that meets or exceeds the dress code of the students which may include the school uniform as adopted by the board of trustees.

REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Any school employee having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is neglected or abused is required by Mississippi Code of 1972 (§43-21-353) to make an oral report immediately to the school principal/designated supervisor and by telephone or otherwise to the Department of Human Services (DHS). As soon as possible thereafter, a written report must be filed with DHS. Reports must contain the names and addresses of the child and parent or other persons responsible for the child's care. If known, the child's age, nature and extent of injuries, any evidence of previous injuries, and other information pertinent to establishing cause of the injury and identity of the perpetrator should be included in the report. Reports of abuse and neglect made under this law and the identity of the reporter are confidential except when the court in its discretion determines the testimony of the person reporting to be material to a judicial proceeding. A school employee makes a required report pursuant to this law is presumed to be acting in good faith. Any person acting in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability. MS Code (§43-21-355)

STUDENT HANDBOOKS

Every homeroom teacher must read, teach, and test their homeroom students on the student handbook. (Mississippi Law)

IN GOD WE TRUST

"In God We Trust" must be displayed in all rooms.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS (*IDA*)

The National Study of School Evaluation Model (NSSE) is the adopted school improvement model of the Lowndes County School District. Each of the district's schools has an improvement plan in place that is based on this model and is updated annually.

LESSON PLANS

It is our belief in Lowndes County School District that the most effective teachers are good planners and thinkers. Most "good lessons" don't just happen by chance. It has been said that "the road to success for teachers requires commitment and practice, especially of those skills involved in planning lessons and learning activities, and in managing classroom behavior." The lesson plan is a legal document that's purpose is to communicate what you will do and what your students will do and what you expect the outcome to be. The school district is charged with assuring that the objectives and standards are taught with fidelity and your lesson plan serves as the first step in written documentation for curricular and instructional validity. Lesson plans must follow the 2014 Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards or the Mississippi Framework, where applicable. Lesson plans must be available in the event a substitute teacher is needed. All teachers must have an emergency lesson plan or folder available for a substitute in the office. A sample, dated copy of all major tests shall also be filed with the principal.

Lesson plans are due on Sunday at midnight for the following week. Failure to submit them will result in the following:

- 1st violation: Verbal warning
- 2nd violation: Written warning
- 3rd violation: Suspension without pay

Principals are required to keep documentation.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS (*IDFA*)

The district or volunteering school will not permit any student in grades K-6 to participate in an interschool competitive sports program of a varsity pattern with scheduled games and championships. Furthermore, the district or school will not allow the school name to be used by another agency in designating the identity of such a team.

EMPLOYEE ATHLETIC PASS

All Lowndes County School District employees will be admitted to all Lowndes County School District regular season athletic events (governed by the MHSAA) with an athletic pass and provided that an employee ID badge is worn.

CLASS SIZES / ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS (*IEC*)

- The student-teacher ratio in kindergarten classes will not exceed 22 to 1. (A maximum class size of 27 is permissible in classes where there is a teacher and an assistant teacher in the classroom.)
- Enrollment in self-contained classes in grades 1-4 will not exceed 27.
- Enrollment in self-contained academic core classes in grades 5-8 will not exceed 30.
- Enrollment in departmentalized academic core classes in grades 5-12 will not exceed 33.
- Teachers of academic core classes in grades 7-12 will teach no more than 150 students per day.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

- A teacher's planning time is to be utilized for professional responsibilities of the job (parent conferences, grading papers, planning, Tier 2 or Tier 3 documentation, etc.).
- A minimum of 60% of classroom instructional time in the kindergarten program must be spent in learning center activities.

- Teachers in grades 7-12 will be limited to three course preparations per day. Four preparations may be approved if the four are in the same discipline area.
- Each teacher (excluding vocational teachers whose classes exceed 50 minutes) will be allotted a period of time for individual or departmental planning. The teacher will not have any instructional or supervisory responsibilities during this planning period.
 - a. The planning period for teachers in grades 7-12 will be no less than 225 minutes per week, exclusive of the lunch period. The planning time for elementary teachers will be no less than 150 minutes per week, exclusive of the lunch period.
 - b. The teaching day does not have the same definition as school day. Each teacher must have a planning period during the school day, which is defined as the time students are in school.

DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS

Classes should be ready for dismissal when the bell rings. Teachers should dismiss classes in an orderly manner and stand in the doorway. Each teacher should report immediately to the next place of duty. Some teachers may need to walk students to the bus, outside the building, etc. Students should not be late.

