

APPROVED 7-18-2023

West Jasper School District

Professional Staff Handbook

2023-2024

"Serving the children of West Jasper Schools"

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WEST JASPER SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATION

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Superintendent of Education
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Bay Springs, Mississippi 39422
Phone: 601-425-8500 Fax: 601-425-8501

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jean Wheaton	District I
Debbie Smith	District II
Jefferson Hughes	District III
Christy Holifield	District IV
Wade Hosey	District V
Rance Ulmer	Board Attorney

CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

Dr. Jill Miller Kathy Culpepper	Superintendent Administrative Assistant/School Board Clerk
Bailey James Yetta Strong Ronda Barden	Chief Financial Officer Accounts Payable Human Resource Officer/Payroll/Insurance
Dawn Gentry Yetta Strong Tayler James Dedra Jones	Director of Federal Programs/Special Education Secretary for Federal Program/Special Education Special Education Case Manager Psychometrist
Chris Holder Debra Clark	Director of Child Nutrition Secretary for Child Nutrition/MSIS/Textbooks
Marc Avary Teri Simmons	Director of Operations (16 th Section, Bus Barn, Custodians, Maintenance) Director of Operations Secretary
Corey Price Antwain Boykin	Technology Coordinator/Fixed Asset Manager Technology Technician
Kim Brown	Coordinator of Teacher Mentoring (Professional Development/Testing)

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

BAY SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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West Jasper School District School Calendar 2023-2024

revised 6-27-23

July 27, 28, 31	Professional Development
August 1	Student's First Day
September 4	Labor Day Holiday
September 7	Progress Reports
September 29	Distance Learning Day (All students learn remotely)
October 4, 5, 6	1 st Nine Weeks Exams
October 9, 10	Fall Break
October 11	2 nd Nine Weeks Begins
October 12	Report Cards
November 9	Progress Reports
November 20-24	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 20, 21, 22	1 st Semester Exams
December 22	60% Day
December 25 – January 9	Christmas Holidays
January 8, 9	Professional Development
January 10	Students Return/3 rd Nine Weeks Begins
January 11	Report Cards
January 15	MLK Holiday
February 2	Distance Learning Day (All students learn remotely)
February 8	Progress Reports
February 19	President's Day Holiday
March 6, 7, 8	3 rd Nine Weeks Exams
March 11-15	Spring Break
March 18	4 th Nine Weeks Begins
March 21	Report Cards
March 29 – April 1	Easter Break
April 18	Progress Reports
May 13, 14	Senior Exams
May 14	Last day for Seniors
May 15, 16, 17	2 nd Semester Exams for K-11 students
May 17	60% day/last day for K-11 students
May 17	Graduation: BSHS @ 6:30 PM SAC @ 5 PM
May 20, 21	Professional Development
May 23	Report Cards

Monthly ADA Calendar = 180

Aug. 1 – Sept. 29	43 days
Oct. 2 – Oct. 31	20 days
Nov. 1 – Nov. 30	17 days
Dec. 1 – Dec. 22	16 days
Jan. 10 – Jan. 31	15 days
Feb. 1 – Feb. 29	20 days
Mar. 1 – Mar. 28	15 days
April 2 – April 30	21 days
May 1 – May 17	<u>13 days</u>
	180 days

Grading Periods = 180

1 st grading period	48 days	(08/01-10/06)
2 nd grading period	48 days	(10/11-12/22)
3 rd grading period	41 days	(01/10 - 03/08)
4 th grading period	43 days	(03/18-05/17)

Professional Development 60% Days

July 27, 28, 31	December 22
January 8, 9	May 17
May 20, 21	

*Dates that may be used as inclement weather make-up days: October 9, October 10, February 19, April 1, May 20, May 21 with additional days added after May 21.

