

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
Consent Agenda
August 19, 2021

MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

- D. Approval of two (2) addenda to the MSDB Operations Manual: To establish a Donation of Leave Policy and add a bereavement leave clause to Appendix D

Background and Purpose: MSDB is proposing the addition of a Donation of Leave Policy on page 24 to be used concurrently with FMLA once an employee's personal and sick days have been exhausted. This policy aligns with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-307.

In addition, MSDB is requesting a bereavement clause addendum to Appendix D, page 91 of the MSDB Operations Manual to include three (3) days of bereavement leave for immediate family members as defined on page 19 of the manual.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind



Operations Manual August 2021

REVISED July 30, 2021

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Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

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NON-DISCRIMINATION AND AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The Mississippi State Board of Education (SBE), the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), and the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) 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 office listed below has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the nondiscrimination policies of the above-mentioned entities.

The ADA covers employers with 15 or more employees and generally prohibits discrimination against “qualified individuals with disabilities.” A qualified individual with a disability is an applicant or an employee who can perform the essential functions of the job in question with or without reasonable accommodation. Disability is defined as: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; a record of such impairment; or being regarded as having such impairment.

The SBE, MDE, and MSDB will reasonably accommodate qualified applicants and employees with disabilities unless making the accommodation imposes an undue hardship on the School or District. MSDB will reasonably accommodate known disabilities. Therefore, employees needing accommodations should inform their supervisor. MSDB expects the reasonable accommodation process to be a mutual process by which the School/District and the employee search for a mutually acceptable reasonable accommodation. MSDB is committed to following nondiscrimination practices with all qualified employees and applicants.

All complaints of noncompliance with the ADA, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or discrimination should be reported to:

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES

1403 Eastover Dr.

Jackson, MS 39211

Phone: 601-984-8107

State Board of Education

Mrs. Rosemary G. Aultman, Chair
Mr. Glen V. East, Vice-Chair
Dr. Wendi Barrett
Dr. Angela Bass
Dr. Karen J. Elam
Mr. Bill Jacobs
Dr. Ronnie L. McGehee
Mr. Matt Miller
Ms. Mary Werner
Ms. Micah Hill, Junior Student Representative
Ms. Amy Zhang, Senior Student Representative

State Superintendent of Education

Carey Wright, Ed.D.

Chief Academic Officer

Nathan Oakley, Ph.D.

MSDB Leadership Team

Superintendent – Jeremy Stinson, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent – Leigh Warren, Ed.D.
MSD Principal – Cheryl Kaler
MSB Principal – Eddie Spann
Interim Special Education Director – LaQuandra Jones
MIRC Director – TBD
Transition Coordinator – Antonio Magee, Ph.D.
Chief Financial Officer – Alison Bradford
Business Operations Specialist – Keshia Sanders
Facilities Director – Otto “Bud” Pace
Transportation Director – Charles Dodd
Warehouse and Custodial Director – Michael Smith
Network Administrator – Eahmon Jamison
Systems Administrator – Joey Dickerson



OVERVIEW

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind are two special purpose schools combined into one school district. Each school serves the unique purpose of providing educational and residential services to qualifying students across the state of Mississippi.

The Mississippi School for the Blind (MSB) was established on March 2, 1848 by the State Legislature (Article 9, Chapter 43 – Laws of Mississippi) and currently operates under Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated, Title 43, Chapter 5. MSB serves students who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind.

The Mississippi School for the Deaf (MSD) was established in 1854 and is currently governed under Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated, Title 43, Chapter 5. MSD serves students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

The two schools were combined onto one campus in 1999. Over the years, certain services were combined to serve both schools including Facilities and Maintenance, Grounds and Transportation, Custodial Services, Health Services, Food Services, and the Business Office. In 2018, the two schools were combined into one district and Administration was restructured to serve over both schools.

On June 25, 2020 during the 2020 Regular Legislative Session, Governor Tate Reeves signed into law HB 667 amending MSDB provisions related to personnel, purchasing, and procurement for MSD, MSB, and MSDB. In implementing HB 667, new policies, procedures, and handbooks were developed and approved by the State Board of Education (SBE). MSDB registered with all required agencies and entities authorizing and allowing MSDB to conduct business as a school and as a district in educating students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deafblind across the state of Mississippi.

This manual, as approved by the State Board of Education (SBE), is a publication of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) and governs all policies applicable to MSDB as it is governed by the SBE. The information in this Policy Manual should serve as a guide in providing a safe and orderly environment that is supportive of successful teaching and learning. As appropriate and necessary, new policies will be developed, approved by the SBE, and added to this manual.

MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

Mississippi School for the Deaf

Vision

Empower Your Future

Mission

The Mississippi School for the Deaf strives to be a diverse bilingual community. In partnership with families, MSD will provide an exemplary education in nurturing, engaging, and challenging environments to help ensure our students achieve personal excellence and become productive citizens.

Philosophy

The Mississippi School for the Deaf advocates self-improvement through the education of all Deaf and Hard of Hearing students by utilizing a bilingual philosophy that places an emphasis on the linguistics of both American Sign Language and English.

Beliefs

1. All people have equal value.
2. All students can learn and are lifelong learners.
3. ASL/English Bilingual Education (AEBE) is a basic right of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. ASL and English are two separate languages.
4. Both Deaf and Hearing interactions are vital to students' bicultural development.
5. Students benefit when parents and families are involved in the educational process, as all adults are vital educators.
6. A safe, secure, inviting, and healthy school environment is essential for learning.
7. All students need to be immersed in a creative, challenging, environment that encourages risk-taking that enhances their social, emotional, and intellectual skills.
8. Students have the right to have their individual needs met through learning opportunities that promote optimum success.
9. Students should have cultural awareness, respect, and sensitivity when choosing a natural mode of communication with peers, staff, family, and the diverse multi-cultural society.

School Colors

Purple and Gold

Mascot

Bulldogs

Mississippi School for the Blind

Vision

Learning Without Limits!

Mission

The Mississippi School for the Blind promotes a strong foundation for learning and independence by providing specialized adapted services and materials to enhance maximum potential for students with visual impairments or blindness.

Beliefs

1. The learning needs of all students with visual impairments or blindness should be the primary focus on all decisions impacting the work of the school.
2. Students with visual impairments or blindness learn in different ways and should be provided with a variety of instructional approaches / strategies to support their learning.
3. Special services and resources are required by visually impaired and blind students, including those with additional disabling conditions such as limited English proficiency, talented and gifted, and mentally and/or physically challenged.
4. A student's self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff.
5. Students with visual impairments or blindness should have professionals highly qualified in the area of visual impairment and blindness involved in their evaluations, program planning, and program implementation.
6. The Expanded Core Curriculum should be a part of the course of study for all students with visual impairments or blindness, including those with additional disabilities.
7. Teachers certified in Visual Impairment should instruct students who are braille readers.

School Colors

Red, White, and Blue

Mascot

Tigers

HUMAN RESOURCES

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE - A full-time employee is an individual whose employment is for no definite term and who is scheduled to work 40 hours per week on a regular basis. In order for an employee to be eligible for insurance benefits, he/she must work a minimum of 20 hours per week.

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE – Classified non-instructional personnel are “at-will” employees whose duties do not require a certificate (or license) issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. Classified employees have no property rights in their employment, which may be terminated without notice at any time by either the employee or employer.

CERTIFIED EMPLOYEE – Certified employees are personnel who possess a license issued by the Mississippi Department of Education or national certification as required by position.

PART-TIME EMPLOYEE - A part-time employee is an individual whose employment is for no definite term and who is scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week on a regular basis. Part-time employees are not eligible for benefits.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE – On occasion, MSDB may utilize the services of employees to temporarily supplement the workforce or help complete a specific project. Temporary employees are not eligible for any benefits or comp time.

NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES – Employees who are required to document time worked are eligible for comp time and/or overtime (i.e., comp and overtime are calculated time and one-half their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek) in accordance with applicable state and federal law. All non-exempt employees must have prior approval by the Superintendent for hours worked in excess of the normal work week. Only budgeted days will be worked.

EXEMPT EMPLOYEES – Employees who are not required to be paid overtime, in accordance with applicable federal and state wage and hour laws, for work performed beyond 40 hours in a work week. Administrators, managers, teachers, professional employees, and certain employees in administrative positions are exempt.

EXEMPT CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES - MSDB recognizes that all professional employees work beyond regular school hours on a regular basis, and the school district acknowledges and appreciates the dedication of its professional employees. However, professional employees are exempt and are not eligible for overtime.

NON-EXEMPT CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES - The workweek for full-time employees shall not exceed forty (40) hours. MSDB encourages the completion of assigned tasks during the regular workday. Non-exempt employees are not to work overtime without prior approval from the Superintendent. Comp time must have prior approval from Superintendent or Immediate Supervisor, can be accumulated but must be used by the last working day in June of the current

fiscal year and can only be used when approved by Superintendent or Immediate Supervisor. Each Supervisor shall maintain accurate records of all hours worked by each employee supervised and ensure that all comp time is taken by the last working day in June of the current fiscal year. Comp time does not roll over from year to year.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

MSDB requires that all teachers be certified by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and “highly qualified.” For more information about mandated teacher qualifications, see MDE website or call the Office of Teacher Licensure at <https://www.mdek12.org/OEL> or 601-359-3483. All teachers must ensure that their teaching certificates remain current.

Parents have a right to know the educational credentials and experience of their child’s teachers. Therefore, to provide this information in an easily accessible venue, an abbreviated résumé for each faculty and administrative staff member will be posted on the MSDB 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.

TEACHER CONTRACTS

The Superintendent shall enter into a contract with each licensed employee and person anticipating graduation from an approved teacher education program or the issuance of a proper license before October 15 or February 15, as the case may be, who is elected and approved for employment by the school board. Such contracts shall be in such form as shall be prescribed by the State Board of Education and shall be executed in duplicate with one (1) copy to be retained by the appropriate superintendent and one (1) copy to be retained by the Principal, licensed employee or person recommended for a licensed position contracted with. The contract shall show the name of the district, the length of the school term, the position held (whether an Assistant Superintendent, Principal or licensed employee), the scholastic years which it covers, the total amount of the annual salary and how same is payable. The amount of salary to be shown in such contract shall be the amount which shall have been fixed and determined by the school board, but, as to the licensed employees paid in whole or in part with adequate education program funds, such salary shall not be less than that required under the provisions of Chapter 19 of this title. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, the contract shall include a provision allowing the school district to reduce the state minimum salary by a pro rata daily amount in order to comply with the school district employee furlough provisions of Section 37-7-308 and shall include a provision which conditions the payment of such salary upon the availability of adequate education funds provided for salaries.

The contract entered into with any person recommended for a licensed position who is anticipating either graduation from an approved teacher education program before September 1 or December 31, as the case may be, or the issuance of a proper license before October 15 or February 15, as the case may be, shall be a conditional contract and shall include a provision stating that the contract will be null and void if, as specified in the contract, the contingency upon which the contract is conditioned has not occurred. If any Superintendent, other than those elected, Principal, licensed employee or person recommended for a licensed position who has been elected and

approved shall not execute and return the contract within ten (10) days after same has been tendered to him/her for execution, then, at the option of the School Board, the election of the licensed employee and the contract tendered to him/her shall be void and of no effect.

[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-23](#)

RELEASE FROM CONTRACT

Any licensed employee at MSDB who is under contract to teach or perform other duties and who desires to be released from such contract shall make application in writing to the Principal for release there from, in which application the reasons for such release shall be clearly stated. If the Principal, Superintendent, and the Board acts favorably upon such application for release, such licensed employee shall be released from his/her contract and said contract shall be null and void on the date specified in the SBE's order. It must be noted, no employee is considered for release from said contract before a suitable replacement has been found.

[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-55](#)

BREACH OF CONTRACT

If any licensed employee in any public school of this state shall arbitrarily or willfully breach his/her contract and abandon his/her employment without being released there from as provided in Section 37- 9-55, the contract of such licensed employee shall be null and void. In addition, the license of such licensed employee may be suspended by the SBE for a period of one (1) year as provided in Section 37-3-2(8) upon written recommendation of the majority of the members of the School Board.

[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-57](#)

NOTICE OF RENEWAL OF CONTRACT REEMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

On or before March 1 of each year, Principals shall be given notice of non-renewal of a contract for a successive year.

REEMPLOYMENT OF TEACHERS

On or before April 15, or within ten (10) days after the Governor approves the appropriation bill for funding K12 education (whichever date is later), teachers and other administrators shall be notified of non-renewal for a successive year. Licensed employees that do not have a valid license on or before April 15 for the successive year will not be offered a contract for a successive year.

REEMPLOYMENT DENIAL (LICENSED EMPLOYEES ONLY)

If a recommendation is made by MSDB not to offer a renewal contract to a licensed employee for a successive year, the employee is entitled to an opportunity for a hearing (if requested in writing within ten (10) days of notice) as cited in the "Education Employment Procedures Law".

[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-101 through Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-113](#)

EXCLUDED EMPLOYEES

Licensed employees who have not been with the MSDB for two continuous years, or one year with one MSDB and two continuous years of employment in another MS School District are not entitled to the protections of this law.

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-101; Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-105; Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-109

MSBA: Education Employment Procedures Law Handbook

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 law 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 will not exceed \$50 per applicant. In addition, background checks for financial impropriety may be conducted per the policy of the MDE. Background checks will be reviewed by the Superintendent and Business Manager. They will be placed in the employees permanent file maintained in the administrative offices of the MSDB.

GRIEVANCE/DUE PROCESS

NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Non-certified MSDB full-time and part-time employees serve at the will and pleasure of the SBE and the MSDB Superintendent. Therefore, these MSDB employees have no property rights in terms of employment. All complaints should be addressed to the MSDB Business Manager, further appeals or grievances will be reported to the MSDB Superintendent. Any grievances against the Superintendent will be reported to Business Manager who will submit to the MDE Chief Academic Officer for review.

All Supervisors and Directors are responsible for monitoring hourly part-time employees and submitting timesheets on a monthly basis. Supervisors and 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 Payroll for processing and approval. It is the Supervisor's and Director's responsibility to ensure that part-time employees work no more than 20 hours in a single week and that the total number of hours worked does not exceed the total budgeted amount.

MSDB part-time 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. All part-time employees must have a full criminal background check through fingerprinting upon hire. There can be no break in service without requiring a new criminal background check.

Licensed Personnel Suspension/Dismissal Due Process

The Superintendent may dismiss or suspend any licensed employee for incompetence, neglect of duty, immoral conduct, intemperance, brutal treatment of a pupil or other good cause. Before being dismissed or suspended, any licensed employee shall be notified of the charges against him/her and advised that he/she is entitled to a public hearing upon said charges. Notification of charges and hearing procedures shall follow the procedure as prescribed by law.

Provided, however, that the Superintendent whose employment has been terminated under this section shall not have the right to request a hearing before the State Board of Education. Provided, however, that a licensed employee in a conservator school district whose employment has been terminated under this section for good cause as determined by a conservator appointed by the State Board of Education shall not have a right to request a hearing. The conservator has

the right to immediately terminate a licensed employee under this section.

In the event the continued presence of said employee on school premises poses a potential threat or danger to the health, safety, or general welfare of the students, or, in the discretion of the Superintendent, may interfere with or cause a disruption of normal school operations, the Superintendent may immediately release said employee of all duties pending a hearing if one is requested by the employee.

In the event a licensed employee is arrested, indicted, or otherwise charged with a felony by a recognized law enforcement official, the continued presence of the licensed employee on school premises shall be deemed to constitute a disruption of normal school operations.

The State Board of Education or hearing officer or designee, upon a request for a hearing by the person so suspended or removed shall set a date, time, and place of such hearing and notify the employee in writing of the same. The hearing date shall be not sooner than five (5) days nor later than thirty (30) days from the date of the request unless otherwise agreed. The procedure for such hearing before the State Board of Education or hearing officer are prescribed in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-111](#) and included in this policy. From the decision made at said hearing, any licensed employee shall be allowed an appeal to the chancery court in the same manner as appeals are authorized in Miss. Code Ann [Sec. 37-9-113](#) which is also included in this policy. Any party aggrieved by action of the chancery court may appeal to the Mississippi Supreme Court as provided by law. In the event that a licensed employee is immediately relieved of duties pending a hearing, as provided in this section, said employee shall be entitled to compensation for a period up to and including the date that the initial hearing is set by the State Board of Education, in the event that there is a request for such a hearing by the employee. In the event that an employee does not request a hearing within five (5) calendar days of the date of the notice of discharge or suspension, it shall constitute a waiver of all rights by said employee and such discharge or suspension shall be effective on the date set out in the notice to the employee.

The State Board of Education is hereby prohibited from denying employment or reemployment to any person as a Superintendent, Principal or licensed employee, as defined in Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-1](#) or as a noninstructional personnel, as defined in Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-1](#), for the single reason that any eligible child of such person does not attend MSDB in which such Superintendent, Principal, licensed employee or noninstructional personnel is employed.

The provisions of this section shall be fully applicable to any administrator or employee of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB).