FIELD AND ACTIVITY TRIPS (*IFCB*)

The Lowndes County School Board controls all interstate and intrastate field trips and extracurricular activity trips. A field trip is a school-sponsored, school-chaperoned activity that allows students to investigate or participate in life experiences away from the classroom. A well-planned field trip can be a worthwhile educational experience. These trips must, however, be specifically related to instructional objectives and/or extracurricular activities. All field trips must be of educational value to the students.

All field trips and extracurricular activity trips away from the school must be under the supervision of a teacher or responsible staff member. All field trips must be approved by the principal and the superintendent. Interstate (between two or more states) field trips having a one-way destination of 100 miles must also be approved by the School Board. Requests for field trips must be submitted for approval at least 30 calendar days prior to the date of the field trip.

A. Principal/Bus Supervisor's Responsibilities

1. He/She must inspect the bus for damages before and after the trip and note any changes.
2. He/She must review rules and regulations with driver and sponsor 10 days prior to the trip.
3. He/She must review any problems reported by the driver and sponsor after the trip.
4. He/She must file a completed checklist.

B. Students' Responsibilities (Bus Code of Conduct)

1. Everyone must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
2. Heads and arms must be kept inside the bus.
3. Students must return on the bus unless their parents pick them up or request other means of transportation in writing.
4. No one may eat or drink on the bus unless it is approved by the sponsor.
5. There should be complete silence at railroad crossings.
6. When stopping to eat, students must not cross the road to go to or from an eating establishment, and they must be back at the designated place at the assigned time.
7. Students must know the procedures for emergency evacuation.
8. If the bus breaks down, students must follow the driver's instructions.
9. All trash must be picked up before exiting the bus.
10. Normal rules of conduct must be followed while on the bus.
11. After the trip, students should thank the driver, sponsors, and chaperons.

C. Bus Driver's Responsibilities

1. He/She must review the bus permit.
2. He/She must review his/her written responsibilities.
3. He/She must confer with the sponsor about departure time, parking places, and eating plans. In making these arrangements, the following things should be considered:

- Extra time should be allowed for emergencies.
 - Students should not cross the road.
 - The bus should be parked so that students have safe access to eating.
 - Students should be let off the bus to eat and picked up at the same location if the bus is unable to park at the eating establishment.
4. He/She must check the oil, water, tires, etc., on the bus before leaving school and before returning to school.
 5. Before leaving school, he/she must explain emergency evacuation procedures to the students.
 6. If the bus breaks down, he/she should explain the procedures that will be followed.
 7. He/She should assist the sponsor, as necessary.
 8. After the trip, he/she must fill the bus with gas and return it to its home base.
 9. He/She must turn in the bus permit with all information completed.
 10. He/She should review all problems with the bus supervisor or principal.

D. Sponsor's Responsibilities

1. The field trip request and bus permit must be obtained 30 calendar days in advance.
2. He/she must review the responsibilities of the sponsor, driver, and students.
3. Parental permission must be obtained for every child.
4. One chaperone must be obtained for every 15 students.
5. He/she must confer with the bus driver about departure time, parking places, and eating plans.
6. He/she must explain the bus code of conduct to the students.
7. He/she must be familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures.
8. He/she must make a list of the participating students and give a copy to each chaperone and the school office.
9. Roll must be called upon departure and every time students return to the bus.
10. If students are not returning on the bus, the sponsor must receive written notification from the parent concerning other means of transportation.
11. He/she must maintain discipline at all times.
12. After the trip, he/she must make sure the bus is free from litter. He/She must also check the bus for students and personal items.
13. The sponsor must remember at all times that he/she is responsible for the students that are participating in the field trip.

PRAYER IN THE SCHOOLS (IG)

This district does not prevent, or otherwise deny participation in, constitutionally protected prayer in the schools if it is consistent with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and other judicial decisions interpreting the religion clauses of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS (IHA)

In kindergarten, a skills checklist is used to measure progress. A parent/teacher conference is also required in February and as needed during the year.

In grades 1-12, A, B, C, and D, are passing. A indicates exceptionally fine work; B represents better than average work; C indicates average work; D indicates poor work. A grade of F indicates failure. The grade given at the end of the semester is a cumulative grade for that semester and is the one that is recorded.

