

BOARD POLICY

1. STUDENT EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS

The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

2. STUDENT SPEAKERS AT NONGRADUATION EVENTS

The District hereby creates a limited public forum for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak. If a student is to speak at an event, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion. The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by law.

3. STUDENT SPEAKERS AT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONIES

a. The District hereby creates a limited public forum consisting of an opportunity for a student to speak at graduation ceremonies.

b. For each speaker, the District shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.

c. The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by law.

d. The District shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the District treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

e. A written disclaimer shall be printed in the graduation program that states, "The students who will be speaking at the graduation ceremony were selected based on neutral criteria to deliver messages of the students' own choices. The content of each student speaker's message is the private expression of the individual student and does not reflect any position or expression of the Tupelo Public School District, the Board of Trustees, the District's administration, the employees of the District, or the views of any other graduate. The contents of these messages were prepared by the student volunteers, and the District refrained from any interaction with student speakers regarding the student speakers' viewpoints on permissible subjects."

4. RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Students may express the students' beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the

religious content of the students' submission. Homework and classroom work shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of religious content. If a teacher's assignment involves writing a poem, the work of a student who submits a poem in the form of a prayer (for example, a psalm) should be judged on the basis of academic standards, including literary quality, and not penalized or rewarded on account of its religious content.

5. FREEDOM TO ORGANIZE RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

a. Students may organize prayer groups, religious clubs, "see you at the pole" gatherings, and other religious gatherings before, during and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other non-curricular student activities and groups.

b. Religious groups must be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other non-curricular groups, without discrimination based on the religious content of the group's expression. If student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce the groups' meetings, for example, by advertising in a student newspaper, putting up posters, making announcements on a student activities bulletin board or public address system, or handing out leaflets, school authorities may not discriminate against groups that meet for prayer or other religious speech.

c. School authorities may disclaim sponsorship of non-curricular groups and events, provided they administer the disclaimer in a manner that does not favor or disfavor groups that meet to engage in prayer or other religious speech.

6. This policy shall not be construed to authorize the District to (a) require any person to participate in prayer or in any other religious activity; or (b) violate the constitutional rights of any person.

7. The Board authorizes the superintendent to adopt procedures consistent with this policy.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1. Student speakers at graduation events shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of ten minutes.

2. Any graduating senior who is interested in delivering the commencement address will complete a Commencement Address Application, available in the Tupelo High School administrative offices. The applicant will include on the Commencement Address Application only the student's identification number only, not his/her name.

3. The graduation committee will review all Commencement Address Applications that have been submitted by the stated deadline and select one to

deliver the commencement address.

4. The subject of the addresses should be appropriate to the occasion, for example, to mark and honor the occasion, to honor the participants and those in attendance, to state the student's perspective on purpose, achievement, life, school, graduation, and looking forward to the future. The commencement speaker must stay on the subject outlined in his/her Commencement Address Application, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd or indecent speech.

LEGAL REF.: Mississippi Student Religious Liberties Act of 2013

NEW POLICY
GBKAR LICENSED PERSONNEL REDUCTION IN FORCE
Draft for discussion purposes 11/06/13

BOARD POLICY

1. When certain conditions necessitate a reduction in force (RIF) greater than what can be accomplished through attrition and appropriate reassignments, it shall be the policy of Board to accomplish the RIF utilizing Board approved priorities and procedures. RIF is a justifiable decrease in the number of positions due to District reorganization, decreased enrollment or decreased funding. The primary objective of the Board when reducing the work force will be maintaining a fair and balanced educational program that is consistent with the functions and responsibilities of the District.
2. When the superintendent believes that an RIF is necessary, appropriate, or in the best interest of the District, the superintendent will present a written recommendation to the Board. The Board will review the superintendent's recommendation and determine whether to authorize the RIF.
3. The Board will consider the following factors in determining which employees will be included in the RIF:
 - o Work performance;
 - o Status as "highly qualified" as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act;
 - o Service in extra duty positions and ability to fill such positions;
 - o Length of service, with higher priority given to service in the Tupelo Public School District;
 - o Recommendations and advice from the superintendent or designee;Other beneficial services provided to the District.
Among these factors, primary consideration will be given to (a) and (e) above. In assessing an employee's work performance for purposes of this policy, the District may consider performance evaluations, improvement plans, past disciplinary actions, and other relevant factors as determined by the superintendent.
4. Upon recommendation of the superintendent, the Board may exempt employees from the RIF requirements if their displacement:
 - o results in the cancellation of the course(s) because no other staff member is trained to teach the course(s);

results in significant impairment in providing services or programs because of insufficiency of training and/or experience of other staff members;

results in any other special or exceptional circumstances as recommended by the superintendent and approved by the Board.

5. All procedures required by the Education Employment Procedures Law shall be followed. Nothing in this policy is to be construed as limiting the power of the Board to dismiss or release a teacher or licensed employee for cause or as otherwise permitted by law. Nothing in this policy shall be construed so as to limit the power of the Board to non-renew a teacher or licensed employee pursuant to law regarding positions which are not being eliminated or abolished.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

1. The superintendent's RIF recommendation will include: 1) the grounds for the RIF; 2) the number or estimated number of licensed positions to be reduced; and 3) the background information, data, and rationale for the recommendation. The Board will review the superintendent's recommendation and determine whether to authorize the RIF.

2. Upon authorization by the Board, the superintendent will recommend to the Board, which employees are to be dismissed or demoted, based on the following guidelines

- importance of the position to the mission, goals, and objectives of the District;
- subject area(s) and advanced degrees by certification;
- quality of performance including the proven ability to accomplish the educational mission of the District ;
- executive ability;
- employee attendance and discipline history;
- experience, professional training, length of service within the District and work assignment;
- skills and licensure in the area(s) where the District has
- instructional and/or supervisory needs.

3. The superintendent will provide timely written notice to teachers eligible under the Education Employment Procedures Law (EEPL).

4. Employee groups for purposes of implementing RIF are: