

Agenda of Regular Meeting

The Board of Trustees Westwood Independent School District

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westwood Independent School District will be held October 18, 2021, beginning at 6:30 PM Westwood Primary
1701 West Point Tap Road
Palestine, TX 75803.

The subjects to be discussed or considered or upon which any formal action may be taken are listed below. Items do not have to be taken in the same order as shown on this meeting notice. Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

Due to health and safety concerns related to COVID-19 coronavirus, the meeting will be conducted by video-conference. At least a quorum of the Board will be participating by videoconference or telephone call in accordance with the provisions of Sections 551.123 or 551.127 of the Texas Government Code that have not been suspended by order of the governor.

An electronic copy of the agenda packet is attached to the online notice www.westwoodisd.net
Members of the public who desire to address the Board regarding an item on this agenda must comply with the following registration procedures: send a request through Zoom Chat from 6:15 pm – 6:30 pm the day of the meeting. Including name and topic.

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ESTABLISH QUORUM**
2. **ROLL CALL**
3. **INVOCATION**
4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/TEXAS PLEDGE**
5. **ACTION ITEM**
 - A. Board to consider approval of the agenda as presented
6. Recognition of Students and Faculty
7. **Public Comments**
8. **Information Items**
 - A. Finance Update
Presenter: Kyle Johnson
 - B. ESL Program Evaluation
Presenter: Tiffany Carwell

Westwood ISD Agenda Item Information

Meeting Date: 10/18/2021

Subject: Annual ESL Program Update

Administrator Responsible: Tiffany Carwell

Summary: A review of the ESL Program for the 2020-2021 school year will be presented.

Administration's Recommendation: No recommendations. Information item only.

Possible Motion: I move that we

Attachments:

Board Approval Required

YES

NO x

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Evaluation

3

Tiffany Carwell
October 18, 2021



Westwood ISD Emergent Bilingual Students

Students Served:

- 95 students Pre-K - 12th grade
- About 6% of total student population
- Majority identified when they first start school in Pre-K or Kindergarten
- Student enrollment identification went up this year
- Spanish is primary first language
- Served through either content-based or pull-out program

4



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

Academic Progress in the Language of Instruction

- Texas does not have the data necessary (i.e., the prior year STAAR scaled score) to calculate and report one year progress measures.



English Learners' Proficiency in English

- TELPAS: Kindergarten through 2 (*16 students*)
 - Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System 2021

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Beginning	13%	13%	25%	25%
Intermediate	25%	50%	50%	50%
Advanced	44%	25%	19%	19%
Advanced High	19%	13%	6%	6%

6



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

English Learners' Proficiency in English

- TELPAS: 3 through 12 (*72 students*)
 - Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System 2021

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Beginning	7%	35%	13%	10%
Intermediate	18%	38%	36%	29%
Advanced	47%	22%	25%	42%
Advanced High	28%	6%	26%	19%

7



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

Reclassification Criteria

Components of 2020-2021 Reclassification Criteria

- TELPAS Advanced High in each domain of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing
- Satisfactory performance on STAAR or State Standardized Reading Assessment
- Subjective Teacher Evaluation

8



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

Students who met Reclassification Criteria 2020-2021

- 1 student met criteria to exit from the district's ESL program



ESL Waiver: 2021-2022

- 11 teachers
 - Primary - 5 teachers
 - Elementary - 4 teachers
 - High School - 2 teachers

10

*One of the teachers who were under the waiver last year obtained their ESL certification.



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

Alternative Language Program

- align as closely as possible to the district's required bilingual or ESL program
- meet the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of their emergent bilingual (EB) students/English learners (ELs)
- ensure students are given the opportunity to master the essential knowledge and skills of the required curriculum, including TEKS for foundation and enrichment areas, the English language proficiency standards (ELPS), and college and career readiness standards (CCRS) [19 TAC §89.1207(a)(1)(B) and §89.1207(b)(1)(B)].

11



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

Alternative Language Program

- Students are provided Tier 2 intervention by teachers who meet ESL certification criteria
- Teachers under the waiver and all core content teachers are provided with professional development to further support their students

12



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

The Comprehensive Professional Development Plan

- In-district support and ongoing professional development
- Region 7 virtual training and online, self-paced courses
 - Sheltered Instruction Training
 - ESL Course Preparation
- [Supporting English Learners in Texas](#) TEA webpage

13

Parent, Family and Community Engagement



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

- C. Curriculum Moment
Presenter: Katie Atkins

Westwood ISD Agenda Item Information

Meeting Date: October 18, 2021

Subject: October 2021 Curriculum Moment

Administrator Responsible: Katie Atkins, Ed.D

Summary:

High quality instruction is essential to high levels of learning for all students. This presentation includes ways in which campuses are collaborating to review data, take actionable steps to support student outcomes, and work towards continuous improvement in this endeavor.

Administration's Recommendation: Not applicable

Attachments: October 2021 Curriculum Moment (ppt)

Board Approval Required YES NO

October 2021 Curriculum Moment

16

Dr. Katie Atkins

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership

October 18, 2021



Areas of Focus for 2021-2022

- High quality instruction
- High levels of support for students and staff
- Resource and programming review to determine alignment to high priority areas of focus

17



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

High Quality Instruction

- ✓ Beginning of year data collected at all campuses
- ✓ Instructional structures that allow for acceleration and remediation at all campuses
- ✓ Visiting PLCs and beginning of instructional rounds

18



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

What are Professional Learning Communities? (PLCs)

The work of the PLC is an intentional and purposeful process to ensure that all students learn at high levels.

The progress a district or school experiences on the PLC journey is largely dependent upon the extent to which the following ideas are considered, understood, and ultimately embraced by its members:

19

- A focus on learning
- A collaborative culture and collective responsibility
- A results orientation



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

A focus on learning....

- Assumes that all students can and will learn at high levels
- Students are not just provided an *opportunity* to learn; PLCs are dedicated to the idea that their organization exists to ensure high levels of learning for ALL students.



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

A collaborative culture and collective responsibility...

- In order to ensure that all students learn at high levels, educators work collaboratively and take responsibility for the success of each student.
- Members work interdependently to achieve common goals for which members are mutually accountable.

21



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

A results orientation...

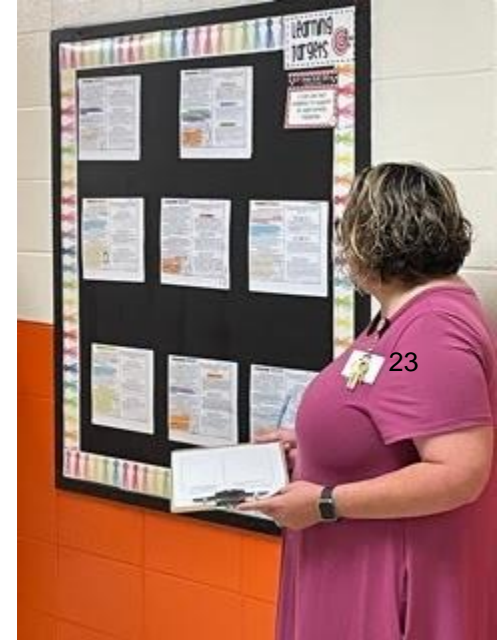
- Gather evidence of current levels of learning
- Develop strategies and ideas to build on strengths and address weaknesses in that learning
- Implement strategies and ideas
- Analyze the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not
- Apply new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement

22



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

How campuses are collaborating to impact high levels of learning



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

Questions

24



@WESTWOODISD
#WWWay
#WWEnergyBus

- D. Discussion of COVID-19 pandemic status and current health and legal guidance concerning mitigation of the spread of disease among students and district staff.
Presenter: Wade Stanford
- E. Board to acknowledge 2021-2022 employee handbook

Westwood ISD

2021-2022 Employee Handbook

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of a disability, please email hlcastaneda@westwoodisd.net



Table of Contents

Employee Handbook Receipt	4
Introduction	5
District Information	6
Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives	6
Board of Trustees	6
Board Meeting Schedule	8
Administration	9
School Calendar	10
Helpful Contacts	10
School Directory	10
Employment	13
Equal Employment Opportunity	13
Job Vacancy Announcements	13
Employment after Retirement	14
Contract and Noncontract Employment	14
Certification and Licenses	15
Recertification of Employment Authorization	15
Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing	15
Health Safety Training	16
Reassignments and Transfers	17
Workload and Work Schedules	17
Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk	18
Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications	18
Outside Employment and Tutoring	18
Performance Evaluation	19
Employee Involvement	19
Staff Development	19
Compensation and Benefits	20
Salaries, Wages, and Stipends	20
Paychecks	20
Automatic Payroll Deposit	21
Payroll Deductions	21
Overtime Compensation	22
Travel Expense Reimbursement	22
Health, Dental, and Life Insurance	23
Supplemental Insurance Benefits	24
Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)	24
Workers' Compensation Insurance	24

Unemployment Compensation Insurance	25
Teacher Retirement	25
Other Benefit Programs	25
Leaves and Absences	26
Personal Leave	27
State Sick Leave	28
Local Leave	29
Vacation	29
Sick Leave Bank (or Pool)	29
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions	30
Local Family and Medical Leave Provisions	32
Temporary Disability Leave	34
Workers’ Compensation Benefits	34
Assault Leave	35
Bereavement Leave	35
Jury Duty	35
Compliance with a Subpoena	36
Truancy Court Appearances	36
Religious Observance	36
Military Leave	36
Employee Relations and Communications	38
Employee Recognition and Appreciation	38
District Communications	38
Complaints and Grievances	39
Employee Conduct and Welfare	40
Standards of Conduct	40
Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation	44
Harassment of Students	44
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	45
Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children	46
Reporting Crime	47
Scope and Sequence	47
Technology Resources	47
Personal Use of Electronic Communications	48
Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents	49
Public Information on Private Devices	52
Criminal History Background Checks	52
Employee Arrests and Convictions	53
Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention	54
Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use	54
Fraud and Financial Impropriety	54