INTRODUCTION

Personnel are expected to be thoroughly familiar with and actively engaged in the enforcement of all board policies and procedures, rules and regulations established by the superintendent, and rules set forth by principals and other administrators. Although it is assumed that employees will follow these policies, rules, and regulations, and directives of a superior, it must be noted that the failure to do so will be considered grounds for discipline. Employee discipline includes reprimand, suspension, non-renewal, or termination at the sole discretion of the district. Licensed personnel will be afforded due process in accordance with state law. This staff handbook supersedes previous handbooks and contains condensed information from pertinent school board policies and administrative rules and regulations. The district reserves the right to modify the information contained herein as may be in its best interest. **The West Jasper School District Policy Manual is posted on the district's website for the employees and public to view.**

MISSION STATEMENT/GOALS

Mission Statement: The West Jasper Consolidated School District has as its mission to provide a quality formal education for the youth in the community.

Goals:

1. Every school will increase student achievement clearly.
2. The district will create an environment that is conducive to safe and orderly schools.
3. The district will operate an effective, efficient, and sound fund balance to ensure resources are distributed equitably and facilities are upgraded and updated.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The West Jasper School District Board of Education adheres to a policy of non-discrimination in educational programs/activities and employment, and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for students and staff. Specifically, the district provides employment and educational opportunity without discrimination and without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, disability, enrollment in CTE courses, or any other legally protected status. No student shall be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any courses offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance, and extra-curricular activities. Contact the West Jasper School District Central Office for information regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies, the filing of grievances, and requests for copies of grievance procedures covering discrimination in all areas other than on the basis of disabilities.

EMPLOYMENT OF LICENSED STAFF

The West Jasper School District takes great pride in its staff. It is important to the education of our children and to the success of our district and communities that we select the best possible professional certified (licensed) and non-certified (non-licensed) staff.

The West Jasper School District Board of Education has the power and authority to select all school district personnel in the manner provided by law and to provide for the employee fringe benefit programs as may be deemed necessary and appropriate by the board. MS Code §37-7-301 (p) (1993)

On or before April 1 of each year, the principal of each school shall recommend to the superintendent or another person designated or authorized by the school board, the licensed employees or non-instructional employees to be employed for the school involved except those licensed employees or non-instructional employees who have been previously employed and who have a contract valid for the ensuing scholastic year. If the recommendations meet with the approval of the superintendent, the superintendent shall recommend the employment of licensed employees or non-instructional employees to the school board, and unless good reason to the contrary exists, the board shall elect the employees so recommended. If, for any reason, the school board shall decline to elect any employee so recommended, additional recommendations for the places to be filled shall be made by the principal to the superintendent and then by the superintendent to the school board as provided above.

EMPLOYMENT OF AT-WILL SUPPORT STAFF

Support/non-certified personnel are "at-will" employees whose duties do not require a certificate or license issued by the State Department of Education. Support/non-certified employees have no property rights in their employment, which may be terminated without notice at any time by either employee or employer.

Assistant Teachers must have completed at least 60 semester hours of study at an institution of higher education; obtained an associate's degree or higher; met a rigorous standard of quality as determined by a formal assessment (Mississippi Test: ACT Work Keys- Reading for Information (must score 4 or above); Applied Mathematics (must score 4 or above); and Writing Subtests (must score 3 or above) and can demonstrate the knowledge of and the ability to assist in instruction of reading, writing, and mathematics. A high school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be required but not sufficient to satisfy the requirements above.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND AND CHILD ABUSE CHECK

The West Jasper School District complies with state law, which requires the following:

1. All newly hired licensed and non-licensed employees must have a state child abuse registry check and criminal records background check via fingerprint card.
2. The cards will be forwarded by the school district to the Department of Public Safety who will in turn forward them to the FBI.
3. West Jasper School District may charge the applicant up to fifty (\$50.00) dollars, or the district may pay the fee at its discretion.
4. Information obtained via these checks is for employment use only and cannot be disseminated.
5. Applicants are ineligible for employment if checks disclose a guilty plea, conviction, or nolo contendere plea to a felony conviction for:
 - a. Possession or sale of drugs.
 - b. Murder, Manslaughter, or Armed Robbery.
 - c. Rape, Sexual Battery, or sex offense as listed in §45-31-3 (1).
 - d. Child Abuse, Arson, Grand Larceny, or Burglary.
 - e. Gratification of Lust or Aggravated Assault.

