

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Item
July 23, 2014

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL ENHANCEMENT
Mississippi School of the Arts

D. *Approval of the Mississippi School of the Arts 2014-2015 Employee Handbook*

Executive Summary

The *Mississippi School of the Arts 2014-2015 Employee Handbook* includes the policies and procedures regarding general information, employee expectations, and daily operations.

This document has the following changes from the previous year publication:

- Revised sections to clarify policies
- Revised sections to clarify procedures for field trips, substitute requests, and facility usage

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

mississippi**school**of the**arts**

i m a g i n e c r e a t e **REALIZE**



Employee Handbook



The Phoenix—MSA's mascot—is a thing of fire and light, the colors of passion and never ending inspiration and creativity. Regardless of cultural interpretation, the phoenix is recognized universally as a thing of excellence and beauty. Each student at the Mississippi School of the Arts holds the same promise. Each individual can be the source of creativity and inspiration. Each administrator, faculty, staff member, and student can share the light...



Imagine

“If you can imagine it, you can dream it.

If you dream it, you can become it.”

William Arthur Wand

Create

“Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine, and at last you create what you will.”

George Bernard Shaw

Realize

“It has never been my object to record my dreams—just the determination to realize them.”

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Man Ray

Revised July 2014

Employee Handbook

Mississippi School of the Arts

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The Mississippi State Board of Education, the Mississippi Department of Education, and the Mississippi School of the Arts do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. The following office has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the nondiscrimination policies of the above-mentioned entities:

Director of Human Resources

Mississippi Department of Education

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State Board of Education

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Ms. Kami Bumgarner

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Mr. Charles McClelland

Mr. Richard Morrison

Mrs. Rosemary G. Aultman

State Superintendent of Education

Dr. Carey Wright

Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Kim Benton

Associate Superintendent

Trecina Green

MSA Regular Class Schedule

(subject to change)

7:35 a.m.	Warning bell for bus loading
7:40 a.m.	Bus leaves for BHS
7:55—9:29 a.m.	Block 1
9:29—10:00 a.m.	Tutorial Sessions or Morning Break
10:00—11:34 a.m.	Block 2
11:34—12:04 p.m.	Lunch
12:04—1:38 p.m.	Block 3
1:42—3:16 p.m.	Block 4
3:20—4:54 p.m.	Block 5

MSA Early Release Schedule

7:35 a.m.	Warning bell for bus loading
7:40 a.m.	Bus leaves for BHS
7:55—9:29 a.m.	Block 1
9:29—10:00 a.m.	Tutorial Sessions or Morning Break
10:00—11:34 a.m.	Block 2
11:34—12:04 p.m.	Lunch
12:04—12:53 p.m.	Block 3
12:57—1:48 p.m.	Block 4
1:52—2:43 p.m.	Block 5

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FORWARD

The information in the Mississippi School of the Arts Employee Handbook has been assembled to serve as a guide in providing a safe and orderly environment that is supportive of successful teaching and learning. Use it as a reference, and add other policy bulletins as they are released.

The administrative staff welcomes questions, suggestions, and discussion of policies and procedures. Please ask for information at any time.

MSA VISION

At the Mississippi School of the Arts, we envision a challenging, dynamic, supportive community of diverse learners where artists imagine, create, and realize a better world in which to live and work.

MSA MISSION

The mission of the Mississippi School of the Arts is to provide a challenging arts education for artistically gifted and talented Mississippi students in a residential learning environment that promotes honor, integrity, service, and life-long learning.

MSA SCHOOL COLORS AND MASCOT

The school colors are red and black. The phoenix is the school mascot.



MSA AND MDE POLICIES

All Mississippi School of the Arts employees are responsible for knowing and enforcing the policies and procedures set forth in the **MSA Student Handbook**.

Since the fulltime staff members of the Mississippi School of the Arts are employees of the Mississippi Department of Education, most of the policies in the **MDE Policies and Procedures Manual** (available at <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/human-resources/human-resources-mde-policy-and-procedures-manual>) apply. A print copy is available in the Y-Hut Administration building.

INSURANCE

See the Mississippi Department of Education Policies and Procedures Manual. <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/human-resources/human-resources-mde-policy-and-procedures-manual>

PAYROLL INFORMATION

See the *Mississippi Department of Education Policies and Procedures Manual*.
<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/human-resources/human-resources-mde-policy-and-procedures-manual>

EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECKS

According to state law, all new hire licensed and non-licensed employees must have (at the employees expense) a criminal record check performed by the FBI and the State CIC center. This bill requires that fingerprint cards be taken and submitted as part of the background check. The cost to process these cards and conduct the background check is \$32.00 per applicant.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

By mandate of the State Superintendent of Education, all MSA/MDE employees must wear identification badges at all times when on duty. MSA ID badges are mandatory since a security system has been installed on the campus that requires electronic identification prior to entry into campus facilities. Any employee who reports to campus without his/her ID badge must report to security for a temporary badge.

ATTENDANCE—STAFF

1. All employees are to report as scheduled by their supervising Director/Principal and/or the Executive Director.
2. Employees who are going to be absent due to illness must notify their supervising Director/Principal, the Executive Director, or a designee as soon as possible.
3. Employees who will be late for any reason must contact the Executive Director or a designee's office so arrangements can be made for a substitute until the employee arrives on campus. Employees must speak directly to a Director/Principal/Executive Director.
4. Employees who arrive after the scheduled time or have problems relative to timely arrival for scheduled duties shall, on that day, provide the office with a written, dated explanation of reason for failure to arrive on time.
5. Employees may not leave campus during duty hours without permission of their supervising Director/Principal, Executive Director, or a designee.
6. Employees should refrain from taking leave for vacations when it directly impacts the functionality of MSA.
7. Excessive absences may be denied in accordance with the Mississippi Department of Education policies. If employee is deemed to be using medical leave to circumvent vacation day policy, a medical excuse may be required by the administration.

All professional employees are expected to be present during registration, open house events, graduation, and other special activities that may be assigned.

ATTENDANCE—STUDENT

1. Faculty members must take attendance at the beginning of each class period—immediately after the tardy bell has rung.
2. Students who are tardy to class must report to the Attendance Secretary who will determine if the tardy is excused or unexcused. Do not admit tardy students without a tardy pass.
3. The Attendance Secretary will email a report to the faculty to provide information regarding a student's absence being excused or unexcused.

DRESS CODE

Mississippi Department of Education of Dress Code Guidelines

The following recommendations are provided as guidelines for acceptable dress for employees of the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and the Mississippi School of the Arts. The guidelines apply to all full-time and contract employees.

The MDE exists to enable all Mississippi students to develop, in a safe and productive environment, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to reach their fullest potential as individuals and citizens. In this role, MDE employees provide services to educators who support and govern education and to the general public. While conducting business, MDE employees should always project a positive, professional image through work and appearance.

To accomplish this, all MDE employees should be well groomed and be dressed in a manner that will result in a positive image of the MDE. Clothing worn should be neat in appearance, in good repair, appropriate for employees' job responsibilities, and should not be offensive to the public or fellow workers. Attire should not detract from the job being performed or the message being delivered and should project a serious, competent image. **MSA employees may be asked to change attire or accessories deemed provocative, revealing, or inappropriate by the Executive Director or a designee.**

Unacceptable Clothing

The following is a list of clothing items that generally do not fall within the concept of a positive, professional image.

- Overalls, sweat suits, wind suits, warm-up suits, and other athletic attire
- Running shoes, walking shoes, cross trainers, and other athletic shoes; house shoes, slippers, shower shoes, plastic sandals and flip-flops
- Jeans (except on Fridays), shorts, skorts, tights, spandex, leotards and tee-shirts
- Short skirts, blouses with inappropriate necklines, see through fabrics, or sets with shelf bras that are immodest.

Exceptions

Ultra-casual clothing is rarely appropriate in a school setting. At-home lounge or outdoors activity/work clothing and foot apparel, including sneakers, are inappropriate for the office. However, some employees have primary work assignments, which require them to move or maintain equipment or work outdoors (e.g., maintenance, food services, visual arts and dance teachers). These employees should discuss relaxed dress code guidelines with their supervisors; **however, all workers must dress professionally according to their specific work duties.** Other occasions, which may call for a relaxed dress code, include office cleaning/packing/moving days and medical purposes. These situations should also be discussed with an employee's supervisor.

The Executive Director reserves the right to authorize staff to dress in different manner (e.g., blue jeans, school T-shirts) on any given day. This decision will generally be centered on a special event or occasion.

Business Casual

Business-casual attire shall be the acceptable requirement of dress. Business-casual attire in an office setting means a relaxed look that differs from standard business attire. Business-casual attire is not the same as attire normally worn to ball games, picnics, or during non-work hours.

Business-casual attire typically involves no ties for men, sweaters, turtlenecks, short sleeve, golf shirts (with a collar), slacks, and appropriate shoes (Sandals are not appropriate shoe attire for men.). Examples of preferred options for women include flat shoes and relaxed ensembles of sweaters, turtlenecks, blouses, and skirts or slacks.

Supervisor Responsibilities

Clothing should cover and fit in a manner appropriate for a business environment. Good judgment and professionalism are expected of all employees in both traditional-business and business-casual attire.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all employees are aware of the dress code guidelines and that staff do not abuse the flexibility intended by the business-casual provision. If an item is questionable, the employee should discuss it with his or her supervisor prior to wearing it. Should there be any questions concerning the acceptability of any clothing, supervisors shall provide guidance.

ASSEMBLIES, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES

All events or assemblies to be scheduled during the school day must be approved by the administration in advance, added to the school calendar, and be closely connected to meaningful teaching and learning. All other events and assemblies may be held at night or on the weekends. See section entitled "Performances, Rehearsals, & Meetings" of this handbook.

COMPENSATORY LEAVE POLICY

The Mississippi School of the Arts honors and follows the state standards for compensatory leave as established in the Mississippi Department of Education employee handbook. With the exception of emergencies, it is expected that all compensatory leave is requested and approved in advance of working the additional hours. If emergencies occur, the appropriate forms and documentation must be submitted for approval the following morning.

Because MSA is a 24-hour residential school, several items of issue are not covered by the policy of the state. Therefore, this shall serve as the official policy of the school.

Working After Hours

In general, working after hours to accomplish daily tasks is not considered for compensatory leave. It is expected that the job duties of PIN positions will be performed. Each employee has a different work style that may or may not be able to accomplish assigned tasks within the 40 hours allotted. However, workloads are not considered excessive. If an employee wants/needs to stay after hours to get work done to meet deadlines, that is their prerogative and is considered voluntary. Therefore, personal time taken prior to important deadlines and school functions should be considered carefully before requesting as it can impact your workload. In special circumstances, there are times when work cannot be performed during the scheduled workday. In the event that tasks are must be performed after hours, best efforts should be made to modify the work schedule in advance for that day in writing. Any schedule changes made for director positions should be communicated to appropriate campus staff and/or students.

Volunteer Activities

If an employee organizes an event or activity for the school voluntarily and is not required to do so, it is considered voluntary and not eligible for compensatory leave.

School Functions

School functions within the general job description (i.e. arts events for arts instructors; graduation for administration and instructors) are not considered eligible for compensatory time. However, functions for the school that require additional assistance that do not formally fall into job descriptions are eligible for compensatory time (i.e. Y-hut staff working for auditions).