Conflict of Interest	55
Gifts and Favors	55
Copyrighted Materials	56
Associations and Political Activities	56
Charitable Contributions	56
Safety	57
Possession of Firearms and Weapons	57
Visitors in the Workplace	58
Asbestos Management Plan	58
Pest Control Treatment	58
Other Topics	58
General Procedures	59
Emergency School Closing	59
Emergencies	59
Purchasing Procedures	59
Name and Address Changes	59
Personnel Records	60
Facility Use	60
Termination of Employment	61
Resignations	61
Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees	61
Dismissal of Noncontract Employees	62
Discharge of Convicted Employees	62
Exit Interviews and Procedures	62
Reports to Texas Education Agency	63
Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding	63
Student Issues	65
Equal Educational Opportunities	65
Student Records	65
Parent and Student Complaints	66
Administering Medication to Students	66
Dietary Supplements	66
Psychotropic Drugs	66
Student Conduct and Discipline	67
Student Attendance	67
Bullying	67
Hazing	68
Index	69

Employee Handbook Receipt

Name _____

Campus/Department _____

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Westwood ISD Employee Handbook. I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document.

Employees have the option of receiving the handbook in electronic format or hard copy.

Electronic format may be accessed on the district website under the “For Employees” tab, and then clicking on the “Employee Handbook”

Please indicate your choice by checking the appropriate box below:

- I choose to receive the employee handbook in electronic format and accept responsibility for accessing it according to the instructions provided.
- I choose to receive a hard copy of the employee handbook and understand I am required to contact _____ to obtain a hard copy.

The information in this handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in district policies may supersede, modify, or render obsolete the information summarized in this document. As the district provides updated policy information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes.

I understand that no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will employment relationships are intended by this handbook.

I understand that I have an obligation to inform my supervisor or department head of any changes in personal information such as phone number, address, etc. I also accept responsibility for contacting my supervisor or the Westwood ISD Administration Office if I have questions or concerns or need further explanation.

Signature

Date

Please sign and date this receipt and forward it to hlcastaneda@westwoodisd.net

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are, have been summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to hlcastaneda@westwoodisd.net.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. District policies can be accessed online at [***https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/122***](https://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/122)

District Information

Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives

Policy AE

Vision

Westwood ISD...

Where Panthers excel today and lead tomorrow

Mission

Westwood ISD

We prepare future ready students in a positive and engaging educational environment.

Beliefs

We believe:

- **In academic excellence for all students**
- **In developing leaders at all levels**
- **Every person is a leader - they lead where they are**
- **Our students want to excel and have pride in accomplishments**
- **Pride and tradition are foundational to our success**
- **Students have a place to belong**
- **Parental involvement is welcome and parents are encouraged to have a voice**
- **Our staff has an unbelievable desire to be excellent and to improve their craft on a daily basis**
- **In being the best**
- **We are all a part of the Panther family**

Board of Trustees

Policies BA, BB series, BD series, and BE series

Texas law grants the board of trustees the power to govern and oversee the management of the district's schools. The board is the policy-making body within the district and has overall responsibility for the curriculum, school taxes, annual budget, employment of the superintendent and other professional staff, and facilities. The board has complete and final control over school matters within limits established by state and federal laws and regulations.

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the district to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for the district's children. Board members are elected by single-member district and serve 3-year terms. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the district.

Current board members include:

- Leonard Armstrong
- Jeff Cooper
- Dr. Carolyn Booker
- Mike Kelly
- Bryan Jones
- Angela Choate
- Ronnie Stanhope

The board usually meets the second Monday of each month at the High School Drama Lab/Fine Arts/Science room. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the district website and Westwood ISD Administration Office at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a one-hour notice.

All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the board to go into a closed session from which the public and others are excluded. Closed session may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real-property acquisition, certain personnel matters including employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or consulting with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

Board Meeting Schedule

Monday	August 9, 2021
Monday	September 13, 2021
Monday	October 18, 2021
Monday	November 8, 2021
Monday	December 13, 2021
Monday	January 10, 2022
Monday	February 14, 2022
Monday	March 21, 2022
Monday	April 11, 2022
Monday	May 9, 2022
Monday	June 13, 2022
Monday	July 11, 2022

Administration

**Westwood ISD Administration Office
4524 W. Oak
Palestine, Texas 75801
903-729-1776**

**Superintendent
Wade Stanford**

**Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
Katie Atkins**

**Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations
Kyle Johnson**

**Director of Federal & Special Programs
Tiffany Carwell**

**PEIMS Director
Mindy Place**

**Director of Transportation
Philip Nedbalek**

**Director of Maintenance
Joshua Shultz**

**Director of Technology
Edwin Schuessler**

**Director of Athletics
Richard Bishop**

**CTE & Testing Coordinator
Kelly Green**

School Calendar

[2021-2022 Westwood ISD Academic Calendar.pdf](#)

Helpful Contacts

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department as listed below.

School Directory

**Westwood High School
1820 Panther Blvd.
903-729-1773**

**Principal
Scott Nettles**

**Assistant Principal
Jennifer Thomason**

**Counselor
Jeffery Tauber**

**Westwood Junior High
1801 Panther Blvd.
903-723-0423**

**Principal
Sonya Brown**

**Assistant Principal
Amy Wilson**

**Counselor
Debbie Coates**

**Westwood Elementary
2305 Salt Works Rd.
903-729-1771**

**Principal
Shinnitta Foreman**

**Assistant Principal
Brendan May**

**Counselor
Amber Linam**

**Westwood Primary
1701 W. Point Tap
903-729-1774**

**Principal
Charlotte May**

**Assistant Principal
Nola Beard**

**Counselor
Kendra Aristide**

Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity

Policies DAA, DIA

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Westwood ISD does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Additionally, the district does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

In accordance with Title IX, the district does not discriminate on the basis of sex and is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The requirement not to discriminate extends to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the district's Title IX coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator for employees to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: *Wade Stanford, Superintendent, 4524 W. Oak St. Palestine, TX 75801, wstanford@westwoodisd.net, and 903-729-1776*. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, email, or phone. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator for employees for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: *Katie Atkins, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, 4524 W. Oak St. Palestine, TX 75801, chbedre@westwoodisd.net, and 903-729-1776*.

Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Policy DC

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis to the district's website.

Employment after Retirement

Policy DC

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed under certain circumstances on a full- or part-time basis without affecting their benefits, according to TRS rules and state law. Detailed information about employment after retirement is available in the TRS publication *Employment after Retirement*. Employees can contact TRS for additional information by calling 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. Information is also available on the TRS Website (www.trs.texas.gov).

Contract and Noncontract Employment

Policy DC series

State law requires the district to employ all full-time professional employees in positions requiring a certificate from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and nurses under probationary, term, or continuing contracts. Employees in all other positions are employed at-will or by a contract that is not subject to the procedures for nonrenewal or termination under Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code. The paragraphs that follow provide a general description of the employment arrangements used by the district.

Probationary Contracts. Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the district and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification must receive a probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after a two-year lapse in district employment or employees who move to a position requiring a new class of certification may also be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one-year contracts. The probationary period for those who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district may not exceed one school year.

For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three school years (i.e., three one-year contracts) with an optional fourth school year if the board determines it is doubtful whether a term or continuing contract should be given.

Term Contracts. Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses will be employed by term contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract. Employment policies can be accessed online or copies will be provided upon request.

Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees. Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as noninstructional administrators) are not employed by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees. All paraprofessional and auxiliary employees, regardless of certification, are employed at will and not by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district.

Certification and Licenses

Policies DBA, DF

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or a professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to Westwood ISD Administration Office in a timely manner. Employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) must notify Wade Stanford when there is action against, or revocation of, their license.

A certified employee's contract may be voided without due process and employment terminated if the individual does not hold a valid certificate or fails to fulfill the requirements necessary to renew or extend a temporary certificate, emergency certificate, probationary certificate, or permit. A contract may also be voided if SBEC suspends or revokes certification because of an individual's failure to comply with criminal history background checks. Contact human resources if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

Recertification of Employment Authorization

Policy DC

At the time of hire all employees must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (Form I-9) and present documents to verify identity and employment authorization.

Employees whose immigration status, employment authorization, or employment authorization documents have expired must present new documents that show current employment authorization. Employees should file the necessary application or petition sufficiently in advance to ensure that they maintain continuous employment authorization or valid employment authorization documents. Contact human resources if you have any questions regarding reverification of employment authorization.

Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing

Policy CQ, DHE

Non-investigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no

legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the district reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The district may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including district-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on district premises or work sites or used in district business.

Employees Required to Have a Commercial Driver's License. Any employee whose duties require a commercial driver's license (CDL) is subject to drug and alcohol testing. This includes all drivers who operate a motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more people counting the driver, drivers of large vehicles, or drivers of vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials. Teachers, coaches, or other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements if their duties include driving a commercial motor vehicle.

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted when reasonable suspicion exists, at random, when an employee returns to duty after engaging in prohibited conduct, and as a follow-up measure. Testing may be conducted following accidents. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty.

All employees required to have a CDL or who otherwise are subject to alcohol and drug testing will receive a copy of the district's policy, the testing requirements, and detailed information on alcohol and drug abuse and the availability of assistance programs.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug testing policies and related educational material should contact the Director of Transportation.