- f. Failure to disclose in writing pending charges, an arrest or conviction for the felonies referenced above shall be considered grounds for immediate dismissal.
6. If the school district has hired an applicant contingent upon a background check and derogatory information is obtained, that applicant's contract may be voided.
7. The school board may, at its discretion, waive any convictions and hire an applicant with a criminal record based on:
 - a. Age at commission of the crime.
 - b. Circumstances surrounding the crime.
 - e. Length of time and criminal history since the crime.
 - f. Work history and current employment and character.
 - g. Other evidence demonstrating the ability of the person to perform the job and does not pose a threat to the health or safety of the schoolchildren.
8. No school district or employee may be held liable in an employment discrimination suit involving this statute.
9. The school district may employ applicants and let them work contingent upon the successful completion of the criminal background check. Failure to meet background check requirements immediately terminates employment.
10. The background checks are required for new hire personnel (licensed and non-licensed) after July 1, 2000.

Conviction Based On Erroneous Information

In the event an applicant wishes to contest a conviction based on erroneous information or an erroneous report, the applicant shall appeal the information to the Department of Public Safety. The applicant will show the school board or its designee proof of the corrected record and will be considered for existing vacancies.

ARREST

Any employee, who is arrested, charged, indicted, or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor is required to notify his/her immediate supervisor and the superintendent or designee within 24 hours and prior to returning to duty. Failure to report incidents may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any employee with CDL's (Bus Driver's License) that receives any motor vehicle citation must notify the District's Transportation Director within 24 hours.

WORK DAY SCHEDULES FOR DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

The normal workday for the licensed employee consists of the time required for accomplishment of instructional goals. Hours of business and lunch periods are set by the district. No one may leave her/his designated station during the hours of operation without prior approval of the supervisor. Work schedules will be established based upon individual school, department, or site needs and objectives. No non-certified employee covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act will be allowed or required to work more than 40 hours per week **without written permission from the superintendent**. Non-certified employees work schedule will be set by **the superintendent**.

Non-Certified Staff:

- Assistant Teachers/ISS Supervisors and Personal Care Assistants work hours are from 7:20 a.m. until 3:20 p.m. with a 30-minute lunch break.
- School Secretaries work hours are from **7:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.** with a 30-minute lunch break.
- **Department of Operations work hours, which includes secretary, transportation, custodians, maintenance, and bus shop, are set by the Director of Operations.** Times may be adjusted by the superintendent.

Certified Staff:

State law requires that the teaching day must provide at least 330 minutes of instruction per day or 27.5 hours per five-day week. A minimum of 140 hours of instruction will be required for each Carnegie unit of credit offered.

All teachers will clock in and out as directed by the principal. All teachers will be expected to comply with duty hours established by the administration and/or the board. There will be occasions when teachers will be asked to remain after hours. Teachers must sign in for themselves. **Under no circumstances will one teacher be allowed to clock in or out for someone else.**

The minimum length of time the classroom teacher is responsible for being at school is from 7:15 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. each day. Faculty meetings and staff development will be held as announced by the principal until 4:00 p.m. Teachers may be required to serve extra duty as needed to provide adequate supervision for students. Principals, with the consent of the superintendent, may adjust the time to fit their particular school hours/needs.

Principals and Assistant Principals are to be on duty from 7:00 a.m. until 4 p.m. (minimal hours) **or as directed by the superintendent.**

PLANNING PERIOD

The teacher-planning period is to be used to plan for classes taught and students served and as a time to hold parent and student conferences. It is not free time or a time for teachers to leave campus. As designated by the principal, lesson plans are to be turned in to the principal for periodic review.

DUTY SCHEDULE

Each principal shall be responsible for developing a teacher duty schedule so that every student will be under continuous supervision during the entire school day and at all school-sponsored activities in order to assure maximum safety and security for each child.

The school bell does not excuse students from the classroom. Each teacher shall give notice of dismissal and stand in the doorway of his/her classroom to supervise children as they pass in and out of the classroom and through the corridor.

Principals will assign duty to teachers to ensure proper decorum during the school day. It is expected that all teachers will correct any misbehavior at any time, regardless of assignment. Students are not to be excused from class for any reason except illness or emergency without permission of the principal.