Emergencies and Shift Coverage

If a staff member is called to campus to care for a student, cover for a co-worker, or fix something on campus. The effort does qualify for compensatory time. In order to document when submitting for compensatory time, attach a copy of the incident report, time sheet for co-worker, or documentation of repairs needed. It is not necessary to get permission to fix the problem if it is deemed necessary by parties involved. It is necessary to document the occurrence the following day of returning to work in order to be approved. Every effort should be made to utilize the staff on call at the time.

Clubs/Activities

Clubs that advance academic success of the students must have a sponsor are considered eligible for compensatory time within reason (making a float for a parade doesn't qualify; meetings would qualify). Any other activities for the students are not considered eligible for compensatory leave.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

See the Mississippi Department of Education Policies and Procedures Manual.

TRAVEL

All in-state and out-of-state travel requests must be made according to MDE policies and procedures. Plans must be made as far in advance as possible. Last minute requests may be denied. Make sure all pertinent information (e.g., agenda, schedules) is included when requests are made. **Verbal requests will not be considered.** See the Mississippi Department of Education Policies and Procedures Manual. <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/human-resources/human-resources-mde-policy-and-procedures-manual>. A sample travel form is included in the Forms Section of this manual.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

State and Federal guidelines frequently require that a school form various committees to ensure compliance with regulations or to oversee diverse school operations. The administrative team will review and appoint members of various committees annually at the beginning of the fiscal year. Some carryover in membership will be ensured to facilitate the ongoing work of the committees.

An overview of MSA Committees may be found below:

Academic Behavioral Review Committee

A student's attendance at MSA is a privilege, not a right; with this privilege comes responsibilities. During the school year, students not demonstrating appropriate academic or behavioral expectations can be placed on probation or returned to their home school to continue their education provided that applicable due process protections are afforded the student. See the **MSA Student Handbook**.

The Academic and Behavioral Review Committee shall be comprised of the Executive Director, Principal, Director of Residential Life, the student's art discipline teacher(s), and Counselor. Depending on the circumstances, the Director of School Safety or additional faculty members may be included.

Graduation Committee

The Principal shall chair the graduation committee that will oversee all events and activities associated with high school graduation. The counselor, Principal and all arts discipline teachers will serve as members of the committee in addition to others who may be appointed as needed. Duties range from organization to ordering invitations, caps and gowns, renting space for commencement, etc.

School Safety and Emergency Preparedness Committee

It is the objective of the Mississippi School of the Arts to operate as safely and efficiently as possible. To accomplish this goal, a **School Safety and Emergency Preparedness Committee** composed of faculty, staff, and administration, shall meet regularly to review policies and procedures outlined in the **MSA Safety and Crisis Management Manual** and to ensure that safety standards are met throughout the organization. All employees have the responsibility of performing their duties in a safe and prompt manner, and to report unsafe conditions to the proper personnel.

Technology Committee

The Technology Committee assists in continuous review of MSA's technology needs and resources as well as annual review/revision of the MSA Technology Plan. Technology Committee members, appointed by the Executive Director, shall represent all stakeholder groups.

School Wellness Committee

The School Wellness Committee shall be responsible for annual review and revision of the MSA Wellness Plan. Committee representatives, appointed by the Executive Director, shall include campus and community representatives in accordance with guidelines provided by the MDE Office of Safe and Healthy Schools (see MSA Wellness Plan).

DEADLINES

Meeting deadlines is crucial to the day-to-day operations of the Mississippi School of the Arts. Deadlines (e.g., attendance, grades, budget requests, cleaning for school events) are established to ensure a timely response to the students, parents, and community as well to ensure a safe and orderly campus. Employees who fail to meet deadlines will be subject to administrative review.

EMPLOYEE MEETINGS

Faculty Meetings

Faculty meeting will generally be held on early release Fridays from 2:45 p.m. until work is completed for professional development or meetings. Meetings will be held in a location to be designated by the Principal or Executive Director. All faculty members are required to be in attendance. Absences and tardies will be noted unless otherwise cleared beforehand. The school nurse, counselor, and librarian are considered as faculty members. Advance notice will be given if meetings are cancelled. The Principal reserves the right to call a special meeting during the school day if needed.

Leadership Team Meetings

The Executive Director or designee will call a Leadership Team meeting as needed. Departmental issues will be addressed that affect the overall functions of the campus.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

All Mississippi School of the Arts fulltime employees serve at the will and pleasure of the State Board of Education. Therefore, MSA employees have no property rights in terms of employment. All complaints should be addressed to the Executive Director, further appeals or grievances will be reported to the Human Resources Director at the Mississippi Department of Education.

EMPLOYEE APPRAISALS

Using the MDE Performance Appraisal System Instruments, full-time PIN non-certified employees will be formally evaluated at least once per year. The statewide evaluation systems for teachers and principals (M-STAR and MPES) will be used for the certified academic staff. Evaluation will be based on observations at primary job posts and as part of the school wide team. Supervisors will meet with all employees in accordance with deadlines mandated for the appraisal systems for review of prior performance and goal setting for the upcoming year. The appraisal instruments are job related to performance in a residential school and departmental context. Appraisals will be utilized to assist supervisors in better serving employees through professional development, improvement plans, or continuation of employment.

Habitual disregard for policies, processes and procedures established by the Mississippi Department of Education and the Mississippi School of the Arts will result in written reprimands and further consequences as outlined by the Mississippi Department of Education. At the beginning of each academic year, procedures, policies, and processes are reviewed with employees. Consistent paperwork, timeliness, or behavior problems will be reprimanded appropriately.

CONTRACTUAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

Contract Workers

All supervisors are responsible for monitoring hourly contract workers and submitting timesheets on a bi-weekly basis. Directors must check each employee's time sheet for accuracy in number of hours worked and rate of pay. Initial the form before submitting it to the Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director for processing and approval. It is your responsibility to ensure that contract employees work no more than 39 hours in a single week and that the total number of hours worked does not exceed the total contracted amount. Maintain a spreadsheet to ensure that contracts do not have to be modified. Contract Monitoring Sheets should be completed at the end of the month and submitted to the Y-Hut. Maintain a copy for departmental files.

A pool of service providers must be maintained and included in documentation if a worker is hired. MSA contract workers who return in a new fiscal year must submit a new PERS form. If any personal contact information has changed (e.g., address, name change), new tax forms must be submitted before a contract can be issued.

Once MSA has completed all documents requesting a contract, it takes a minimum of 12 working days after the documentation reaches the Procurement Office at MDE. Plan accordingly. Hiring a contract worker is a lengthy process; do not wait until the last minute. Plan well in advance to have adequate personnel when a new school year begins. In planning, consider the entire fiscal year in relation to the number of contracted hours and begin preparing for new contracts several months in advance if they are to be in effect beginning July 1 of a new fiscal year.

All contract employees must have a full criminal background check through fingerprinting upon hire at the employees expense.

Independent Contractors

Administrators must follow all contractual policies and procedures when securing the services of an independent contractor (e.g., fire inspections, pest control). Contract monitoring forms must be completed as described above except they may be filed and submitted monthly, quarterly, semiannually, or annually depending on the nature of the service. Maintain department copies of independent contractor documentation before submitting originals to the Administrative Assistant and the Executive Director. Directors are encouraged to acquire quotes for multiyear contracts when hiring independent service providers in order to ensure more economical pricing.

RELATIONSHIPS

Employee-Executive Director: Exchanges of ideas in any area such as curriculum, discipline, instruction, facilities, and services, are always encouraged and appreciated. Democratic practices are the goal. The Executive Director, through visitation and observation in various areas of the campus, assists employees in every possible way to ensure the most effective learning and living environment for each student. Employees and Executive Director continuously keep each other informed. In dealing with the Mississippi Department of Education, the proper channel is through the Executive Director. This does not include personal calls you may wish to make to an office worker concerning your own personal data and actions related to it.

Employee-Student: Each student's request or problem is important and should be treated with respect. The Executive Director is the final authority in matters pertaining to students. For this

reason, employees are responsible for preliminary work in the realm of problem solving before the Executive Director can act.

Employee-Parent/Guardian: Employees have the responsibility and authority to discuss an individual student's problems directly with parent(s)/guardian(s). This may be done directly, keeping the Executive Director informed and receiving approval beforehand as to the problem, and afterward, as to the result. To know the parent/guardian is to know the child better. Consult the Executive Director when you are not sure. Teachers shall not discuss a student's performance with anyone other than the student, his/her parents/guardian or with legitimate authorized personnel. Report all evidence of child abuse to proper authorities and to the Executive Director.

Employee-Employee: Employees are encouraged and urged to cooperate directly on matters of mutual constructive nature. Keep the Executive Director informed as needed.

Employee-Administrative Staff: Deal directly with any member of the MSA administrative staff—all directors. Bring problem areas in this regard to the Executive Director's attention. The administrative staff coordinates, supports, and supervises the entire operation of the school.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES (TEACHERS AND STAFF MEMBERS)

1. To plan, organize, and conduct a program of instruction in the subjects, grades or programs to which they are assigned.
2. To assume custody of the pupils assigned to their care and to take precautions that will ensure the pupil's safety and general welfare. Students should never be left unsupervised.
3. To participate in all school orientation and registration meetings and professional development unless assigned school duty conflicts.
4. To perform extracurricular duties assigned by the Executive Director or a designee, such as classroom, hallways, campus grounds and similar essential duties in any school facility.
5. To attend all faculty or staff meetings scheduled by the Executive Director or a designee, coordinators, supervisors, or superintendent, unless excused by the person calling the meeting.
6. To keep classes in session each day during school hours and not dismiss them for any time without the prior consent of the Executive Director or a designee.
7. To be responsible for all school property and equipment entrusted to them.
8. To be responsible for the behavior of their pupils and all other pupils with whom they have contact on campus.
9. To prepare all records as directed by the Executive Director or a designee.
10. To make all contacts and/or requests to the Legislature, Mississippi Department of Education or the State Board of Education through the Executive Director or a designee and superintendent.

11. To be accountable for the performance of assigned duties to the Executive Director or a designee.
12. To keep lesson plans and/or outlines of class procedures as directed. These will aid Executive Director or a designee in performing their duties and will serve as guidelines for substitute teachers.
13. Prepare a substitute folder as prescribed and keep it up to date.
14. In all cases where a teacher terminates employment during the school year, said teacher shall provide lesson plans for at least two weeks in advance to the replacement teacher.
15. To practice, and to require the pupils to practice shared responsibility by:
 - a. Conservation of environmental and material resources
 - b. Good housekeeping by forbidding clutter, trash, scattered personal belongings;
 - c. Storing books, work materials, supplies, and equipment in a neat and orderly manner;
 - d. Keeping bulletin boards, display areas, and whiteboards clean, functional, and attractive;
 - e. Having blinds properly hung, raised, or lowered and window ledges clear of objects that appear ill-kempt from the outside;
 - f. Keeping heating and cooling vents clear of obstructions at all times;
 - g. Practicing other activities necessary to reflect good housekeeping.
16. To notify the Executive Director, direct supervisor or their designee directly upon any anticipated absences, obtaining prior approval when required.
17. To strive to interpret the work of the school fairly, honestly, and adequately to patrons at every opportunity.
18. To avoid political, doctrinal, sectarian, and denominational teaching.
19. To keep up to date in areas of expertise.
20. To strive at all times to maintain cordial relationships with colleagues, the home and parent(s)/guardian, keeping the parent(s)/guardian informed of the student's progress and holding conferences whenever necessary.
21. To perform other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Director or a designee or assistant Executive Director or a designee.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Taking Student Attendance

Compulsory school attendance laws mandate that students attend school regularly. Teachers and Substitute Teachers must take attendance each class period. Attendance must be completed within the first ten minutes of each class. Students are marked tardy if they come into class after the second bell. Students missing thirty minutes or more are considered absent. Since substitute teachers will be using a printed roster, they should call the attendance secretary each block to report attendance.