Health Safety Training

Policies DBA, DMA

Certain employees who are involved in physical activities for students must maintain and submit to the district proof of current certification or training in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), concussion, and extracurricular athletic activity safety. Certification or documentation of training must be issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, University Interscholastic League, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to the curriculum department by appropriate.

School nurses and employees with regular contact with students must complete a Texas Education Agency approved, online training regarding seizure disorder awareness, recognition, and related first aid.

Reassignments and Transfers

Policy DK

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the superintendent or designee when the superintendent or designee determines that the assignment or reassignment is in the best interest of the district. Reassignment is a transfer to another position, department, or facility that does not necessitate a change in the employment contract. Campus reassignments must be approved by the principal at the receiving campus except when reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or program changes. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be reassigned at any time unless an extracurricular or supplemental duty assignment is part of a dual-assignment contract. Employees who object to a reassignment may follow the district process for employee complaints as outlined in this handbook and district policy DGBA (Local).

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit his or her request by May 1st. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Human Resource office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

Workload and Work Schedules

Policies DEAB, DK, DL

Professional Employees. Professional employees and academic administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10-, 11-, or 12-month basis, according to the work schedules set by the district. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation including conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The district may require teachers to supervise students during lunch one day a week when no other personnel are available.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees. Support employees are employed at will and receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. See Overtime Compensation on page 22 for additional information.

Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk

Policies DEAB, DG

The district supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk. A place, other than a multiple user bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from other employees and the public where the employee can express breast milk will be provided.

A reasonable amount of break time will be provided when the employee has a need to express milk. For nonexempt employees, these breaks are unpaid and are not counted as hours worked. Employees should meet with their supervisor to discuss their needs and arrange break times.

Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications

Policies DK, DBA

In schools receiving Title I funds, the district is required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to notify parents at the beginning of each school year that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. ESSA also requires that parents be notified if their child has been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements.

Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate. This notice is not required if parental notice under ESSA is sent. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request. Employees who have questions about their certification status can call human resources.

Outside Employment and Tutoring

Policy DBD

Employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor any outside employment that may create a potential conflict of interest with their assigned duties and responsibilities or the best interest of the district. Supervisors will consider outside

employment on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it should be prohibited because of a conflict of interest.

Performance Evaluation

Policy DN series

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the district. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda also can be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, participate in a performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

Employee Involvement

Policies BQA, BQB

At both the campus and district levels, Westwood ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from curriculum department.

Staff Development

Policy DMA

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the district. Staff development for instructional personnel is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, addressed in the campus improvement plan, and approved by a campus-level advisory committee. Staff development for noninstructional personnel is designed to meet specific licensing requirements (e.g., bus drivers) and continued employee skill development.

Individuals holding renewable SBEC certificates are responsible for obtaining the required training hours and maintaining appropriate documentation.

Compensation and Benefits

Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The district's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All district positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as nonexempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek. (See *Overtime Compensation*, page 22.)

All employees will receive written notice of their pay and work schedules before the first pay date of the school year. Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time nurses, and full-time counselors will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule.

Employees should contact human resources for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

Paychecks

All professional and salaried and hourly employees are paid monthly. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization.

The schedule of pay dates for the 2021-2022 school year follows:

Pay Period	Due Date	Pay Date	Pay Day
08/08/2021-09/04/2021	09/07/2021	09/24/2021	Friday
09/05/2021-10/02/2021	10/04/2021	10/25/2021	Monday
10/03/2021-10/30/2021	11/01/2021	11/19/2021	Friday
10/31/2021-11/27/2021	11/29/2021	12/17/2021	Friday

11/28/2021-1/1/2022	01/03/2022	01/21/2022	Friday
01/02/2022-01/29/2022	01/31/2022	02/25/2022	Friday
01/30/2022-03/05/2022	03/07/2022	03/25/2022	Friday
03/06/2022-04/02/2022	04/04/2022	04/25/2022	Monday
04/03/2022-04/30/2022	05/02/2022	05/25/2022	Wednesday
05/01/2022-06/04/2022	06/06/2022	06/24/2022	Friday
06/05/2022-07/02/2022	07/05/2022	07/25/2022	Monday
07/03/2022-08/06/2022	08/08/2022	08/25/2022	Thursday

Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees must have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of two weeks is necessary to activate this service. Contact the payroll department for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll Deductions

Policy CFEA

The district is required to make the following automatic payroll deductions:

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or Social Security employee contributions
- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance; annuities; and higher education savings plans or prepaid tuition programs. Employees also may request payroll deduction for payment of membership dues to professional organizations and certain charitable contributions

approved by the board. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

Overtime Compensation

Policies DEAB, DEC

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees and paraprofessional employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01am Sunday and ends at midnight Saturday.

Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for the hours set by the normal work schedule. Hours worked beyond the normal schedule up to 40 hours will be paid at a regular rate of pay.

Employees may be compensated for overtime (i.e., hours beyond 40 in a workweek) at time-and-a-half rate with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees can accumulate up to 30 hours of comp time.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- An employee is required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

Travel Expense Reimbursement

Policy DEE

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations must give approval. For approved travel,

employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the district, per the state comptroller’s office. Employees must submit receipts, to the extent possible, to be reimbursed for allowable expenses other than mileage.

- Hourly employees must submit time off under “school business”, which covers scheduled work hours and driving time.

One Day Travel

- All Time spent traveling as part of a one-day work assignment or training in another location is compensable even if this time occurs outside the normal work schedule. However, time spent traveling from home to the local airport, bus depot, mass transit center, or other point of departure is not compensable. Meal time or travel time to and from lunch during the one-day assignment or training is not compensable if no work is performed. (29 C.F.R. Section 785.38)

Overnight Travel

- For overnight trips, compensable time depends on the nature of the travel and the time it occurs. If the traveling occurs during normal working hours, the time is compensable, even if it occurs during nonworking days (Saturday, Sunday, or holidays). Traveling as a passenger on an airplane, train, bus, or in an automobile is not compensable time if it occurs outside of normal working hours, unless the employee is required to perform work while traveling. (29 C.F.R. Section 785.39)
- If an employee is driving a vehicle, the time is compensable regardless of when the travel occurs. Meal periods or periods when the employee is sleeping are not compensable. (29 C.F.R. Section 785.41)
- Whether an employee must be compensated for time spent on-call or waiting to work depends on the degree of freedom given to the employee. (29 C.F.R. Section 785.17) For example, if a bus driver arrives at the stadium and is told to remain with the bus during the activity to safeguard district and student properties, the employee will be considered working. On the other hand, if the bus driver is told upon arrival to return in five hours and is free to use those hours at his or her discretion, the time will not be considered work time.

Health, Dental, and Life Insurance

Policy CRD

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school employee health insurance program. The district’s contribution to employee insurance

premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

- Employees who are active, contributing TRS members
- Employees who are not contributing TRS members and who are employed for 10 or more regularly scheduled hours per week

TRS retirees who are enrolled in TRS-Care (retiree health insurance program) are not eligible to participate in TRS-ActiveCare.

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment each year or when they experience a qualifying event (e.g., marriage, divorce, birth). Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees should contact human resources for more information.

Supplemental Insurance Benefits

Policy CRD

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact human resources for more information.

Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e., disability, accidental death and dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, dental, and additional term life insurance). A third-party administrator handles employee claims made on these accounts.

New employees must accept or reject this benefit during their first month of employment. All employees must accept or reject this benefit on an annual basis and during the specified time period.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Policy CRE

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from Claims Administrative Services.

Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to your supervisor, and then to human resources. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See *Workers' Compensation Benefits*, page 22 for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

Unemployment Compensation Insurance

Policy CRF

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact human resources.

Teacher Retirement

All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least four and one-half months are members of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). Substitutes not receiving TRS service retirement benefits who work at least 90 days a year are eligible to purchase a year of creditable service in TRS. TRS provides members with an annual statement of their account showing all deposits and the total account balance for the year ending August 31, as well as an estimate of their retirement benefits.

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify human resources as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the web (www.trs.texas.gov).

Leaves and Absences

Policies DEC, DECA, DECB

The district offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of more than five days should call human resources for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the district.

Paid leave must be used in whole and ½ day increments. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave. Paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

- Local leave
- State sick leave accumulated prior to the 1995-1996 school year
- State personal leave

Employees must follow district and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification.

- Exhausting leave and going into “dock” status is a violation of leave policy and may result in disciplinary action, including termination or nonrenewal, if not on district approved leave.

Immediate Family. For purposes of leave other than family and medical leave, immediate family is defined as the following:

- Spouse
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.
- Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.
- Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law
- Grandparent and grandchild
- Any person residing in the employee’s household at the time of illness or death

For purposes of family and medical leave, the definition of family is limited to spouse, parent, son or daughter, and next of kin. The definition of these are found in Policy DECA (LEGAL).

Medical Certification. Any employee, who is absent more than three days because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee’s fitness to return to work.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits covered employers from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we ask that employees and health care providers do not provide any genetic information in any medical certification. ‘Genetic information,’ as defined by GINA, includes an individual’s family medical history, the results of an individual’s or family member’s genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual’s family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual’s family member, or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

Continuation of Health Insurance. Employees, on an approved leave of absence other than family and medical leave, may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid by the district as they were prior to the leave. Otherwise, the district does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave.

Under TRS-Active Care rules, an employee is no longer eligible for insurance through the district after six months of unpaid leave other than FML. If an employee’s unpaid leave extends for more than six months, the district will provide the employee with notice of COBRA rights.