EXTRACURRICULAR DUTY

Extra and co-curricular activities are an essential part of the school's instructional program. Teachers shall share in the supervision of these activities. Assignments shall be impartially distributed among the staff in an equitable manner.

STAFF MEETINGS

All employees must attend all staff meetings as scheduled and called unless excused by the principal or other administrator calling the meeting. Such meetings are essential to efficient, effective, accountable operation of schools and often provide a mechanism for problem solving and input to the decision-making process. The number, time, place, and subject matter of staff meetings are to be determined by the person who calls the meeting. Appointments are to be made at a time other than the scheduled time of staff meetings. Agendas and minutes will be maintained in the principal's office. Employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act may not work more than 40 hours per week without the written permission of the superintendent.

EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE

Employees are the backbone of our district and teamwork is essential to everyone's success. It is important that employees be prompt and regular in attendance for the benefit of maximum opportunities for student achievement and the work site. If unable to report to work on time because of circumstances beyond one's control, the supervisor should be notified as soon as possible. If an employee must miss work for any reason, the supervisor must be given advance notice so the absence can be filled with a minimum of inconvenience to the operation of the school/department and to students. Employees must call their supervisor by 6:30 a.m. on the day of absence or as soon as it is known an absence is pending. Failure to notify supervisors will result in disciplinary action. When the absence will be longer than one day, the supervisor must be given an expected date of return. Should this date change, the supervisor must be notified at once.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS OR DUTY POSTS

Except in cases of emergency, teachers are expected to remain on the school grounds from check-in until checkout and to remain in their classrooms during class sessions or on their duty posts for the entire assigned time. Failure to do so could result in termination. Any teacher who must leave the school campus during the school day because of an emergency must first secure the principal's permission.

CHILDREN AT WORK

Employees are not permitted to bring their child or children to work for any portion of the workday except for those children who are enrolled at the school where the employee works. Children should not be permitted to go to their parent's classroom/worksite and cause interruptions.

VISITORS AT WORK

Employees are cautioned to remember that although friends or family members may occasionally visit the employee's work site, no visitor should be permitted access to a classroom or worksite without first reporting to the office and obtaining permission. School sites and offices are businesses and will be treated as such; therefore, it is not acceptable to socialize with friends or relatives during the workday. Employees will be held accountable for making their visitors aware of this policy.

DRESS CODE

All staff members are expected to dress in a manner that is professionally appropriate for the duties assigned. Attire should be clean, tasteful, and in good repair. Staff members should regard it their professional responsibility to dress in a manner that sets a good example for students and that conveys a positive professional image.

Any type or style of clothing or manner of dress or personal presentation prohibited for students shall likewise be prohibited for employees. In addition, no shorts, tops that reveal the midriff or excessive cleavage, excessively tight, faded, or low cut jeans or pants, or backless sundresses may be worn. Jogging suits or wind suits are also not considered appropriate. Within these parameters, the administrator of each site shall be responsible for determining appropriate dress at that site.

ASSIGNMENTS/REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

The basic consideration in the assignment of professional personnel in the West Jasper School District is the well-being of the instructional program. The appropriateness of the assignment will have a significant impact on the morale of the professional staff and the effectiveness of the total educational program.

It is the policy of the Board of Education that instructional personnel are assigned based on their qualifications, the needs of the district, and their expressed desires. When it is not possible to meet all

three conditions, personnel shall be assigned in accordance with the needs of the district in order to provide each school with the best-qualified staff and to facilitate the highest quality educational program possible for the district. In the case of vacancies in new or existing positions, favorable consideration will be given to qualified applicants among current employees.

The superintendent shall have the power and authority to make assignments to the various schools in the district of all non-instructional and non-licensed employees and all licensed employees, as provided in MS Code §37-9-15 and §37-9-17, and to make reassignments of the employees from time to time; however, a reassignment of a licensed employee may only be to an area in which the employee has a valid license issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. Upon request from any licensed employee transferred, the assignment shall be subject to review by the school board. Teachers will be transferred only when it benefits the school district and students.