Hearing, Notice, Procedures, and Evidence

The State Board of Education, or its designee, upon request for a hearing under Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-59](#) or Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-101](#) through Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-113](#) shall set the time, place and date of such hearing and notify the employee in writing of same. The date shall be set not sooner than five (5) days nor later than thirty (30) days from the date of the request, unless otherwise agreed. The hearing may be held before the State Board of Education or before a hearing officer appointed for such purpose by the State Board of Education, either from among its own membership, from the staff of the MSDB or some other qualified and impartial person, but in no event shall the hearing officer be the staff member responsible for the initial recommendation of non-reemployment. No hearing officer may have an interest in the outcome of a hearing, nor may a hearing officer be related to a State Board of Education member, any

administrator making the recommendations of non-reemployment, or the employee. Once a hearing officer is appointed, no ex-parte communications may be made regarding any substantive provisions of the hearing.

The hearing must be held in executive session unless the employee elects to have a public hearing. If an employee makes this election, however, the State Board of Education or the hearing officer, as the case may be, may order any part of the hearing to be held in executive session, if, in the opinion of the State Board of Education or the hearing officer, the testimony to be elicited deals with matters involving the reputation or character of another person. Notwithstanding the election by an employee for a public hearing, any testimony by minor witnesses must be held in executive session and considered confidential personnel records and confidential student records, subject to an expectation of reasonable privacy and confidentiality. Public disclosure of these records may be by court order only.

MSDB shall present evidence, either in written or oral form, at the hearing in support of its recommendation for non-reemployment.

The employee shall be afforded an opportunity to present matters at the hearing relevant to the reasons given for the proposed non-reemployment determination and to the reasons the employee alleges to be the reasons for non-reemployment and to be represented by counsel at such a hearing. Such hearing shall be conducted in such a manner as to afford the parties a fair and reasonable opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence pertinent to the issues and to cross-examine witnesses presented at the hearing. The State Board of Education or the hearing officer may require any portion of the evidence to be submitted in the form of depositions or affidavits, and in case affidavits are received, an opportunity to present counter-affidavits shall be provided.

The State Board of Education shall cause to be made stenographic notes of the proceedings. In the event of a judicial appeal of the State Board of Education's decision, the entire expense of the transcript and notes shall be assessed as court costs.

The State Board of Education shall review the matters presented before it, or, if the hearing is conducted by a hearing officer, the report of the hearing officer, if any, the record of the proceedings and, based solely thereon, conclude whether the proposed non-reemployment is a proper employment decision, is based upon a valid educational reason or noncompliance with MSDB personnel policies and is based solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing, and shall notify the employee in writing of its final decision and reasons therefor. Such notification shall be within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the hearing if the hearing is conducted by a hearing officer and within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the hearing if the hearing is initially conducted by the State Board of Education. If the matter is heard before a hearing officer, the State Board of Education shall also grant the employee the opportunity to appear before the Board to present a statement in his own behalf, either in person or by his attorney, prior to a final decision by the Board.

In conducting a hearing, the State Board of Education or hearing officer shall not be bound by common law or by statutory rules of evidence or by technical or formal rules of procedure except as provided in Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-101](#) through Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-113](#) but may conduct such hearing in such manner as best to ascertain the rights of the parties; however, hearsay evidence, if admitted, shall not be the sole basis for the determination of facts by the

State Board of Education or hearing officer.

In the event the decision of the State Board of Education is in favor of the employee, the State Board of Education shall have the authority to order the execution of a contract with the employee for an additional period of one (1) year.

For purposes of conducting hearings under Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-101](#) through Miss. Code Ann. [Sec.37-9-113](#), the State Board of Education or hearing officer shall have the authority to issue subpoenas for witnesses and to compel their attendance and the giving of evidence. Any expense connected therewith shall be borne by the party requesting the subpoenas, which shall include an appearance fee for each witness so subpoenaed not inconsistent with state laws governing payments to witnesses. In the event it is necessary to enforce or to quash a subpoena issued to compel the attendance of a witness, application shall be made with the chancery court of the county where the State Board of Education is located.

This section shall not be applicable to a Superintendent whose employment has been terminated by the Board under Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-59](#), or whose employment contract has not been renewed by the State Board of Education.

Appeal Rights

Any employee aggrieved by a final decision of the State Board of Education is entitled to judicial review thereof, as hereinafter provided.

An appeal may be taken by such employee to the chancery court of the judicial district in which the State Board of Education is located, by filing a petition with the clerk of that court and executing and filing bond payable to the State Board of Education with sufficient sureties, in the penalty of not less than Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00), conditioned upon the payment of all of the costs of appeal, within twenty (20) days of the receipt of the final decision of the State Board of Education.

The scope of review of the chancery court in such cases shall be limited to a review of the record made before the State Board of Education or hearing officer to determine if the action of the State Board of Education is unlawful for the reason that it was:

- (a) Not supported by any substantial evidence;
- (b) Arbitrary or capricious; or
- (c) In violation of some statutory or constitutional right of the employee.

No relief shall be granted based upon a court's finding of harmless error by the State Board of Education in complying with the procedural requirements of Miss. Code Ann. [Sec.37-9-101](#) through Miss. Code Ann. [Sec. 37-9-113](#). However, in the event that there is a finding of prejudicial error in the proceedings, the cause shall be remanded for a rehearing consistent with the findings of the court.

Any party aggrieved by action of the chancery court may appeal to the Supreme Court in the manner provided by law.

References: [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-59](#)
[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-111](#)
[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-113](#)

EMPLOYEE APPRAISALS

Using an internal performance appraisal instrument, full-time non-certified employees will be formally evaluated at least once per year. The statewide evaluation systems for Teachers, Librarians, Counselors, Principals, and other licensed or certified employees 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 MSDB may result in written reprimands and further consequences as outlined by the MSDB Standard Operating Procedures Manual. 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.

ATTENDANCE OF EMPLOYEES

The following guidelines and procedures should be followed by all administrative and supervisory personnel regarding the attendance of MSDB employees throughout the year. In addition, the guidelines should be reviewed during the evaluation process and incorporated into employee evaluations.

1. All employees of MSDB are expected to be at work, on time, every scheduled workday. Employees contribute to achieving the mission and the education of the student body. The success of MSDB depends upon each employee doing what is expected, including maintaining an acceptable attendance record.
2. It is important that all employees be treated equitably with respect to the monitoring of attendance.
3. Excessive absenteeism adversely affects overall operations by placing added pressure or burdens on employees who are at work on a regular basis, and by requiring administrative time and cost to cover for employees who are absent.

CATEGORIES OF ABSENCES

All absences will be classified into two categories as follows:

1. Excused - Absences that do not count against an employee's attendance record include any pre-approved vacation, personal leave, bereavement leave, military or uniformed services leave, family and medical leave (as designated under our FMLA policy), jury duty, disability accommodation leaves of absence, or worker's compensation leave.
2. Unexcused. All remaining absences are classified as counting against an employee's attendance record.

TARDINESS

Promptness in arriving at work is expected from all employees. Tardiness has a negative effect on operations, just as absenteeism does. Not returning promptly from breaks or lunch is considered an instance of tardiness. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action, action plans, and/or termination.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

1. All employees are to report as scheduled by their Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent.
2. Employees who are going to be absent due to illness must notify their Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent, or a designee as soon as possible.
3. Employees who will be late for any reason must contact their Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent so arrangements can be made for a substitute until the employee arrives on campus. Employees must speak directly to a Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent.
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 Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent, or a designee.
6. Employees should refrain from taking leave for vacations when it directly impacts the functionality of MSDB.
7. Excessive absences may be denied in accordance with the MSDB 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 employees may be expected to be present during registration, open house events, graduation, state testing, and other special activities that may be assigned.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

A. DEFINITIONS

1. An “eligible employee” is an employee of a covered employer who:
 - (a) has been employed for at least 12 months, and
 - (b) has been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of leave, and
 - (c) is employed at a worksite at which the employer employs at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the worksite.
2. “Employee’s spouse” means husband or wife as defined by Mississippi Law.
3. “Employee’s son or daughter” means biological child, adopted child or foster child, a stepchild, legal ward, or the child for whom the employee is standing in loco parentis, who is either under the age of 18, or age 18 or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
4. “Employee’s parent” means biological parent, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood (or now stands) in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child (not to include parents-in-law).
5. “Employee’s immediate family member” means spouse, son or daughter, grandchild, or parent as defined herein above.
6. For the purposes of FMLA “serious health condition” means an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care (overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider.
7. “Healthcare provider” means a licensed medical physician, nurse practitioner, dentist,

psychologist, and chiropractor.

B. LEAVE PROVISIONS

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

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

C. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

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

D. REQUIRED CERTIFICATION

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

E. THE CERTIFICATION IS TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

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

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

F. EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS PROTECTION

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

G. MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE

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

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

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

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

"Outpatient status," with respect to a covered service member, means the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient; or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients. In order to care for a covered service

member, an eligible employee must be the spouse, son, daughter, or parent, or next of kin of a covered service member.

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

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

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

A call to active duty for purposes of leave taken because of a qualifying exigency refers to a Federal call to active duty. State calls to active duty are not covered unless under order of the President of the United States pursuant to one of the provisions of law identified in support of a contingency operation.

The active-duty orders of a covered military member will generally specify if the service member is serving in support of a contingency operation by citation to the relevant section of United States Code and/or by reference to the specific name of the contingency operation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

H. DONATION OF LEAVE

For the purpose of this policy:

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

Any employee of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) may donate a portion of his or her unused accumulated personal or sick leave to another MSDB employee who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness or who has a member of his or her immediate family suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with the following:

1. The employee donating the leave (the “donor employee”) shall designate the employee who is to receive the leave (the “recipient employee”) and the amount of unused accumulated personal or sick leave that is to be donated and shall notify the MSDB superintendent or his designee of his or her designation.
2. The maximum amount of unused accumulated personal leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed a number of days that would leave the donor employee with fewer than seven (7) days of personal leave remaining, and the maximum amount of unused accumulated sick leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the unused accumulated sick leave of the donor employee.
3. An employee must have exhausted all of his or her available leave before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee. Eligibility for donated leave shall be based upon review and approval by the donor employee’s supervisor.

4. Before an employee may receive donated leave, he or she must provide the MSDB superintendent or his designee with a physician's statement that states that the illness meets the catastrophic criteria established under this section, the beginning date of the catastrophic injury or illness, a description of the injury or illness, and a prognosis for recovery and the anticipated date that the recipient employee will be able to return to work.
5. Before an employee may receive donated leave, the MSDB superintendent shall appoint a review committee to approve or disapprove the said donations of leave, including the determination that the illness is catastrophic within the meaning of this section.
6. If the total amount of leave that is donated to any employee is not used by the recipient employee, the whole days of donated leave shall be returned to the donor employees on a pro rata basis, based on the ratio of the number of days of leave donated by each donor employee to the total number of days of leave donated by all donor employees.
7. Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement.

The MSDB superintendent or designee shall establish procedures to support this policy. LEGAL REF.: MS CODE Section 37-7-307

NON-QUALIFYING FMLA LEAVE REQUEST

An employee who does not qualify for leave based on the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 may take a leave of absence up to 20 business days. The employee may be responsible for timely payments of all insurance premiums while on approved leave of absence.

GENERAL PROVISIONS: In order to qualify for temporary medical leave of absence the following must apply:

1. An employee anticipating an absence of five (5) days or more must apply for leave of absence with the administration prior to the absence or within seven (7) business days of the first day of absence.
2. New employees reported to work on the first day of employment.
3. The employee does not qualify for FMLA based on the following criteria:
 - a. Employee has not been employed with MSDB for at least 12 months;
 - b. Employee has not worked for MSDB at least 1250 hours.
4. Qualifying for the leave of absence follows the same criteria and procedure as described in FMLA regulations.
 - a. Birth of a child and/or to care for a newborn child of the employee.
 - b. Placement with the employee of a child through adoption.
 - c. Care for the employee's spouse, dependent child, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition.
 - d. A serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the function of his/her job.
5. All leave of absences requires final approval of the Superintendent.
6. Failure to return to work on the determined return-to-work day will be considered as a resignation by the employee.
7. The employee must use any available accrued paid leave concurrently with the leave of absence. Otherwise, compensation will not be paid during leave.
8. The leave of absence must be used continuously and can only be used once per fiscal year. It will not be available for intermittent use.

PROCEDURES:

1. A request for leave of absence must be made on the Request for Leave of Absence Form having the approval of the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and the Superintendent.
2. Medical documentation supporting the request must be provided to the Superintendent's Office within five (5) days of the request for leave.
3. The Request for Leave of Absence form must be filed in the employee's personnel file.
4. The Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and the Superintendent must be notified of the expected date the employee returns. The employee must provide documentation from the physician stating the employee's return to work date before returning to work.

BENEFITS INSURANCE AND RETIREMENT

MSDB is interested in the health and well-being of both employees and their families. This section briefly describes each District-sponsored employee benefit program. Employees receive summary plan descriptions, which describe certain benefit programs in greater detail. The plan description and official plan documents (such as insurance master contracts) contain information regarding eligibility requirements, coverage limits, deductibles, premiums, and fees. Employees are expected to read the plan descriptions carefully to understand rights and responsibilities. Should a conflict exist between the official benefit plan documents and this manual or the plan descriptions, the official plan documents will control in all cases.

MSDB reserves the right, at its sole and absolute discretion, to rescind or amend benefits, to change insurance carriers, or to require a change in employee contributions toward premium costs, deductibles, or co-payments. MSDB may make such changes at any time, for any reason; financial necessity is not required. Employees will be promptly notified of any such changes. While MSDB's intent is to continue offering the sponsored benefit programs, it cannot guarantee that such benefits will always be available. MSDB offers the following benefits to regular full-time employees. Part-time employees may or may not be eligible for these benefits based on the individual plan requirements:

MEDICAL INSURANCE - MSDB offers health insurance plans for school employees. Information regarding the options available to school employees may be obtained by contacting the Business Office.

CAFETERIA PLAN - MSDB participates in the Section 125 Flexible Benefit Plan, commonly known as the "cafeteria plan." Participation by employees in the cafeteria plan is optional. Additional information regarding the cafeteria plan is available in the Business Office.

RETIREMENT PLAN - All regular full-time employees must participate in the Mississippi Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). Current Mississippi law requires eight (8) years of service as of July 1, 2007 for vested interest. Twenty-five (25) years are required for less than sixty (60) years of age for full retirement benefits without penalty. If hired after July 1, 2011, thirty (30) years are required for less than sixty (60) years of age for full retirement benefits. Employees desiring more specific information regarding their retirement should contact the Mississippi Public Employees' Retirement System.

COBRA - If the employee, the employee's spouse, or the employee's dependents lose group health insurance coverage due to employment termination or any other "qualifying event," any and all may be eligible to elect continuation of group health coverage in accordance with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). COBRA entitles employees and their dependents to elect or decline continued group health insurance coverage upon a "qualifying event." Under federal law, a qualifying event is an event that would ordinarily cause an employee, spouse, or dependent to lose group health insurance coverage. Qualifying events include termination of employment, retirement, discharge for poor performance, reduction of work hours, death of a covered employee, divorce or legal separation from a covered employee, losing "dependent child" status, or Medicare eligibility. Employees discharged for gross misconduct may not be eligible for continuation benefits. Employees and dependents are responsible for notifying the Business Office immediately following any qualifying event and upon any change in address of the employee and/or dependents. Employees and dependents who elect continued coverage following a qualifying event will be required to pay 100% of the applicable premium coverage cost plus any applicable administration fees. The covered individual has sixty (60) days to elect coverage from the date of notification. If the covered individual chooses to continue coverage and pays all premiums, benefits will be continued for 18 months. A covered employee, spouse, or dependent who is disabled (according to the Social Security Administration) at the time of the qualifying event may be eligible to continue coverage for up to 29 months. An employee's covered spouse or dependent may be able to continue coverage up to 36 months in the event the covered employee dies, becomes entitled to Medicare, divorces or legally separates from the spouse, or the dependent child ceases to qualify as a dependent under the District's insurance plan provisions. In the event of a second qualifying event occurring during the period of coverage for an original event, the period of coverage will be extended to 36 months from the date of the original qualifying event. Employees may obtain additional information about COBRA from the Business Office.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

The law requires payroll deductions to cover federal, state, and local income taxes and Social Security/Medicare (FICA) and retirement. These deductions are made automatically. Other deductions for other programs will be made upon a written authorization by the employee and with the approval of MSDB.

Deductions can be made for health, life and salary protection insurance. All requests for changes in deductions must be submitted, in writing, prior to the 1st of each month. Deductions may also stem from garnishments. When a garnishment is imposed, the administration of MSDB complies by withholding a percentage of the employee's salary, as mandated by law. It is our policy to comply with the salary basis requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Therefore, we prohibit any improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees. We want employees to be aware of this policy and that MSDB does not allow deductions that violate the FLSA. Deductions from exempt employees' salaries are prohibited, except as allowed by applicable law.

COMPENSATION

Employees of MSDB are paid on the last working day of the calendar month. Each employee is responsible for reviewing their pay and notifying their supervisor if any errors are noted. Teachers are paid based upon an approved salary scale and are contracted for specified days each

year, with payment distribution over twelve months. No payment will be made to any contracted personnel without an executed contract in place. All salaries are within the scale as deemed appropriate for the job descriptions aligned with the Mississippi State Personnel Board and are subject to final approval by the SBE.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION - It is MSDB's goal to provide a safe work environment. Each employee shall comply with all occupational safety, health policies and standards. Should an accident occur, the employee must report any injury or illness, no matter how minor it may seem, immediately to the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent. The Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent must report the incident to the Workers' Compensation Coordinator. Failure to do so may jeopardize eligibility for workers' compensation. Employees are covered against certain loss of earnings due to injuries on the job by a workers' compensation insurance policy furnished by MSDB.