The numerical equivalent is given below:

Elementary Grading Scale (Grades K-5)

- A = 94 -100
- B = 85 - 93
- C = 75 - 84
- D = 70 - 74
- F = 69 or below

Middle and High School Grading Scale (Grades 6-12)

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 60-69
- F = 59 or below

Report cards are issued on the Thursday after the nine-week grading period. Numerals are used to designate a pupil's progress in grades K through 12.

INTERNET / NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE (IJA)

Use of the Lowndes County School District's network shall be solely for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of information for this district in the furtherance of education, research, and job-related activities. The network also supports the educational and instructional endeavors of students and employees of the Lowndes County School District.

The Lowndes County School District's network is a complex system of components structured to perform specific functions within the district. The network system requires centralized management to ensure seamless operation; consequently, no user shall be allowed to attach any peripheral to the network without prior written permission. This includes, but is not limited to, hubs/switches, network storage devices, network printers, servers of any kind, and computers not owned by this district.

Anyone who uses the Lowndes County School District network must also abide by the guidelines established in COPPA and CIPA. CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act 2000) states that filtering services will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet in the Lowndes County School District. COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act 1998) states that users will not disclose, use, disseminate, or give personal and/or private information about himself/herself, minors, or any other persons. In accordance, this district will provide filtering software for every Internet accessible computer, and no employees shall disclose personal information about students on the district or school websites.

The following are examples of other inappropriate activities related to The Lowndes County School District's network, e-mail system, and the Internet. Failure to abide by any of the district's Internet/ network "acceptable use" regulations shall result in suspension of the Internet and email account. Violations are not limited to those listed below:

- Downloading, installing, or copying software of any kind onto a workstation or any network drive without approval of district technology personnel.
- Violating copyright laws.
- Damaging computer systems or computer networks (This includes changing workstation configurations such as printers, BIOS information, passwords, etc.).
- Accessing inappropriate web sites (sites containing material that is violent, illegal, sexual, etc.).
- Plagiarism of materials that are found on the Internet.
- Sharing passwords.
- Broadcasting network messages by participating or sending chain mail.
- Intentionally wasting limited resources such as disk space and printing capacity.
- Listening to radio or tv broadcasting on the Internet.

All users should realize when they use the Internet, they enter a global world, and any actions taken by them will reflect upon the Lowndes County School District as a whole. As such, all users must behave in an ethical and legal manner and abide by the netiquette rules of network.

All employees and guests utilizing the Internet must sign the district's "Internet/Network Usage Agreement Form" before being allowed to use the Internet or network.

The Lowndes County School District's Board of Trustees has implemented the 1:1 Digital Learning Initiative, called Engaged Learning Initiative (ELI), an innovative plan focused on enhancing academic learning through new

technology resources. As such, the district provides its students and staff access to a variety of technological resources, including laptops, MacBook, and iPads.

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines and regulations regarding the safe, legal, considerate and responsible use of this technology, as well as all technological resources utilized by students, staff, parents, and volunteers of the Lowndes County School District. All Lowndes County School District technological resources and information stored on the devices are governed by district policies and are subject to school supervision and inspection. This policy applies regardless of whether such use occurs on or off school district property, and it applies to all school district technological resources, including but not limited to computer networks and connections, the resources, tools and learning environments made available by or on the networks and all devices that connect to those networks.

The Lowndes County School District reserves the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read and disclose all messages, information, and files which have been created, sent, posted from, stored on, or utilized by its technological resources to law enforcement officials and others without prior notice. Any individual who violates this policy or any applicable local, state or federal laws is subject to disciplinary action, a loss of technology privileges and may face legal action.

EMAIL USE (IFBGA)

The technology department will make every possible attempt to provide a full range of Email functionality for employees to use in conducting school communications. Email is, however, for official Lowndes County School District business only. Cooperation of faculty and staff is therefore extremely important for the technology team to maintain an efficient Email system according to the guidelines within this policy.

Email account creations or removals must be submitted to the technology department and must be approved by the employee supervisor. The email account is Office 365 for Education and thus subject to Microsoft's service offerings which are subject to change. A request for a district Email account will be verified with the principal/supervisor before it is created.

When an Email account is assigned to an individual, the account must not be used by others. The designated individual will be solely responsible for the proper use of the account, including password protection. This individual must also take all reasonable precautions, including password maintenance, to prevent use of their account by unauthorized persons. Passwords must be at least four characters long.