Leaving Students Unattended

Mississippi School of the Arts policy forbids leaving students unattended in classrooms or sending students around campus without supervision. Teachers are responsible for ensuring a safe and orderly classroom environment where adult supervision is provided without interruption. Classroom climate should always support teaching and learning. At no time should students be left alone under the supervision of a student teacher. Supervision policies are in effect at all times when students are assigned to a classroom or duty post. Policies cover spaces inside and outside campus facilities or off campus when staff members are supervising school activities.

Establishing Clear Expectations for Students

Students excel when they are given clear expectations and high standards for living and learning. Make certain that assignments are clear, requirements and deadlines understood, and assessment criteria determined in advance and used as a work tool. Set firm deadlines and stick to them. Do not accept work beyond established time frames except in circumstances of excused absences. See the MSA Student Handbook for specific guidelines. Never accept student work after a grading period has passed except in circumstances approved by the Executive Director or Principal.

Setting Rules for Student Classroom Behavior

Teachers are responsible for working with students to establish classroom rules and teaching appropriate classroom behavior to those under their care. Appropriate language, physical boundaries, and classroom etiquette should be taught and maintained throughout the school year. Disciplinary Reports must be completed for violations of school policies including classroom rules.

Allowing Students to Work Outside the Classroom

Sometimes students may need to work outside the classroom independently for legitimate learning experiences such as taking photographs, painting from real life, rehearsing in pairs or small groups out of doors, etc. Such instances must be kept to a minimum. Faculty members should make certain that students always work in common areas where they are clearly visible. Students must not work in areas where noise or physical presence of additional persons would interrupt teaching and learning in other classrooms. Teachers must circulate among the students and maintain contact with them throughout the class time.

Attending Assemblies and Performances

All teachers must accompany their students to campus assemblies, meetings, and performances. Teachers are responsible for student conduct during these events. Proper, respectful, audience behavior is a critical component of becoming a productive citizen. When accompanying students on

a field trip, proper etiquette of audience behavior is expected.

LESSON PLANS

Teachers are responsible for writing and following a lesson or unit plan for each class period. Lesson plans should be written with clear objectives and learning experiences so that anyone could follow the lesson. Each lesson must be tied to the Mississippi Department of Education's framework for the specific subject area.

Each teacher will be given a space under the "Academics" file share and should have plans available for review at 7:45 a.m. every Monday morning or the first workday of the week. This file share should be kept for the entire year and should be added to each week. An administrator observing in the classroom will be able to write comments, questions, and suggestions for the current lesson. All print materials (e.g., handouts, tests, rubrics) should be included with each lesson plan or be made available upon request/observation.

There should be a different lesson for each course taught. If a teacher has four different courses, a different lesson should be planned for each day. Teachers are advised that all lesson plans are subject to review by administration. Teachers having computer issues should use the library for entry of lesson plans and/or make arrangements to provide a hard copy of lesson plans to the principal. Failure to prepare lesson plans may lead to administrative action.

To facilitate revision, all lesson plans should be done electronically and stored for future personal use. The approved template for lesson plans is provided electronically in the file share at the beginning of the school year and is to be used for all lesson plans.

DISCIPLINE GUIDE FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

The Mississippi School of the Arts is not only responsible for student academic progress but teaching students to be successful citizens in life. Every employee is responsible to for knowing and enforcing all of the policies and procedures in the student handbook. In order to be familiar with school policies, employees must read and understand all handbooks provided.

What Employees Should Do:

- Learn student names as soon as possible. All people like to be recognized;
- Be fair and consistent;
- Treat each student equally;
- Be empathetic and accentuate the positive, avoid the negative;
- Be thoroughly prepared for all classes, activities, or events and have ample involvement for all students throughout the time period;
- Be cheerful, attractive and orderly; let the learning, work, and recreation spaces reflect these qualities;
- Be professional in demeanor and maintain a sense of humor;
- Be flexible; know when to adjust plans or timelines;

- Admit errors and apologize when mistakes are made;
- Establish a minimum number of simple rules and help students understand why policies and procedures are necessary;
- Let students assist in formulating rules, policies, and procedures and in publicizing them;
- Correct students when needed to prevent minor problems from growing into larger ones;
- Watch for indicators of harassment or bullying;
- Report problems that are simmering and have the potential to escalate, thereby affecting more students and becoming much more serious. Report problems to the Executive Director and/or Security, depending on urgency;
- Remember that all employees are on duty at all times when on campus; and
- **All employees are responsible for student discipline.**

What Employees Should Not Do:

- Fail to report disciplinary infractions;
- Punish the entire group for the misbehavior of a few;
- Argue with a student;
- Embarrass or belittle a student;
- Ignore disciplinary infractions because the paperwork takes too long;
- Refuse to consider mitigating circumstances;
- Stereotype groups of teens; even artistic students are unique;
- Compare students with one another;
- Become overly friendly or familiar with students; this can cause loss of respect;
- Repeatedly show favoritism to certain students;
- Challenge or dare students to repeat an undesirable act or get yourself in a position of “do it or else”
- Administer unusual punishments;
- Punish by leaving a student alone and unsupervised in a classroom or hall;
- Punish by having a student write lines;
- Make physical contact in an attempt to discipline; or

- Be alone with a student in a non-public, inappropriate place.

Guidelines for issuing disciplinary action:

When issuing discipline for students, follow these steps if on campus in the academic setting:

- 1) Deal with the issue immediately with the student in a calm and appropriate manner
- 2) Report the issue to the Principal in writing
- 3) The Principal will decide the level of infraction and document in student files
 - a. If level 1-2, the Principal will handle the situation and inform the Executive Director
 - b. If level 3, the Executive Director will handle the situation and involve the Principal
- 4) A conference with the student will be held as necessary with consequences outlined in writing
- 5) Follow up will be made as necessary to fulfill consequences
- 6) If parents need to be contacted, the Principal will make the contact for the conference

When issuing discipline for students, follow these same steps if on campus in the residence life setting. The Director of Residence Life will take the place of the Principal.

When off campus for MSA event, if discipline issues arise all the steps should be consistent with on campus regulations.

When off campus in the community unrelated to MSA, follow these steps:

- 1) Deal with the issue immediately with the student in a calm and appropriate manner
- 2) Do not make a scene with the student in a public place, ask the student to step to the side to discuss
- 3) Report the issue to the Executive Director
- 4) A conference with the student will be held as necessary with consequences outlined in writing
- 5) Follow up will be made as necessary to fulfill consequences
- 6) If parents need to be contacted, the Executive Director will make the contact for the conference.

Contacting Parents:

Teachers do have authority to contact parents with regard to academic issues. All disciplinary issues should be reported to the Director of Residence Life, Principal, or Executive Director and contact will be made with parents as necessary.

Bullying

The purpose of this policy is to assist the Mississippi School of the Arts in preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior. MSA strives to maintain a safe and civil learning environment for students to attain high academic and artistic achievement and to promote healthy human relationships. As a residential school, it is imperative to do everything possible to prevent bullying and take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented.

Definition:

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus. *BULLYING* includes, but is not limited to; conduct by a student/employee/parent/other person against a Special State School student that one can reasonably believe has the effect of:

- (a) Harming a person;
- (b) Damaging a person's property;
- (c) Placing a person in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property; or
- (d) Creating a hostile environment for a person.

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

An act of bullying or harassing, by an individual student, a group of students, parents, employee or other person is expressly prohibited on school property, online, at school-related functions, or on a school bus. This policy applies not only to those directly engaged in an act of bullying but also to anyone who, by their indirect behavior, condones or supports an act of bullying.

No employee of the Special State School shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. False accusations or reports of bullying are prohibited.

Reporting

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or anyone with knowledge that a student or school employee has been subjected to bullying or harassing behavior shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official. A student may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district's ability to take action based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.

All Special State School employees shall be alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying.

Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, or work assignments, or educational or work environment.

The Special State Schools will annually provide education and information to students regarding bullying or harassing, including this policy, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying.

Action:

Upon receipt of a complaint or report of bullying, Special State School officials or a designated third party will act to investigate all complaints of bullying within 24 hours of the report and will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone who is found to have violated this policy.

- Investigation and action taken will be consistent with the school's policy on harassment, violence, or other action causing harm to another.
- Consequences of students may include suspension and/or dismissal.
- Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to termination or discharge.
- Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events.

PARTIES

Parties on campus or involving students may be held only with prior approval of the Executive Director or a designee.

PERFORMANCES, MEETINGS & REHEARSALS

MSA administration must approve all events before they are posted or advertised for students, parents, and/or the public. To minimize conflicts in scheduling, submit all proposed activities to the administration for approval and recording on the school master calendar. Use the **Event/Field Trip Database**. Space, time, location, and a list of those involved should be submitted. Staff members may not hold unscheduled activities without approval. Once rehearsal schedules are approved, the room(s) will be reserved for those events. Due to lack of space on campus, facilities must be reserved in advance.

Under no circumstances will performances, rehearsals, meetings, or other activities be scheduled during weekends when students are not scheduled to stay on campus. Security is not on duty during those weekends and liability issues are a serious concern.

Learning in the arts requires that faculty and staff schedule times for rehearsals. At no time shall students be left alone for rehearsals or any other activities in Johnson Institute. The person(s) who schedule rehearsals are legally liable for students left unsupervised. All rehearsals shall end by 8:30

p.m. Exceptions may be granted for technical/dress rehearsals with advance notice to the administration and the residential life staff. Rosters of students involved in rehearsals shall be provided to the Residential Life Staff so that they may account for students during the evening hours. Supervising staff should call the SLC front desk at the conclusion of rehearsals to account for students returning promptly.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES FOR THE PUBLIC

Any staff member proposing an event on or off campus that the public is allowed to attend must submit in the Event/Field Trip Database for approval prior to announcing it to the public/campus or posting on the calendar. This is to avoid calls to the school for inquiries without staff members knowing about the event.

HOMEWORK

Teachers may assign a reasonable amount of meaningful homework. All homework will be checked or graded by the teacher and counted toward course credit. No homework will be given prior to subject area or standardized test days or holidays without special permission from the Executive Director or Principal. Teachers are expected to provide assignments and other assistance to students with excused absences as specified by the policies in the Student Handbook.

ILLNESSES (STUDENT)

Send the student to the school nurse with a pass. Allow another student to accompany him/her if his/her condition so indicates. Even if a student appears to be feigning illness, it is usually better practice to acknowledge the student's feelings and allow the nurse to make a medical decision. The nurse will assume responsibility for further action and follow through.

Under no circumstances should faculty members send a student to the dorm or "prescribe" treatment when a student claims to be sick. The school nurse (or designee) is the only medical professional on campus. If a student is seriously ill, the nurse will contact the parents and the child will go home. In instances that the nurse is off campus, the second person for contact is the Attendance Secretary and the third person for contact is the Administrative Assistant in the Y-Hut. During the evening, the residence life staff is capable of administering medications according to policy and assist with getting emergent care as needed.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an important extension of the curriculum. Students are afforded opportunities during the school year to travel in state and possibly out-of-state. With this privilege comes the responsibility to exhibit expected behaviors while representing MSA. Trip administrators, teachers, or staff members in charge will communicate expectations and the policies of the student handbook are applicable during all travels. Violators will be referred to the Executive Director. Students are encouraged to participate in all field trips sponsored by the school or their teachers. Students are responsible for contacting teachers prior to missing a class for any field trip scheduled by another instructor.