Personal Leave

State law entitles all employees to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is available for use at the beginning of the year. A day of personal leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee’s usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time. State personal leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. Personal leave may be used for two general purposes: nondiscretionary and discretionary.

Nondiscretionary. Leave taken for personal or family illness, family emergency, a death in the family, or active military service is considered nondiscretionary leave. Reasons for this type of leave allow very little, if any, advance planning. Nondiscretionary may be used in the same manner as state sick leave.

Discretionary. Leave taken at an employee’s discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor three days in advance of the anticipated absence. The effect of the employee’s absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor.

Discretionary use of leave shall not be allowed on the day before a school holiday, the day after a school holiday, days scheduled for end-of semester or end-of-year exams, days scheduled for state-mandated assessments, or professional or staff development days.

Any employee, who is absent the day before or after a holiday, because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification from a qualified healthcare provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee’s fitness to return to work.

Leave Proration. If an employee separates from employment with the district before his or her last duty day of the year, or begins employment after the first duty day, state personal leave will be prorated based on the actual time employed. When an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee’s final paycheck will be reduced by the amount of state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year.

State Sick Leave

State sick leave accumulated before 1995 is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. State sick leave can be used only in whole or ½ day increments, except when coordinated with family and medical leave taken on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis or when coordinated with workers’ compensation benefits.

State sick leave may be used for the following reasons only:

- Employee illness
- Illness in the employee’s immediate family
- Family emergency (i.e., natural disasters or life-threatening situations)
- Death in the immediate family
- Active military service

Local Leave

In addition to the state minimum personal leave, the District shall provide four (4) additional days per year. This leave is earned at a rate of 1/2 day for every 22.5 days worked. This leave does not accumulate. The Board of Trustees will set a rate of pay for unutilized local leaves during the annual budget development process.

Sick Leave Pool

The district has adopted a policy for the establishment of a sick leave pool in order to assist employees who are suffering from personal catastrophic illness or injury, or illness or injury in the immediate family. Pooling may be requested when leave exhausts state, local and extended sick leave and personal leave. The employee may receive a maximum of 30 days from the pool. Requests for a sick leave pool recommendation must be made by employee's immediate supervisor, in writing to the superintendent for approval. For more information on the specific details of this policy, please refer to DEC Local, which is located in the district policy manual in the Westwood ISD Administration office.

POLICY DEC
(LOCAL)

SICK LEAVE POOL The District sick leave pool shall be established from voluntary donations by the District staff to assist a fellow employee suffering from personal catastrophic illness or injury or illness or injury in the immediate family. Pooling may be requested when an employee has exhausted his or her state, local and extended sick leave and personal leave. The employee may receive a maximum of 30 days from the pool.

ESTABLISHMENT A request for the establishment of a sick leave pool shall be made in writing to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall then initiate the sick leave pool for the employee and notify District staff.

CONTRIBUTIONS The sick leave pool shall be composed of voluntary contributions by District staff for a specific individual and donated days

shall be designated to a specific pool. No staff member shall be allowed to contribute more than three of his or her local leave days per school year. A maximum of 30 days may be contributed to an individual sick leave pool.

CESSATION OF SICK LEAVE POOL The sick leave pool shall cease to exist when the employee returns to work, or when each voluntary donation reaches the three-day maximum and the pool is exhausted. Unused sick leave pool days shall revert to the donor and shall be divided in increments of no less than one-half days. No general pool shall remain in existence.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions

The following text is from the federal notice, *Employee Rights and Responsibilities Under the Family and Medical Leave Act*. Specific information that the district has adopted to implement the FMLA follows this general notice.

Leave Entitlements

Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child’s birth or placement);
- To care for the employee’s spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee’s own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee’s spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered servicemember's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Benefits and Protections

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

An employer may not interfere with an individual's FMLA rights or retaliate against someone for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

Eligibility Requirements

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave;* and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

*Special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

Requesting Leave

Generally, employees must give 30-days' advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days' notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally, follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection.

Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

Employer Responsibilities

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

Enforcement

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information:

1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627
www.wagehour.dol.gov

Local Family and Medical Leave Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period

- A rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

Use of Paid Leave. FML runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, compensatory time, assault leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or

injury. The district will designate the leave as FML, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

Combined Leave for Spouses. Spouses who are employed by the district are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FML to care for a parent with a serious health condition; or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

Intermittent Leave. When medically necessary or in the case of a qualifying exigency, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. The district does not permit the use of intermittent or reduced-schedule leave for the care of a newborn child or for adoption or placement of a child with the employee.

Fitness for Duty. An employee that takes FML due to the employee's own serious health condition shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification from the health care provider. If certification of the employee's ability to perform essential job function is required, the district shall provide a list of essential job functions (e.g., job description) to the employee with the FML designation notice to share with the health care provider.

Reinstatement. An employee returning to work at the end of FML will be returned to the same position held when the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

In certain cases, instructional employees desiring to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue on family and medical leave until the end of the semester. The additional time off is not counted against the employee's FML entitlement, and the district will maintain the employees group health insurance and reinstate the employee at the end of the leave according the procedures outlined in policy (see DECA (LEGAL)).

Failure to Return. If, at the expiration of FML, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the district may require the employee to reimburse the district's share of insurance premiums paid during any portion of FML when the employee was on unpaid leave. If the employee fails to return to work for a reason beyond the employee's control, such as a continuing personal or family serious health condition or a spouse being unexpectedly transferred more than 75 miles from the district, the district may not require the employee to reimburse the district's share of premiums paid.

District Contact. Employees that require FML or have questions should contact human resources for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Temporary Disability Leave

Certified Employees. Any full-time employee whose position requires certification from the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is eligible for temporary disability leave. The purpose of temporary disability leave is to provide job protection to full-time educators who cannot work for an extended period of time because of a mental or physical disability of a temporary nature. Temporary disability leave must be taken as a continuous block of time. It may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability.

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be accepted as a request for temporary disability leave. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days.

If an employee is placed on temporary disability leave involuntarily, he or she has the right to request a hearing before the board of trustees. The employee may protest the action and present additional evidence of fitness to work.

When an employee is ready to return to work, the campus principal or immediate supervisor and the superintendent or the superintendent's designee should be notified at least 30 days in advance. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able to resume regular duties. Certified employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned if an appropriate position is available. If an appropriate position is not available, the employee may be assigned to another campus, subject to the approval of the campus principal. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, the employee will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

Workers' Compensation Benefits

An employee absent from duty because of a job-related illness or injury may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits if the absence exceeds seven calendar days.

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use available, partial-day increments of sick leave or any other paid leave benefits to make up the difference between wage benefits and pre-injury or -illness wages. While an employee is receiving workers' compensation wage benefits, the district will charge available leave proportionately so that the employee receives an amount equal to the employee's regular salary.

Assault Leave

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to an employee who is injured as the result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An incident involving an assault is a work-related injury and should be immediately reported to immediate supervisor, and human resources.

An injury is treated as an assault if the person causing the injury could be prosecuted for assault or could not be prosecuted only because that person's age or mental capacity renders the person nonresponsible for purposes of criminal liability.

An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take all the leave time medically necessary (up to two years) to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. At the request of an employee, the district will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

Bereavement Leave

Approved leave for death in the immediate family shall be for no more than five workdays for each occurrence, subject to the approval of the District. Employee must use allotted state or local days.

Jury Duty

Policies DEC, DG

The district provides paid leave to employees who are summoned to jury duty including service on a grand jury. The district will not discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate, or coerce any regular employee because of juror or grand juror service or for the employee's attendance or scheduled attendance in connection with the service in any court in the United States. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides. An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and may be required to provide the district a copy of the summons to document the need for leave.

An employee may be required to report back to work as soon as they are released from jury duty. The supervisor may consider the travel time required and the nature of the individual's

position when determining the need to report to work. A copy of the release from jury duty or documentation of time spent at the court may be required.

Compliance with a Subpoena

Employees will be paid while on leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding and will not be required to use personal leave. Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

Truancy Court Appearances

An employee who is a parent, guardian of a child, or a court-appointed guardian ad litem of a child who is required to miss work to attend a truancy court hearing may use personal leave or compensatory time for the absence. Employees who do not have paid leave available will be docked for any absence required because of the court appearance.

Religious Observance

The district will reasonably accommodate an employee's request for absence for a religious holiday or observance. Accommodations such as changes to work schedules or approving a day of absence will be made unless they pose an undue hardship to the district. The employee may use any accumulated personal leave for this purpose. Employees who have exhausted applicable paid leave may be granted an unpaid day of absence.

Military Leave

Paid Leave for Military Service. Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to paid leave when engaged in authorized training or duty orders by proper authority. Paid military leave is limited to 15 days each fiscal year. In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service.

Reemployment after Military Leave. Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably

discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. Employees returning to work following military leave should contact human resources. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

Continuation of Health Insurance. Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24 months. Employees should contact human resources for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Employee Relations and Communications

Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the district. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the district newsletter, and through special events and activities.

District Communications

Throughout the school year, the Westwood ISD Administration office publishes newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements. They include the following:

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=DGBA&filter=DGBA>

Complaints and Grievances

Policy DGBA

In an effort to hear and resolve employee concerns or complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted an orderly grievance process. Employees are encouraged to discuss their concerns or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time.

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees. For ease of reference, the district's policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints is reprinted as follows:

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=DGBA&filter=DGBA>

Employee Conduct and Welfare

Standards of Conduct

Policy DH

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the district and to be courteous to students, one another, and the public. Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor in advance or as early as possible in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and failure to follow procedures for reporting an absence may be cause for disciplinary action.
- Know and comply with department and district policies and procedures.
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism through appropriate channels.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
- Use district time, funds, and property for authorized district business and activities only.