All Email will be scanned for viruses, but the Lowndes County School District will not be responsible for any damage or loss of data to any computer system due to any type of virus. The district will also not be responsible for any lost, deleted, or undelivered Emails.

A user account will be deleted if an employee terminates his/her employment. When an employee's termination is processed, the principal/supervisor should immediately advise the technology department to disable or delete the account.

"All Faculty/Staff" listserv will be maintained for public use.

All users must send Email in a way that accurately identifies the sender. They should also carefully direct the Email to the correct recipient. Just like a postal letter, once an Email is sent, it cannot be rescinded.

Forging Email header information is prohibited. (This is a computer FRAUD law.)

User Email maintained on the district server will be deleted automatically after six months.

The following are considered to be improper usage of school Email and are therefore prohibited:

Chain Letters - A letter generated to evoke the sending of an increasing number of Email messages.

- *Hoax* - The transmission of Email messages with the intention of bombarding an Email server to cause that server to crash.

- *Bombardment* - Sending an Email transmission (inside or outside of the district's email system) that evokes others to transmit Email messages, which consequently bombards the district's or other Email systems.

All employees requesting a district Email account must sign a "Lowndes County School District Email Agreement Form" before an Email account will be installed and activated.

The use of electronic mail is one of the official means of communication with employees of Lowndes County School District. All employees (excluding temporary) are required to access and review LCSd e-mail on a frequent and consistent basis in order to stay current with district related communications. Employees must be aware of mailbox capacity and ensure that there is sufficient space in their accounts for email to be delivered. Employees must recognize that certain communications may be time critical. Employees are not held responsible for any interruption in their ability to access a message if the LCSd email system malfunctions or other district system related problems prevent timely delivery of or access to that message (power outage or email system viruses).

*****STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES*****

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (*JBA*)

This school district implements procedures for monitoring and reporting student absences as specified in the Mississippi Compulsory Attendance Law.

PROCEDURES FOR ATTENDANCE, ENROLLMENT, WITHDRAWAL, AND STUDENT SCHEDULES

Attendance

Elementary attendance must be taken and entered into the student package daily during the morning by the appropriate personnel. The middle and high school attendance should be entered throughout the day during each period of the school day by the appropriate personnel. Teachers should report absences to the office as soon as the class roster is verified.

A student must be present any part of the school day to be considered present for that day. A student suspended from school shall receive unexcused absences for all classes missed and shall receive a zero (0) for work graded during that period. No special attendance procedures are needed for exam days since all students are in attendance as if it were a regular school day. The student package does not default to excused or unexcused; the field is blank.

On the dates designated for the end of the month attendance report, each school should generate the reports that calculate enrollment, absences, attendance and days off roll. A hard copy of this report must be sent to the MSIS monthly ADA project manager at the close of each month. A hard copy should be retained in the school for a period of one school year. A complete monthly report includes: a list of students enrolled during school month, a list of students withdrawn during school month, a composite of attendance/absences/days off roll, transportation information, and a breakdown of enrollment by grade, race, and sex.

Attendance Reports

Attendance reports will be run at the school level on a weekly or monthly basis. The teacher will verify the attendance of each student and once verified by the teacher, the principal will sign and approve the attendance reports.

Absentee Documentation

Written documentation of excused absences will be kept on file in the school office for one year to maintain MSIS compliance.

Enrollment

The appropriate personnel will complete a standardized enrollment form and correctly code the entrance as determined by the principal, guidance counselor or designee. The form is kept at the school for one year. Appropriate documentation is verified and the information is entered into the student package by the appropriate personnel. The school designated MSIS representative will immediately secure MSIS ownership of each enrolled student.

Release/Transfer of Students

The school MSIS representative is responsible for coding withdrawals to correctly reflect the status of students no longer attending school. The reason for withdrawal will be coded at the direction of the counselor, principal or designee and may reflect information from the attendance officer. A hard copy log or other documentation should be kept at the school for one year to indicate withdrawal information including information about requests for records and/or requests to release students in MSIS. The school MSIS representative will immediately release the student in MSIS within two working days once a formal request is made and the student is no longer in attendance at the school.