No compensation will be allowed for an injury, illness or death due to willful misconduct, intentional self-inflicted injury, intoxication, or willful failure or refusal to use safety devices or lack of compliance with prescribed safety procedures. The payment of medical bills and compensation payments will be in accordance with all applicable workers' compensation laws.

If an employee suffers an occupational injury or illness, the following steps should be taken:

1. Any necessary first-aid treatment should be administered.
2. When physically able, the employee should immediately report the injury or illness to his or her Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent.
3. Both the employee and Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent must complete a Report of Accident/Injury form within the first hour of the accident, if possible or as soon as possible after the event. If medical attention is required, the employee may be seen by a medical doctor or facility approved by MSDB, unless in an emergency.
4. Medical facilities will need a claim number in order to administer treatment. The insurance company will not provide a claim number without the Accident/Injury form. These forms are available from the employee's supervisor or on the District website under "Staff Documents." Both forms must be signed and dated by the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent and forwarded to the Workers' Compensation Coordinator in the Business Office as soon as possible.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION - Employees are not eligible for unemployment benefits in the summer months between school terms. An employee hired during the school term that has reasonable assurance of employment for the same or similar work for the following school term will be denied. Substitutes may receive unemployment compensation if they are only working part-time and not earning more than their allowed benefit for the week. Substitute logs are to be sent to the Business Office each month documenting who was called and whether they accepted the work. This information is provided to the Mississippi Department of Employment Security for those substitutes that file unemployment claims.

REDUCTION IN FORCE

MSDB has the responsibility for providing and maintaining a quality school. In order to carry out its responsibility, the SBE, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, may: (1) abolish or combine job positions, (2) reduce the length of the work year with a concomitant reduction in

salary (the same to be in no event less than 187 days per contract year), (3) reduce employee salaries, and/or (4) reduce the number of employees. Initially, staff reduction will be accomplished by attrition.

When reducing the number of licensed employees, the SBE, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, will take into account the following reasons for such reduction in force:

1. Enrollment declines,
2. Financial decline/reduction,
3. Educational program(s) elimination, and/or
4. Other good and/or just cause as defined by the SBE.

The primary objective of the MSDB when reducing the work force will be the maintenance of a fair and balanced educational program consistent with the needs of the students and the functions and responsibilities of the school. When deciding reduction in force, the SBE, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, will consider the following factors, not necessarily in the order listed:

1. Importance of the position to the mission, goals, and objectives of the MSDB.
2. Area(s) and level(s) of competence indicated by certification.
3. Experience, professional training, length of service within the district and work assignment.
4. Quality of performance including character, teaching capacity, and/or executive ability.
5. Skills in area(s) where the district has instructional and/or supervisory needs.

References: [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-101 through 37-9-113](#) and [37-9-59](#)

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees choosing to work outside MSDB may do so as long as it does not create a conflict of interest or interfere with their work schedule or job performance. Outside employment that affects an employee's attendance, work performance, productivity, or conduct, either directly or indirectly, or that creates a conflict of interest of any kind, is strictly prohibited. If employees choose to seek outside employment, they first must discuss this matter with the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent and receive written approval of their plans from the Superintendent. Schedules may or may not be adjusted, and special considerations may or may not be made for employees who have outside employment.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

An employee of the MSDB shall not have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with duties and responsibilities. No staff member shall engage in any type of private business during school time and on school property.

Employees shall not engage in work of any type where the source of information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information obtained through the school. No gifts from any person or group desiring or doing business with MSDB shall be solicited by a school employee except for nominally valued instructional products or advertising items that are widely distributed.

CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

All employees at MSDB shall comply with the Mississippi Professional Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct as outlined in MDE policy 14.10; 14.10 A, B, C, D, E; 14.17; and

14.18. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall establish procedures to assure that all MSDB employees comply with this policy. The procedures shall include, but are not limited to:

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

The Superintendent shall report to the MDE all license holders who engage in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4).

VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy shall be reported and discussed in a conference between the employee and the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent (or Superintendent and Principal if a Principal is in violation of this policy). If the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent finds the complaint to be factual, he/she shall issue a written reprimand to the employee(s) involved. This reprimand shall become a part of the employee's personnel file. Severe violations or continuous violations of this policy may lead to an employee being suspended, dismissed, or non-renewed. Employees shall have the right to appeal any disciplinary action taken against them by following the proper chain of command as specified in the district's "Employee Grievance Procedure" policy.

ARREST OF EMPLOYEE

Employees arrested for any reason must notify their Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent within 24 hours. Supervisors, Directors, or Principals will inform the Superintendent who will contact the Chief Academic Officer at MDE.

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 to help.)

REPORTING WITHIN THE SCHOOL

Inform the Superintendent or the School Counselor of your findings. The Superintendent 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 dates of birth of other children in the home

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Unless expressly authorized to do so, employees are prohibited from sending, transmitting, or otherwise distributing proprietary information, data, or other confidential information belonging to MSDB. Unauthorized dissemination of such material may result in severe disciplinary action as well as substantial civil and criminal penalties under state and federal Economic Espionage laws.

MSDB shall operate in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 regarding student information and records. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) have provided schools, school districts, and state educational agencies guidelines in disclosing student records. School officials with a "legitimate educational interest" in any student information can have access to educational

records without specific consent of parents or eligible students.

A legitimate educational interest is the person's need to know in order to:

1. Perform an administrative task required in the school employee's position description approved by the SBE;
2. Perform a supervisory/instructional task directly related to the student's education; or
3. Perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family such as health care, counseling, student job placement, or student financial aid. However, the misuse or improper disclosure of confidential information by school officials or a third party is strictly prohibited and is punishable by federal statutes.

Electronic access to student information will be limited to job-duty specifications of each employee. At no time should this information be printed, transferred, or shared under conditions other than those stipulated in FERPA. A complete explanation of FERPA may be found online at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

As mandated by the State Superintendent of Education, MSDB must implement policies and procedures related to the prohibition of inappropriate relationships and/or conduct with students. The MSDB 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, and/or off campus.

DO NOT BLUR THE LINES BETWEEN ADULTS 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/s, 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 Superintendent 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.

STAFF/STUDENT NON-FRATERNIZATION

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

It is the policy of MSDB to prohibit any sexual relationship, contact, or sexually-nuanced behavior or communication between a staff member and a student, while the student is enrolled in the school. The prohibition applies regardless of gender, whether the student or the staff member is the initiator of the behavior, and whether or not the student welcomes or reciprocates the attention.

Guidelines

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

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school and/or staff.
2. Staff members shall not exchange gifts with students.
3. Staff-sponsored parties, at which students are in attendance, unless they are a part of the school's extracurricular program and are properly supervised, are prohibited.
4. Staff members shall not fraternize, written or verbally, with students except on matters that pertain to school-related issues.
5. Staff members shall not text students nor participate in any student blogs unrelated to school.
6. Staff members shall not friend students on any social media platforms prior to graduation.
7. Staff members shall not associate with students at any time in any situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
8. Staff members shall not date students. Sexual relations with students, regardless of age and/or consent, are prohibited and will result in dismissal and criminal prosecution.
9. Staff members shall not use insults against students as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.
10. Staff members shall maintain a reasonable standard of care for the supervision, control, and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.
11. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
12. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.
13. Staff members shall not attempt to counsel, assess, diagnose, or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health, and/or family relationships but instead, should refer the student to appropriate school personnel or agency for assistance, pursuant to law and Board policy.
14. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health, and/or family background.

Parents who are Staff Members

MSDB recognizes the unique nature of our community. At times, parents of current students are also staff members. These situations create dynamics and liabilities that are unique to residential schools for the Deaf and/or the Blind.

Diligent care will be taken to protect all staff members and students. All students have the right to enjoy friendships and the rituals of childhood and young adulthood such as visiting each other's homes, going on sleepovers, and participating in social outings. For all students, any excursions originating from campus after school must have both sets of parents' written permissions on file.

Along with written permissions, employees who are also parents of current students should communicate with their Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent to ensure procedures are understood and being followed if any other student/s are to be in your care outside of school for any reason.

Alumni and Former Students who are Staff Members

MSDB encourages alumni to return as staff members. Alumni serve as important role models to current students. It is imperative to follow staff member guidelines and establish clear boundaries as a staff member. This will create changes in relationships as current students might have been your friends when you were a student. Staff members who are former students and/or alumni should work with their Supervisor, Director, or Principal and /or the Superintendent to discuss any challenges or concerns.

Social Media

All employees of this school district who participate in social media websites or applications such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and/or Instagram shall not post any data, documents, photos, or inappropriate information on any website that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. The determination of appropriateness will be made by the Superintendent.

Employees, faculty, and staff are solely responsible for the content and the security of their social media websites and applications and shall not give their social media website passwords to students.

Employees, faculty, and staff shall NEVER use their personal social media accounts in any way purporting to be or speaking for MSDB.

Fraternization via the Internet between employees and students is prohibited and in violation of standards of the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics.

Communications with both students and parents shall be done in person, over telephone, through standard mail, secure educational applications, and/or through email. Communications with parents through social media should be used only as a last resort, and with permission from the Supervisor, Director, or Principal and /or the Superintendent, when all other avenues have been unsuccessful.

Access of social media websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited. Violation of any of these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, termination. Nothing in this policy prohibits staff or students from the use of educational websites.

Annual Reminder to Staff

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

1. Improper fraternization with students using social media and similar internet sites or networks
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol

4. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid
5. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology
6. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct

Periodical Review

The Superintendent or designees may periodically conduct Internet searches to see if employees have posted inappropriate materials online. When inappropriate use of computers and/or websites is discovered, the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent may download the offensive material and promptly take proper administrative action.

BULLYING

PROHIBITION - No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students. MSDB prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students or school employees. MSDB will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by anyone.

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, and that:

1. places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
2. creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. For the purposes of this section, a "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Conduct described in subsection (1) is considered bullying if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

** Bullying or harassing behavior includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying or harassing behavior that occurs electronically. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others. No person shall engage in any act of retaliation or reprisal against any person, including a victim, a witness, or another person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior and/or who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying.*

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING, INVESTIGATING, AND ADDRESSING BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR

A student who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior and/or a student or volunteer who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student, school employee, or volunteer has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior should report the incident to a school employee, who shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Supervisor,

Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent. Students should report bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee promptly, but no later than five (5) working days after the alleged incident(s) occurred.

Reports should include: the name of the reporting person*, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the name(s) of the victim(s) of the misconduct, the name(s) of any witness(es), the name(s) of the alleged bully, and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the report.

**If a student or staff member chooses to anonymously report bullying or harassing behavior, the school's ability to act based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.*

A school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent. Reports against the Principal shall immediately be made in writing to the Superintendent, and reports against the Superintendent shall immediately be made in writing to the Chief Academic Officer at MDE.

The school administration will investigate reported incidents of bullying within five (5) working days of receiving the report.

The school administration will speak with the alleged victim and alleged bully separately. Students may submit evidence for the school administration to review and a list of witnesses for the school administration to speak with. Students should preserve evidence of bullying, cyberbullying, and/or harassing behavior.

All teachers, employees, volunteers, and students shall fully cooperate with the investigating and answer truthfully all inquiries relative thereto.

Upon completion of the investigation, the school administration will immediately notify the alleged victim and alleged bully regarding the outcome of the investigation and/or what discipline actions and/or other appropriate actions will be taken, if warranted.

The school administration will provide notice of an incident of bullying and the outcome of the investigation and/or what discipline actions and/or other appropriate actions will be taken, if warranted, within a reasonable amount of time to a parent or guardian of the victim and a parent or guardian of the bully not to exceed five (5) working days after the completion of the investigation.

MSDB recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. "Reasonable action" includes, but is not limited to, promptly reporting the bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee and student's use of reasonable self-defense.

If, after an investigation, a student is found to be a victim of bullying, such student shall not face disciplinary action on the basis of that student's use of reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying.

Discipline for bullying of a student with disabilities shall comply with the applicable requirements under federal law including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.). Available counseling options for a student who is a victim of bullying or a witness to bullying or a student who engages in bullying include:

- School Guidance Counseling
- Conflict Resolution Training
- Anger Management Training
- Problem Solving Skills Training (proactive, constructive, relationship building)
- Social Skills Training

Support and intervention in response to bullying may be provided by the MSDB through the assistance of the any of the following agencies:

- Mississippi Department of Education
- Community/Family Public or private community-based mental health services
- Faith-based services
- Law enforcement agencies
- Guidance counselor's office at MSDB

The procedure for reporting bullying will also be posted on the school's website. False accusations or reports of bullying are prohibited and may warrant discipline action. Any perceived criminal conduct will be immediately reported to law enforcement.

References: [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-67](#) and [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-69](#)

HARASSMENT

MSDB is committed to sustaining a safe and supportive school environment free from harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the school will not tolerate harassment of employees or students by anyone, including administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, volunteers or any others on campus.

MSDB prohibits all types of harassment based on, but not limited to, color, race, religion, creed, national origin, gender, age, or disability. MSDB will promptly investigate all complaints of harassment—formal or informal, written or verbal—and take appropriate actions against any member of the school community found in violation of this policy.

Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment must be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Mississippi Department of Education Board Policy Part 3, Chapter 99, Rule 99.1.

Definitions

“School Community” includes, but is not limited to, all students, parents, school and state employees, contractors, volunteers, committee members, and other visitors.

“School Employee” includes, but is not limited to, all administrators, teachers, staff, bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, and agents of the District and/or Schools.

“Harassment” means verbal or physical conduct based on an individual’s actual or perceived race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability that affects or interferes with a student’s educational performance or creates a hostile, offensive, or intimidating environment.

Harassment may include any form of unwelcome verbal, physical, or written conduct that offends, degrades, or belittles an individual. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, unsolicited derogatory remarks, jokes, demeaning comments, offensive behavior, slurs, mimicking, name calling, graffiti, innuendo, gestures, physical contact, stalking, threatening, bullying, extorting, or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures. These stipulations apply whether the harassment is between people of the same, or of a different gender.

“Sexual Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome sexual advances, threats, bodily contact, sexual oriented verbal teasing, abuse, pressure for sexual activity, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, unwelcome touching such as pinching, patting, or constant brushing against another’s body, suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades, employment status, or similarly personal concerns, filing a false complaint of sexual harassment, or other deliberate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by any school employee or volunteer to a student or to another school employee or volunteer; a student to another student; or a student to a staff member when:

1. Submission to such contact is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual’s privileges, access to campus resources and activities, grades, or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for education decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Students believing, they have been sexually harassed should immediately report the incident(s) to the Administration or a school employee. The Administration shall investigate and take appropriate corrective action.

“Peer Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome attention from peers or other individuals and includes such actions as name calling, threatening gestures, unwanted physical contact, vandalism of personal property, and filing a false complaint.

“Racial and Color Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of an individual’s race or color. Nicknames, emphasizing stereotypes, racial slurs, comments on one’s manner of speaking, and negative references to racial customs are examples of racial or color harassment.

“Religious Creed Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at an individual’s religion or creed such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, religious clothing, religious slurs, or graffiti.

“National Origin Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of an individual’s national origin such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking, customs, language, or ethnic slurs.

“Disability Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at a person’s disabling mental or physical condition such as manner of speech or movement or interference with an individual’s equipment.

REPORTING HARASSMENT

Students who believe they are a victim of any form of harassment should immediately report the incident(s) to the Administration or a school employee. Any school employee or student, who observes, overhears, or otherwise witnesses harassment is encouraged to take appropriate action to report the incident immediately. In the event the school employee or student is unable to personally take prompt action, they are encouraged to report the incident or complaint in writing to the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent. Any complaint of harassment filed by a student or staff member will be reported immediately to the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment must be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the MDE Board Policy Part 3, Chapter 99, Rule 99.1.

Filing of a complaint or reporting harassment in any manner will not affect an individual’s status, work assignments, or grades.

Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment behaviors may constitute physical or sexual abuse. Therefore, when educators become aware of suspected abuse, they must report the incident to the Mississippi Department of Human Services. Such acts constitute violations of Mississippi criminal law resulting in law enforcement investigations and possible criminal charges.

RETALIATION TO HARASSMENT

Members of the school community may not retaliate against any person who reports alleged harassment or any person who testifies, assists, or participates in the investigation, proceedings, or hearing related to such harassment. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment and may be redressed through the same process for reporting, investigating, and enforcing procedures for harassment. Any person who knowingly files a false claim or report may be subject to the same actions that MSDB might take against any other individual violating this harassment policy.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and the accused, will be respected consistent with the legal obligation of the school and the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective actions when such conduct occurs.

Consequences to Violation of Harassment Policies: Any school employee or student found to have violated this policy may be subject to action including, but not limited to, warning, remedial training, education or counseling, suspension, expulsion, termination, or discharge from duties.