REASSIGNMENT

The reassignment of personnel shall be made by the superintendent. The reassignment is subject to review by the board upon written request from the employee made through the superintendent. Reassignment will be made only when it is in the best interest of the schools. Although consideration will be given to the wishes of the employee, such reassignment cannot be guaranteed. When possible, advance notice of reassignment will be given to the employee.

TRANSFER

A transfer is defined as the assignment of an employee to a school or site different from that where the employee worked the previous year. Requests for transfers will be considered within the District when there is a vacancy at another site. At times, an employee will be transferred involuntarily when the transfer will benefit the school or department. It must be noted that a transfer will not automatically be granted because a vacancy exists at another site. Professional personnel are assigned and transferred based on their qualifications, the needs of the district, and their expressed desires. When it is not possible to meet all three conditions, personnel shall be assigned or transferred in accordance with the needs of the district in order to provide each school with the best-qualified staff and to facilitate the highest quality educational program possible for the district. In the case of vacancies in new or existing positions, favorable consideration will be given to qualified applicants among current employees.

The superintendent may make school assignments for all certified and non-certified employees and may make reassignments of employees from time to time. Upon request from the employee, reassignments are subject to review by the board.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

All employees will be paid monthly at the approved payroll schedule for the school year and must participate in direct deposit per state department of education.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Employees who have perfect attendance will be rewarded an additional day of leave at the end of each respective pay period. Perfect attendance is defined as an employee working their assigned work schedule.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF LEAVE

In accordance with the state law, the West Jasper School District adopts this leave policy, which is applicable to all full-time employees, unless otherwise stated. A full-time employee is any person employed on a regular basis and working the number of hours designated for that job.

LEAVE DUE TO DECLARED EMERGENCY CLOSURES

The West Jasper Board of Trustees may in its discretion, provide additional administrative leave with pay for all employees (professional, certified, and classified) in the event of declared emergency closures.

SICK LEAVE

Employees may take sick leave with full pay because of personal illness, childbirth, or for the care of an ill member of their immediate family. Immediate family means spouse, parent, stepparent, sibling, child or stepchild, grandparent, stepbrother, or stepsister. Sick leave may be denied for elective surgery or other procedures. Employees may be required to provide documentation that such procedures are non-elective. This policy governs all requests for sick leave that do not come within definitions of the Family and Medical Leave Policy.

Amount of Leave

1. Employees who are on a twelve (12) month contract shall accrue twelve (12) days of sick leave per year.
2. All full-time certified or licensed employees, assistant teachers, and secretaries, who work 220 days or less shall accrue ten (10) days of sick leave per year.
3. Cafeteria personnel who work at least 26 hours per week shall accrue ten (10) days of sick leave per year.
4. Bus drivers shall accrue six (6) days sick leave per year. Bus drivers will be allowed to miss 6 days per year. Of those absences, 3 will be paid days off. Any absence after 6 days will require a written doctor's excuse. This doctor's excuse should be delivered to the Transportation Director on the first day back to work after an absence. If a driver misses more than 6 days without a doctor's excuse, he/she may not be recommended for employment the following school year. If the driver is recommended back, he/she will not receive their step pay raise that year. No leave will be granted the day before or the day after a holiday break or the last day of school without a doctor's excuse. Any absences that do not abide by the above policy, must be validated and approved by the Transportation Director.

Accumulated Leave

1. Certified and non-certified employees may accumulate an unlimited number of sick leave days that may be carried over from year to year.
2. Accumulated sick leave shall be forfeited upon the termination of employment and shall not be restored with later employment in the West Jasper School District.
3. Accumulated leave will be certified to the Public Employees Retirement System for service credit in accordance with state law.

PERSONAL LEAVE

1. All personnel except bus drivers and cafeteria workers shall accrue two personal leave days per year. Bus drivers and cafeteria workers receive no personal leave. Cafeteria managers receive 2 days personal leave.
2. Personal leave days shall accumulate to a maximum of five.
3. Unused personal leave days beyond the five accumulated shall be converted to sick days.
4. Personal leave days may be used according to the following rules:

- a. The employee must give a request for personal leave to the principal or supervisor at least three school days in advance, except in cases of emergency.
- b. Except as otherwise listed below, no employee may take personal leave on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, a day before a holiday, a day after a holiday, or a staff development day. With written request, the superintendent may waive this requirement when extraordinary or emergency circumstances exist with full loss of pay.