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a district investigation may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day after the superintendent knew of the incident. See *Reports to the Texas Education Agency*, page 60 for additional information.

The *Educators' Code of Ethics*, adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification, which all district employees must adhere to, is reprinted below:

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

Purpose and Scope

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification. (19 TAC 247.1(b))

Enforceable Standards

1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

Standard 1.1 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

Standard 1.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.3 The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

Standard 1.4 The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.5 The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 1.6 The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.7 The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.

Standard 1.8 The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

Standard 1.9 The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.

Standard 1.10 The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.

Standard 1.11 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.

Standard 1.12 The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse, or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.

Standard 1.13 The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

Standard 2.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 2.2 The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

Standard 2.3 The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

Standard 2.4 The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Standard 2.5 The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 2.6 The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

Standard 2.7 The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

Standard 2.8 The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

3. Ethical Conduct toward Students

Standard 3.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 3.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

Standard 3.3 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

Standard 3.4 The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 3.5 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

Standard 3.6 The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

Standard 3.7 The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

Standard 3.8 The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

Standard 3.9 The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

- (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
- (ii) the subject matter of the communication;
- (iii) whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

- (iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- (v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- (vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Policies DH, DIA

Employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other employees, unpaid interns, student teachers, or students. While acting in the course of their employment, employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment of other persons including board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents. A substantiated charge of harassment will result in disciplinary action.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated or retaliated against or harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the campus principal, supervisor, or appropriate district official. If the campus principal, supervisor, or district official is the subject of a complaint, the complaint should be made directly to the superintendent. A complaint against the superintendent may be made directly to the board.

Any district employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, or believes that another employee has experienced such prohibited conduct, should immediately report the alleged acts. The employee may report the alleged acts to his or her supervisor, the campus principal, the Title IX coordinator, or the superintendent. The district's Title IX coordinator's name and contact information is listed in the Equal Employment Opportunity section of this handbook.

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is reprinted below:

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=DIA&filter=DIA>

Harassment of Students

Policies DH, DHB, FFG, FFH, FFI

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited.

Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. Any district employee who suspects or receives direct or indirect notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, of a student shall immediately notify the district's Title IX coordinator, the ADA/Section 504 coordinator, or superintendent and take any other steps required by district policy.

All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*, page 45 and *Bullying*, page 67 for additional information.

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is reprinted below:

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=DHB&filter=DHB>

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=FFH&filter=FFH>

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Policies DG, GRA

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §261.001, to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services (CPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering the facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Alleged abuse or neglect involving a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child (including a teacher) must be reported to CPS.

Employees are also required to make a report if they have cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the

information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or person with a disability.

Reports to Child Protective Services can be made online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx> or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the district is prohibited from taking an adverse employment action against a certified or licensed professional who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

An employee's failure to make the required report may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agency.

Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer's request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children

The district has established a plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at <https://www.westwoodisd.net/>. As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or maltreated. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Maltreatment is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected

has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

Reporting Crime

Policy DG

The Texas Whistleblower Act protects district employees who make good faith reports of violations of law by the district to an appropriate law enforcement authority. The district is prohibited from suspending, terminating the employment of, or taking other adverse personnel action against, an employee who makes a report under the Act. State law also provides employees with the right to report a crime witnessed at the school to any peace officer with authority to investigate the crime.

Scope and Sequence

Policy DG

If a teacher determines that students need more or less time in a specific area to demonstrate proficiency in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for that subject and grade level, the district will not penalize the teacher for not following the district's scope and sequence.

The district may take appropriate action if a teacher does not follow the district's scope and sequence based on documented evidence of a deficiency in classroom instruction. This documentation can be obtained through observation or substantiated and documented third-party information.

Technology Resources

Policy CQ

The district's technology resources, including its networks, computer systems, email accounts, devices connected to its networks, and all district-owned devices used on or off school property, are primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use is permitted if the use:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the district.
- Does not unduly burden the district's technology resources.
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance.

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the district’s acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Director of Technology.

Personal Use of Electronic Communications

Policy CQ, DH

Electronic communications include all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic communications also include all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

As role models for the district’s students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as district employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic communications as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee’s use of electronic communications interferes with the employee’s ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee’s page, including content added by the employee, the employee’s friends, or members of the public who can access the employee’s page, and for web links on the employee’s page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic communications for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee’s personal social network page(s) using the district’s computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct district business.
- The employee shall not use the district’s logo or other copyrighted material of the district without express written consent.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on district business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee’s immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant

that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
 - Confidentiality of student records. [See Policy FL]
 - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law. [See DH (EXHIBIT)]
 - Confidentiality of district records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses. [See Policy GBA]
 - Copyright law [See Policy CY]
 - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system. [See DH (EXHIBIT)]

See *Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents*, below, for regulations on employee communication with students through electronic media.

Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents

Policy DH

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may use electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in the district. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. Electronic communications between all other employees and students who are enrolled in the district are prohibited. Employees are not required to provide students with their personal phone number or email address.

An employee is not subject to the provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

- The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol
- The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school;
- The parent understands that the employee’s communications with the student are excepted from district regulation; and
- The parent is solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the employee and the student.

The following definitions apply for the use of electronic media with students:

- *Electronic communications* means any communication facilitated by the use of any electronic device, including a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. The term includes email, text messages, instant messages, and any communication made through an Internet website, including a social media website or a social networking website.
- *Communicate* means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee’s personal social network page or a blog) is not a *communication*: however, the employee may be subject to district regulations on personal electronic communications. See *Personal Use of Electronic Media*, above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not a *communication*.
- *Certified or licensed employee* means a person employed in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, licensed therapists, and athletic trainers.

An employee who communicates electronically with students shall observe the following:

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the district unless a specific exception is noted below.
- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:

- The employee shall include at least one of the student’s parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message;
- The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
- For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee’s district email address.
- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page (“professional page”) for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee’s professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics including:
 - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
 - Copyright law [Policy CY]
 - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DH]
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.

- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.
- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district's record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in an improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

Public Information on Private Devices

Policy DH

Employees should not maintain district information on privately owned devices. Any district information must be forwarded or transferred to the district to be preserved. The district will take reasonable efforts to obtain public information in compliance with the Public Information Act. Reasonable efforts may include:

- Verbal or written directive
- Remote access to district-owned devices and services

Criminal History Background Checks

Policy DBAA

Employees may be subject to a review of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted on certain employees and entered into the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Clearinghouse. This database provides the district and SBEC with access to an employee's current national criminal history and updates to the employee's subsequent criminal history.

Employee Arrests and Convictions

Policy DH

An employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony, and any of the other offenses listed below:

- Crimes involving school property or funds
- Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator
- Crimes that occur wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity
- Crimes involving moral turpitude

Moral turpitude includes the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit
- Theft
- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor
- Crimes involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance
- Felonies involving driving while intoxicated (DWI)
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the SBEC rules

If an educator is arrested or criminally charged, the superintendent is also required to report the educator's criminal history to the Division of Investigations at TEA.

Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention

Policy DH

Westwood ISD is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities on or off school property. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours may be dismissed. The district’s policy regarding employee drug use follows:

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=DH&filter=DH>

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=DI&filter=DI>

Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use

Policies DH, FNCD, GKA

State law prohibits smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes on all district-owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off school property. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of district-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes while inside the vehicle. Notices stating that smoking is prohibited by law and punishable by a fine are displayed in prominent places in all school buildings.

Fraud and Financial Impropriety

Policy CAA

All employees should act with integrity and diligence in duties involving the district’s financial resources. The district prohibits fraud and financial impropriety, as defined below. Fraud and financial impropriety include the following:

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the district
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other district assets including employee time
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of district financial transactions
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of district information or activities
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties

- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the district
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the district, except as otherwise permitted by law or district policy
- Inappropriately destroying, removing, or using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state, or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or district policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the district
- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards

Conflict of Interest

Policy CB, DBD

Employees are required to disclose in writing to the district any situation that creates a potential conflict of interest with proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities or creates a potential conflict of interest with the best interests of the district. This includes the following:

- A personal financial interest
- A business interest
- Any other obligation or relationship
- Non-school employment

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

Gifts and Favors

Policy DBD

Employees may not accept gifts or favors that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor, or service by an administrator or teacher that might reasonably tend to influence the selection of textbooks, electronic textbooks, instructional materials or technological equipment may result in prosecution of a Class B misdemeanor offense. This does not include staff development,

teacher training, or instructional materials such as maps or worksheets that convey information to students or contribute to the learning process.

Copyrighted Materials

Policy CY

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Electronic media, including motion pictures and other audiovisual works, are to be used in the classroom for instructional purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Associations and Political Activities

Policy DGA

The district will not directly or indirectly discourage employees from participating in political affairs or require any employee to join any group, club, committee, organization, or association. Employees may join or refuse to join any professional association or organization.

An individual's employment will not be affected by membership or a decision not to be a member of any employee organization that exists for the purpose of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work. Use of district resources including work time for political activities is prohibited.

The district encourages personal participation in the political process, including voting. Employees who need to be absent from work to vote during the early voting period or on election day must communicate with their immediate supervisor prior to the absence.