The following guidelines will govern school-sponsored trips:

1. The faculty or staff member sponsoring the trip will submit a request in the Field Trip

Database for approval at least two weeks prior to departure.

2. The request will be forwarded to the Principal to secure substitutes as needed and assess if ADA and class minutes are effected.
3. All trips must be educational and well planned with an adequate number of chaperones. A ratio of one adult per ten students is acceptable.
4. Parents or other adults (of acceptable age and maturity) may serve as chaperones, but the instructor is responsible for ensuring that they understand their duties.
5. Faculty and chaperones must travel in school vehicles with students to ensure proper supervision and safety while in transport.
6. Last minute requests for trips will not be approved.
7. The request will be forwarded to the Director of Security and Director of Residence Life to see if a bus and driver are available in advance since we have a limited number of vehicles and drivers.
8. If admission fees or tickets are required as part of the field trip, participants should collectively share the costs for the bus driver.
9. The request will also be forwarded to the Director of Food Services. If bag lunches, beverages, or snacks are needed for the trip, the sponsor must make the request upon entry in the database and must be at least two weeks in advance using the Food Service Function section of the database request.
10. The teacher will submit in the request a list of those students participating in field trips. Notification of those attending will be posted in the Morning Announcements.
11. Students are responsible for obtaining class and homework assignments missed as a result of field trips. All work must be completed in accordance with the make-up policy.
12. The General Permissions Information Form provides parental signature allowing students to participate in all school sponsored field trips within Mississippi. Out of State requests must be secured with an additional Permission Slip.
13. Even though the school has general trip authorization signatures on file, the field trip sponsor should notify parents in advance of the scheduled event so they will know their child will be away from campus for a specified period of time.
14. A student without all of the required signed permission forms and/or assessed fees in advance of the trip date may not participate in the field trip.
15. Students who do not participate in field trips must complete an alternative assignment.
16. School rules and regulations found in the MSA handbook pertain to all school-sponsored trips.

Field trips shall not occur during statewide testing. All field trips will be complete prior to May 1. The sponsor of any field trip must ride on the bus with the bus driver and students to and from the destination. State statute requires that a staff member in addition to the bus driver should

ride in the bus with the students. For MSA field trips, rarely is there another staff member available to accompany the students. Parent chaperones or volunteers cannot be held liable for knowing MSA policies and implementing proper behavior expectations. Therefore, the sponsor of the field trip will be mandated to ride with the students on the bus.

STUDENT TEACHERS

Occasionally—upon request, student teachers may be assigned to a Mississippi School of the Arts teacher. All requests for the placement of student teachers must be addressed to the Principal or the Executive Director for approval **before** arrangements are made. Contact by the teacher education placement office must be made, not through the student or the prospective resident teacher.

The supervising teacher will be responsible for mentoring the development of the student teacher's classroom management, teaching and learning strategies, and professionalism.

1. Student teachers shall not administer or prescribe punishment to students.
2. Student teachers will abide by the policies set forth by the Mississippi School of the Arts.
3. Supervising teachers must never leave pupils alone in the care of a student teacher.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

When teachers anticipate being absent, they should discuss the absence with the Principal before finalizing plans to be absent from school. Faculty members must submit a request in the **Substitute Request Database** to the Principal for approval at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of requested absence. The request must have the up-to-date substitute file including all items listed below. Last minute requests will be denied. When a teacher will be off campus supervising school activities during the school day, the same procedures must be followed. MSA has a limited number of substitutes, so advance notification is mandatory, but illness and emergencies do occur occasionally.

When notifying the Principal or Executive Director during school, please call the following numbers:

Principal

Executive Director

601-823-1308 Office

601-823-1303 Office

Do not leave a voice mail message anywhere. Keep calling until you speak to someone personally. Classroom teachers must maintain an up-to-date substitute file that will be kept in the Principal's office in preparation for absences due to unexpected illness or emergencies. Folders must be clearly labeled with the teacher's name and containing the following:

- Generic lesson plans that are meaningful to the subject area, but applicable to any time period within the semester;
- Class rosters (Keep them up-to-date; it is not the duty of secretarial staff to print out class rosters.);
- Teaching schedules;
- Duty assignments with clear instructions;

- Select students in each class whose job it will be to assist a substitute in routine matters.
- Make sure that all necessary materials will be readily available for the substitute with instructions concerning what to do with assigned and completed work.
- Leave blank Campus Passes for use by the substitute.
- Please include Discipline Report forms for the substitute in case a problem arises.
- Follow up on reports left by the substitute regarding discipline problems that may have occurred during your absence.

PLEASE NOTE: All work produced in the absence of a teacher must be graded and included as a part of regular grades. Too frequently students perceive work assigned in the absence of a teacher as busywork—therefore, they think it is not important. Meaningful and challenging work left in the absence of a teacher supports continuous learning and helps maintain order and discipline.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* requires that all teachers of core academic subjects (English, Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Foreign Languages, History, Civics, Economics, Government, Geography and the Arts) be “highly qualified.” For more information about mandated teacher qualifications, see MDE website or call the Office of Teacher Licensure. All teachers must ensure that their teaching certificates are current.

In keeping with the intent of the NCLB federal legislation, parents have a right to know the educational credentials and experience of their child’s teachers. High quality teachers are mandated by NCLB. Therefore, in order to provide this information in an easily accessible venue, an abbreviated résumé for each faculty and administrative staff member will be posted on the MSA website. The information should include degree(s), major and minor subject area(s), years of experience, awards, publications, and specific school assignments (e.g., Student Government Sponsor, Club Sponsor). A recent photograph should be included.

TEXTBOOKS

Teachers are responsible for maintaining the inventory of all textbooks assigned to their classrooms or workstations. Upon arrival on campus, they must verify the Textbook Inventory form provided and report any differences to MSA Textbook Coordinator. The following procedures shall be used:

1. In assigning textbooks, teachers must record book identification numbers, book title, and the student receiving the textbook.
2. Secure all textbooks not assigned to individual students. Leaving books on open shelves in the classroom results in damage and loss.
3. When a student moves, books must be turned in to classroom teacher as a part of the withdrawal process before records are released. A teacher’s signature is required to complete the withdrawal process or before checking out for the summer or before graduation.
4. Students will be charged for books that are lost.

5. All losses and collections for textbooks shall be reported to the textbook coordinator(s) in the Y-Hut.
6. Teachers and staff members distributing books to pupils are authorized to collect for any damage or excessive wear of the textbooks.
7. Loss or damage fees will be based on the schedule published in the MSA Student Handbook.
8. The amount collected should be determined by the extent such damage has impaired the future use of the book and should be sufficient to impress upon parents and student the necessity for proper care and the use of the state-funded textbooks.
9. In order to comply with state accreditation policies, books that are more than ten (10) years old are not included in state textbook inventory and must not be stored permanently in classrooms. Since MSA uses many books that are more than ten years old for reference (e.g., plays, art history texts, trade books), these books will be stored in the library, checked out by the faculty member who needs them and returned to the library when work is completed. The staff member or student who checks the books out of the library is responsible for their return.
10. **Teachers must inventory textbooks and report the information to the Textbook Coordinator** at the end of the school year (semester). If a faculty member leaves campus at the end of the school year without completing textbook inventory requirements will have to return to campus to complete documentation not turned in.
11. Clearly mark all personal books and resources materials with your name in order to distinguish them from state property.

DUTY STATIONS

All teachers and employees who are available in the Student Life Center during the lunch period are responsible for correcting inappropriate behavior. This responsibility extends to the entire campus regardless of time of day.

Lunch Duty Cafeteria Line

These two duty stations are located (1) Monitoring students in line into the serving area and (2) Circulating throughout the dining room area. Duties may include:

1. Being on duty at 11:20 a.m. until 11:55 p.m.
2. Ensuring that students do not break line at the serving area.
3. Ensuring that all students abide by school rules during lunchtime.
4. Monitoring tables to make sure students dispose of trash, dishes, and trays properly.
5. Monitoring noise level and ensuring that the television remains off during mealtimes.
6. Encouraging good etiquette.
7. Completing Discipline Reports for those who violate school policy and report to the Principal.

8. Finding a replacement when absent or on a field trip.

Hall and Campus Duty

Between classes, all teachers should stand in their doorways before and after class in order to ensure safe and orderly conduct in the hallways when changing classes. All employees are responsible for addressing students in relation to proper behavior when passing in the common areas of the campus. Disciplinary action must be taken when students violate school guidelines.

OFF BLOCKS FOR STUDENTS

Students are not allowed to be in active classrooms if they are on off blocks unless they have work to do for a course directly taught by that classroom teacher. If the student needs to meet with a teacher, they must make an appointment that is outside of class time for the teacher and the student (before school, after school, planning period). If at anytime, students that need to work in a classroom on a project for that teacher distract other students or the teacher, they must leave the classroom.

FOOD SERVICES

The Mississippi School of the Arts participates in the National School Lunch/School Breakfast Program. Although meals are at no charge to students, an eligibility of free, reduced or paid is assigned to each student and local, state and federal assistance is given to MSA based on the eligibility of the students and the meals served. For this reason, students must complete a Free or Reduced Application for Meal to determine eligibility of benefits.

No person, because of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination in our United States Department of Agriculture Donated Food and Nutrition Program. Any person who believes he has been discriminated against should write immediately to: Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

Payment for employee or guest meals and extra items can be made in several ways: cash, check, or by establishing a prepaid account. Students and staff may establish prepaid accounts; student accounts are used to pay for items over and above the regular meal. The banked amount can be accessed to pay for meals or extra items purchased. An individual PIN identifies each account for security purposes. Prepayment is appreciated since it helps the line move quicker, and assures that you will be able to eat without cash. Charging meals or extra items is not allowed. Payment is due at the time of service.

Make checks payable to the Mississippi School of the Arts; include an employee or student PIN number on the check. MSA does not receive funding for adult meals; therefore, the price must cover the complete costs of the meal. Costs for employees and guests are as follows for the upcoming school year.

Breakfast	Employees:	\$3.00	Guests:	\$4.00
Lunch	Employees:	\$4.00	Guests:	\$5.00
Supper	Employees:	\$4.00	Guests:	\$5.00

Meal patterns and portion sizes are the same for students and adults. Selections exceeding meal pattern allowances will incur additional charges for each item.

CAMPUS ADDRESSES

United States Postal Service Mailing addresses should be used as follows:

All official school mail should be sent to the following address:

Mississippi School of the Arts
P.O. Box 229
Brookhaven, MS 39602-0229

Student and Residential Life mail box addresses:

Jane Doe
Mississippi School of the Arts
355 West Monticello Street
P.O. Box _____
Brookhaven, MS 39601

Do not use the above address for any official school mail. There is not a mailbox for general school mail, so any mail delivered may not be secure.

Ground Deliveries:

Packages and shipments that will be transported by ground (e.g., UPS, Fedex, AirBorne) should be addressed to the Y-Hut (308 West Cherokee Street) or the Student Life Center (355 West Monticello Street), dependent upon the recipient and/or the use and storage of the materials. Packages for students should be delivered to the SLC address.