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STAFF MEMBERS

MSDB Administration recognizes that personal and romantic relationships among staff member may develop and do exist outside of the workplace. These relationships must never impact the mission and vision of either school or the agency. If personal or romantic relationships among staff members impact the job performance of any employee or impact the ability of MSDB, MSD, or MSB to fulfill its mission or vision, progressive disciplinary action will be implemented with involved employees, up to and including dismissal from employment. Should a personal or romantic relationship exist or develop between a manager and an employee, plans will be developed and implemented so that no employee is involved in supervision of another employee with whom they have a personal or romantic relationship. No employee shall supervise any other employee who supervises the employee with whom they have a relationship. These plans will be kept on file in the Human Resources or Business Office.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

MSDB exists to enable all Mississippi students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deafblind to develop, in a safe and productive environment, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to reach their fullest potential as individuals and citizens. All MSDB employees are role models to our students and all employees should project a positive, professional image through their work and their appearance.

MSDB Administration recognizes there are a variety of job duties on campus and employee dress must reflect the same diversity as the duties.

To this end, all employees should be well groomed and be dressed in a manner that will result in a positive image of the school and in accordance with your specific job duty. Clothing worn should be clean, 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. Care should be taken to avoid clothing that a reasonable person would find "revealing."

MSDB Administration also realizes there are varying reasons for professional dress, business dress, business-casual dress, or casual dress. The Administration trusts that employee choices for dress match the employee's planned duties for the day. Staff, including teachers and assistants, who have painting activities planned should be allowed to dress in a way as to not ruin or mar more expensive clothing items. Other classroom activities such as field trips, science dissections, and other "messy" classroom activities will be considered regarding appropriate dress.

If staff have questions about what is considered appropriate, he/she should check with their supervisor.

MSDB employees may be asked to change attire or accessories deemed provocative, revealing, or inappropriate by the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent.

TELEPHONES/CELL PHONES

Telephones are an integral part of communications within MSDB. Therefore, telephones should be used primarily for school business purposes. Personal calls are permitted to a reasonable extent; however, they must be limited, and this privilege not abused. The use of cell phones, iPods, and any other device, including but not limited to headphones or earphones, which may interfere with an

employee's ability to operate a school vehicle or to adequately observe and monitor the behavior of students while said students are under his/her supervision are strictly prohibited.

VISITORS

All visitors to the school shall report to the Welcome Center / Security Gate. Once allowed onto campus, visitors should proceed to the respective school's office to sign in and gain identification as a visitor. This procedure applies to all visitors, parents, community members, etc. The only exceptions are groups who have made appointments for campus tours and are escorted by school staff. All employees shall either report unidentified visitors to their respective office or stop any unauthorized person on campus, direct them and/or escort them to the school's office, and have them sign in.

Salespersons and other individuals desiring business transactions with the school must obtain permission for visitation from the Administration to present to the appropriate individual.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF STAFF MEMBERS

MSDB recognizes the rights of its employees and encourages them as citizens to engage in activities which exemplify good citizenship. However, school property and school time shall not be used for political purposes. Any statements made by employees on social media or otherwise, that affects that employee's ability perform his/her duties or causes a disruption of manner at work is prohibited. Statements of this nature can result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal from employment.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

1. To plan, organize, and conduct a program of instruction in the subjects, grades, or programs/departments 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 Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent, 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 Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the 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 Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent.
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 Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent.
10. To make all contacts and/or requests to the Legislature, Mississippi Department of Education or SBE through the Superintendent.
11. To be accountable for the performance of assigned duties to the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent.

12. To keep lesson plans and/or outlines of class and/or dorm procedures as directed. These will aid Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent in performing their duties and will serve as guidelines for Substitute Teachers or Residential Education Parents.
13. 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.
14. To practice, and to require the pupils to practice shared responsibility by:
 - a. Conservation of environmental and material resources
 - b. Good housekeeping by addressing 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
15. To notify the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent directly upon any anticipated absences, obtaining prior approval when required.
16. To strive to interpret the work of the school fairly, honestly, and adequately to patrons at every opportunity.
17. To avoid political, doctrinal, sectarian, and denominational teaching.
18. To keep up to date in areas of expertise.
19. To strive at all times to maintain respectful relationships with colleagues and parent(s)/guardian(s)
20. To strive to keep parent(s)/guardian informed of their child's progress, and holding conferences whenever necessary.
21. To perform other duties as may be assigned by the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent.

DISCIPLINE GUIDE FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

MSDB is not only responsible for student academic progress but teaching students to be successful citizens in life. Every employee is responsible 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.

EMPLOYEES SHOULD:

- 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 disciplinary infractions.
- Report problems that are simmering and have the potential to escalate, thereby affecting more students and becoming much more serious. Report problems to the Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or the Superintendent, depending on urgency.
- All employees are responsible for student discipline.

GUIDELINES FOR ISSUING DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All guidelines for discipline are outlined in the School Staff Handbooks and Residential Education Handbooks. All behavior is communication. Staff should use behavior infractions as an opportunity to respect what students are trying to communicate, facilitate language develop, teach choice-making, ensure resolution happens, and implement appropriate and authentic consequences for the behavior. All behavior infractions should be appropriately documented for data collection and intervention design. Please check your school or department handbook for more detailed information.

CONTACTING PARENTS

Teachers do have authority to contact parents with regard to academic issues. All disciplinary issues should be reported to the Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent and contact will be made with parents, as necessary. In an effort to build relationships with parents, MSDB encourages positive reports to them as often as possible.

TECHNOLOGY OFFICE AND LOCATIONS

The MSDB Technology Offices and secured technology locations are off limits to staff and students unless they are accompanied by a member of the Technology Department or given permission from the same. Staff members must not use master keys to enable a student to access any Technology Office.

TECHNOLOGY – ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

All staff members must participate in training, read and sign the Acceptable Use Agreement Contract.

MSDB is pleased to offer to its students, faculty, and staff access to the Internet in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy. All users of the internet access must comply with the school's Acceptable Use Policy. It is important that all users understand the terms, conditions, and responsibilities associated with the use of the internet access.

This policy governs the use of all computers, computer-based communication networks and all related information technology equipment administered by MSDB. A user is defined as any person employed by MSDB, which includes full-time, part-time, temporary, or contract employees, persons who are employed by contractors or subcontractors of MSDB, and any other individuals who are authorized to access or use agency information systems including students, parents, prospective students, and project volunteers. The electronic communications and facilities of MSDB are the property of the State and by using these facilities the user

acknowledges consent to abide by this policy. These facilities and resources are to be used for School business purposes.

MSDB has taken available precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, it is impossible for MSDB to restrict access to all controversial materials. Parents/Guardians agree not to hold MSDB responsible for materials acquired by students on the network. Parents/Guardians accept full responsibility for supervision of each child's Internet access if and when their use is not in a school setting. Further, Parents/Guardians full responsibility for their child's use of property of MSDB. Parents give their permission for MSDB to provide computer network and Internet access to each child and consent to the monitoring of each child's computer and Internet activities by MSDB. All conditions of the Acceptable Use Policy also apply to the use of technology in the residential setting.

CHILDREN'S INTERNET PROTECTION ACT (CIPA)

In December 2000, Congress enacted the CIPA. For any school or library that receives discounts for Internet access or for internal connections, CIPA imposes certain requirements. The CIPA requires that schools restrict employee and student access to the Internet. Under the CIPA, covered schools must have an Internet safety program which filters both adult and student access to visual depictions that are obscene or constitute child pornography. The program must also prevent students from accessing materials that are harmful to minors.

The school receives these discounts for Internet Access through the E-Rate program and is therefore in compliance with the CIPA. Key terms for this policy are defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act.

In compliance with CIPA 2008 updates, all students at the MSDB are educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites, in chat rooms and in cyberbullying awareness and response.

CHILDREN'S ONLINE PRIVACY PROTECTION ACT (COPPA)

The COPPA, effective April 21, 2000, applies to online collection of personal information from children under the age of 13, such as full name, home address, email address, telephone number or any other information that would allow someone to identify or contact the child. The Final Rule issued by the Federal Trade Commission spells out what a Website operator must include in a privacy policy, when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent, and what responsibilities an operator has to protect children privacy and safety online.

EDUCATION, SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the MSDB staff to educate, supervise, and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Technology Team Members. MSDB or designated representatives will provide age-appropriate and accessible training for students who use the MSDB Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote the MSDB commitment to:

1. The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the MSDB Acceptable Use Policy;
2. Student safety regarding:
 - a. the Internet;
 - b. appropriate behavior while on online, on social networking web sites, and in chat rooms; and,
 - c. cyber bullying awareness and response (see also the Anti-Bullying policy regarding expectations of electronic usage).
3. Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”).

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of the District's acceptable use policies.

NETWORK AND COMPUTER USAGE ON CAMPUS

The MSDB campus computer network is referred to as MSDB Network. The MSDB Network usage policies are designed to provide an environment that is consistent with the MSD and MSB missions and visions, MDE requirements, and federal/state laws. The MSDB Network refers to devices attached to the entire computer network system at the MSDB. The MSDB Network includes but is not limited to the Local Area Network (LAN on campus), all MSDB file servers, and access to the Internet.

The MSDB Network facilities and network connections are for providing educational computing support to students, faculty, and staff. Under federal statutes and the sections of the Mississippi Code, which govern the use of these resources, all users must use the MSDB Network resources properly and for the purpose designated by the legislature. Students, faculty, and staff must follow all existing federal and state laws and MSDB regulations and policies that apply, including those specific to computers, networks, and websites, and those that may apply generally to personal conduct.

CYBERSECURITY

Cybersecurity plays an important role in today’s technological world. With advanced threats from criminals around the world, any exploit in technology systems can be used to gain unauthorized access from perpetrators. With that in mind, MSDB will take pertinent steps to help prevent cyber-attacks against the institution’s computer network systems, but employees must also do their part in helping to prevent such attacks.

Staff and students are encouraged to take cybersecurity seriously. Training on cybersecurity shall be conducted yearly, and additional training will be held as optioned by the administration.

Users of MSDB computer systems are prohibited from sharing login credentials with other users unless expressed permission is given by a member of the Technology Department. It is the responsibility of the user to secure his/her login credentials when accessing trusted network resources. Passwords associated with trusted resources must contain an appropriate strength and be of at least 8 alphanumeric characters.

In regard to cybersecurity, MSDB reserves the right to monitor the network system for signs of illegal or unauthorized activity. Even though the MSDB Acceptable Use Policy may not expressly prohibit an activity, such behavior may not be permissible. The Technology Department may

delete files deemed unnecessary. For questions related to appropriate use, contact a member of the Technology Department.

INAPPROPRIATE NETWORK USAGE

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the MSDB online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

The following behaviors are not permitted on district computers:

1. Sharing confidential information about students or employees
2. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
3. Using obscene or sexually explicit language or images
4. Discriminatory, harassing, derogatory, insulting or attacking any individual or group
5. Defamatory or threatening language or images
6. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
7. Violating copyright laws or any laws
8. Using others' passwords
9. Trespassing in others' folders, work, or files
10. Intentionally wasting limited resources
11. Using computers for personal or commercial purposes
12. Supporting/opposing political candidates or issues
13. Engaging in practices that threaten the system (e.g., loading files that may introduce a virus)
14. Violating regulations prescribed by the provider
15. Conducting union business
16. Promoting, supporting, celebrating or opposing religion or religious institutions
17. Engaging in any purpose that is contrary to MSDB's policies or interests
18. Visiting obscene web sites
19. Participating in any obscene "chat room" communications
20. Unauthorized monitoring or intercepting files or electronic communications of other users
21. Attempting to bypass any internet filtering, traffic regulating, or such automated systems designed to control the access level and functionality of the MSDB network as required by CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act)
22. Hacking or obtaining access to systems or files that are unauthorized to the user

No personal computer or other personal hardware device(s) may be used to connect to, to log into, or to interface with the MSDB Network academic network at any time. No personal removable media (including but not limited to floppy disks, PIN, thumb, jump drives, etc.) may be used in conjunction with MSDB equipment. MSDB will archive all emails sent or received through the network or on MSDB equipment for a period of at least 60 days and these emails are subject to review by the Technology Department staff and/or the Superintendent.

USER RESPONSIBILITIES

As MSDB Network account holders, users should:

1. Be owners of their data and keep account information confidential.
2. Provide a personal USB flash memory drive for school use in storing personal files and moving them from one computer to another. Other marketing terms used for these devices are “thumb drive” or “jump drive.”
3. Be responsible for ensuring that their data is adequately backed up and protected against unauthorized access.
4. Notify a member of the Technology Department to change their personal password when they suspect it has been compromised.
5. Report suspected violations of technology guidelines to a member of the Technology Department.
6. **Remember**, no information stored, produced, or transmitted in any way on devices that contact the MSDB Network is to be considered confidential or private in any way. **ALL** information is subject to monitoring and examination for appropriate content at any time. This **INCLUDES** personally owned disks or devices used in conjunction with the MSDB Network. Any such item must be surrendered on demand to any school official that requests it for examination.
7. Remain in good standing as a staff member at MSDB. When staff are suspended, dismissed, or otherwise no longer employed, permission to use school resources may be removed, and access to the school and its systems may be denied until the staff member returns to the school in good standing. Staff who are dismissed from employment automatically forfeit all access to school technological resources.

PERSONAL COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERAL DEVICES

In general, staff may not connect their own computers, peripherals, or technological devices to the MSDB Network. This includes such devices as external drives, iPods, cell phones, smart phones, digitizing tablets, etc. However, staff may connect thumb drives to the system for purposes of storing and retrieving their own personal data as it relates to school purposes.

Staff who choose to have their own computers on campus must:

1. Provide the computer and all necessary accessories to allow it to function and that is configured by the staff in compliance with safety protocols.
2. Understand that the resources of the MSDB technology staff are for official school purposes only and they cannot install or repair equipment, hardware, or software on staff computers.
3. Understand that it is a privilege NOT a right for a staff to have a personal computer on the MSDB campus.
4. Recognize that violations of MSDB Network policy may result in personal computers being sent home, loss of some or all computer privileges, and/or other disciplinary actions.
5. Ensure that real time antivirus software is installed, active, and kept up to date on all machines.
6. Agree that MSDB reserves the right to modify the system configuration to ensure compatibility with network systems.
7. Agree to keep the operating system of the computer up to date by automatically applying all manufacturer’s security updates as they are released.

MSDB NETWORK POLICY ENFORCEMENT

To protect the MSDB Network resources and monitor proper usage of computer resources for educational purposes, members of the Technology Department shall:

1. Investigate alleged abuses of computer resources.
2. Access the electronic files of its users as part of that investigation if there are indications that computer privileges have been violated.
3. Limit the access of users found to be using any computer systems improperly.
4. Administer disciplinary actions as directed by school administration for violations of MSDB policies that may include the loss of some or all computer privileges and/or other disciplinary actions.
5. Act as a technical advisor to school administrators when they hear all cases involving misuse of computer privileges.
6. Deny access temporarily pending review when there is reasonable suspicion that such use may harm or do damage in the interim.
7. Administer the technical aspects of all penalties for computer violations assigned by school administration.

HARDWARE

1. All personal computers (PCs), servers, workstations, printers, network switches, and other associated equipment are the property of the State of Mississippi and should not be used for purposes other than school business. All such equipment is by default considered to be under the authority and supervision of the MSDB Technology Department unless it is specifically excluded in a written agreement between the MSDB Technology Department and the appropriate substitute designee. No hardware changes, modifications, additions to, deletions from, or removal of any equipment may be done to any such style equipment without notification to the MSDB Technology Department in writing, including all units as described above. Additionally, any person other than Technology personnel may make no such hardware changes to any unit under its supervision unless an MSDB Technology Department representative authorizes such action in writing in advance.
2. No personal devices are to be connected to the MSDB Network without special permission for the MSDB Technology Department. The only routine exception to this rule is that personal USB Flash Memory devices (jump drives or thumb drives) may be used for storing or moving user data files.
3. The transfer of any information system equipment from one user to another, or to vendor for repair, must be recorded using appropriate MDE Property Office and MSDB Technology Department procedures.
4. Except for notebook PCs used daily in offsite work, no information systems equipment should be removed from the MSDB premises without the prior permission of both the individuals' immediate supervisor and the MSDB Technology Department. In the event equipment is to be off premises for some time, the user responsible for the equipment must file a written notification with the MSDB Technology Department.

SOFTWARE

1. Software owned or licensed by MSDB may not be copied to alternate media, distributed by e-mail, transmitted electronically, or used in its original form on other than MSDB computers without express prior written permission from the MSDB Technology Department. Users will adhere to all applicable licensing agreements and copyright provisions.

2. Software licensed to MSDB is to be used for its intended purpose according to the license agreement. Users are responsible for using software in a manner consistent with the licensing agreements of the manufacturer. License agreements are to be maintained by the MSDB Technology Department staff, or the machine's official substitute designee. Copies of all license agreements are to be kept on file in the MSDB Technology office regardless of official supervisory authority.
3. Without prior written approval, software, including but not limited to Internet downloads, utilities, add-ons, programs (including shareware, freeware and Internet access software), patches, or upgrades, shall not be installed on any school owned equipment by anyone other than a representative of the MSDB Technology Department.
4. All software obtained for use on MSDB equipment must be approved in writing by the MSDB Technology Department staff prior to acquisition. Any software obtained for systems that have a substitute supervisory designee must have a copy kept on file in the MSDB Technology Department along with the proof of the licensing certification.
5. Standard software is to be used for all internal functions. When required, approved non-standard software is to be used only to interface with customer/vendor organizations and other governmental agencies. Any non-standard software needed to perform a specific job function should be approved by the MSDB Technology Department.