Student Schedules

All student schedules must be entered into the student package before school ends in May or no later than July 31. Any update to teacher or student schedules must be reported to the personnel director as soon as the change is made at the school level.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT (JDB)

Except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, a teacher, principal, or assistant principal shall not be civilly or criminally liable for any action carried out in conformity with state or federal law or rules or regulations of the State Board of Education or the local School Board regarding the control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students. The local School Board shall provide any necessary legal defense to a teacher, principal, or assistant principal in any action that may be filed against such school personnel.

Corporal punishment administered in a reasonable manner by a teacher, principal, or assistant principal acting within the scope of his/her employment or function and in accordance with any state or federal laws or rules or regulations of the State Board of Education or the local School Board does not constitute assault, simple assault, aggravated assault, battery, negligence, or child abuse. No teacher, principal, or assistant principal so acting shall be named as an individual defendant or be held liable in a suit for civil damages alleged to have been suffered by a student as a result of the administration of corporal punishment, unless the court determines that the teacher, principal, or assistant principal acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting a wanton and willful disregard of human rights or safety.

“Corporal punishment” means the reasonable use of physical contact by a teacher, principal, or assistant principal as may be necessary to maintain discipline, to enforce a school rule, for self-protection, or for the protection of other students from disruptive students. Corporal punishment in the form of paddling shall be witnessed at all times by at least one (1) school employee, and all other acts of corporal punishment, as defined herein, shall be witnessed at all times, if possible, by a school employee. Certified staff should serve as witnesses whenever possible. §37-11-57

MEDICAL EXAM FOR ATHLETES (JGD)

Middle and high-school students wishing to participate in athletics must have a physical examination and receive certification from a physician stating that the student is in excellent health to participate in the athletic activity. This certification must be signed and dated by the physician and submitted to the principal. The physical examination must be during the current school year and must be submitted prior to practice or competition (MHSAA guidelines).

STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM (EGB)

Accident insurance, under a group policy, will be made available to all students. The School Board will select the company and the program. All students (middle and high) participating in interscholastic athletics are required to have accident insurance coverage. No student will be allowed to practice, play, or scrimmage without this insurance. This requirement may be waived by a signed affidavit from the parents stating that the student has adequate insurance coverage under the family’s policy.

ACCIDENTS/FIRST AID (JGFG)

Every accident in the school building, on school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any athletic event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge and to someone in the school office. All accident forms must also be completed and sent to the school nurse to be filed. All supervising staff must complete a memo-to-record account of the accident.

STUDENTS IN CRISIS

In the event a student expresses suicidal thoughts, threatens self-harm or harm to others, the school counselor or crisis counselor responding to the crisis shall have parents sign a Crisis Emergency form. The student will not be allowed to return to school until he/she has been evaluated by a licensed mental health professional who has signed the Crisis Emergency form stating that the student is stable and is no longer a danger to themselves and/or others.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (JGCC)

It shall be unlawful for any child to attend school with a dangerous, contagious, or infectious disease. If a student comes down with an infectious disease at school, he/she will be immediately isolated until he/she can be taken home or picked up by the parent/guardian. Under no condition will the student be allowed to ride the bus home. In addition, the student will not be permitted to return to school without a permission slip from a doctor or health department official.

MEDICINES PROCEDURES

The following medicine procedures will be adhered to in the Lowndes County School District:

1. Parents must provide all medications to be given at school. Lowndes County Schools do not provide any medication for students.
2. In order for a student to take **ANY** medication (**including all over the counter medications, such as Tylenol or Advil**) at school, the parent must obtain a medication authorization form from the school nurse or school office, or print it from the school website, and have it completed and signed by the doctor. The parent must also sign the form and bring the completed form along with the medication to the school nurse.
3. **Parents should not send medication to school by the student.**
4. Prescription medication must be brought to school in the pharmacy labeled bottle, which contains instructions on how and when the medication is to be given. Over the counter medications must be in its original container.
5. The principal of each school will designate someone to administer all medication. The designee, if not the nurse, will be given instruction or training to insure he/she can safely administer the medications.
6. School personnel will follow the written direction of the student's physician in administering all medication.
7. Students are admonished and instructed not to bring any medication to school, including over the counter medications. Any student bringing medication to school and giving it to another student will be disciplined.
8. **For children known to have severe or life threatening allergies [or serious medical conditions (seizures, diabetes, asthma etc., which require emergency medications)] parents should:**
 - a. Inform the school nurse and the child's teacher of their child's life threatening condition at the beginning of the school year, or as soon as possible after the diagnosis. All severe allergies must be verified by documentation from a Physician or Nurse Practitioner.
 - b. Complete and submit all required medication forms.
 - c. Provide the school with current cell phone, pager, etc. and maintain updated contact numbers and medical information.
 - d. Provide the school nurse with up-to-date emergency medication (including epinephrine, diastat, and glucagon), so they can be placed in all required locations for the current school year.
 - e. Provided epinephrine, diastat, glucagon or any other emergency medication on field trips.