Charitable Contributions

Policy DG

The Board or any employee may not directly or indirectly require or coerce an employee to make a contribution to a charitable organization or in response to a fundraiser. Employees cannot be required to attend a meeting called for the purpose of soliciting charitable contributions. In addition, the Board or any employee may not directly or indirectly require or coerce an employee to refrain from making a contribution to a charitable organization or in response to a fundraiser or attending a meeting called for the purpose of soliciting charitable contributions.

Safety

Policy CK series

The district has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. See Emergencies on page 60 for additional information.

To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve district equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules.
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times.
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor.
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization.

While driving on district business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on district business are prohibited from texting and using other electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgment on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact Director of Facilities.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Policies DH, FNCG, GKA

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other district provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisor or call Westwood ISD Administration Office immediately.

Visitors in the Workplace

Policy GKC

All visitors are expected to enter any district facility through the main entrance and sign in or report to the building's main office. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the district premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge.

Asbestos Management Plan

Policy CKA

The district is committed to providing a safe environment for employees. An accredited management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for each school. A copy of the district's management plan is kept in the maintenance office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Pest Control Treatment

Policies CLB, DI

Employees are prohibited from applying any pesticide or herbicide without appropriate training and prior approval of the integrated pest management (IPM) coordinator. Any application of pesticide or herbicide must be done in a manner prescribed by law and the district's integrated pest management program.

Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a district building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located at each campus. In addition, individual employees may request in writing to be notified of pesticide applications. An employee who requests individualized notice will be notified by telephone, written, or electric means. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

Other Topics

General Procedures

Emergency School Closing

The district may close schools because of severe weather, epidemics, or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the district's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post a notice on the district's website, social media accounts and notify the following radio and television stations:

**KBHT – 93.5 KOYA – 96.7 KWRW – 97.7 KYYK – 98.3 KNET – 1450 KLTV – Ch. 7
KETK – Ch. 5**

Emergencies

Policies CKC, CKD

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to emergencies, including a medical emergency. Employees should locate evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas and be familiar with shelter in place, lockout, and lockdown procedures. Emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with safety and evacuation procedures. Each campus is equipped with an automatic external defibrillator. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all district buildings. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use.

Purchasing Procedures

Policy CH

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the campus/department secretary on an official district purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the district can be made without a PO number. The district will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the district's business office. Contact accounts payable for additional information on purchasing procedures.

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the human resource office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. The form to process a change in personal information can be obtained from Westwood ISD Administration Office.

Personnel Records

Policy DBA, GBA

Most district records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. In most cases, an employee's personal email address is confidential and may not be released without the employee's permission.

Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

- Address
- Phone number, including personal cell phone number
- Emergency contact information
- Information that reveals whether they have family members

The choice to not allow public access to this information or change an existing choice may be made at any time by submitting a written request to human resources. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information may be released to the public until a request to withhold the information is submitted or another exception for release of information under law applies. An employee is responsible for notifying the district if he or she is subject to any exception for disclosure of personal or confidential information.

Facility Use

Policies DGA, GKD

Employees who wish to use district facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. Each campus is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact campus principal to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

Termination of Employment

Resignations

Policy DFE

Contract Employees. Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received at least 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the campus principal, or immediate supervisor. Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the superintendent or the board of trustees. Resignation without consent may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of an educator's resignation within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct for any of the acts listed in *Reports to Texas Education Agency* on page 63. The superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee resigns and reasonable evidence exists to indicate that the employee has engaged in of the same act.

Noncontract Employees. Noncontract employees may resign their position at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to campus principal, or immediate supervisor at least two weeks prior to the effective date. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so.

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of a noncertified employee's resignation or termination within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct of abuse of a student, or was involved in a romantic relationship with or solicited or engaged in sexual conduct with a student or minor. The superintendent will notify TEA within seven business days of receiving a report from a principal, or of knowing about an employee's resignation or termination following an alleged incident of misconduct described above.

Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

Policies DF Series

Employees on probationary, term, and continuing contracts can be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Employees on probationary or term contracts can be nonrenewed at the end of the contract term. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay, or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The timelines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination, or nonrenewal occurs will be provided when a written notice is given to an employee. Advance notification requirements do not apply when a contract employee is dismissed for failing to obtain or maintain appropriate certification or when the employee's

certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the DF series policies that are provided to employees or are available online.

Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

Policies DCD, DP

Noncontract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Noncontract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (See *Complaints and Grievances*, page 39.)

The principal is required to notify the superintendent of a noncertified employee's resignation or termination within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct of abuse of a student, or was involved in a romantic relationship with or solicited or engaged in sexual conduct with a student or minor. The superintendent will notify TEA within seven business days of receiving a report from a principal, or knew about an employee's resignation or termination following an alleged incident of misconduct described above.

Discharge of Convicted Employees

Policy DF

The district shall discharge any employee who has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for an offense requiring the registration as a sex offender or convicted of a felony under Title 5 Penal Code if the victim was a minor.

If the offense is more than 30 years before the date the person's employment began or the person satisfied all terms of the court order entered on conviction the requirement to discharge does not apply.

Exit Interviews and Procedures

Exit interviews will be scheduled for all employees leaving the district. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at this time. Separating employees are asked to provide the district with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the district with feedback on his or her employment experience. All district keys, books, property, including intellectual property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

Reports to Texas Education Agency

Policies DF, DHB, DHC

Certified Employees. The resignation or termination of a certified employee must be reported to the Division of Investigations at TEA if there is evidence that the employee was involved in any of the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor, or any other unlawful conduct with a student or a minor
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual contact or a romantic relationship with a student or minor
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of district or school property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit for the purpose of promotion or additional compensation
- Committing a criminal offense or any part of a criminal offense on district property or at a school-sponsored event.

The reporting requirements above are in addition to the superintendent's ongoing duty to notify TEA when a certified employee or an applicant for certification has a reported criminal history or engaged in conduct violating the assessment security procedures established under TEC §39.0301. "Reported criminal history" means any formal criminal justice system charges and dispositions including arrests, detentions, indictments, criminal information, convictions, deferred adjudications, and probations in any state or federal jurisdiction that is obtained by a means other than the Fingerprint-based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT).

Noncertified Employees. The voluntary or involuntary separation of a noncertified employee from the District must be reported to the Division of Investigations at TEA by the superintendent if there is evidence the employee abused or otherwise committed an unlawful act with a student or minor, was involved in a romantic relationship with a student or minor, or solicited or engaged in sexual contact with a student or minor.

Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding

The district is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance. Notice of the following must be sent to the support recipient and the court or, in the case of child support, the Texas Attorney General Child Support Division:

- Termination of employment not later than the seventh day after the date of termination
- Employee's last known address
- Name and address of the employee's new employer, if known

Student Issues

Equal Educational Opportunities

Policies FB, FFH

In an effort to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Westwood ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to Wade Stanford, Superintendent, 4525 W. Oak St. Palestine, TX 75801, wstanford@westwoodisd.net and 903-729-1776, the district Title IX coordinator for students. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Christine Bedre, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, 4524 W. Oak St. Palestine, TX 75801, chbedre@westwoodisd.net, and 903-729-1776. the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator for students. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to the Superintendent.

Student Records

Policy FL

Student records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records. The following people are the only people who have general access to a student's records:

- Parents: Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights
- The student: The rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A district is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student's records before this time.
- School officials with legitimate educational interests

The student handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the campus principal for assistance.

Parent and Student Complaints

Policy FNG

In an effort to hear and resolve parent and student complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted orderly processes for handling complaints on different issues. Any campus office or the superintendent's office can provide parents and students with information on filing a complaint.

Parents are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with the teacher or the appropriate administrator at any time. Parents and students with complaints that cannot be resolved to their satisfaction should be directed to the campus principal. The formal complaint process provides parents and students with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with a principal's response.

Administering Medication to Students

Policy FFAC

Only designated employees may administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. Exceptions apply to the self-administration of asthma medication, medication for anaphylaxis (e.g., EpiPen®), and medication for diabetes management, if the medication is self-administered in accordance with district policy and procedures. A student who must take any other medication during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine in its original, properly labeled container. Contact the principal or school nurse for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

Dietary Supplements

Policies DH, FFAC

District employees are prohibited by state law from knowingly selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to a student with whom the employee has contact as part of his or her school district duties. In addition, employees may not knowingly endorse or suggest the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

Psychotropic Drugs

Policy FFAC

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

District employees are prohibited by state law from doing the following:

- Recommending that a student use a psychotropic drug
- Suggesting a particular diagnosis
- Excluding from class or school-related activity a student whose parent refuses to consent to a psychiatric evaluation or to authorize the administration of a psychotropic drug to a student

Student Conduct and Discipline

Policies in the FN series and FO series

Students are expected to follow the classroom rules, campus rules, and rules listed in the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. Teachers and administrators are responsible for taking disciplinary action based on a range of discipline management strategies that have been adopted by the district. Other employees that have concerns about a particular student's conduct should contact the classroom teacher or campus principal.

Student Attendance

Policy FEB

Teachers and staff should be familiar with the district's policies and procedures for attendance accounting. These procedures require minor students to have parental consent before they are allowed to leave campus. When absent from school, the student upon returning to school, must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. These requirements are addressed in campus training and in the student handbook. Contact the campus principal for additional information.

Bullying

Policy FFI

Bullying is defined by §TEC 37.0832. All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying, including cyber bullying, to the campus principal. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and is reprinted below:

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/122?filter=FFI&filter=FFI>

Hazing

Policy FNCC

Students must have prior approval from the principal or designee for any type of “initiation rites” of a school club or organization. While most initiation rites are permissible, engaging in or permitting “hazing” is a criminal offense. Any teacher, administrator, or employee who observes a student engaged in any form of hazing, who has reason to know or suspect that a student intends to engage in hazing, or has engaged in hazing must report that fact or suspicion to the designated campus administrator.