PRACTICES

1. System identification codes and passwords are for the use of the specifically assigned user and are to be protected from abuse and/or use by unauthorized individuals. Users are to use their individually assigned system access credentials at all times and are not to share credentials. Any use of another user's credentials must be reported immediately to the MSDB Technology Department staff.
2. All e-mail attachments and executable e-mail messages are automatically scanned for viruses using the virus detection software installed on all MSDB computer workstations. In the event of any configuration changes to the workstation, even with the approval of the MSDB Technology Department Staff, it is the responsibility of the user to ensure virus protection is active prior to opening/executing any file, regardless of the method by which it was obtained. In addition, users are expected to exercise good judgment and safe computing practices to protect agency systems against the threat of potential virus exposure.
3. Like all MSDB information systems resources, Internet access and e-mail are for work-related use. Access to e-mail and Internet sites visited can be monitored at the specific individual level.
4. All Internet use facilitated by the MSDB Network system must conform to all regulatory statutes as governed by the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).
5. Users may not use MSDB information systems resources for soliciting, personal financial gain, partisan political activities or further disseminating "junk" e-mail such as chain letters, spam, etc.
6. Information contained on any school system is strictly proprietary to the State of Mississippi and MSDB. Copying or disseminating any of this information for any purpose other than state business is strictly prohibited.
7. It is highly recommended that all faculty and staff users store data files (word documents, spreadsheets, databases, etc.) in their various directories on the network file servers. The MSDB Technology Department is responsible for backing up data on

the network servers. The individual users are responsible for backing up any files not stored in the appropriate areas of the network servers.

MSDB Technology and Instructional Device Use Policy

TERMS

All student users of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) provided laptops, tablets, or other personal computing devices shall comply with MSDB policies. Any failure to comply may result in termination of student user rights of possession effective immediately, and MSDB may repossess the device.

LEGAL TITLE

MSDB and the State of Mississippi retain legal title to the property. The student user's right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon full and complete compliance with this agreement, MSDB Technology policies, and all MSDB Acceptable Use policies and procedures as found in the MSDB Student Handbook.

RULES FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

1. Electronic devices loaned to students shall be used only for educational purposes that directly relate to a school project or assignment, unless otherwise explicitly authorized by building administration.
2. Student users are responsible for the proper care of electronic devices at all times, whether on or off school property.
 - a. Student users shall not leave the device unattended in an unlocked classroom or during an extracurricular activity.
 - b. Student users shall not lend the device to a classmate, friend, or family member. If any person damages the device, it will be the student user's (parent/guardian in the case of a student) responsibility and the damage cost policy will be in effect.
 - c. Student users shall transport the device in its protective case and sleeve.
 - d. Student users shall not leave the device in a vehicle for extended periods of time or overnight.
 - e. Student users shall not leave the device in visible sight when left in a vehicle.
3. Student users shall report a lost or damaged device to the school authorities immediately. If a device is stolen, a report shall be made immediately to local law enforcement.
 - a. If a device is damaged, lost, or stolen because of irresponsible behavior, including intentional or negligent damage or loss, the student user or the parent/guardian may be responsible for the full replacement cost. The student user or the parent/guardian will be responsible for full replacement cost of the device if not reported to MSDB personnel within three (3) calendar days of missing or damaged device.
4. Violation of policies or rules governing the use of electronic devices or any careless use of the device may result in a student's device being confiscated and/or a student only being allowed to use the device under the direct supervision of school staff. The student shall also be subject to disciplinary action for any violations of Board policies/procedures or school rules.
5. The student user is responsible for recharging the device's battery, so it is fully charged by the start of the next school day. Devices with no battery life shall be charged in the classroom. The student may be required to forfeit use of the device for the entire time it takes to charge it. All class work missed because of uncharged batteries shall be made up on a student's own time.
6. The device configuration shall not be altered in any way by student users. No software applications shall be installed, removed, or altered on the device unless permission is explicitly given, in writing, by the

teacher or building administrator. Any attempt to “jailbreak” and/or remove MSDB protection software may result in disciplinary action.

7. The device shall only be used by the student to whom it is issued. The person to whom the device is issued will be responsible for any activity or action performed on the device.
8. The device shall be returned in acceptable working order by the last day of each school year, upon withdrawal or exit date from MSDB, and whenever requested by school staff.
9. Failure to return the device by the last day of each school year, upon withdrawal or exit date from MSDB, or whenever requested by school staff shall result in a full cost of replacement charge to the student user or parent/legal guardian responsible for this agreement.

USE OF PERSONAL LAPTOPS AND TABLETS

Students may use their personal laptops or tablets in place of a school device. However, while on the MSDB campus, students shall connect to the school’s provided wireless network and not a personal hotspot not provided by the school. Students bringing a personal device to campus, or using the device for remote learning, will be responsible for support and maintenance of the device.

REPOSSESSION

If the student user fails to fully comply with all terms of this Agreement and MSDB Technology policies, including the timely return of the property, MSDB shall be entitled to declare the student user in default and take appropriate legal action to secure the safe return of the device or incur full replacement.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

The student user’s right to use and possession of the property terminates no later than the last day of enrollment, unless earlier terminated by MSDB or upon withdrawal from MSDB.

SUPPORT

Students shall contact their teachers as a first level of support for class-related work. If a student needs assistance regarding device software and hardware, they will need to send a repair request to support.msbd@mdek12.org

Student users shall not take devices belonging to MSDB to any other businesses for technical support or repair.

FEES

- First damage occurrence: Cost of repair, not to exceed \$75.00.
- Second damage occurrence: Cost of repair or potential full replacement cost, if required, and loss of take-home privileges.

STUDENT USER DATA

All student users are responsible for keeping backups of important data. If a device must be repaired, there may be a need to reset it to the original settings. The technology department will not be responsible for any student user data that might be lost as a part of this process.

UNLAWFUL APPROPRIATION

Failure to timely return the property and use of any school device for non-school purposes, without MSDB consent, may be considered unlawful appropriation of MSDB property.

SIGNATURE VERIFICATION

Print Parent/Guardian Name(s) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature(s) _____

Date: _____

Print Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Date: _____

I have reviewed MSDB Technology policies and understand the rules and guidelines for the following:

_____ (initial) Acceptable Use Policy in the 2020-2021 MSDB Student Handbook. This includes policies related to account use, network monitoring and adherence to the Children's Internet Protection Act.

_____ (initial) Damages – I am subject to a \$75 charge for the first report of damage. I am subject to the full replacement cost of subsequent damage / first loss / first theft.

Policy History:

Adopted and Board Approved: August 27, 2020

Reviewed and Board Approved:

DEADLINES

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

FORMS AND PUBLICATIONS

A wide variety of forms are necessary to acquire data necessary for the effective operation of a residential school. Forms shall be made available using network resources and available to all employees, subject to access rights assigned by the MSDB Technology Department.

Occasionally, a need arises for a new form. All forms must be created using an appropriate MSDB format that is accessible to screen readers. Before distribution and use, all forms must be approved by the Superintendent. 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, and written from a supportive perspective. Use grammar and spell check to proof all documents.

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 MSDB 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.

CUMULATIVE FOLDERS AND PERMANENT RECORDS

MSDB maintains student cumulative folders and permanent records according to state laws and regulations. Cumulative records are stored in locked, fireproof files near the Administrative Suite in Building B upstairs. Authorized staff members (administrative staff, counselor, teachers) may examine and work on student records only near the administrative office areas. Parents may request to inspect a student’s education records and inspection will be arranged within 15 days of receipt of the request.

RECORDS RETENTION

MSDB shall retain copies of records in accordance with the mandatory school, SBE, 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. Mississippi 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 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULES FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

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 Miss. Code Ann. § 39-5-9. 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.

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.

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTIONS

MSDB has a variety of performances, exhibits and events annually. All promotional materials (press releases, fliers, and programs) must be approved by the Superintendent 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 MSDB 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.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

Administrators must follow all contractual policies and procedures when securing the services of an independent contractor (e.g., fire inspections, pest control). Maintain department copies of independent contractor documentation before submitting originals to the Business Office. Supervisors, Directors and/or Principals are required to submit quotes in accordance with state purchasing laws for any contract when hiring independent service providers to ensure more economical pricing.

CONFERENCES

SUPERINTENDENT AND EMPLOYEE

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

SUPERVISOR/DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL AND EMPLOYEE

Conferences will be held at the discretion of the Supervisor/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, MSDB employees must be responsible in taking the initiative to schedule a parent conference at the first sign of any issue or concern with a student. Parent/teacher conferences should be scheduled at a time appropriate for the parent/s, the teacher, and any other required staff member. Non-teaching employees may schedule appointments with parents according to individual work schedules and upon approval of immediate supervisor and/or the Superintendent. When possible, the Superintendent will notify employees in advance when parents request a conference through the administrative offices. With sufficient advance notice, the Superintendent may be invited to attend conferences, if requested. When travel distance is prohibitive, a parent conference may be held virtually or through telephone.

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 MSDB Student Handbook must be followed.

INSTRUCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

TEACHER AS THE AUTHORITY IN THE CLASSROOM

MSDB as governed by the SBE recognizes the Teacher as the authority in classroom matters and supports that Teacher in any decision in compliance with the written discipline code of conduct. Such recognition shall include the right of the teacher to remove from the classroom any student who, in the professional judgment of the teacher, is disrupting the learning environment, to the Principal's or Counselor's office.

The Counselor or Principal shall determine the proper placement for the student, who may not be returned to the classroom until a conference of some kind has been held with the student, and in some cases with the parent or guardian or custodian during which the disrupting behavior is discussed, and agreements are reached that result in resolution to the situation. If the Principal does not approve of the determination of the Teacher to remove the student from the classroom, the student may not be removed from the classroom, and the Principal, upon request from the Teacher, must provide justification for the disapproval.

A student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities may be subject to discipline actions.

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 School Office each period to report attendance.

LEAVING STUDENTS UNATTENDED

Students should not be left unattended in classrooms without supervision. Supervision looks differently as students age and mature and they deserve opportunities to practice independence skills. Staff members should be in communication if students are traveling independently across the building or campus and/or spending short amounts of independent time in their dorm environments. Staff members should never be far away and frequent visual and/or auditory check-ins are required by staff. 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. Assignments should be clear, requirements and deadlines understood, and assessment criteria determined in advance and used as a work tool. Deadlines should be followed. Assignments accepted beyond established time frames should not be the normal operation. MSDB promotes turning work in on time. MSDB also understands that the school is a learning environment where flexibility is almost always an option. Assignments turned in late may have grading consequences; however, the main focus is on student learning. See the MSDB Student Handbook for specific guidelines.

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.

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 and 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.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with the MSDB commitment to excellence among its employees, the school will provide opportunities for professional development for all its employees that complements and supports the educational and residential programs. Additionally, staff are encouraged to seek unique opportunities that can enhance their job performance.

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 MDE framework for the specific subject area. Teachers are advised that all lesson plans are subject to review by administration. Principals will clarify the procedures for submitting lesson plans and/or having plans available for review. Failure to prepare and submit lesson plans may lead to administrative action.

APPROPRIATE CONTENT

MSDB is a state public school that provides on-campus education that includes residential support services. The school seeks to provide a safe and healthy, positive learning environment. In keeping with this philosophy, things such as tobacco, drug, or alcohol usage, profanity, violence, abuse, lewdness, nudity, sexuality, or any other suggestive subject matter is not considered appropriate content student generated works created in any medium (e.g., written, performed, electronic, artworks, video, photographs, cartoons). This policy applies to all aspects of the campus; students and faculty members must refrain from generating, producing, or performing works that might be questionable. Written and published works may have to be edited to be appropriate for use in a public school context where students are minor children. Questions regarding appropriate content should be addressed to the Principal for approval.

HOMEWORK

Teachers may assign a reasonable amount of meaningful homework. All homework will be checked and may be graded by the teacher and counted toward course credit. Teachers are expected to provide assignments and other assistance to students with excused absences as specified by the policies in the Student Handbook.

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 MSDB. 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 Director or Principal and/or the Superintendent. 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 Staff member sponsoring the trip will submit an FMX request for approval at least two weeks prior to departure.
2. The Director or Principal will secure substitutes as needed and assess if ADA and class minutes are affected.

3. All trips must be educational and well planned with an adequate number of chaperones. The number of chaperones needed depends on the age/grade and maturity levels of the group and should be agreed upon by the organizing Staff member and the Director or Principal.
4. Parents or other adults (of acceptable age and maturity) may serve as volunteer chaperones, and the organizing Staff member is responsible for ensuring that the volunteer chaperone understands their duties. At no point should volunteer chaperones be left with students without a staff member present.
5. Chaperones must travel in school vehicles with students to ensure proper supervision and safety while in transport.
6. The FMX request will include transportation needs to see if a bus and driver are available in advance since MSDB has a limited number of vehicles and drivers.
7. The FMX request will include medical and food service needs.
8. The organizing Staff member will submit in the request a list of those students participating in field trips.
9. 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.
10. 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 Student Permission Slip after travel authorizations from the Superintendent Office are secured for staff.
11. 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.
12. Any 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.
13. Students who do not participate in field trips must complete an alternative assignment.
14. School rules and regulations found in the MSDB handbook pertain to all school-sponsored trips.

Field trips shall not occur during statewide testing. 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 on the bus with the students.

STUDENT TEACHERS/INTERNS

Occasionally—upon request, Student Teachers or Interns may be assigned to an MSDB Staff member. All requests for the placement of Student Teachers or Interns must be addressed to the Principal or the Superintendent 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 or Intern's classroom management, teaching and learning strategies, and professionalism. Student Teachers shall not administer or prescribe punishment to students. Student Teachers will abide by the policies set forth by the MSDB. Supervising Teachers/Staff Members must never leave students alone in the care of a Student Teacher or Intern.

On-campus housing in residence areas designed for students is available to Student Teachers and

Interns on a first-come, first-served, space-available basis during their internship time. Housing in the LifeShare House is NOT available for Student Teachers or Interns.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS/STAFF MEMBERS

When Staff members anticipate being absent, they should discuss the absence with the Director or Principal before finalizing plans to be absent from school. Staff members must submit a request to the Director or 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 may be denied. When a teacher will be off campus supervising school activities during the school day, the same procedures must be followed. MSDB has a limited number of substitutes, so advance notification is mandatory, but illness and emergencies do occur occasionally.

Leave a voice mail message and call or text until you receive a response from 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:

1. Generic lesson plans that are meaningful to the subject area, but applicable to any time period within the semester
2. Class rosters (Keep them up to date)
3. Teaching schedules
4. Duty assignments with clear instructions

PLEASE NOTE: All work produced in the absence of a Teacher may 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.

ILLNESSES (STUDENT)

When students report feeling unwell or Staff members notice a student seeming to be unwell, the Teacher or Staff member should call the School Office. The School Office Administrative Assistant will notify the Health Clinic that a student is on their way. The Teacher or Staff member should accompany the student to the Health Clinic. Even if a student appears to be feigning illness, it is best 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 Staff members send a student to the dorm or "prescribe" treatment when a student claims to be sick. The Nurse is the medical professional on campus. If a student is seriously ill, the Nurse will contact the parents and the student will go home. If parents are unable to come and pick up their child, transportation home may be arranged depending on bus, driver, and chaperone staff availability.

For illness in the Residential Dorms, Residential Education Parents should contact the Health Clinic and the Director/Supervisor on duty. Directors/Supervisors must ensure coverage in the dorms as well as getting the student escorted to the Health Clinic for treatment. Health Clinic staff may be able to visit the student who is ill in the Dorm depending on other Health Clinic needs.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION TO STUDENTS

MSDB 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 according to training. Employees who are not designated or trained are prohibited from administering medications at any time.

Designated MSDB employees will dispense medication to students in accordance with policies included in the Student Handbook.

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 the Principal.

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 Principal.
6. Teachers and Staff members distributing books to students 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 MSDB 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 MSDB may use many books that are more than ten years old for reference (e.g., Deaf Culture and visual impairments history), these books will be stored in the library, checked out by the Staff 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 Staff member leaves campus at the end of the school year without completing textbook inventory requirements, they 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 are responsible for correcting inappropriate behavior across the entire campus at all times.

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.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

It is the policy of MSDB to comply with all provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Carl Perkins Act of 1984, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1983, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school.

Anyone wishing to file a formal complaint of discrimination should contact the Superintendent Office.

The SBE, MDE, and MSDB do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment must be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the MDE Board Policy Part 3, Chapter 99, Rule 99.1.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH IDEA AND SECTION 504 ELIGIBILITY

Special education students are responsible for adhering to the same rules of conduct as nondisabled students. The school complies with all provisions of the IDEA of 2004, the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Mississippi laws, and State Board Policy 7219 when implementing discipline procedures for students with disabilities.

PLAGIARISM

Because plagiarism is a nationwide problem in schools, each Staff 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. 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.

GRADE REPORTING

In order to ensure timely feedback to students, parents, Counselors, 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 and up-to-date records of student grades.
3. Use SAM 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 SAM within three school days after grading is completed, with a minimum of one grade posted per week.
7. Provide feedback regarding grades in a timely manner 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.
11. Include a daily participation citizenship percentage.

Parents have access to student attendance, grades, and discipline via ActiveParent.

EMPLOYEE WORKDAY

Educational Staff members daily work schedule is Monday to Friday 7:45am – 3:45pm. Some Staff members, such as Teaching Assistants and Specialists/Support Staff may have a slightly different start and end time.