- f. Go on field trips with their children if possible. If a student has emergency medication for seizures, diabetes, or any other medical conditions that require close supervision, a parent or adult chosen by the parent will be required to accompany the child, or the child will not be able to attend the field trip.
- g. Inform the school of any changes in the child's life threatening allergy status.
- h. Provide the school with physician's statement if the student no longer has life threatening allergies or other medical conditions.
- i. For food allergies that may cause a need for the diet to be changed from the regular meal pattern in the cafeteria, a **Mississippi Department of Education Office of Child Nutrition Medical Statement** (for Non-Disabled or Disabled Child) should be completed by the student's Doctor at the beginning of the school year or as soon as diagnosed. The parent can obtain a copy of this form from the school nurse, the school office, or the school website.

All necessary permission slips, request forms, etc., must be signed before the above and foregoing policy and procedures are carried out in relation to administering any medication to the student. The Lowndes County School District will administer first aid and emergency treatment to insure the safety of its students.

ASTHMA MEDICATION POLICY

A student with asthma may possess and use asthma medications when at school, at a school-sponsored activity, under the supervision of school personnel, or before and after normal school activities while on school properties (including school-sponsored child care or after-school programs) according to the guidelines set forth by the Mississippi Department of Education and outlined in the district's policy manual. The school district shall incur no liability as a result of any injury sustained by the student from the self-administration of asthma medications.

EMERGENCIES, ILLNESSES, AND ACCIDENTS

A. *Information Cards*

Each school shall maintain a card on each student for emergency purposes. The card must contain the following information:

- student's name
- name and number of who to call in case of an emergency
- physician's name and phone number
- a permission statement for the school to give emergency medical or dental treatment

B. *General Rules and Reporting Requirements*

All schools must have first aid supplies on hand.

The principal must be notified of all accidents involving students and employees. This includes accidents that occur to or from school, along with those that occur on school grounds or at a school-related activity.

All accidents involving students and employees must be reported if the injury requires medical treatment other than first aid. An accident report must be completed on each accident and sent to the school nurse to be filed.

The school is not liable for injuries to students, patrons, or employees. The public schools are a subdivision of the State of Mississippi, which exempts them from liability under state law. The principals and teachers are, however, under obligation to try to prevent accidents. Policies and procedures for caring for ill or injured students and for dealing with routine and emergency situations shall be published and posted in a readily accessible location in each school.

C. *Specific Procedures*

If an accident occurs, the following steps will be taken:

- *Minor injury* - First aid will be given at school.
- *Major injury* - First aid will be administered at school, and the victim will be sent or taken home, to the doctor, or to the hospital, depending on the extent of the injury.

- *Notification of parents* - Every effort will be made to notify the parent/guardian and the family physician if a student is involved in a major injury.
- *Treatment at the hospital* - The school official will stay with the student until the parent or guardian arrives.

In the event that a child needs medical attention and a parent or other designated person cannot be reached, an ambulance will be called at the parent's expense.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

In compliance with federal requirements of the Local Schools Wellness Policy the Lowndes County School District (LSCD) has appointed School Health Coordinators and committee members to coordinate and implement procedures in developing the school district's Wellness Policies. The committee members shall schedule semiannual meetings at each school site to include LCSD staff, community members/groups, parents and health officials.

The LCSD Site Health Coordinator and selected committee members shall implement procedures for developing the District's Wellness Plan. The plan shall include recommendations to improve the district's wellness program for students and staff. The draft developed by the appointed council members shall be forwarded to the District's Central Office Wellness Coordinator for review. The draft copy shall be forwarded to the Superintendent's Office and the Board for final approval.

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (PL # 108-265) requires each local Educational Agency that receives funding from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs to establish a local school wellness policy as required by Mississippi Code 37-13-134.

SUPERVISION

Teachers should not leave class or study hall except in cases of emergency. If an emergency occurs, the teacher must notify the nearest teacher and someone in the office of the situation and the approximate time of return.