For the purposes of fire or other 911 Emergency situations, the following are the correct addresses for the various buildings on the Mississippi School of the Arts campus:

Buildings Currently in Use:

Johnson Institute	300 West Cherokee Street	Brookhaven, MS 39601-
Lampton Auditorium	110 South Jackson Street	Brookhaven, MS 39601-3347

Student Life Center	355 West Monticello Street	Brookhaven, MS 39601-3205
Enochs Hall	335 West Monticello Street	Brookhaven, MS 39601-3205
Y-Hut	308 West Cherokee Street	Brookhaven, MS 39601-3220

Buildings Currently not in Use:

Cooper Hall	106 South Jackson Street	Brookhaven, MS 39601-3347
Elizabeth Cottage	306 West Cherokee Street	Brookhaven, MS 39601-3220

MAIL SERVICES

Incoming Mail

Mailboxes for faculty members and major campus departments (e.g., Residential Life, Food Services, Technology, Maintenance) are located on the main floor of the Y-Hut. Employees should check their mailboxes daily since the spaces fill up very quickly. P.O. Box 229, Brookhaven, MS 39602-0229 is the official mailing address for the school. Do not use the Student Life Center address for regular mail.

Outgoing Mail

An outgoing mail basket can be found on the top of the mailbox cabinet. Employees are discouraged from placing personal stamped mail in this location since it is not secure. MSA takes no responsibility for employee mail that is deposited here. Staff members are responsible for mailing their own mail not sending it to the YHut for mailing. This is to insure that the mail is sent as desired by the staff member.

Student Life Center

Although students have individual locked mailboxes, sometimes mail is addressed to the Student Life Center street address. This practice is discouraged. All mail and packages should be delivered to the First Floor Desk. The employee on duty will log them in and store them in a safe location. Email notifications will be sent to individuals who have mail or packages to be picked up. The individual to whom they are addressed will sign that they have been received.

No one should put mail or packages at the second floor desk or on the table near student mailboxes. Items placed in easily accessible, common areas are at-risk and may disappear.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell Phones and Text Messaging

Cell phones must be turned off or switched to silent or vibrate during work hours. Text messaging while at work is prohibited except during approved times or for work purposes.

Employees should not release cell phone numbers for work contact and should use MSA office numbers only. Employees may check cell phones during breaks or at lunchtime only. Employees must not use wireless devices to access cell phones during work hours. Students, parents and visitors, and other employees should never have to wait for assistance because an employee is on a cell phone. **Employees that witness a student in violation of the MSA Student Cell Phone Policy must take the phone, contact the Principal (school day) or Director of Residence Life (after-school hours) and complete a disciplinary report.** The phone should be given to the Principal or Director of Residence Life.

Personal Phone Calls

Personal phone calls on MSA landlines must be kept to an absolute minimum, and primarily restricted for cases of emergency only. Repeated phone calls that are not related to work result in wasted agency time and ultimately impacts productivity and quality of work. Refrain from using office phones for personal calls except during breaks or at lunchtime.

Phone Calls During Class Time

All MSA staff members must refrain from calling a teacher during class time except in matters of extreme importance. Teachers should make certain that they do not receive personal calls during class. All parents and guardians will be instructed to call during teacher preparation periods.

Use of iPods (Listening Devices)

Due to nationwide reports of the negative impact that the use of iPods (or similar devices) is having on productivity and isolation of employees in the workplace, such devices should not be used during the workday. Adults should not have to repeat themselves when conversing with students. Research reports widespread hearing loss for high school age students due to loud music and sounds so close to the ears due to ear buds and headphones.

COMMUNICATIONS (PRINT AND ELECTRONIC)

Designated Server Space

If the work of specific course, club or activity necessitates designated server space, the staff member should contact the Technology Coordinator, to set up the space. Requests must be made well in advance of the time the space will be used.

E-Mail—General

Each Mississippi School of the Arts full-time employee has two e-mail addresses: one assigned by the MS Department of Education and one that is part of the MSANet system. Both addresses must be checked regularly in order to ensure receipt of school and MDE communications in a timely manner. To send and receive e-mail, use the following:

MDE E-mail Address: username@mde.k12.ms.us

MSA E-mail Address: Firstname.Lastname@live.msa.k12.ms.us

MDE usernames are assigned by Management Information Systems to ensure that names are not duplicated in the state system.

MSA's campus has four working buildings housing the operations of many different departments. In order to stay in contact with all departments, please check MSA and MDE e-mails at least twice a day to stay informed. Employees are responsible for clearing e-mail accounts (MDE and MSA) periodically. Failure to do so may result in lost files, administrative reprimand, and/or loss of services. Personal e-mail accounts should not be accessed during work time. E-mailing jokes and other non-work materials is forbidden. All MSA employees must sign an Acceptable Use Contract agreeing to comply with state guidelines.

E-Mail Lists

Various e-mail lists have been organized to accommodate communication among specific groups that share a common purpose. An up-to-date list of groups may be found on the Staff Read Only server. If a staff member has need of a new e-mail list, please contact the Technology Coordinator.

E-Mails—Mass

Staff members must refrain from mass campus wide or group e-mails to students and staff especially if topics or proposals have not been cleared by the administration.

Morning Announcements

Daily announcements will be emailed to faculty, students and staff each morning of the school year. These announcements serve as a reminder of important daily and weekly information. Please read appropriate passages to students aloud during third block each day. A copy of each morning report will be posted at the Student Life Center at the first floor desk and in the library.

Announcements or information for the morning report must be emailed to the Attendance Secretary, Principal, and the Executive Director by 5pm the day before posting.

Staff Drop Boxes

To facilitate the transfer of shared documents, each staff member has a drop box on the main server. Keep in mind that any staff member can access a document that remains in a personal drop box. **Drop boxes are not private.** Delete documents periodically; they are not intended for long-term storage.

Staff Read Only Server

Generic forms, special school forms, photographs, handbooks, and other documents can be accessed on the Staff Read Only Server. Do not change or modify forms found on this server without contacting the administration.

Staff Shared Work Server

This server enables various staff members to share work documents in a central location. A good example is the campus work service folder that is shared by several employees in the administrative offices. Employees who have a need for a shared work folder should contact the Technology Coordinator.

Publicity and Promotions

MSA has a variety of performances, exhibits and events annually. All promotional materials (press releases, fliers, and programs) must be approved by the Executive Director prior to distribution or printing. If changes are requested a second version must be presented for approval unless otherwise instructed. Materials should be ready in a timely manner with adequate time to fix any issues before distribution.

The visual appearance of an institution makes the first impression when visitors arrive on campus. Therefore, posters and signs should reflect the quality of work that is at the heart of the MSA mission for the school. Materials promoting businesses, politics, churches, or other organizations are forbidden.

The staff member is responsible for proofing all text and check to ensure that copyrighted materials have not been appropriated. Photos of staff members, students, or others should not be used without permission. When posting signs on doors or windows, tape them inside of the glass on all corners to prevent curling and sagging. Do **not** post items on exterior surfaces or on painted OR wood surfaces inside. Please remove posted signs, the tape, and any residue in a timely manner.

FORMS AND PUBLICATIONS

A wide variety of forms are necessary to acquire data necessary for the effective operation of a residential school. Blank forms are stored on the "Staff Read Only" server and are organized in folders by source (MSA or MDE) and function. Download and save these forms in order to use them. The forms stored on the server are "Read Only" and cannot be completed and saved without downloading.

Occasionally, a need arises for a new form. All forms must be created using an appropriate MSA format. Before distribution and use, all forms must be approved by the Executive Director. Be certain that the document has been proofed for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation before submitting it for approval. The documents provided by an organization reflect on its professional quality.

Communications should be concise, clear to understand, but written from a supportive perspective. Use grammar and spell check to proof all documents. Word process and print all communications on school letterhead using 10-12 point Arial font with fully justified paragraphs.

When at all possible communications via electronic documents are preferred to conserve natural resources and economize in light of rising costs of postal services. Staff members must restrain from modifying MSA letterhead forms, memos, fax documents, etc. without permission. A consistent appearance in documentation helps create a school "brand"—a visual identity that communicates excellence and professionalism.

Please note that training will be provided to all employees on each form and its purpose. Staff are responsible for timely and accurate paperwork in all aspects of work. Habitual problematic submissions will result in a reprimand.

All forms found in this section can be found on the server entitled, "Staff Read Only."

CUMULATIVE FOLDERS AND PERMANENT RECORDS

MSA maintains student cumulative folders and permanent records according to state laws and regulations. Cumulative records are stored in locked, fireproof files in the administrative office

basement storage area. Authorized staff members (administrative staff, counselor, teachers) may examine and work on student records only in the administrative office areas. Parents may request to inspect a student's education records by completing a **Request to Inspect Records** form. The inspection will be arranged within 45 days of receipt of the request.

RECORDS RETENTION

The Mississippi School of the Arts shall retain copies of records in accordance with the mandatory school, State Board of Education, Department of Archives and History, and other state and federal requirements. The following documents will be used for guidelines:

1. State Of Mississippi Records Retention Schedules For School Districts
2. MS Cumulative Folders and Permanent Records Manual of Directions
3. Guidelines for retention of records for specific federal programs (e.g., E-Rate, National School Lunch Program)
4. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA),
5. The Confidentiality Section of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 1997 Amendments IDEA).

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULES FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS
GENERAL SCHEDULES

Implementation of the General Schedules

These general records retention schedules are issued by the Department of Archives and History, Local Government Records Office, as found in Section 39-5-9, Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, as amended. The Local Government Records Committee approved these schedules on the dates indicated. Additions and revisions to the schedules may be issued in the future by the Local Government Records Office and will be distributed accordingly.

The retention period listed in the general schedules for each records series is the **minimum** time necessary to retain the records. *There may be conditions or factors in a local government that require retention of a particular record series for a longer period than is required by the general records schedule, and, in such cases, the local governments are urged to continue retention of the records series as needed.* In no case, however, may records series be destroyed sooner than the scheduled retention period.

Records involved in investigations, audits, or litigation must be maintained until the settlement of the case and subsequent appeals regardless of disposition instructions found in a records retention schedule.

No local government records dating prior to 1920 shall be destroyed without special schedule directions issued by the Committee. Destruction of records dating prior to 1940 but after 1919 may be undertaken only with the written approval of the Director of the Department of Archives and History. The Committee may modify this date according to the historical value of a particular record series by placing a special statement in the retention period of such series with an approved records control schedule.

Upon expiration of the minimum retention period, local officials are authorized to dispose of the records if there are no extenuating circumstances. Disposition should be done in a manner consistent with the nature of the records (e.g. records containing confidential information should be disposed in a manner that will insure confidentiality). There may be instances when a county, upon the expiration of the retention period, may choose to transfer a records series to a public library or a local historical organization as an alternative to destruction. Prior to such a transfer, the county must contact the Local Government Records Office.

According to Mississippi law, records may not be destroyed except in accordance with an approved retention schedule. Therefore, records series not listed in these schedules are not eligible for disposal until an appropriate records retention schedule has been approved by the Local Government Records Committee.

CONFERENCES

Executive Director and Employee

Conferences will be held at the discretion of the Principal or Executive Director or upon request of the employee. Please schedule an appointment except in matters of urgency.

Director/Principal and Employee

Conferences will be held at the discretion of the supervising Director/Principal or upon request of the employee. Please schedule an appointment except in matters of urgency.

Administrator (Teacher, Staff) and Parent or Guardian

Since frequent communication with parents or guardians opens many doors, builds partnerships, and creates a supportive educational environment, MSA employees must be responsible in taking the initiative to schedule a parent conference at the first sign of a student's deviation from the norm. Parent/teacher conferences should be scheduled during a teacher's preparation period. Non-teaching employees may schedule appointments with parents according to individual work schedules and upon approval of immediate supervisor or Executive Director. When possible, the Executive Director will notify employees in advance when parents request a conference through the administrative offices. With sufficient advance notice, the Executive Director may be invited to attend conferences if requested. When travel distance is prohibitive, a parent conference may be held via speakerphone.