Residential Staff members shifts are as follows:

Sunday Day Shift: 6:00pm-12:00am

Monday to Thursday Overnight Shift 12:00am-8:00am

Monday to Thursday Day Shift 3:00pm-12:00am

Some Residential Staff members also provide bus chaperoning duties, and their schedules are dependent upon bus routes.

Each Staff member, whether Educational or Residential, are expected to work 40 hours per week unless he/she is a part-time employee.

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 conditions or behaviors on campus to the appropriate Administrator.

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 MSDB Safety and Crisis Management Manual. Staff members will prioritize accessibility for students and staff who are

deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deafblind to ensure they have access to the emergency situation and all instructions pertaining to the emergency.

FIRE DRILL

All Staff members are responsible for knowing the fire evacuation routes and procedures. Teachers and/or Teaching Assistants and Residential Education Parents should carry class/dorm rosters during evacuation and account for each student under their supervision. Each employee should 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 or been sighted and may affect areas identified.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

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

If a Tornado Warning has been issued, the tornado sirens will sound, and an announcement will be made via MSDB intercoms and visual paging systems. If no electricity, Administration will announce and implement tornado warning procedures.

PERSONAL EMERGENCY

In case of a personal emergency, teachers should notify the School Office, the Residential Education Director/Supervisor, and/or the Superintendent as soon as possible.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All MSDB employees must wear identification badges at all times when on duty. MSDB ID badges are mandatory. MSDB Staff members are also given a generic proxy card that provides electronic access to the front and back gates of campus. Disciplinary measures may be taken with staff members who forget their badge on a consistent basis.

ACCIDENTS

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 Health Clinic and call or send someone to the School Office to ask for help. Residential Staff members should contact their Supervisor and/or Director.
5. If first aid is indicated and if you are trained and 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**. This form may be available electronically and your Supervisor, Director, or Principal should have shown you where these forms are kept (hard copy or electronically) upon hire.

Full-time employees who are injured on the job are covered by workman's compensation insurance. On the day of the accident or within 24 hours, complete the appropriate MSDB form that can be acquired from your Supervisor, Director, or Principal or from the Business Office. This form may be available electronically and your Supervisor, Director, or Principal should have shown you where these forms are kept (hard copy or electronically) upon hire.

SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATIONS

Pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. §45-33-49(5), the MDE 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>

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 sheriff shall be responsible for verifying their respective registries annually against DPS records to ensure current information is available at both levels.

WEAPONS

MSDB desires to maintain a work environment which is safe and secure in nature. Threats, threatening behavior, or any acts of violence against employees, students or other individuals on the premises will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination, and/or criminal prosecution. Any person who engages in violent behavior, such as making substantial threats, or intentionally hitting, kicking, or striking a person or property on MSDB premises may be removed by Administration from the premises as quickly as safety permits, and is to remain off premises pending the outcome of an investigation. Additionally, the School Policy prohibits firearms or weapons of any type on the premises.

MSDB recognizes the possession of pistols, firearms or other weapons on school premises or at school functions by persons other than duly authorized law enforcement officials creates an unreasonable and unwarranted risk of injury or death to employees, students, visitors or guests. Possession of a firearm or weapon while on the premises will be handled with appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. All employees will fully cooperate with MSDB Administration and with law enforcement agencies to eliminate workplace violence risks. All personnel are responsible for immediately notifying their Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or Superintendent of any threats, threatening behavior or acts of violence, which they have witnessed, received or have been told that another person has

witnessed or received. Even without an actual threat, personnel should also report any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent when that behavior is employment or job-related or might be carried out on MSDB premises. The Supervisor, Director, or Principal who receives the report is responsible for informing the Superintendent so that proper documentation of the incident can be gathered.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE

MSDB is a drug-free workplace including all school facilities, grounds, and vehicles. This policy includes alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and e-cigarettes/vaping.

It is the policy of MSDB 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 MSDB workplace. Pursuant to this law, all MSDB employees will notify the Superintendent 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 MSDB policy is that employees shall not be allowed to work or participate in any school or department 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 MSDB activity is cause for termination.

Employees who struggle with addictions 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 MSDB Human Resources or Business 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 Superintendent considers to be cause for dismissal, and no request for assistance will prevent the Superintendent from taking disciplinary action based on the misconduct which may have been related to the employee's use of alcohol or drugs.

MSDB, 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.

MSDB has adopted the policy that all areas it occupies will be tobacco-free. The Mississippi State Board of Education has the right to revise this policy. MSDB 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. MSDB 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, MSDB's relationship with the government or reflects badly on MSDB and/or the Department of Education 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 MSDB Student Handbook policy related to possession and/or use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

DRUG TESTING

All MSDB 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, MSDB 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).
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 and tobacco use is banned on the MSDB campus and any adjacent properties owned by MSDB provided for school use.

MSDB employees who smoke or use tobacco may do so during breaks and at lunch. Since all MSDB 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 MSDB campus (including adjacent properties) are subject to disciplinary action and civil penalties.

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 MSDB 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. MSDB encourages its staff to pursue a healthy lifestyle that contributes to their improved health status and personal commitment to the health of students creates positive role modeling. All staff at MSDB should model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. The Health Clinic will work with all students and staff to establish a personalized wellness program and conduct periodic assessments to monitor wellness.

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 their Supervisor, Director, or Principal and/or the Superintendent so that appropriate action can be taken.

TERMINATED EMPLOYEE POLICY

Upon notification of termination, MSDB has the following policy with regard to contact with the students and staff on campus.

- Visits to campus – No terminated employee is permitted to visit campus without prior written approval from the Superintendent. This is in perpetuity and will not be released. Violation of this protocol may result in arrest for trespassing.
- Attendance to MSDB events on or off campus – No terminated employee is permitted to attend any campus events, even if open to the public, without prior written approval from the Superintendent. This includes performances, showcases, exhibits, and special events such as prom and graduation. Violation of this protocol may result in arrest for trespassing.
- Technology accounts – All technology accounts are discontinued effective the date of termination.
- Badges, keys, and inventory are all required to be turned in to MSDB or face possible fines to pay to MSDB and/or the Mississippi Department of Education.
- All personal items may be picked up from campus at a mutually agreed upon time when school is not in session. A list of items taken from campus will be made upon pick up.
- Final paychecks will be sent to the employee's home address. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify MSDB if the address has changed from what is on file.

PARKING—GENERAL

Employees may park in any lined spaces in any open parking lot. Handicapped/Disabled parking places are reserved for those with the appropriate placard or decal. All parking is filled on a first come, first served basis.

PARKING—HANDICAPPED

Miss. Code Ann. § 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 MSDB employees who qualify to park in a special handicapped parking space must have on file with Security Welcome Center Gate:

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 Welcome Center Gate 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. Any subsequent offense(s) will result in a citation and fine by the authorities.

Employees must not park in fire zones; violations may result in warnings and fines as described above.

FISCAL MANAGEMENT

FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The financial records and statements of the MSDB will be kept and presented in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the requirements and procedures outlined in the Mississippi Public School District Financial Accounting Manual, as amended. This uniform accounting system, which is directed by the MDE, includes a method of accounting for and keeping records of all funds received, handled, and disbursed by MSDB, whether derived from taxation or otherwise, including funds from donations, athletic events, and other special activities of the school.

MSDB employs a school Chief Financial Officer/Business Manager whose qualifications meet the criteria established by MDE and whose primary job responsibilities are conducting, supervising, and/or directing the financial affairs and operations of the school. MSDB operates with a financial accounting system as prescribed by the MDE.

The SBE and MSDB have implemented a fixed asset system of accountability that complies with the standards established by the State Auditor's Office for the verification of fixed assets and the auditing of fixed assets records.

The financial accounting data and the corresponding annual audit report as submitted to the MDE reflect no less than a zero-fund balance (as defined by Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) for all funds of MSDB.

Miss. Code Ann. § [37-37-1](#), [37-9-18](#), [37-61-23](#), [37-17-6\(16\)](#), [37-61-9](#)

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

The annual operating budget is the plan of current expenditures and the proposed means of financing them. The annual operating budget is the primary means by which most of the financing, acquisition, spending and service delivery activities of MSDB are controlled.

The annual operating budget, as required by law, is essential to the sound financial management of MSDB. Funds are allocated directly through the Mississippi Department of Education budget by the Mississippi legislature and the Governor.

[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-61-9](#)

FISCAL YEAR/SCHOLASTIC YEAR

The "fiscal year" of MSDB shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30 of each year. The "scholastic year" of MSDB shall likewise commence on July 1 and end on June 30 of each year.

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET PREPARATION PROCEDURES

On or before the fifteenth day of August of each year, the SBE shall approve the prepared budget presented by the Superintendent, as defined in Section 37-57-1, at least two (2) copies of a budget of estimated expenditures for the support, maintenance and operation of MSDB for the fiscal year commencing on July 1 of such year. Such budget shall be prepared on forms prescribed and provided by MDE and shall contain such information as MDE may require.

Prior to the adoption of a budget pursuant to this section, MSDB shall submit to the SBE for

approval at least one (1) public board meeting to provide the general public with an opportunity to review the proposed budget. After final adoption of the budget a synopsis of such budget in a form prescribed by the Mississippi Department of Education shall be published on the school website for statewide dissemination.

The SBE may hold an executive session for the transaction of business and discussions regarding employment and termination of employees as needed.

Miss. Code Ann [§ 37-61-9](#), [§ 25-41-7](#)(Executive Session)(4)(K).

PERIODIC BUDGET RECONCILIATION

It shall be the duty of the Superintendent and the SBE to limit the expenditure of school funds during the fiscal year to the resources available. It shall be unlawful for MSDB to budget expenditures from a fund in excess of the resources available within that fund.

Furthermore, it shall be unlawful for any contract to be entered into or any obligation incurred or expenditure made in excess of the resources available for such fiscal year.

Any member of the SBE, Superintendent, or other school official, who knowingly enters into any contract, incurs any obligation, or makes any expenditure in excess of the amount available for the fiscal year shall be personally liable for the amount of such excess.

However, no SBE member, Superintendent, or other school official shall be personally liable (a) in the event of any reduction in budgetary allocation by action of the Governor, or (b) for claims, damages, awards or judgments, on account of any wrongful or tort action or omission or breach of implied term or condition of any warranty or contract; provided, however, that the foregoing immunity provisions shall not be a defense in cases of fraud, criminal action or an intentional breach of fiduciary obligations imposed by statute.

The SBE shall approve a budget for MSDB. The SBE shall approve amendments to such budget where major functions of revenues and expenditures are involved. The Superintendent and/or his/her designee may amend objects within major functions as may be necessary during the fiscal year.

LINE-ITEM TRANSFER AUTHORITY

If the Superintendent or the SBE anticipates that the amounts to be received from state appropriations or any other source will be more than the amount estimated in the budget filed and approved, or if it should appear that such amounts shall be less than the amount estimated, the SBE, with assistance from the Superintendent, shall revise the budget at any time during the fiscal year by increasing or decreasing the fund budget, in proportion to the increase or decrease in the estimated amounts.

If it should appear to the Superintendent, or the SBE that some function of the budget as filed is in excess of the requirement of that function and that the entire amount budgeted for such function will not be needed for expenditures therefore during the fiscal year, the SBE, with assistance from the Superintendent, may transfer resources to and from functions and funds within the budget when and where needed; however, no such transfer shall be made from fund to fund or from function to function which will result in the expenditure of any money for any purpose different from that for which the money was appropriated, allotted, collected or otherwise made

available or for a purpose which is not authorized by law. No revision of any budget under the provisions hereof shall be made which will permit a fund expenditure in excess of the amounts available for such purpose.

The revised portions of the budgets shall be incorporated in the minutes of the SBE meeting. Final budget revisions, pertinent to a fiscal year, shall be approved on or before the date set by the SBE for MSDB to submit its financial information for that fiscal year.

The SBE shall approve all transfers between individual funds except those approved as part of the budget. Transfers approved as part of the budget already have board approval and a second approval of the actual transaction is unnecessary unless different from the budget.

DEBT LIMITATION RESTRICTIONS ON INDEBTEDNESS

MSDB will not engage in any debt relief against the property owned by the State of Mississippi.

REVENUES FROM SCHOOL PROPERTY

The SBE authorizes and empowers the Superintendent to allow for rental of the property under terms and for purposes as agreed upon by the SBE. Funds received from such leases shall be used to defray operational costs of MSDB.

FEDERAL AID

In order to provide the best educational opportunities possible for students of MSDB, it shall be the objective of the Board to seek as many sources of revenue as possible to supplement the funds provided by the State.

Therefore, MSDB shall participate in any eligible federal aid programs which provide direct educational auxiliary services or opportunities to students enrolled in and served by MSDB.

All applications for federal aid and special grants shall be prepared by Administrative staff and approved by the SBE, if applicable.

The expenditure of all federal funds shall strictly comply with the laws, regulations and procedures as established by the terms of agreement between the district and sponsoring agency.

It shall be unlawful for MSDB to expend any public funds from any source(s) for purposes which are political. Prohibited expenditures shall include but not be limited to the purchase of partisan political materials, contributions to any candidate for public office, and use of school property, equipment or employees in support of a candidate(s).

FEDERAL LOANS AND GRANTS

MSDB has developed the following policies and procedures to ensure effective cash management for Federal Loans and Grants, to provide a comprehensive policy for managing the federal drawdowns of funds for payment of grant-related expenses, meet all cash requirements for grant management in compliance with the federal Cash Management Improvement Act, and to provide for accurate documentation.

The Cash Management Improvement Act requires districts receiving federal funds to

demonstrate that the district has either already expended the federal funds or will spend the federal funds within three business days of receipt. The district will ensure funds are drawn as closely as possible to the actual expenditure of funds and monitor the fiscal activity for each grant.

Transactions and supporting documentation will be reviewed by the Director of each federal program for approval. The Business Office must approve all transactions dealing with the disbursements and track them through a pre-numbered monitoring system (pre-numbered checks and purchase orders). Transactions will be posted and reconciled in a timely manner.

MSDB will maintain semi-annual certifications for employees working on a single federal award. MSDB will maintain personnel activity reports or time sheets for employees working on multiple activities which include at least one federal award.

Purchases from federal grants must adhere to Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. Federal procurement regulations are included in the MSDB Purchasing Manual. Transactions and supporting documentation, including purchase orders and invoices, will be reviewed by the applicable federal program Director for approval.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS/DONATED ASSETS

Items and donations contributed will become the property of MSDB and shall be subject to the same controls and regulations which govern the use or disposal of all fixed assets. MSDB reserves the right to reject any contribution to the school which does not serve to enhance or extend the school.

The Superintendent or designee shall have the authority to accept and acknowledge all donations and contributions (monies and personal property) to MSDB on the date of donation. Any such monies shall be receipted into the respective school's activity funds and deposited in that bank account.

CROWDFUNDING PROJECTS

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project by raising small amounts of money from a large number of people.

The following guidelines apply to any crowdfunding project:

1. Any person (including employees) or entity acting on behalf of MSDB, and wishing to conduct crowdfunding, online fundraising, or any other online donation campaign for the benefit of MSDB, shall begin the process by seeking PRIOR written approval from the Superintendent or designee. Written approval must be obtained.
2. All items (monies and personal property) obtained through crowdfunding projects using the respective school's names are to become the property of the MSDB.
3. All monetary donations should be recorded by the school Business Office in the School Activity Fund. No school banking information should ever be disclosed by individuals to anyone outside the district. A check should be requested to be mailed to the school in the name of the school and not to an individual.
4. Inventory policies and procedures of MSDB apply to property obtained through crowdfunding projects.

5. Any cost of installation is the responsibility of the donor unless otherwise agreed to by MSDB.
6. Some crowdfunding sites are tax deductible, and some are not. It is not the responsibility of MSDB to determine if the donation is tax deductible. MSDB will not provide a Form 990 for crowdfunding donations.
7. Crowdfunding that would obligate the MSDB to future operating or upkeep costs must be approved by the SBE.
8. Law, policy, and procedure concerning student privacy and other requirements set out in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) must also be followed when making requests for crowdfunding projects.

INVESTMENT EARNINGS

Until a fund balance can be built with the state appropriation each year, MSDB does not have an investment program. The bank account balances earning interest will apply all earnings in excess of \$100.00 for deposits shall be allocated back to the fund from which the deposit or investment was made.

DEPOSITORY OF FUNDS

MSDB shall advertise and accept bids for depositories no less than once every three years. ([Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-333](#)) The depositories must meet the requirements in [Miss. Code Ann. § 27-105-315](#).

MSDB may deposit school funds in those banks only designated as depositories by the SBE. School activity funds may be deposited only in banks approved as depositories by MSDB.

FUND BALANCE

PURPOSE

The SBE recognizes that the maintenance of a fund balance is essential to the preservation of the financial integrity of MSDB and is fiscally advantageous for both the school and the taxpayer. This policy establishes goals and provides guidance concerning the desired level of fund balance maintained by MSDB to mitigate financial risk that can occur from unforeseen revenue fluctuations, unanticipated expenditures, and similar circumstances.

DEFINITIONS

Fund balance is a measurement of available financial resources and is the difference between total assets and total liabilities in each fund.

Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 54 distinguishes fund balance classified based on the relative strength of the constraints that control the purposes for which specified amounts can be spent. Beginning with the most restrictive constraints, fund balance amounts will be reported in the following categories:

1. **Non-spendable fund balance** – amounts that are not in a spendable form (e.g., inventory) or are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact (e.g., grants or donations).
2. **Restricted fund balance** – amounts that can be spent only for the specific purposes stipulated by external parties either constitutionally or through enabling legislation (e.g., grants or donations).

3. **Committed fund balance** – amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes determined by a formal action of the SBE. Commitments may be changed or lifted only by referring to the formal action that imposed the constraint originally (e.g., the SBE’s commitment in connection with future construction projects).
4. **Assigned fund balance** – amounts intended to be used by the government for specific purposes. Intent can be expressed by the SBE or by a designee to whom the governing body delegates the authority. In governmental funds other than the general fund, assigned fund balance represents the amount that is not restricted or committed. This indicates that resources in other governmental funds are, at a minimum, intended to be used for the purpose of that fund.
5. **Unassigned fund balance** – includes all amounts not contained in other classifications and is the residual classification of the general fund only. Unassigned amounts are available for any legal purpose.

POLICY

The responsibility for designating funds to specific classifications shall be as follows:

1. **Committed Fund Balance** – The SBE is the MSDB’s highest level of decision-making authority, and the formal action that is required to be taken to establish, modify, or rescind a fund balance commitment is a resolution approved by the SBE.
2. **Assigned Fund Balance** – The SBE has authorized the Superintendent and the School Business Manager as officials authorized to assign fund balance to a specific purpose as approved by this fund balance policy.

MINIMUM UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE

The goal of MSDB is to maintain an unassigned fund balance (in its main operating fund) of at least 10% of its total revenues. Because the budget of MSDB is allocated by the state of Mississippi legislature and is the main source of income, the school will create a plan to build the desired fund balance with incremental annual contributions over five years to attain the goal.

ORDER OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

When multiple categories of fund balances are available for expenditure (e.g., a project is being funded partly by a grant, funds set aside by the SBE, and unassigned fund balance), MSDB will start with the most restricted category and spend those funds first before moving down to the next category with available funds.

BONDED EMPLOYEES AND BOARD MEMBERS

The SBE may execute a surety bond for any MSDB employee who receipts and/or disburses funds unless a different penalty is prescribed by law.

The Superintendent, before entering upon the duties of his/her office, shall hold a surety bond in the penal sum amount of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) with sufficient surety.

The purchasing agent(s) of the MSDB, before entering upon his/her official duties in such capacity, shall hold surety bond in the amount penal sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00).

A Principal acting as a purchasing agent must be bonded for total statutorily required coverage of \$100,000.00. The position of Principal may be covered by blanket bond, but the position of purchasing agent requires individual bond.

The premium on surety bonds will be paid from MSDB. All surety bonds shall be filed and recorded at the office of the Chancery Clerk.

INDIVIDUAL BOND: A new bond in the amount required by law shall be secured at the beginning of each new term of office or every four (4) years, whichever is less.

BLANKET BOND: A new bond in an amount not less than that required by law for public employees shall be secured upon employment and coverage shall be secured at the beginning of each new term of office of the public or appointed official by whom they are employed, if applicable, or at least every four (4) years concurrent with the normal election cycle of the Governor.

ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent shall open and keep regular sets of books, as prescribed by the MDE, which shall be subject to inspection during office hours by any citizen so desiring to inspect the same. The books for each fiscal year shall be kept separately and same shall be safely preserved by the Superintendent.

MSDB funds shall be maintained in accordance with the accounting and reporting system developed by the Mississippi Department of Education for uniform use by school districts. This system shall include a method of accounting for and keeping records of all funds received, handled and disbursed by the MSDB.

The MSDB shall prepare annual financial statements, including the notes to the financial statements, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles on June 30 of each fiscal year.

Monthly, the Superintendent shall furnish to the SBE or MDE designee a financial statement of receipts and disbursements, by funds, and other financial reports as required by the Mississippi Department of Education. The SBE shall be authorized to investigate and audit all financial records of the Superintendent at any and all times.

[Miss. Code Ann. §37-37-1, §37-61-23, §37-9-18; Mississippi Public School District Financial Accounting Manual](#)

INTERNAL CONTROL OF CASH RECEIPTS

The Superintendent shall develop a plan of organization under which employee duties are so arranged and records and procedures so designed as to make it possible to exercise effective accounting control over assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenditures. The work of employees shall be subdivided so that no single employee performs a complete cycle of operations. The procedures to be followed shall be prescribed in the Standard Operating Procedures Manual as

well as the Mississippi Department of Education Financial Accounting manual which outline proper authorization by designated officials for all actions to be taken.

All monies shall be receipted to the MSDB using pre-numbered receipts. Under no circumstances shall monies be deposited to any bank account without a proper receipting of such monies. Any and all documentation necessary to support the cash receipts shall be maintained on file.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS include, but are not limited to, the plan of organization and the procedures and records that are concerned with the decision processes leading to management's authorization of transactions. Such authorization is a management function directly associated with the responsibility for achieving the objectives of the organization and is the starting point for establishing accounting control of transactions.

ACCOUNTING CONTROLS comprise the plan of organization and the procedures and records that are concerned with the safeguarding of assets and the reliability of financial records and consequently are designed to provide reasonable assurance that:

1. Transactions are executed in accordance with management's general or specific authorization.
2. Transactions are recorded as necessary (a) to permit preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles or any other criteria applicable to such statements and (b) to maintain accountability for assets.
3. Access to assets is permitted only in accordance with management's authorization.
4. The recorded accountability for assets is compared with the existing assets at reasonable intervals and appropriate action is taken with respect to any differences.

Characteristics of reliable internal control systems are:

1. Segregation of Responsibilities -- This characteristic is sometimes referred to as "division of duties." There should be segregation of the three main duties associated with transactions. These are:
 - a. Authorization to execute a transaction.
 - b. Recording the transaction.
 - c. Custody of assets involved in the transaction.
2. Authorization and Record Procedures -- This characteristic refers to "a system of authorization and record procedures." Such a system means that approved procedures and methods should be employed by management's accounting function.
3. Sound Practices -- This characteristic refers to "sound practices in the performance of duties and functions." Sound practices refers to the many and varied error-checking routines that may be performed in connection with record keeping, including periodic comparison of recorded amounts with existing assets and liabilities.
4. Quality of Personnel -- This characteristic is the most important and the most difficult to evaluate. This refers to the "competence of personnel."
5. Actual System Performance -- Any system may be beautifully designed, but if the personnel do not operate the system as designed, then the system exists only on paper.

AUDITS

All MSDB funds are subject to annual audit. The audit may be conducted by the MDE, Mississippi State Auditor's Office, or by a certified public accounting firm.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

The Superintendent and/or their designee is authorized to sign district checks on all school district accounts. An electronic signature of the Superintendent embedded in the district's accounting software may be used on accounts payable checks and payroll checks.

Activity Fund accounts require two (2)s authorized signors on all Activity Fund checks. The Superintendent has authority to sign and will designate other signors.

CASH IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS

All money shall be turned in to the Business Office as soon as possible for deposit, where it will be receipted and kept in the safe if needed overnight. Deposit receipts are to be filed in the Business Office. Any funds that cannot be taken to the Business Office and/or deposited right away shall be kept in a locked safe or file cabinet. Funds should not be held more than 48 hours in any academic building.

Students' personal funds for Residential students (i.e., eating out, beverage machines, outings) shall be kept in a locked safe or file cabinet at all times. Records will be kept of all students' individual deposits and purchases and individual records will be reconciled at the conclusion of each financial transaction.

SALARY DEDUCTIONS / REDUCTIONS

The MSDB shall deduct and withhold from the wages of all employees:

1. The amount of federal income tax required by federal law; 26 USCA 3401-3402.
2. The amount of social security tax required by federal law; 26 USCA 3101-3102; S25-11-3, et seq.
3. The amount of contributions to PERS. S25-11-123(f)(1992).
4. The amount of state income tax required by the state.
5. The amount of other deductions elected by the employee (such as insurance and annuities) so long as the employee has adequate gross earnings to offset the deduction.

[Federal law USCA 3401-3402; USCA 3101-3102; Miss. Code Ann. § 25-11-3 et seq., § 25-11-123.](#)

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS/TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

District and school personnel who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties will be reimbursed upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and such supporting receipts as may be required by MSDB.

Such expenses may be incurred and approved in line with budgetary allocations for specific types of expenses. Expenses must be preapproved.

Expenses for travel will be reimbursed when the travel has the advance authorization of the Superintendent. The Superintendent may grant this authorization without prior Board approval when the travel expense has been anticipated and incorporated into the operational budget of the particular program involved.

District and school personnel will follow the travel related authorization and reimbursement procedures outlined in the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Purchasing Manual, which is in compliance with federal and state regulations.

Persons who travel at district expense will exercise the same economy as a prudent person traveling on personal business and will differentiate between expenditures for business and those for personal convenience.

Miss. Code Ann. § 25-3-41

PURCHASE OF FOOD, DRINKS, FOOD SUPPLIES FROM PUBLIC FUNDS

In accord with the Attorney General’s legal opinion dated July 30, 1999, the SBE does hereby adopt such opinion as policy and in accord with such opinion does hereby grant unto the Superintendent and Principals’ authority to make food and beverage purchases consistent with the Attorney General’s opinion and when such purchases and the consumption thereof are a necessary and reasonable expense for the meeting and reasonably related to the educational goals or functions of the district.

Regarding student athletic or student recognition banquets, “activity funds” may be used for such limited purposes regarding school related programs, conventions or seminars where the Superintendent and Principals determine that such expenditure shall be beneficial to such official or extra-curricular programs of the district.

Regarding the expenditure of general public funds (other than activity funds) coffee supplies, soft drinks and edible items may be purchased when the Superintendent and the Principals determine (1) that there is a particular goal or function that is a scheduled event and (2) the particular event is reasonably related and incident to educational goals of the MSDB.

Caveat: The state auditor has ruled that neither general public funds nor activity funds may be used for teacher recognition banquets.

PURCHASING

All purchases of supplies, equipment or services on behalf of MSDB shall be in accordance with the laws of the State of Mississippi and all applicable rules and regulations as may be established by other agencies responsible for the supervision of expenditures.

Further, purchases of supplies, equipment or services on behalf of MSDB shall be in accordance with the policies outlined in the MSDB Purchasing Manual.

Miss. Code Ann. [§ 31-7-13](#); [§ 31-7-1](#). et seq.

PURCHASING AUTHORITY

The SBE and/or SBE Subcommittee does hereby designate the Superintendent as purchasing

agent for MSDB together with the authority to establish a central purchasing system for the District.

Pursuant to the authority granted by [Section 37-39-15, Mississippi Code 1972](#) as amended, this Board hereby designates other individuals as “purchasing agents” subject to the limitations set forth below:

1. In addition to the Superintendent, the SBE hereby designates the Chief Financial Officer/Business Manager as “purchasing agent” with general authority to negotiate for and purchase the commodities and services necessary for the operation of MSDB, within the limits of budget categories and purchasing law.
2. The SBE hereby designates the School Principals as “purchasing agents” with the limited authority to negotiate for and purchase commodities and services necessary for the operation of their respective schools with the Activity Funds for which they are responsible, subject to all purchasing laws.

[Miss. Code Ann. §37-39-15](#)

PURCHASING PROCEDURES

All purchases on behalf of MSDB shall be submitted upon a purchase order issued and signed by the Superintendent or other purchasing agent as designated by the Board.

All purchases to be paid from school Activity Funds shall be based upon a purchase order issued and signed by the Principal of the respective school. Purchases made by any other method shall not be considered for payment by the Principal of the respective school.

All requests for supplies, equipment, or services shall be initiated electronically and shall be approved by the Principal of the respective school or the person charged with the responsibility of supervising a specific program or budget. Upon approval of the requisition by the purchasing agent, a purchase order will be issued by the Business Office for the purchase of items requested.

All purchases must be made in accordance with the MSDB Purchasing Manual.

BIDS AND QUOTATIONS

All purchases and expenditures of MSDB funds shall comply with the legal requirements for bids and quotations as mandated by the laws of the State of Mississippi.

All purchases or expenditures using federal funds shall comply with the applicable federal procurement laws for bids and quotations.

For detail policies and procedures relating to bids and quotations, see the MSDB Purchasing Manual.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

The SBE and/or SBE Subcommittee has the power, authority and duty to make orders directed by the Superintendent for the issuance of pay certificates for lawful purposes on any available funds of MSDB and to have full control of the receipt, distribution, allotment, and disbursement of all

funds provided for the support and operation of the schools whether such funds be derived from state appropriations, collections or otherwise.

Docketed Claims – The Superintendent shall maintain responsibility for a docket of claims in the manner required by law, upon which he/she shall immediately enter all demands, claims, and accounts to be paid from MSDB funds. Claims shall be numbered consecutively in the order of filing and at each regular or special meeting of the SBE and/or the SBE Subcommittee the docket of claims shall be called and all claims on file not previously rejected or allowed shall be passed upon in the order in which they are registered upon the docket. All claims found by the SBE and/or the SBE Subcommittee to be illegal shall be rejected or disallowed. All claims which are found to be legal and proper shall be allowed and approved in the order in which they appear upon the docket. Continuances shall be granted in proper cases as provided by law. Pay certificates shall be issued by the Superintendent in payment of claims which are allowed and approved by the Board.

Other Claims – Teachers' salaries, amounts due private contractors upon written contracts previously approved and accepted by the SBE and/or the SBE Subcommittee, or other payments or salaries where the amount thereof has been previously approved by a contract or by an order of the SBE and/or the SBE Subcommittee entered upon its Minutes, need not be entered as demands or claims upon the docket of claims and the amounts of the payments thereby required may be paid by the Superintendent by pay certificates issued by him/her against the proper fund without allowance of a specific claim therefore, provided that the payment thereof is otherwise in conformity with law.

Prepayment of Claims – The SBE and/or the SBE Subcommittee grants the Superintendent or his/her designee, the authority to pay MSDB claims prior to the regular SBE and/or the SBE Subcommittee meeting. This authority includes only claims for which there are MSDB fund resources available to pay said claims and said expenditures are in conformity with the law. In addition, no limit shall be placed upon the dollar amount of any prepaid claim.

In order for a claim to be prepaid, the Superintendent or his/her designee must approve a written request from an employee requesting a prepaid claim. The request must include payee, amount and purpose of prepaid claim. The prepaid claim is to be included on the subsequent docket of claims submitted to the SBE and/or the SBE Subcommittee for approval.

[Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-14; 37-7-301](#)

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FUND MANAGEMENT

The SBE and/or the Subcommittee adopts a decentralized accounting system as a method of accounting for school activity funds. This method of accounting provides for receipt and expenditure of funds at the school level. The Superintendent is hereby authorized to receipt and disburse these funds according to the guidelines established in the Financial Accounting Manual for Mississippi Public School Districts and the MSDB Purchasing Manual.

School Activity Funds shall be classified as either a general fund or an agency fund with monies maintained in bank accounts of financial institutions approved by the MSDB. The Superintendent must approve the opening and closing of bank accounts for Activity Funds. The

Superintendent and his/her designees shall be authorized to sign checks on the Activity Fund bank account.

RECEIPTS

All local Activity Funds received shall be accounted for according to guidelines established in the Financial Accounting Manual for Mississippi Public School Districts and the MSDB Purchasing Manual. If at all possible, monies received shall be deposited daily. No more than \$100.00 cash should remain in the Business Office safe at the close of the day.

PURCHASING

Activity Funds may be expended for the following: any necessary expenses or travel costs (including advances) incurred by students and their chaperones in attending school-related programs, commodities, equipment, travel expenses of school employees, purchased services, and school supplies deemed beneficial to the official or extra-curricular programs of the school by the respective Principal, including items which may subsequently become the personal property of such individuals (such as: book covers, trophies, yearbooks). These purchases, when utilizing a general fund, shall be subject to state purchasing laws. Expenditures made by funds classified as agency funds are not subject to state purchasing laws. Pre-numbered purchase orders must be used for all purchases and must be approved by the Principal and/or the Superintendent. The person at the school receiving the goods shall either prepare and sign a receiving report form, or sign and date the invoices denoting receipt of the goods.

DISBURSEMENTS

Disbursement of all Activity Funds shall be made according to guidelines established in the Financial Accounting Manual for Mississippi Public School Districts and the MSDB Purchasing Manual. Pre-numbered checks containing the original signature of the Superintendent and his/her designee must be utilized for payment.

REPORTING

A transmittal report of all Activity Fund transactions (receipts and disbursements) for the previous month shall be delivered to the Superintendent no more than ten (10) working days after the close of the month.

FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

The SBE and/or SBE Subcommittee authorizes the Superintendent to approve fundraising activities that are appropriate or beneficial to the official or extracurricular programs of the school. Any proceeds of such fund-raising activities shall be treated as Activity Funds and shall be accounted for as are other Activity Funds. When a fund-raising activity is conducted as a part of the sale or rental of items to students, these funds (inclusive of the fee, commission, or rebate) may be paid directly to the vendor by the student and rebated later to the school. If this is done, there must be a disclosure statement advising that a portion of the proceeds of the sales or rentals shall be contributed to the Student Activity Fund. The Business Manager shall obtain an independent listing of the students and the amounts paid to the vendor by each student so that the amount due the school can be reconciled. The monies collected from the vendor shall be credited to the appropriate general fund by the Business Manager.