Index

Administering medication, 59
Administration, 7
Alcohol and drug
 abuse prevention, 46
 testing, 11
Arrests and convictions, 45
Asbestos management plan, 50
Assault leave, 27
Associations and political activities, 48
At-will employment, 10
Automatic payroll deposits, 15
Background checks, 45
Bad weather closing, 52
Benefits
 cafeteria plan, 18
 health insurance, 17
 leave, 20
 retirement, 19
 supplemental insurance, 18
 workers' compensation, 19, 27
Bereavement leave, 28
Board of Trustees
 information, 6
 meeting schedule, 7
 members, 6
Breaks, 13
Breast milk, 13
Bullying, 60
Cafeteria plan benefits, 18
Certification
 health and safety training, 11
 maintaining, 10
 parent notification, 13
Change of address, 52
Charitable contributions, 49
Child abuse
 reporting, 38
 sexual, 39
Code of ethics, 34

- Committees, 14
- Compensation, 15
- Complaints
 - employee, 32
 - parent and student, 59
- Compliance coordinators, 8, 58
- Compliance with a subpoena, 28
- Conduct and welfare, 33
- Conflict of interest, 47
- Contract
 - employment, 9
 - noncertified employees, 9
 - nonrenewal, 54
- Copyright materials, 48
- Court appearances, 28
- Court-ordered withholding, 56
- Crime reporting, 39
- Criminal history, 45
- Dietary supplements, 59
- Directories
 - helpful contacts, 7
 - school, 7
- Discrimination
 - employee, 37
 - student, 58
- Dismissal
 - contract employees, 54
 - noncontract employees, 54
- District
 - communications, 31
 - description, 6
 - information, 6
 - map, 6
 - mission statement, 6
- Drug
 - abuse prevention, 46
 - psychotropic, 60
 - testing, 11
- E-cigarettes, 46
- Electronic communications, 40, 42
- Emergencies, 52
- Employee
 - conduct and welfare, 33

- involvement, 14
- recognition, 31
- Employment
 - after retirement, 8
 - at-will, 10
 - authorization documents, 10
 - contract, 9
 - noncontract, 9
 - outside, 14
- Equal opportunity
 - educational, 58
 - employment, 8
- Every Student Succeeds Act, 13
- Exit interviews, 55
- Facility use, 53
- Family and medical leave, 23
- Firearms, 50
- Form I-9, 10
- Fraud, 47
- General procedures, 52
- Gifts and favors, 48
- Grievances, 32
- Harassment, 37
- Hazing, 61
- Health insurance, 17
- Health safety training, 11
- Helpful contacts, 7
- Insurance
 - health, 17
 - supplemental, 18
 - unemployment, 19
- Internet use, 40, 42
- Job vacancy announcements, 8
- Jury duty, 28
- Leave
 - assault, 27
 - bank, 22
 - bereavement, 28
 - court appearance, 28
 - discretionary, 21
 - family and medical, 23
 - jury duty, 28
 - local, 22

- medical certification, 20
- military, 29
- nondiscretionary, 21
- personal, 21
- pool, 22
- proration, 22
- religious observance, 29
- sick, 22
- temporary disability, 26
- truancy court appearance, 29
- workers' compensation, 27
- Maltreatment of children, 39
- Medications, 59
- Military leave, 29
- Mission statement, 6
- Name and address changes, 52
- Nonrenewals, 54
- Nursing mothers, 13
- Outside employment, 14
- Overtime, 16
- Parent and student complaints, 59
- Parent notification, 13
- Paychecks, 15
- Payroll
 - automatic deposits, 15
 - deductions, 16
 - schedule, 15
- Performance evaluation, 14
- Personal leave, 21
- Personnel records, 53
- Pest control treatment, 50
- Political activities, 48
- Possession of firearms and weapons, 50
- Psychotropic drugs, 60
- Public information, 45
- Purchasing procedures, 52
- Qualifying exigency, 25
- Reassignments, 12
- Religious observance, 29
- Resignations, 54
 - contract employees, 54
 - noncontract employees, 54
- Retaliation, 37

Retirement
 benefits, 19
 employment after, 8
Safety, 49
Salaries, 15
School
 calendar, 7
 closing, 52
 directory, 7
Scope and sequence, 39
Searches, 11
Sexual harassment, 37
Sick leave, 22
Staff development, 14
Standards of conduct, 33
Student
 attendance, 60
 bullying, 60
 complaints, 59
 dietary supplements, 59
 discipline, 60
 equal educational opportunities, 58
 harassment, 37
 hazing, 61
 medication, 59
 records, 58
Supplemental insurance, 18
TEA reports, 56
Teacher retirement, 19
Technology resources, 40
Temporary disability leave, 26
Termination
 discharge of convicted employees, 55
 dismissal during the contract term, 54
 exit interviews, 55
 noncontract employees, 55
 nonrenewal, 54
 reports to TEA, 54, 56
 resignation, 54
Text messaging, 42
Tobacco
 products, 46
 use, 46

Training
 health and safety, 11
 staff development, 14
Transfers, 12
Travel expenses, 17
Truancy court appearances, 29
Tutoring, 14
Unemployment insurance, 19
Vacancy announcements, 8
Vacation, 22
Visitors, 50
Wages, 15
Weapons, 50
Whistleblower Act, 39
Work schedule, 12
Workers' compensation benefits, 19, 27
Workload, 12

9. **ACTION ITEMS**

10. Board to consider approval of Consent Agenda
 - A. Fundraisers

**WESTWOOD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Authorization to Conduct Fund Raising Event**

Organization: Theater Campus: HS Date submitted 9/10/21
 Fundraising Event: Calendar Fundraiser + Sponsorships
 Requested fundraising date/dates: ~~Oct. 1 - Oct. 31~~ or Nov. 1-30
 Vendor (if applicable) _____

Address _____ City/State _____ Telephone _____

List specific items that will be sold: We would like to sell days to donate. Donations over \$79 get a free ticket to a show. (puffs)
 Price per item: \$ \$1-31 or \$1-30 Will customer pay in advance? yes
 Profit to organization should never be less than 50%; otherwise, explain \$496 per student or 465 profit

What will money raised from this fundraiser be used for? Theatre specific trips + productions (See Attachment)

If **NO** vendor is involved; list location of event: Pelestine
 Estimated cost to organization to start fundraiser \$ 0
 How much will you charge your customer? \$ 1-31 Will you accept donations? yes

I, Ethan Herrin, am submitting this fund raising request before my organization starts raising funds. I understand that I am held responsible for ordering and distributing merchandise and collecting all funds submitting funds to the office, to be deposited in my activity account. With the conclusion of this fund raiser, I will complete this form and return to the campus office.

PERMISSION IS GRANTED TO CONDUCT THIS EVENT:

[Signature] 9/21/21
 Campus Principal's Signature Date WISD Superintendent's Signature Date

Total Proceeds collected \$ _____
 Total Deposited in activity account \$ _____ Total invoice from vendor \$ _____
 Expenses incurred for a successful fundraiser \$ _____ (advertising, t-shirts, supplies, etc.)
 Total Profit my organization benefitted from this fundraiser \$ _____
 I, _____, understand that these funds will not be available until this form is completed and returned to the campus office

Theater Fundraising 2021

We are wanting to introduce the calendar fundraiser as a way to bring in some sponsors to support our productions and possible trips.

The calendar fundraiser is commonly used to support peewee sports programs and is an easy way for each student to raise up to almost \$500 each. The system works as follows.

1. Each student is given a calendar. The goal is to get someone to volunteer to donate the amount of money equal to whichever day they volunteer for.

Example: Mr. Herrin selects Nov. 1. Mr. Herrin donates \$1 to the program for the student. Mr. Herrin also selects Nov. 15th. Mr. Herrin donates \$15 to the program for the student.

- We will also allow people to donate other amounts as they choose.
- We are wanting to provide the following incentives for donations.
- Donations equaling \$7 would get a free ticket to our fall show Puffs. Each \$7 increment beyond that would result in another free ticket. This would be equal or less than the price of tickets once we begin selling them. *(Based on our last production, we will have to sell tickets because we cannot fit 100+ people in the drama lab.)*
- Donations equalling \$21 or more would get tickets as well as their name featured in our program as a sponsor.
- Donations equaling \$30 or more would receive all of the previous as well as having their name written on a removable vinyl star and placed on our wall of sponsors for the year.
- We are working on packages for rewards beyond that that would include half page and full page ads in our playbills and special recognition at our shows.
- If someone were wanting to sponsor an entire show (covering the costs of licensing and a few other things we would need) they would receive a private showing of the production for as many guests as they could fit in the drama lab.

B. Minutes of Regular Board Meetings September 13, 2021, and September 27, 2021

Regular Meeting
Monday, September 13, 2021 6:30 PM Central

Westwood Primary
1701 West Point Tap Road
Palestine, TX 75803

Leonard Armstrong: Absent
Carolyn Booker: Present
Angela Choate: Present
Jeff Cooper: Present
Bryan Jones: Present
Mike Kelly: Present
Ronnie Stanhope: Present

Present: 6, Absent: 1.

Others present: Tiffany Carwell, Katie Atkinson, Scott Nettles, Sonya Brown, Kim Gilbreath, Edwin Schuesler, Charlotte May, Shinitta Foreman, Brenda Bing, Mrs. Calcote, Kay Denison
Meeting called to order by President Dr. Carolyn Booker at 6:30 pm.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ESTABLISH QUORUM

2. INVOCATION

Given by Jeff Cooper

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/TEXAS PLEDGE

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.A. Board to consider approval of the Agenda as presented

Motion to approve the board agenda as presented. This motion, made by Mike Kelly and seconded by Bryan Jones, Passed.