Employee—Student

An employee who has frequent and direct communication with students will find the profits to be overwhelming in the areas of student achievement, behavior, and overall progress. Employees should keep records where problems exist and improvement plans are designed. If a student is placed on probation, policies and procedures delineated in the MSA Student Handbook must be followed.

IEP/504 Plan

Brookhaven School District (BSD) will provide special education and related services to eligible students with disabilities enrolled at MSA, and will appoint the appropriate staff for any necessary meetings to monitor student progress.

GRADE REPORTING

In order to ensure timely feedback to students, parents, the counselor, and administrators, teachers must:

1. Publish their grading processes and procedures at the beginning of each course including how various assignments are weighted to determine student grades.
2. Keep accurate, up-to-date records of student grades.
3. Use SAM7 to enter and average grades according to system requirements.
4. Grade all assessments and major projects or assignments.
5. Average grades in accordance with approved grading scales.
6. Post grades in SAM7 within three school days after grading is completed.
7. Provide feedback regarding grades in a timely manner in order to facilitate instruction, remediation, and enrichment.

8. Meet deadlines for grade entry so that progress reports and/or report cards are completed on time.
9. Enter grades with no inaccurate or incomplete information provided.
10. Administer nine weeks examinations. No students are exempt from MSA exams.
11. Count a percentage for use of planners.
12. Include a daily participation, citizenship percentage
13. Count off points for each day late; establish a maximum number of days after which work will not be accepted.

Keeping a paper grade book is discouraged since errors may occur in transferring grades to the electronic system. A print copy of the SAM7 electronic grade book is recommended. Under no circumstance shall a paper grade book be a substitute for ongoing and timely entry of grades into SAM7. Parents have access to student attendance, grades, and discipline via ActiveParent.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Students

A current address, telephone number, and the name and telephone number for parents or guardians for each student are recorded in the student administrative management system, SAM7. When a staff member is notified that a change of information has occurred, he/she should complete a **Change of Student Information Form** and e-mail the document to the school Attendance Secretary, Director of Residence Life, Executive Director, Nurse, Principal, and Registrar who will add the information to student files as appropriate. The registrar will update information in SAM7. Changes should be reported within two days.

Administration, Faculty, and Staff

All employees must update their **Employee Contact Information Form** at the beginning of each school year. Emergency contact information must be included. Name and address changes should be reported within two days to the school office so that MSA can notify the Office of Human Resources at MDE. Contract workers must provide the same information.

EMERGENCIES

It is essential that the staff be knowledgeable of the school's emergency procedures. Remain calm during emergencies. Specific procedures are described in the **MSA Safety/Crisis Manual**.

Fire Drill

In the case of fire, know the fire evacuation routes and procedures. Carry class rosters during evacuation and account for each student under your supervision. Know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher and how to use it.

Inclement Weather Definitions:

- **Severe Weather Watch**—weather conditions are such that severe thunderstorms may

develop.

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

Inclement Weather Procedures

During **Severe Weather**, students will remain in classrooms or the Student Life Center unless notified by school personnel who will continuously monitor the situation.

If a **Tornado Warning** has been issued, the City of Brookhaven sirens will sound and an announcement will be made via MSA intercom. If electricity is not available, administrative personnel will verbally announce the implementation of tornado warning procedures.

In Johnson Institute, all students go to the center hallway on the first floor, be seated with backs against the walls. In the Student Life Center, all persons go to the cafeteria hallway. In the Y-Hut, personnel go to the basement along the interior walls.

In the event of approaching catastrophic weather conditions such as hurricanes or tropical storms that could spawn tornados, all personnel will be moved to the SLC first floor.

Personal Emergency

In case of a personal emergency, teachers should notify the Y-Hut immediately.

ACCIDENTS

Administration, faculty, and staff members are responsible for the safety of all students under their supervision. Injuries to students while they are the responsibility of the school must be given immediate attention. Accident procedures cannot be formulated to apply in all situations. The following will serve as general guidelines and may be modified as individual situations occur.

1. Follow the school emergency plan.
2. Remain calm and promptly decide what needs to be done to prevent the situation from worsening.
3. Act decisively—take charge.
4. If the accident requires further assistance, call the school nurse and call or send someone to the Y-Hut to ask for help.
5. If first aid is indicated and if you are knowledgeable, administer first aid.
6. Resume normal activities as soon as possible.

7. Prior to leaving school, submit a written report to the office using the **Accident Report Form** (student or staff) provided in your **School Safety and Crisis Management Manual** and on the Staff Read Only Forms folder in the network shared drive.

Fulltime employees who are injured on the job are covered by workman's compensation insurance. On the day of the accident, complete the appropriate MDE form that can be acquired from the Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director.

ARREST OF EMPLOYEE

Employees arrested for any reason must notify their supervisor within 24 hours. Supervisors will inform the Executive Director who will contact the MDE Office of Human Resources to determine what action may be taken.

REPORTING ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Reporting Authority

According to Mississippi Code (1972 annotated), the following people are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect:

1. Attorneys
2. Child's Caregiver
3. Dentists
4. Doctors
5. Interns
6. Law Enforcement Officers
7. Ministers
8. Nurses
9. Psychologists
10. Residents
11. School Principals
12. Social Workers
13. Teachers
14. Or any other person having reasonable cause to suspect a child has been neglected or abused.

Immunity

The law protects individuals who make reports of suspected child abuse or neglect from civil liability if they act in good faith. Absolute proof is not necessary before a report is filed. Child Protective Services is responsible for conducting its own investigation.

Steps To Follow After Suspecting Abuse.

1. Take the student to a private place and let the student tell you about the above.
2. **DO NOT** interrogate the student.
3. Encourage the student to express his/her feelings about the abuse.
4. Avoid leading questions.

5. Ask open-ended questions (e.g., What happened next?).
6. Try to remain calm and nonjudgmental.
7. Let the student know that you believe his or her story.
8. Reassure the student he/she is not to blame for what happened.
9. Respect the privacy of the student.
10. **DO NOT** tell other people who do not need to know.
11. Explain to the student what will happen next (i.e., tell them you will call someone who will help them.)

Reporting Within the School

Inform the Executive Director or the school counselor of your findings. The Executive Director and/or the counselor will work with employees in contacting social services.

Reporting to Social Services

1. Name and address of student and parents or caretaker
2. Date of Birth
3. Nature of student's injury
4. Identity and address of perpetrator, if known
5. Any other information you believe social worker will find helpful
6. Names and date of births of other children in the home

INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

As mandated by the State Superintendent of Education, MSA must implement policies and procedures related to the prohibition of inappropriate relationships and/or conduct with students. The Mississippi School of the Arts Student Handbook informs students that such conduct is prohibited and that if an employee treats them in any inappropriate way, they should report it immediately.

DO NOT email, text message, call or contact students via any form of communication regarding personal matters. All communications should be highly professional and related to school ONLY. The same applies to verbal or written conversations and communications at school, school related activities, or off campus.

DO NOT BLUR THE LINES BETWEEN ADULT AND STUDENTS!

The administration, when it hears or becomes aware that a situation might exist between one of its employees and a student, must investigate all possible leads. While rumors may be nothing more than gossip, the administration must evaluate the credibility of the information to determine if there is sufficient substantiation to investigate.

Investigation should include interviewing students, the accused staff member, other staff members, looking at phone records, emails, text messages, etc. If there is no evidence that any wrongdoing has occurred, the investigation can be closed. However, the investigation should be properly documented regarding what the inquiry entailed and that there was no evidence to support the charges.

If the investigation reveals suspicious conduct, then the investigation must continue until the allegation is dismissed as unfounded or there are sufficient facts to lend credibility to the charges. Usually the investigation does not prove absolutely that sexual behavior has occurred between a staff member and a student but that other inappropriate conduct did occur, such as personal emails and text messages between the staff member and a student. There may be a legitimate reason for an occasional email between an employee and a student, but it must be school related. Personal emails, telephone calls and text messages are not appropriate and are grounds for dismissal.

If there is a reasonable basis to believe that any type of sexual involvement has occurred between any employee and a student under the age of 18, it is mandatory that the Executive Director or principal must report it to the district attorney. Thus, if the investigation reveals information that provides a reasonable basis to believe that sexual involvement occurred, the district attorney must be informed. In summary, the administration must thoroughly investigate all accusations of misconduct in an expeditious manner. Documentation of the investigation is important, regardless of the conclusions reached. Once evidence is found, the information must be turned over to the District Attorney and dismissal of the employee should take place.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The policy of the MSA/MDE is that employees are able to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. The MDE strictly prohibits any form of sexual harassment and pledges to swiftly and fully address each complaint under this policy. The State Superintendent shall provide a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome sexual advances, threats, bodily contact, or other deliberate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Also included are remarks, gestures, physical contact, display or circulation of written or electronic materials, pictures or objects derogatory to any employee. Such behavior shall be strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated at any organizational level.

Whether male or female, no employee or applicant should endure sexual harassment. Any person believing he/she has been sexually harassed should immediately report the incident to management. The appointing authority shall take appropriate corrective action. This rule applies equally to same sex harassment.

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited at any organizational level. This includes co-workers, same-level employees or employees and supervisors. Sexual harassment is expressly detrimental when the offending employee is in a position to affect the compensation or employment status of the person being harassed, and the MDE supervisors are strictly prohibited from using their supervisory role in a harassing manner. Sexual harassment is behavior of a sexual nature that is uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct directed at an employee because of his or her sex. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially appropriate nature. Specifically, sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to: Repeated offensive sexual flirtations, Repeated requests for dates, Advances or propositions, Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, Graphic or degrading comments about appearance, Display of sexually suggestive objects, appearance, pictures or images, Offensive or degrading cartoons or jokes, Offensive or degrading e-mail or electronic images.

No employee should imply, suggest, or threaten an applicant's or employee's cooperation of a sexual nature (or refusal thereof) will have any effect on the individual's employment status, including, but not limited to assignment, compensation, advancement or other condition or employment. Sanctions for Violations of this policy will be addressed in a manner pursuant to the State of Mississippi personnel provisions. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

Any and all acts of retaliation against persons who utilize the grievance procedure are expressly prohibited. Similarly, the MDE prohibits retaliation against witnesses or any other employees who might be called on to participate in investigations of complaints.

A report/grievance should be filed immediately with the appropriate supervisor. **Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at the Mississippi School of the Arts.**

SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATIONS

Pursuant to §45-33-49(5), of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, the Mississippi Department of Education shall notify all school districts annually regarding the availability of the Sex Offender Registry at the Mississippi Department of Public Safety (DPS) Web site: http://www.sor.mdps.state.ms.us/sorpublic/hpsor_search.aspx.

DPS information provides the name, address, photograph, if available, date of photograph, place of employment, crime for which convicted, date and place of conviction, hair, eye color, height, race, sex and date of birth of any registrant. Also, a sheriff shall maintain records for registrants of the county and shall make available to any person upon request other information deemed necessary for the protection of the public. The sheriffs shall be responsible for verifying their respective registries annually against DPS records to ensure current information is available at both levels.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

The Mississippi School of the Arts is a drug free workplace including all school facilities, grounds, and vehicles. This policy includes alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. All employees of the Mississippi School of the Arts as employees of the Mississippi Department of Education are bound by the following policy. Within this policy the words "Mississippi School of the Arts" are interchangeable with Mississippi "Department of Education" and "Department."