Monies collected by the school through school sponsored fund-raising activities (such as vending machines, concessions, school stores, festivals, school-wide sales projects, sales by Principal or Staff to students) shall be accounted for in the appropriate general fund. The price for the activities shall be set by the organizer when gaining approval for the fund-raising activity. For all items purchased for resale to students, there must be a reconciliation of the items purchased, the items sold, and the net profit amount. The reconciliation must be performed on a periodic basis and be submitted to the Business Office for review and approval.

IDEA FUNDS

It is the policy of MSDB to use IDEA funds in accordance with all the rules and regulations of Federal and State laws.

Authorized Uses of Funds: IDEA grant funds will be used for staffing, educational materials, equipment, and other costs to provide special education and related services, as well as supplementary aids and services, to children with disabilities. MSDB will use IDEA funds only for special education and will not use the funds to supplant what MSDB should do to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to students.

Maintenance of Effort: MSDB will ensure that maintenance of effort requirements are met each year.

Assurances: MSDB will abide by all assurances agreed to in the acceptance of grant awards and will operate accordingly to generally accepted accounting principles.

Allocated Funds and Carryover Use: All allocated funds and carryover will be spent only as approved.

Budgeting: All funds will be budgeted within a line-item budget.

Procurement: Procurement will conform to applicable Federal and State laws.

TRAVEL

The following travel policies are established for use by individuals who are required to travel in-state and out-of-state on official MSDB business. These policies are based on and are in addition to the guidelines established by the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), Office of Purchasing, Travel and Fleet Management (OPTFM) in accordance with Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code Annotated(1972).

The State Travel Manual in its entirety can be found at <https://www.dfa.ms.gov/media/xxkohqdv/travel-manual-2019-resaved.pdf>

OFFICIAL WORKPLACE - The official workplace for all employees shall be the office to which they are assigned. Sometimes, an employee's official duty station shall be his or her residence if he/she is not permanently assigned to an office.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION - A Travel Authorization Form must be completed in ADVANCE for all travel (in-state and out-of-state travel). For in-state travel, the highest level

of approval needed is the “Division Approval.” For all out-of-state travel, “Agency Approval” is needed from the Superintendent. The Superintendent is exempt from completing a Travel Authorization Form for in-state travel. Travel advances may be requested for out-of-state trips and for prior-to-trip expenses for in-state travel such as the first night of a hotel which is due when the reservation is made.

The Travel Authorization Form must be used to request the advance. Advances should be requested and submitted for processing 15 days before the travel is to occur; however, payment of the advance will not be made more than 10 days in advance. Advances are made to cover meals, hotel expenses, and other related travel costs. The advance should not include the cost of airline travel or conference fees as these may be paid in advance by MSDB.

An employee will be allowed one outstanding travel advance at a time. No additional advances will be given until the previous advances have been cleared. The travel advance must be cleared upon the employee’s return. If an advance is not settled within ten (10) working days after the end of the month in which travel was completed, the employee’s paycheck will be held, or their direct deposit stopped until the debt to the school is resolved.

Expenses for travel will be reimbursed when the travel has the advance authorization of the Superintendent. The Superintendent may grant this authorization without prior Board action when the travel expense has been anticipated and incorporated into the operational budget of the particular program involved.

MSDB Staff will follow travel related authorization and reimbursement procedures as outlined in the MSDB Standard Operating Procedures Manual, which is in compliance with federal and state guidelines.

Persons who travel at MSDB expense will exercise the same economy as a prudent person traveling on personal business and will differentiate between expenditures for business and those for personal convenience.

AUTOMOBILE TRAVEL - Actual mileage shall be calculated from the official workplace or residence and back or actual miles traveled, whichever is less. The most direct route to a destination should be claimed for reimbursement purposes. The travel voucher must indicate if any intermediate stops were made. Specific sites visited must be noted on the voucher in lieu of "Vicinity Travel." Effective July 1, 2017, state agencies under the purview of the DFA Bureau of Fleet Management are required to use the Trip Optimizer System (TOS) developed and administered by the DFA Office of Purchasing, Travel, and Fleet Management in computing the optimum method and cost for travel by state employees using a motor vehicle. Reimbursement will be based on the least expensive method of transportation. Prior to travel, the Trip Optimizer System should be used to determine the lowest cost mode of transportation. The maximum amount authorized for travel reimbursement related to motor vehicle usage will be the lowest cost option as determined by the TOS. All travel claims submitted for reimbursement must include the results of the Trip Optimizer System indicating the lowest cost option for travel. The maximum amount reimbursable for travel by motor vehicle will be the lowest cost calculated.

FIXED ASSETS/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 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 MSDB owned items. Students must check out needed equipment from the IT Department. Under no circumstances should a student be allowed to use an employee's computer.

MSDB has to account for equipment to MDE with a formal quarterly audit. Employees are responsible for all equipment assigned to them. Do not loan or borrow another user's equipment without permission from the user and Fixed Asset Property Officer with proper documentation as described in this policy. All transfers and surplus of equipment must have the appropriate paperwork submitted to the person in charge of fixed assets. Upon resignation or termination, employees must return all school property on or before the last day of work.

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 without permission and/or notification to the Fixed Asset Property Officer.
3. Do not move furniture or equipment into hallways; this clutters passageway and creates possible safety hazards.
4. Check out all equipment (e.g., laptops, projector, portable tables, cameras, tripods, lenses) with the IT Department or Staff member responsible for that equipment.
5. Ensure that parents sign the appropriate contracts before a student is allowed to use any MSDB equipment.
6. Store equipment in a secure location when not in use. Employees are responsible for all equipment checked out to them.
7. At no time should MSDB property/equipment/furniture be removed from campus without proper permission.
8. Any maintenance problem or malfunction of equipment should be reported to the appropriate MSDB Administrator.
9. Employees should require students to exercise care in use of school property and equipment at all times.
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 Supervisor, Director, or Principal, and/or Superintendent promptly.

OFF CAMPUS USE OF EQUIPMENT

Per Office of State Auditor guidelines, equipment purchased and/or inventoried must be used for official school use only. At no time may equipment be used for personal or financial gain. Under very minimum situations, it may be necessary for some employees to take equipment off campus for work-related purposes (includes repair). An Equipment Receipt must be

completed and signed by the equipment's responsible owner and Superintendent. This Equipment Receipt must be on file in the event of an audit while equipment is off campus. The Equipment Receipt is valid for one year from date but may be revoked at any time during the valid term.

SCHOOL PROPERTIES DISPOSAL PROCEDURE

As it relates to school properties disposal, MSDB will comply with all applicable provisions of the Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated including but not limited to [§37-7-451](#), [§37-7-471](#) through [§37-7-485](#) as amended, and with all other applicable federal and state laws.

FACILITY USAGE

Due to limited space on campus, all facilities must be reserved for use. 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 internal requests should be entered into the FMX system (or other maintenance and facility tracking system used). All external requests for use of MSDB campus facilities should be directed to the Superintendent Office.

WORKSPACES

SHARED INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES

Due to potential increased student enrollment, some classrooms or other instructional spaces may have to be shared. 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.

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.

APPENDIX A – Teacher Pay Scale

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

MSDB Salary Schedule at Base				
Years	A	AA	AAA	AAAA
0	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 39,280.00	\$ 40,444.00	\$ 41,608.00
1	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 39,280.00	\$ 40,444.00	\$ 41,608.00
2	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 39,280.00	\$ 40,444.00	\$ 41,608.00
3	\$ 37,385.00	\$ 39,940.00	\$ 41,171.00	\$ 42,402.00
4	\$ 37,880.00	\$ 40,600.00	\$ 41,898.00	\$ 43,196.00
5	\$ 38,375.00	\$ 41,260.00	\$ 42,625.00	\$ 43,990.00
6	\$ 38,870.00	\$ 41,920.00	\$ 43,352.00	\$ 44,784.00
7	\$ 39,365.00	\$ 42,580.00	\$ 44,079.00	\$ 45,578.00
8	\$ 39,860.00	\$ 43,240.00	\$ 44,806.00	\$ 46,372.00
9	\$ 40,355.00	\$ 43,900.00	\$ 45,533.00	\$ 47,166.00
10	\$ 40,850.00	\$ 44,560.00	\$ 46,260.00	\$ 47,960.00
11	\$ 41,345.00	\$ 45,220.00	\$ 46,987.00	\$ 48,754.00
12	\$ 41,840.00	\$ 45,880.00	\$ 47,714.00	\$ 49,548.00
13	\$ 42,335.00	\$ 46,540.00	\$ 48,441.00	\$ 50,342.00
14	\$ 42,830.00	\$ 47,200.00	\$ 49,168.00	\$ 51,136.00
15	\$ 43,325.00	\$ 47,860.00	\$ 49,895.00	\$ 51,930.00
16	\$ 43,820.00	\$ 48,520.00	\$ 50,622.00	\$ 52,724.00
17	\$ 44,315.00	\$ 49,180.00	\$ 51,349.00	\$ 53,518.00
18	\$ 44,810.00	\$ 49,840.00	\$ 52,076.00	\$ 54,312.00
19	\$ 45,305.00	\$ 50,500.00	\$ 52,803.00	\$ 55,106.00
20	\$ 45,800.00	\$ 51,160.00	\$ 53,530.00	\$ 55,900.00
21	\$ 46,295.00	\$ 51,820.00	\$ 54,257.00	\$ 56,694.00
22	\$ 46,790.00	\$ 52,480.00	\$ 54,984.00	\$ 57,488.00
23	\$ 47,285.00	\$ 53,140.00	\$ 55,711.00	\$ 58,282.00
24	\$ 47,780.00	\$ 53,800.00	\$ 56,438.00	\$ 59,076.00
25	\$ 50,335.00	\$ 56,520.00	\$ 59,225.00	\$ 61,930.00
26	\$ 50,830.00	\$ 57,180.00	\$ 59,952.00	\$ 62,724.00
27	\$ 51,325.00	\$ 57,840.00	\$ 60,679.00	\$ 63,518.00
28	\$ 51,820.00	\$ 58,500.00	\$ 61,406.00	\$ 64,312.00
29	\$ 52,315.00	\$ 59,160.00	\$ 62,133.00	\$ 65,106.00
30	\$ 52,810.00	\$ 59,820.00	\$ 62,860.00	\$ 65,900.00
31	\$ 53,305.00	\$ 60,480.00	\$ 63,587.00	\$ 66,694.00
32	\$ 53,800.00	\$ 61,140.00	\$ 64,314.00	\$ 67,488.00
33	\$ 54,295.00	\$ 61,800.00	\$ 65,041.00	\$ 68,282.00
34	\$ 54,790.00	\$ 62,460.00	\$ 65,768.00	\$ 69,076.00
35	\$ 55,285.00	\$ 63,120.00	\$ 66,495.00	\$ 69,870.00

**APPENDIX B – Teacher Supplemental Pay Scale (TOD, TVI, TODB Certified)
Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind**

**MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND
CERTIFIED TEACHER SALARY SUPPLEMENT SCALE**

SINGLE ENDORSEMENT								
Years of Experience		A Certificate Supplement		AA Certificate Supplement		AAA Certificate Supplement		AAAA Certificate Supplement
0		\$ 3,000		\$ 3,050		\$ 3,100		\$ 3,150
1		\$ 3,100		\$ 3,150		\$ 3,200		\$ 3,250
2		\$ 3,200		\$ 3,250		\$ 3,300		\$ 3,350
3		\$ 3,300		\$ 3,350		\$ 3,400		\$ 3,450
4		\$ 3,400		\$ 3,450		\$ 3,500		\$ 3,550
5		\$ 3,500		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650
6		\$ 3,500		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650
7		\$ 3,500		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650
8		\$ 3,500		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650
9		\$ 3,500		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650
10		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700
11		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700
12		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700
13		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700
14		\$ 3,550		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700
15		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750
16		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750
17		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750
18		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750
19		\$ 3,600		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750
20		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750		\$ 3,800
21		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750		\$ 3,800
22		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750		\$ 3,800
23		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750		\$ 3,800
24		\$ 3,650		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750		\$ 3,800
25 or more		\$ 3,700		\$ 3,750		\$ 3,800		\$ 3,850

**MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND
CERTIFIED TEACHER SALARY SUPPLEMENT SCALE**

DUAL ENDORSEMENT (FOR HI/VI DUAL-CERTIFIED TEACHERS)								
Years of Experience		A Certificate Supplement		AA Certificate Supplement		AAA Certificate Supplement		AAAA Certificate Supplement
0		\$ 4,500		\$ 4,550		\$ 4,600		\$ 4,650
1		\$ 4,600		\$ 4,650		\$ 4,700		\$ 4,750
2		\$ 4,700		\$ 4,750		\$ 4,800		\$ 4,850
3		\$ 4,800		\$ 4,850		\$ 4,900		\$ 4,950
4		\$ 4,900		\$ 4,950		\$ 5,000		\$ 5,050
5		\$ 5,000		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150
6		\$ 5,000		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150
7		\$ 5,000		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150
8		\$ 5,000		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150
9		\$ 5,000		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150
10		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200
11		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200
12		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200
13		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200
14		\$ 5,050		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200
15		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250
16		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250
17		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250
18		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250
19		\$ 5,100		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250
20		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250		\$ 5,300
21		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250		\$ 5,300
22		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250		\$ 5,300
23		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250		\$ 5,300
24		\$ 5,150		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250		\$ 5,300
25 or more		\$ 5,200		\$ 5,250		\$ 5,300		\$ 5,350

APPENDIX C – Teacher’s Assistant Pay Scale
Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

Step	A Teaching Certificate	B B.S. Degree Any Field	C AA Degree Any Field	D High School Diploma
0	\$21,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$17,000.00
1	\$21,119.68	\$19,119.68	\$18,119.68	\$17,119.68
2	\$21,239.36	\$19,239.36	\$18,239.36	\$17,239.36
3	\$21,359.04	\$19,359.04	\$18,359.04	\$17,359.04
4	\$21,478.72	\$19,478.72	\$18,478.72	\$17,478.72
5	\$21,598.40	\$19,598.40	\$18,598.40	\$17,598.40
6	\$21,718.08	\$19,718.08	\$18,718.08	\$17,718.08
7	\$21,837.76	\$19,837.76	\$18,837.76	\$17,837.76
8	\$21,957.44	\$19,957.44	\$18,957.44	\$17,957.44
9	\$22,077.12	\$20,077.12	\$19,077.12	\$18,077.12
10	\$22,196.80	\$20,196.80	\$19,196.80	\$18,196.80
11	\$22,316.48	\$20,316.48	\$19,316.48	\$18,316.48
12	\$22,436.16	\$20,436.16	\$19,436.16	\$18,436.16
13	\$22,555.84	\$20,555.84	\$19,555.84	\$18,555.84
14	\$22,675.52	\$20,675.52	\$19,675.52	\$18,675.52
15	\$22,795.20	\$20,795.20	\$19,795.20	\$18,795.20
16	\$22,914.88	\$20,914.88	\$19,914.88	\$18,914.88
17	\$23,034.56	\$21,034.56	\$20,034.56	\$19,034.56
18	\$23,154.24	\$21,154.24	\$20,154.24	\$19,154.24
19	\$23,273.92	\$21,273.92	\$20,273.92	\$19,273.92
20	\$23,393.60	\$21,393.60	\$20,393.60	\$19,393.60
21	\$23,513.28	\$21,513.28	\$20,513.28	\$19,513.28
22	\$23,632.96	\$21,632.96	\$20,632.96	\$19,632.96
23	\$23,752.64	\$21,752.64	\$20,752.64	\$19,752.64
24	\$23,872.32	\$21,872.32	\$20,872.32	\$19,872.32
25	\$23,992.00	\$21,992.00	\$20,992.00	\$19,992.00
26	\$24,111.68	\$22,111.68	\$21,111.68	\$20,111.68
27	\$24,231.36	\$22,231.36	\$21,231.36	\$20,231.36
28	\$24,351.04	\$22,351.04	\$21,351.04	\$20,351.04
29	\$24,470.72	\$22,470.72	\$21,470.72	\$20,470.72
30	\$24,590.40	\$22,590.40	\$21,590.40	\$20,590.40

Please note: The numbers down the left side of the scale do not represent the number of years of experience as a teacher assistant. These numbers are simply a position on the salary scale.

**** APPENDIX D – Employee Work Days and Leave Allowances**

Effective July 1, 2021

Employee Group	Days Employed	Personal Leave	Sick Leave	Vacation Days
Group A	240 days	3 days	8 days	10 days
Group B	197 days	3 days	8 days	
Group C	187 days	3 days	8 days	

Group A – 240 days	Group B – 197 days	Group C – 187 days
Superintendent Assistant Superintendent Principals Assistant Principals Administrative Assistants Business Office Staff Facilities Staff Maintenance Staff Technology Department Staff MIRC Director MAC Director School Psychologist Sped Case Manager Residential Directors MSIS Coordinator Transition Coordinator Dean of Students/Athletic Coordinator Education Specialist	School Counselors Head Nurse	Teachers Teaching Assistants Residential Parents Residential Parent Supervisors Health Clinic Nurses Early Intervention Specialists Interpreters SLPs OT/PT ASL Specialist O&M Specialist

Addendum Effective August 19, 2021: If the death of an immediate family member (see definition on page 20) occurs, three (3) days of bereavement will be provided in addition to the allocated days.

Leave carryover will be implemented according to state law.