Per HB 572:

Notwithstanding the restrictions listed above on the use of personal leave, a licensed employee may use personal leave per amendments to Section 37-7-307 adopted and effective July 1, 2015:

Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, an immediate family member of the employee is being deployed for military service.

1. Personal leave may be taken on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if an employee of the West Jasper School District has either a minimum of ten (10) years of experience as an employee of the West Jasper School District or a minimum of thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave that has been earned while employed in the West Jasper School District.
2. Personal leave may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, the employee has been summoned to appear for jury duty or as a witness in court. See House Senate Bill 949

Personal leave may be taken without penalty in the event of death or funeral of an immediate family member.

BEREAVEMENT

Employees may take personal leave and/or sick leave days when there is a death in the immediate family, which includes spouse, parents, parents-in-law, sons, daughters, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, sisters, brothers, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, grandparents, or grandchildren.

VACATION OR ANNUAL LEAVE

SB 2297, effective May 1, 2004 provides that vacation leave granted to either licensed or non-licensed employees shall be synonymous with personal leave. Unused vacation or personal leave accumulated by licensed employees in excess of the maximum five (5) days which may be carried over from one year to the next may be converted to sick leave not to exceed the conversion of ten (10) days of personal or vacation leave days to sick days per year. In the case of unused vacation or personal leave accumulated by non-licensed employees, no more than ten (10) days of unused personal or vacation leave may be converted to sick leave per year. Any personal vacation leave previously converted to sick leave under a lawfully adopted policy before the effective date of SB 2297, shall be recognized as accrued leave by the local school district and available for use by the employee. The leave converted under a lawfully adopted policy may be certified to PERS upon termination of employment and any such leave previously converted and certified to PERS shall be recognized.

Effective July 1, 2017, full time 12-month employees must have worked for a full contract year in order to receive 10 days paid vacation annually with vacation leave being credited on July 1 of each year.

JURY DUTY/SUBPOENA

The West Jasper School District shall provide leave with pay for employees who are called for or who serve on juries. Performance of jury duty is with full pay and does not count against any type of leave of absence by the employee. When excused from jury duty prior to 11 A.M., the employee will report to their work site. The district will not recover jury fees from employees who serve on juries. (Attorney

General Opinion, *Middleton* of July 10, 1991.) Employees under subpoena to provide court testimony or to testify in hearings may use their personal leave. Absence beyond accrued personal leave will result in loss of pay.

MILITARY LEAVE

MISSISSIPPI LAW ON THE SUBJECT OF EMPLOYEES CALLED TO MILITARY SERVICE IS COVERED IN MISSISSIPPI CODE 1972, ' 33-1-21

The law provides that state employees and employees of "any county, municipality or other political subdivision" are entitled to a leave of absence from their respective duties for periods not to exceed 15 days without loss of pay, time, annual leave or efficiency rating when ordered to military duty.

Districts do not have to pay such employees after the 15-day absence, but all other benefits are to remain intact until the employee "is relieved from duty."

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

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

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

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE

Employees may be eligible for professional leave in order to perform professional services by representing the district at educational conferences, convention, school evaluations, and other such events. An employee desiring professional leave must request approval from the principal/supervisor and superintendent two weeks in advance of the leave. Approved professional leave will be with full pay and will not count against other leave time.

In addition, each licensed employee shall be credited with a professional leave allowance, with pay, for each day of absence from the school district caused by reason of the employee's statutorily required membership and attendance at a regular or special meeting held within the State of Mississippi of the Mississippi State Board of Education; the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development; the Commission on School Accreditation, the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television; and the meetings of the state textbook rating committee. MS Code §37-7-307(4) 1972. *Burkes*, September 25, 1998, Attorney General Op. # 98-0558

Attorney General Op. # 98-0588: This office is of the opinion that if service on a particular state board or commission is not part of the duties of an individual's employment as a career state service or appointed state employee, then the individual may not be compensated for work as an employee while performing duties as a member of the board or commission.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 entitles employees of covered employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified reasons, with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave.