Leonard Armstrong: Absent, Carolyn Booker: Yea, Angela Choate: Yea, Jeff Cooper:

Yea, Bryan Jones: Yea, Mike Kelly: Yea, Ronnie Stanhope: Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

Invocation given by Jeff Cooper

5. Public Comments

5.A. Proud Panther Celebration

Lynn Calcote was presented at Westwood's Proud Panther. Scott Nettles spoke on behalf of Mrs. Lynn Calcote, she retired from Westwood ISD in 2015 with 37 years of faith service to the district and the Westwood Community. Mrs. Calcote was a teacher and librarian for the district. As a librarian, Mrs. Calcote made sure to visit other campuses to promote literacy and further the joy of reading in students. Her leadership bridged access to resources, which opened student's eyes to civic involvement. Furthermore, Lynn Calcote promoted economic vitality within the community via student leadership among the professional communities of Anderson County. Mrs. Calcote is one of the great teachers who contributed richly to the Westwood tradition.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

6.A. Curriculum Update

Presented by Katie Atkins

6.B. Finance Update

Presented by Kyle Johnson

6.C. 2020-2021 Accountability Update

6.D. Acknowledge employee handbook for the 2021-2022 school year

6.E. Discussion of COVID-19 pandemic status and current health and legal guidance concerning mitigation of the spread of disease among student and District staff.

Discussion by Mr. Stanford, the board and the campus principals on COVID mitigation ideas. Cases have doubled in Anderson County in the last 2 weeks with 18 ICU patients in Palestine all on ventilators. 132 positive cases to date in the district and last year there were 112 all year. COVID will peak soon and fall, but will go through this cycle possibly for the next 2 years per reports. Mr. Stanford said he doesn't even know the right questions to ask or how to answer those questions, but we are gambling with the virus as cases mount in the county. One substitute currently is hospitalized with the virus. Mr. Stanford recommends going into masks district-wide, but knows this won't protect the students and staff once they leave the school campuses. Mr. Nettles discussed the state of the high school, where the rates are higher. Says this is because they are moving around more in the hallways, they are in locker rooms, they are in practices together, and are more social when they leave school. He does see a rise in students wearing masks on campus. They have spread out while eating lunch like they did last year. Assignments are loaded into Google Classroom, but he is seeing a bunch of students behind or incomplete because of time out of school due to illness. They did start remote conferencing today, but lack of staffing makes it difficult. Mrs. Brown discussed remote conferencing at the Junior High, and she is seeing 50% of the students sent home taking part in it. She is worried about students and staff being out impacting lessons in the classroom and grades for students. She has them spread out in the gym for lunch. The students requested being separated because they don't want to be sick and miss school. She ran a thought exchange with the students and 132 responds from students. Predominantly the students wanted to wear masks, so they could stay healthy and in school. Primary is struggling to get students on remote conferencing because of connectivity issues. Trying to social distance students, but it is difficult. Mrs. May thinks it will be very difficult to keep her Primary students in a mask. Mrs. Foreman says on her campus the masks issue is split right down the middle with 50% for and 50% against. Mr. Cooper says that last year he was against masks and vaccines, but this year he is changing his mind about both topics and feels like masks will slow the spread down and doesn't see any other options. He asked the principals if they have any recommendations. Mr. Stanford says he doesn't feel good about mandating vaccines because its a personal choice, but the stats don't lie on vaccinated people either not getting it or having milder symptoms. Mrs. Gilbreath talked about how this strand is more aerosol and lingers in the room more than the last strain that was more droplets. Mr. Stanford discussed HVAC ideas to help with air purification options. Student home close contacts have to stay home for 10 days, but staff can test out of this requirement with rapid tests on the Junior High campus. Mrs. May asks the board to keep in mind as they try to make decisions on a mask mandate that at the Primary level the students really rely on seeing the teachers mouth to learn how to speak and read. Mr. Stanford said the number one goal is to keep students and staff safely in school.

6.F. Discussion of local Covid-19 days

Mr. Stanford led discussion and gave options. One is to do nothing. Another is to allow days upon a positive test result. Another option is to allow days for a positive or a mandatory stay at home order from the district. Last year 800 COVID days used and told the board to think about this as they discuss a decision. Board decided to think and discuss at the next meeting in 2 weeks. Mr. Cooper said he wants the staff to know they will be supportive, but we also need all hands on deck right now. Mrs. Brown said last year she had teachers abuse the COVID days, and it really hurt morale on her campus. She said there has to be clear guidelines on when these can be used. Dr. Booker said there should be very clear guidelines and restrictions. Mr. Cooper asked about Local Sick Leave Pools and how that could help.

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.A. The board to consider and possibly approve a budget amendment for the 2021-2022 school year.

Moved to consent agenda

7.B. Board to consider and possibly approve local COVID-19 days

7.C. Possible action to adjust WISD COVID-19 policy and protocols in accordance with current health and legal guidelines

7.D. Board to consider and possibly approve the consent agenda

Motion to approve consent agenda as presented. This motion, made by Mike Kelly and seconded by Jeff Cooper, Passed.

Leonard Armstrong: Absent, Carolyn Booker: Yea, Angela Choate: Yea, Jeff Cooper: Yea, Bryan Jones: Yea, Mike Kelly: Yea, Ronnie Stanhope: Yea
Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

7.D.1. Minutes of Special Board Workshop August 2, 2021, Special Board Meeting August 2, 2021, Regular Board Meeting August 9, 2021, Special Board Meeting August 11, 2021, Public Hearing August 30, 2021, and Special Board Meeting, August 30, 2021.

7.D.2. Periodic and Annual Investment Reports

7.D.3. Interlocal Agreement with Anderson County Election Office

7.D.4. Budget amendment for the 2021-2022 school year

8. CLOSED SESSION

President Dr. Carolyn Booker stated the board would go into closed session at 8:43 pm.

The president stated the board would come out of the closed session at 9:08 pm.

8.A. Acknowledge professional contracts

8.B. Reconvene from Closed Session

9. Board to vote in open session on items discussed in closed session

10. ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment at 9:11 pm

Board Secretary

Leonard Armstrong: Absent
Carolyn Booker: Present
Angela Choate: Present
Jeff Cooper: Present
Bryan Jones: Present
Mike Kelly: Present
Ronnie Stanhope: Absent
Present: 5, Absent: 2.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ESTABLISH QUORUM

2. ROLL CALL

3. INVOCATION

was given by Mike Kelly

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/TEXAS PLEDGE

5. ACTION ITEMS

5.A. Board to consider approval of the Agenda as presented

Board approved the agenda as presented. This motion, made by Mike Kelly and seconded by Bryan Jones, Passed.

Leonard Armstrong: Absent, Ronnie Stanhope: Absent, Carolyn Booker: Yea, Angela Choate: Yea, Jeff Cooper: Yea, Bryan Jones: Yea, Mike Kelly: Yea
Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

none

7. INFORMATION ITEM

7.A. Discussion of COVID-19 pandemic status and current health and legal guidance concerning mitigation of the spread of disease amount student and district staff

8. ACTION ITEMS

8.A. Board to consider and possibly approve fundraisers

8.B. Board to consider and possibly approve local COVID-19 days for the 2021-2022 school year for staff

Board approved a resolution that awards a maximum total of ten (10) COVID days during the 2021-2022 school year to employees that meet the following requirements: 1) an employee that receives and provides a valid test result indicating the employee is infected with COVID-19 2) provides a positive COVID-19 test result for immediate family (living full-time in the household of the employee) 3) a mandatory stay-at-home order from Westwood ISD due to the staff member exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.

This resolution is retroactive to the first contract day of each employee for the 2021-2022 school year. The district will be working through our records to apply the appropriate days to each impacted employee. Please be patient, as this will take time to record this information accurately. This motion, made by Angela Choate and seconded by Mike Kelly, was Passed. This motion, made by Bryan Jones and seconded by Angela Choate, Passed.

Leonard Armstrong: Absent, Ronnie Stanhope: Absent, Carolyn Booker: Yea, Angela Choate: Yea, Jeff Cooper: Yea, Bryan Jones: Yea, Mike Kelly: Yea
Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

8.C. Board to possibly approve adjustment to WISD COVID-19 policy and protocols in accordance with current health and legal guidelines
no action taken

9. CLOSED SESSION

Dr. Carolyn Booker stated the board would go into a closed session at 6:18 pm.
The board came out of the closed session at 6:30 pm.

9.A. Acknowledge professional contracts

9.B. Reconvene from Closed Session

10. Board to possibly vote in open session on items discussed in closed session

11. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 6:35 pm

11. **ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Possible action to adjust WISD COVID-19 policy and protocols in accordance with current health and legal guidelines

12. **CLOSED SESSION**

13. **Reconvene from Closed Session**

- A. Board to possibly vote in open session on items discussed in closed session

14. **Future agenda items request and special events**

Presenter: Wade Stanford

15. **Adjournment**

If, during the course of the meeting, discussion of any item on the agenda should be held in a closed meeting, the board will conduct a closed meeting in accordance with the ~~Texas Open Meetings Act, Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapters D and E or Texas Government Code section 418.183(f)~~. Before any closed meeting is convened, the presiding officer will publicly identify the section or sections of the Act authorizing the closed meeting. All final votes, actions, or decisions will be taken in open meeting. [See BEC(LEGAL)]

The notice for this meeting was posted in compliance with the Texas Open Meeting Act on:

For the Board of Trustees