It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Education to maintain a drug and alcohol abuse-free workplace. As a condition of employment, all employees will be required to certify, in writing, that they will abide by the terms of this policy as set out below. All employees will be required to sign, at the time of employee orientation an acknowledgment of the "Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988" memorandum (Section 7.2). The signed certification will be a part of the employee's permanent personnel file.

In accordance with Public Law 100-690, the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 and Public Law 101647, the Drug Free Schools and Community Act of 1986, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace of the Department of Education. Pursuant to this law, all Department of Education employees will notify the State Superintendent of Education if convicted for violation of any criminal drug statutes, should said violation occur in the workplace, no later than five (5) days after such conviction.

As used in this policy, the term "drugs" includes alcohol, inhalants (chemical vapors), cannabis (marijuana), controlled substances, and similar substances that impair a person's ability to work productively and safely. The proper use of drugs as prescribed by a licensed physician is not subject to disciplinary action. If an employee's ability to work safely may be affected by the use of a

prescribed drug, the employee must inform his/her supervisor so that precautions can be taken.

The Mississippi Department of Education's policy is that employees shall not be allowed to work or participate in any Department of Education activities while using alcohol or under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance which alters their ability to work safely and productively. Reporting to work under the influence of, or when ability is impaired by, alcohol or the unlawful use of a controlled substance, is cause for termination. The use of alcohol or the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance while on the job, on the office premise or participating in any Department of Education activity is cause for termination.

Employees who suffer from the problems of drug abuse or alcoholism must recognize that it is their responsibility to address these problems. Upon request by the employee for assistance with a substance abuse problem, the Department of Education Human Resources Office will advise the employee of leave, insurance benefits and available treatment resources. It is the employee's obligation to seek diagnosis and/or treatment and to abide by any program of care prescribed by medical personnel. A request for assistance may not be entertained if it is made after the employee engages in misconduct which the State Superintendent considers to be cause for dismissal, and no request for assistance will prevent the State Superintendent from taking disciplinary action based on the misconduct which may have been related to the employee's use of alcohol or drugs.

The Department of Education, however, is under no obligation to maintain the employment of anyone who constitutes a threat to the workplace or whose current use of alcohol or drugs prevents him/her from working safely or productively, or otherwise performing his/her duties.

The Department has adopted the policy that all areas it occupies will be tobacco-free. The Mississippi Board of Education has the right to revise this policy. Nothing in this policy grants any property right to an employee who serves at the will and pleasure of the State Superintendent of Education. The Department requires that all employees report to work without any alcohol or illegal or mind-altering substances in their systems. No employee shall report for work or remain on duty when using any controlled substance, except when the use is pursuant to the instructions of a physician who has advised the employee that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to perform in a safe manner.

Employees must inform their supervisor when they are legitimately taking medication that may affect their ability to work, in order to avoid creating safety problems and violating the Drug and Alcohol Policy. No employee shall use alcohol while on duty. The Department also prohibits employees using, possessing, manufacturing, distributing or making arrangements to distribute illegal drugs while at work or on department property. Further, outside conduct of a substance abuse-related nature that affects an employee's work, the Department's relationship with the government or reflects badly on the Department is prohibited.

"Workplace" is defined as the site for the performance of work done including a school building, campus grounds or other school premises; any school-owned vehicle or any other school approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; off-school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or performance event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall abide by the terms of the school respecting a drug-free workplace and shall report to work without any alcohol or illegal mind-altering substances in their systems.

All employees should be very familiar with the MSA Student Handbook policy related to possession and/or use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

DRUG TESTING

All Mississippi School of the Arts employees who are licensed bus drivers are subject to 49 C.F.R. Part 40 and the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991. In order to enforce these rules, the Department reserves the right to require the above employees to submit, at any time an employee is on duty or at any time an employee may normally be called to be on duty, to drug tests to determine the presence of prohibited substances. (For more information on this policy, see the MDE Policies and Procedures Manual.)

SMOKING POLICY

Mississippi Uniform Smoke-Free Public Place Act of 2007

The **Mississippi Uniform Smoke-Free Public Place Act of 2007** prohibits smoking on all educational property by all persons at all times. This ban includes all employees, students, and patrons attending school sponsored events and meetings. "Educational property" means any public or private school building or bus, public school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field or other property owned, used or operated by any local school board, school or directors for the administration of any public or private educational institution or during a school-related activity, effective July 1, 2007.

Civil penalties

Any person who violates this act shall be subject to a civil fine and upon conviction shall be liable as follows:

1. For a first conviction, a warning;
2. For a second conviction, a fine of Seventy-five Dollars (\$75.00); and
3. For all subsequent convictions, a fine not to exceed One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$150.00).

Anyone convicted under this section shall be recorded as being fined for a civil violation of this act and not for violating a criminal statute. Any such violation shall be tried in any justice court or municipal court with proper jurisdiction.

It is the responsibility of all law enforcement officers and law enforcement agencies of this state to ensure that the provisions of this act are enforced.

A person or employer shall not discharge, refuse to hire or in any manner retaliate against any employee, applicant for employment, or customer because that person exercises a right to a smoke-free environment afforded by this act.

In keeping with the requirements of the **Mississippi Uniform Smoke-Free Public Place Act of 2007, smoking is banned on the Mississippi School of the Arts campus and adjacent properties owned by the Mississippi School of the Arts Foundation provided for school use.**

MSA employees who smoke may do so during breaks and at lunch. Since all MSA employees serve as role models, smokers must leave the campus to smoke out of the view of students. Smoking is not allowed in vehicles on campus. Employees who are found smoking on the MSA campus (including adjacent properties) are subject to disciplinary action and civil penalties.

PLAGIARISM

Because plagiarism is a nationwide problem in schools, each faculty member must make arrangements to instruct their students in relation to violation of copyrights at the beginning of each course and include periodic reminders throughout the grading periods. Each arts discipline teacher must teach the difference between adaptation, appropriation, and copying in the various arts forms and make an appointment with the librarian to do additional instruction on plagiarism using online resources. Violation of copyright is stealing and results in serious disciplinary action. All employees are responsible for reporting incidences of plagiarism, including copying homework. Each employee is expected to serve as a role model by setting an example of respect for the work of others. Schools have been assessed severe fines for copyright violations. Be careful; ask questions. Staff members responsible for ensuring that documents created under their supervision do not contain copyrighted images, photos, text or other media. Adults must model correct methodologies for students.

MEDICATION

MSA employees will dispense medication to students in accordance with policies included in the ***Student Handbook***. Over the counter medications may be acquired from the nurse for self-administration by employees.

UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY

School employees who suspect or have direct knowledge of unlawful activity either by students or other school personnel should report their suspicions to the Executive Director or their immediate supervisor who will take appropriate action.

PARKING—GENERAL

Employees may park in any lined spaces in the Student Life Center lot. Some spaces are marked "Staff" on the east side of the lot adjacent to the Handicapped Parking Area. Marked parking spaces along the north and south sides of Cherokee Street may also be used. These are public city parking areas, so no spot may be designated. All parking is filled on a first come, first served basis.

PARKING—HANDICAPPED

Mississippi Code § 27-19-56(5)(a) makes it unlawful to park a motor vehicle in an area set aside for persons who are disabled if the vehicle does not have:

1. A temporary or permanent placard visible on the windshield,
2. A special license plate displayed on the vehicle, or
3. A disabled American veteran tag or plate displayed on the vehicle.

All MSA employees who qualify to park in a special handicapped parking space must have on file with Security Office:

1. A copy of the handicap placard/tag application submitted to the DMV, and
2. A copy of the temporary/permanent placard with expiration date, or

3. A copy of the disabled tag displayed on the vehicle.

This information must be submitted to the Security Office every twelve (12) months. Any employee found parking in a special handicap parking space without proper documentation on file may be subject to disciplinary action. First offense will result in a written warning by the Director of School Safety. Any subsequent offense(s) will result in a citation and fine by the Brookhaven Police Department.

MSA employees must refrain from parking in the SLC circle or behind the cafeteria except for purposes of unloading. As soon as the car is unloaded, the vehicle should be moved. Employees must not park in fire zones; violations may result in warnings and fines as described above.

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

Collection of money (e.g., dues, fees, fines, fundraising proceeds, tickets or admission costs) requires prior approval of the Executive Director or his/her designee. By law, MSA must comply with state procurement and accounting procedures. Because we are a state agency whose funds are dispersed through the MS Department of Finance and Administration, all purchases must be handled through a requisition process or via state procurement card.

The MSA bank account is merely a clearing account that serves as a mechanism for transferring money to the MS Department of Education (MDE). We cannot write checks to make purchases or payments from this account. Therefore, advance planning is necessary in order for funds to be deposited and requisitions prepared well in advance of the time when goods or services are needed. **Please Note: Requests for Services and Goods (requisitions) take three to four weeks or longer to be processed through MDE depending on the time of the fiscal year.**

Staff members must meticulously adhere to proper procedures when collecting and handling funds. All employees who collect funds must acquire a numbered receipt book from Y-Hut Staff. Employees must sign for the receipt book and are responsible for its return at the end of the year or when all receipts have been issued and a new book is needed.

- When administration, faculty, or staff members collect money, a receipt must be provided to the individual making payment.
- Employees must not allow students to collect, receipt, or handle money at any time.
- Keep receipted money in a locked, secure location.
- Before leaving school each day, turn in money collected and the number of the receipts used to the Y-Hut.
- Submit a Receipt Log that includes a list of persons from whom money has been collected, the purpose for the fee, and the amount received from each individual. If you are collecting money from an entire class, you may attach a print roster and write, "see attached" in the space provided for names. The Receipt Log is located on the Staff Read Only server in Excel format for electronic entry and calculations.
- The Y-Hut staff will provide a receipt to the employee for the monies received (by receipt numbers) that day, and sign and date the Receipt Log. A copy of the form should be maintained in the employee's files.

- The amount of money submitted must agree with the receipts covered in the daily deposit. Deposits are stored in the school safe until they are transferred to the clearing account.

The Executive Director is responsible for all funds collected in the school. For this reason, no collection of funds or purchases of any kind may be made without prior knowledge and approval of the Executive Director. Failure to follow accounting and purchasing procedures may result in disciplinary action, personal liability or termination of employment.

PURCHASING

Purchasing Procedures

The purchasing process begins after a need for goods, services, or equipment has been identified. The steps necessary to complete the process are listed in general.

1. MSA office verifies budget availability for purchase based on quotes, catalog, or Internet pricing.
2. Each department should prepare Request for Services of Goods Forms for their programs and submit them to the Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director for further processing.
3. The Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director submits approved Request for Services of Goods Forms to the Accounting Office at the Mississippi Department of Education.
4. The Accounting Office issues a purchase order that is mailed to the vendor.
5. The vendor fills the order.
6. MSA receives the order.
7. The requesting employee checks the shipment to verify the receipt of all merchandise in good condition.
8. The requesting employee signs the packing slip and returns it to the Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director who files the packing slip until an invoice is received.
9. If an invoice is included with the shipment, sign it and return it also.
10. Keep a copy of all purchasing documents in departmental files for reference in case of questions.
11. The Executive Director approves invoices for payment and the Administrative Assistant routes invoice to the Accounting Office.
12. Accounts Office makes payment to the vendor.

Equipment

Please note that funding for equipment is very limited. If equipment is requested, attach a memo addressed to the budget office clearly giving justification for the purchase. Why is it needed? Who

will use it? What impact will result if the purchase is not approved? If multiple departments or groups of users can share equipment, requests are more likely to be approved (e.g., jig saw to be used by visual arts, theatre, and maintenance staff and students for _____ purpose). If you have questions about what is classified as "equipment," please ask for clarification.

Purchasing Thresholds

House Bill 1012 (effective March 20, 2007) revised the competitive bid thresholds for the state purchasing statute, §31-7-13, Mississippi Code of 1972.

In an effort to be fiscally accountable when spending public funds that do not require competition by obtaining written quotes, employees should continue to comparison shop, when time permits, for the best prices and quality. The new limits are exclusive of freight or shipping.

The updated thresholds are listed for the purchase of goods, equipment and furniture. As a reminder, state contract purchases do not require competition.

Thresholds for Quotes/Bids: Non-State Contract Purchases

\$.00 to \$5,000	Purchase from any vendor, no quotes required
\$5,000 to \$49,999	Purchases over \$5,000, but less than \$50,000 require two written quotes
Over \$50,000	Purchases over \$50,000 shall be advertised once per week for two consecutive weeks, sealed bids opened after seventh working day of last day advertised.

State Contract Purchases

If an item is on state contract, agencies must purchase from vendors who have submitted the lowest bid. Items such as office supplies, paper, toner for printers, furniture, janitorial supplies, and other commonly used merchandise may be included on state contracts. Questions about such items can be answered in the Y-Hut. Total expenditures for any single state contract item from any other vendor (e.g., Wal-Mart) must be less than \$25.00. State contract items can usually be purchased via state credit card.

Purchasing Violations

What is a purchasing violation? Section 31-7-57 of the MS Code states that when an employee receives goods or services without a purchase order, the agency has no liability for the bill. The employee is held personally liable. A purchasing violation is committed when:

1. An employee receives goods or services without a purchase order.
2. An office prepares intentionally two or more requisitions to the same vendor when one order combined is greater than \$5,000. This is done to avoid getting written quotes/sealed bids and is called splitting a purchase order.
3. An employee personally utilizes a rebate, gift or prize given to the agency by a vendor.

PLEASE NOTE: When an employee orders or receives goods/services in the name of the Mississippi School of the Arts before requesting a purchase order, the employee will be held personally liable for the bill. The administrative staff will not send the requisition and invoice to the Mississippi Department of Education.

Unallowable Purchases

The following items cannot be purchased using state funds:

1. Individual memberships to professional organizations
2. Individual Chamber of Commerce memberships
3. Individual personalization of planners, portfolios, or briefcases
4. Certificates to state employees, public officials, or board members
5. Plaques to state employees, public officials, or board members
6. Awards to state employees, public officials, or board members

Penalties For Purchasing Violations

1. Reprimands
2. Loss of Job
3. Fines
4. Imprisonment
5. Repayment of misspent funds
6. Vendor will re-bill order to the individual

Sole Source Justification:

If an individual wishes to purchase an item that is produced by a sole source, the justification letter that accompanies the Request for Goods and Services form should include the following information:

1. What will the product be used for?
2. Is it compatible with existing equipment?
3. Will the product be used for testing or trial use only?
4. Do other companies make similar products that are acceptable?
5. How is the product special or unique?
6. What can this product do that other products cannot do?
7. Is there a copyright or patent on this product?
8. Is the manufacturer the only distributor?
9. Does the manufacturer only sell to specific distributors instead of direct sales?

Sales Tax Exempt Status

According to Section 27-65-105(a), Mississippi Code of 1972, as an agency of the Mississippi Department of Education, the Mississippi School of the Arts is exempt from sales taxes. This Section provides that sales of tangible personal property or services to the United States Government, the State of Mississippi and its departments, institutions, counties and municipalities or departments or school districts of said counties and municipalities are exempt from sales taxes. As a prerequisite to exemption, the sale of property of charge for services must be sold directly to, billed directly to and paid for directly by the exempt entity.

A letter documenting tax-exempt status is available in the Y-Hut.

Credit Card Purchases

Several members of the MSA administrative team have state procurement cards to facilitate

purchasing and to reduce paperwork involved in Requests for Services and Goods. The Executive Director must approve all credit card purchases before the order is placed. All purchases must be made according to MDE procurement card policies and procedures.

Petty Cash Purchases

MSA does not have a petty cash fund available and therefore all purchases must follow procedures as outlined above.

Delivery “Ship To” Codes

When completing a **Request for Services or Goods Form** for materials or equipment that has to be delivered, use the following codes in the “Ship To” line:

- 23S Administration, Admissions, and Academics Departments
- 23W Maintenance, Transportation & Safety; Nurse, Residential Life, and Technology Departments
- 23X Food Services

If the request does not involve the shipment of goods use the Administrative Code 23S.

PROPERTY/EQUIPMENT/FURNITURE USAGE

State policies regarding the inventory and use of equipment are strict. The person to whom the equipment is assigned is financially responsible for that equipment. Therefore, under no circumstances should any person use a master key to enter a storage equipment area and remove items for use without authorization. Events and needs should be planned for and equipment reserved well in advance. All equipment stored in the library must be checked out using the appropriate form.

Do not check something out in your name and then allow a student to use it. A contract signed by all parents and students regarding use of equipment is kept on file each year. Parents and/or students are financially responsible for any loss of or damage to school property. These contracts cover all MSA owned items. Require that students check out needed equipment from the library. Under no circumstances should a student be allowed to use an employee’s computer.

MSA has to account for equipment to MDE with a formal quarterly audit. Employees are responsible for all equipment assigned to them. Do not loan it; do not borrow someone else's.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Complete a **Furniture/Equipment Inventory Form** at the beginning and end of the school year.
2. All furniture must remain in its assigned location. Do not rearrange or remove any furniture.
3. Do not move furniture or equipment into hallways; this clutters passageways and creates possible safety hazards.
4. Check out all equipment (e.g., laptops, projector, portable tables, cameras, tripods, lenses) with the library, technology department, or staff member responsible for that equipment.
5. Ensure that parents sign the appropriate contracts before a student is allowed to use any MSA equipment.

6. Store equipment not in use in a secure location. Employees are responsible for all equipment checked out to them.
7. At no time should MSA property/equipment/furniture be removed from campus.
8. Any maintenance problem or malfunction of equipment should be reported to the appropriate MSA administrator.
9. Employees should at all times require students to exercise care in use of school property and equipment.
10. Any damages sustained to property or equipment must be assessed and paid for, no matter how minor. Such occurrences must also be reported to the Executive Director promptly.

RECOGNITION—EMPLOYEE OR STUDENT

Occasionally circumstances may exist when an employee or student deserve recognition for exemplary work, accomplishments, or awards. Presentations of plaques, trophies, or other awards are not allowed unless authorized through state or federal regulations, statutes, or grants. Therefore, certificates and/or certificate holders are the only items that can be used for recognition purposes.

RECYCLING

In a concerted effort to recycle as many resources as possible, all employees and students are encouraged to make a concerted effort to conserve the following items that are collected for delivery to area vendors who work in partnership with the Environmental Club and school staff in receiving items for recycling. MSA recycles the following items: plastic drink bottles, soft drink and juice cans, white office paper, cardboard, and plastic grocery bags. All students and staff members are responsible for helping keep MSA “green.” Use the containers provided for depositing these reusable resources.

RESOURCE PERSONS

Well-planned use of community resource persons makes a valuable contribution to educational programs. Employees are encouraged to arrange for such persons to discuss appropriate topics with students. The Executive Director must approve all topics prior to extending an invitation.

SAFETY

All employees must take all possible steps to ensure the safety of students at school. The interior environment, campus, and student activities must be in harmony with the requirements of safety. Immediately report any unsafe condition or behavior on campus to the appropriate administrator.

VISITORS

All visitors to the school shall report to the school security office in the Student Life Center, turn in their identification, and receive an official visitor’s pass before entering any other school facility. This procedure applies to all visitors, guest artists, community members, etc. The only exceptions are groups who have made appointments for campus tours and are escorted by school staff. All employees shall stop any unauthorized person on campus, direct them to the security office, and report their presence to the security office immediately.

WELLNESS

Students are not the only ones who need good health. School employees who want to encourage children and teens to live a healthy lifestyle will be more successful if they model healthy behaviors. The Mississippi School of the Arts Wellness Policy emphasizes a commitment to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, marketing, and implementation. It is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources to serve the needs of students and staff, taking into consideration cultural differences. The Mississippi School of the Arts encourages its staff to pursue a healthy lifestyle that contributes to their improved health status and personal commitment to the health of students and creates positive role modeling. All staff at the Mississippi School of the Arts should model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. The school nurse will work with all students and staff to establish a personalized wellness program and conduct periodic assessments to monitor wellness.

CARE OF WORK, LEARNING, AND LIVING SPACES

All work, learning, living, and recreational areas should be neat, colorful, interesting, and attractive. Old materials, supplies, and equipment should be removed and discarded. It is expected that spaces will be in the condition that they are found throughout the year. Keep in mind fire codes and do not block exits or walkways.

FACILITY USAGE

Due to limited space on campus, all facilities must be reserved for use after 5:00 p.m. All property (real and spatial) belongs to the school for the purposes of educating and supporting students. A spirit of cooperation will enhance collaboration as the population and services of the school increase. All requests related to facility usage should be directed to the office of the Executive Director.

WORK SPACES

Shared Instructional Spaces

Due to increased student enrolment over the past few years, some classrooms or other instructional spaces may have to be shared with itinerate teachers. Although such situations are never ideal, staff must respect the work of colleagues and collaborate in using available facilities.

Desk Areas and Offices

Employee offices and desk areas are not spaces for extended visits with adults or students. While all staff members should be supportive of students, visitors, colleagues, and others. These persons should not be encouraged to "hang out" in work areas during free time. Employees should maintain a friendly, but professional demeanor when working with students, staff, and visitors.

Faculty Workroom

The faculty workroom is located on the second floor of Johnson Institute. All faculty members are assigned keys to the workroom for their convenience. Individuals are responsible for maintaining the space in which they work. Monitor personal items in the refrigerator to prevent spoilage. **No student should be in the faculty workroom without a teacher. The workroom door should remain locked at all times.**

Hallways

Although classroom, storage, and exhibition spaces on campus are limited, staff members must keep hallways clean and free of obstruction. Fire codes must be followed and areas should be monitored on a daily basis. Hallways are not storage areas for excess furniture, equipment, works-in-progress, or student books and belongings.

Health Center

Due to the nature and function of the Health Center and office areas, doors must remain locked at all times. Staff should never allow a student to enter the health center unless accompanied by the school nurse or other authorized adult. Medications must be kept in locked areas at all times.

Second Floor Desk

The area behind the reception desk on the second floor of the Student Life Center is reserved for adults only. It is not a storage area for student belongings or a hangout area at any time. Visitors should receive service without having to compete with teens lounging around the desk area.

Security Office

Although students have to enter the security office to turn in or retrieve car keys, students should not be allowed to hang around in the security office where all the monitoring equipment is easily accessible. The security office must remain locked when officers are making rounds on campus. MSA employees must not use the security office as a lounge area during the workday.

Technology Office

The MSA technology office is off limits to students unless they are accompanied by the Technology Coordinator. Valuable equipment must be inventoried and should not be accessible to anyone without permission. Staff members must not use master keys to enable a student to access the technology office.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION TO STUDENTS

MSA follows a self administration policy for students to take prescription and over the counter medications. Designated staff members have been trained on tracking administration of medications. Employees who have been trained are required to see the medication that a student is taking, watch them take it, and document the action in the school software. Employees who are not designated or trained are prohibited from administering medications at any time.