Students will be scheduled under teacher supervision all day. Teachers must know where their students are at all times. Students must not be allowed to wander the campus at their own will. Any time a student is wandering around the school, someone is negligent in his/her responsibility and may be held accountable.

No teacher shall permit a student to leave school for any reason without first getting the approval of the principal. If the principal is off campus, the assistant principal or a designated person may grant permission. Furthermore, *no teacher may leave campus during the school day without the principal's permission.*

PERMANENT RECORDS (JR)

A Mississippi cumulative folder will be kept for each student enrolled. The folder shall contain (but shall not be limited to) grades, attendance records, health information (including an immunization sheet) and results of standardized testing required by the state. An annual pupil performance record will also be kept on the folder of each student to reflect his/her mastery of required skills on the FLE and success on subject-area exams required for graduation.

These active permanent records will be housed in the school office and kept in binders in a fire-resistant storage unit. They will be available to school district personnel involved in planning, implementing, and reviewing the students' instructional programs. Guidelines, specifying those individuals who have access to student records, and procedures for reviewing student records shall be in compliance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended.

A student's permanent record will not be destroyed at any time unless complete copies of the permanent record have been made on photographic film or microfilm and stored in the central depository of the district. This must also be, by order of the Board of Education, not less than five years after the permanent record of the student has become inactive.

Each homeroom teacher is responsible for the full completion of the permanent records. Teachers should be sure there is a permanent record for every student in their homeroom.

It is extremely important that permanent records be kept accurately. The inside sheet is as important as the outside folder because all parts of the folder should be kept up-to-date. If a teacher does not know how to complete a permanent record, he/she should ask for help.

Grades are to be posted on the folders at the end of each semester. Each homeroom teacher should also post physical traits and absentees. It is the responsibility of the homeroom teacher to make sure the permanent record is accurate and complete.

Lowndes County School District will not release the educational records of pupils to any third party without the written consent of the student's parents. The following officials/agencies are exceptions to this rule:

- School officials, including teachers, who have legitimate educational interest in the student
- Officials of other schools, after a pupil has transferred, upon the condition that the pupil's parents are notified and have an opportunity to challenge the content of the record
- State or federal officials for audit purposes or report information required by state statute
- Financial aid officials in connection with a pupil's application for aid
- Educational agencies for the purpose of developing or validating predictive tests, if such information does not identify individual pupils
- Accreditation agencies for the purpose of gathering statistical data to carry out their function
- Parents of dependent pupils who have attained 18 years of age
- Persons who need information to protect the health or safety of pupils in cases of emergency

At the principal's discretion, a fee may be charged for transcripts of the permanent record.

FINES AND FEES (JS)

Fees may not be charged to students to generate income for the district. Fees may be charged to students for consumable supplies or for repair/rental of equipment or books. Such fees shall not be used for any other purposes.

Student organizations may, with the approval of the principal, charge fees for various activities. The district follows state law on all fees.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCHES

- Full-price student breakfast \$1.00
- Reduced-price student breakfast \$.30
- Full-price student lunch (K-5) \$2.75
- Full-price student lunch (6-12) \$2.75
- Reduced-price student lunch \$.40
- Adult breakfast \$2.75
- Adult lunch \$4.50

*****PUBLIC RELATIONS*****

GIFTS TO SCHOOLS AND STAFF MEMBERS (KHE)

The superintendent is authorized to accept gifts to particular schools or the district. He/She shall report such acceptance to the Board, who shall officially approve the gifts and thank the donors. If the superintendent doubts the appropriateness or usefulness of a gift, he/she shall refer the offer to the Board for its decision. This School Board shall acknowledge in its official minutes the fair market value, date of donation, and who will maintain title or ownership to any and all donated assets.

SPEAKERS

- A. The Board recognizes that the views of visiting speakers may be controversial. If persons are prohibited from speaking because of their points of view, academic freedom is endangered. Students need to study controversial issues and practice analyzing problems, gathering/organizing facts, discussing varying viewpoints, and drawing tentative conclusions.
- B. When correctly handled, the use of controversial speakers can be a valuable component in accomplishing the goals of citizenship education. However, this places a serious responsibility on the professional staff members to correctly structure the learning situation involving a speaker.
- C. All speakers must be invited through the school principal. The principal shall try to engage speakers for both sides of the issues. In no instance shall a speaker who advocates unconstitutional or illegal acts or procedures be permitted to address students. U.S. Constitution, Amendment I, *Tinker vs. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

*****ORGANIZATIONS*****

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Administrators, teachers, and non-certified staff are encouraged to become active members of their professional associations and adhere to the code of ethics of these organizations.

STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS (*MFB*)

Student teachers from colleges/universities may be placed in the schools. The following regulations shall apply to the student teaching program:

- The principal shall determine a schedule and make assignments within each school.
- First-year teachers shall not be assigned student teachers.
- Teachers shall be responsible for the following: pupil discipline, pupil evaluation, length and quality of pupil assignments, and delegation of student teaching time.
- Teachers may not desert student teachers in the classroom, and student teachers may not replace the teachers in the classroom.
- The teacher is responsible for everything that takes place in the classroom, whether he/she has a student teacher or not.
- Administrators may find it beneficial to student teachers to involve them in school activities other than the instructional program.

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Notes to Remember

Notes to Remember



LOWNDES COUNTY
School District
 CALEDONIA • NEW HOPE • WEST LOWNDES • CAREER TECH

2023 - 2024 Academic Calendar

Board Approved 1-13-2023

JULY 2023							T-6 S-3							Important Dates							JANUARY 2024							T-17 S-16																																																							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	July 24	July 27	August 31	September 1	September 1	September 4	October 2-6	October 6	October 9-13	October 19	November 16	November 20 - 24	December 22	December 25 - 29	January 1 - 5	January 8	January 9	January 11	January 15	February 8	February 19	February 19	March 22	Mar 18-22	March 25-29	March 29	April 4	April 25	May 17 - 18	May 27	May 30	May 31	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
						1							Teachers' First Day	Students' First Day	Progress Reports	Parent Conference/Student Holiday	Teacher Workday	Labor Day	Fall Intersession	End 1st 9 Weeks	Fall Break	Report Cards	Progress Reports	Thanksgiving Break	60%/End 2nd 9 Weeks	Christmas Holidays	New Year's Holiday	Teachers Return	Students Return	Reports Cards	MLK Holiday	Progress Reports	President's Day/Student Holiday	Teacher Workday	End 3rd 9 Weeks	Spring Intersession	Spring Break	Good Friday	Report Cards	Progress Reports	Graduation	Memorial Day	Students' Last Day/60%	Teachers' Last Day	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
AUGUST 2023							T-23 S-23							FEBRUARY 2024							T-21 S-20																																																														
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	October 19	November 16	November 20 - 24	December 22	December 25 - 29	January 1 - 5	January 8	January 9	January 11	January 15	February 8	February 19	February 19	March 22	Mar 18-22	March 25-29	March 29	April 4	April 25	May 17 - 18	May 27	May 30	May 31	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29											
						1							Report Cards	Progress Reports	Thanksgiving Break	60%/End 2nd 9 Weeks	Christmas Holidays	New Year's Holiday	Teachers Return	Students Return	Reports Cards	MLK Holiday	Progress Reports	President's Day/Student Holiday	Teacher Workday	End 3rd 9 Weeks	Spring Intersession	Spring Break	Good Friday	Report Cards	Progress Reports	Graduation	Memorial Day	Students' Last Day/60%	Teachers' Last Day	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29												
SEPTEMBER 2023							T-20 S-19							MARCH 2024							T-11 S-11																																																														
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	February 8	February 19	February 19	March 22	Mar 18-22	March 25-29	March 29	April 4	April 25	May 17 - 18	May 27	May 30	May 31	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31																			
						1							Progress Reports	President's Day/Student Holiday	Teacher Workday	End 3rd 9 Weeks	Spring Intersession	Spring Break	Good Friday	Report Cards	Progress Reports	Graduation	Memorial Day	Students' Last Day/60%	Teachers' Last Day	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2 <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29 </td>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29																						
OCTOBER 2023							T-12 S-12							APRIL 2024							T-22 S-22																																																														
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	April 25	May 17 - 18	May 27	May 30	May 31	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30																												
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NOVEMBER 2023							T-17 S-17							MAY 2024							T-22 S-21																																																														
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	May 30	May 31	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31																														
						1							Teachers' Last Day	Teachers' Last Day	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29																																	
DECEMBER 2023							T-16 S-16							JUNE 2024							T-22 S-21																																																														
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	July 27 - October 6	October 16 - December 22	January 9 - March 22	April 1 - May 30	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31																												
						1							Teacher Days - 187	Student Days - 180	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29																																	

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