Application for family medical leave shall be presented to the superintendent for approval 30 days in advance of the expected leave time, except in cases of emergency.

An employee on leave under the provisions of this policy shall provide the Principal/Superintendent with reports every two (2) weeks on the status and intention of the employee to return to work. A certificate will be required in order for the employee to return to his/her original or equivalent position.

Definition:

- a. "Eligible employee" means one who is employed at a school facility where at least 50 persons are employed, either there or within a 75 mile radius of that school facility as measured by road miles by the shortest route possible; and who has been employed for at least 12 months by the school district as of the date leave commences, and who has also provided at least 1250 hours of service during that 12 month period. Fifty-two (52) weeks of casual, intermittent or occasional employment qualifies as "at least 12 months". School district employees exempt from FLSA requirements are presumed to have worked 1250 hours.
- b. "Employee's spouse" as defined by Mississippi Law.
- c. "Employee's son or daughter" means biological child, adopted child or foster child, legal ward or the child for whom the employee is standing in loco parentis who is either under the age of 18 or above the age of 18 and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
- d. "Employee's parent" means biological parent or an individual who stood (or now stands) in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child (not to include parents-in-law).
- e. "Employee's immediate family member" means spouse, son or daughter or parent as defined hereinabove.
- f. For the purposes of FMLA, "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves either in-patient care (overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Eligible employees are entitled to take up to 12 workweeks of FMLA leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

1. The birth, adoption, or placement of a child.
2. The care of a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition.
3. Care for employee's spouse, son daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition.

Leave Provisions

1. An eligible employee is entitled to 12 unpaid workweeks of leave during any 12-month period for any one or more of the following reasons stated in 1 through 3 above.
2. An eligible employee is entitled to **Service Member Exigency Leave**. For absences caused by an active duty exigency when the employee's spouse, child, or parent is a service member.
3. An eligible employee is entitled to Military Caregiver Leave. To care for employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin (if the employee is the nearest blood relative) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty.
4. Employee shall provide a 30 days' notice to the district when FMLA leave is foreseeable. In the event of an unforeseeable need for FMLA, the employee or a representative for the employee must notify the district as soon as possible and practicable under the circumstances.

Failure to provide 30 days' notice for foreseeable leave may result in a delayed approval until notice is provided.

5. Spouses have a 12 week aggregated leave limit except for personal illness or the illness of a child or the other spouse; that is, if each spouse took 6 weeks of leave for the birth of a child, each could later use an additional 6 weeks due to personal illness or to care for a sick child.
6. Brother and sister employees will have an aggregate limit of 12 weeks to care for their parent.
7. West Jasper School District requires instructional personnel only to take FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, or near the end of a semester whichever does not disrupt the instructional and support service requirement of the employee's job.
8. The district requires an employee to use sick and personal leave concurrent with leave provisions of FMLA. The maximum leave entitlement for the reasons covered under FMLA is the combined total of an employee's accrued sick and personal leave for 12 weeks (60 working days) as provided under FMLA.
9. The West Jasper School District uses the following method to establish a 12-month period:
A "rolling 12-month period measured backward" – 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave. Under the "rolling" 12-month period, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave entitlement would be the balance of the 12 weeks, which has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months.

Required Certification

Eligible employees shall provide certification of a serious health condition for his/her own serious health condition or that of a family member. The FMLA permits an employer to require that eligible employees submit a timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification to support the request for leave. It is the employees' responsibility to submit request to retain the benefit of FMLA protections.

29 U. S. C. §§ 2613, 2614(c) (3).

1. Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition is required by the West Jasper School District for conditions requiring an overnight stay in a medical facility.
2. Failure to provide a complete and sufficient medical certification may result in a denial of FMLA Leave request.
3. Eligible employees will be given at least 15 calendar days to return the completed certification. 29 C. F. R. § 825.305(b).
4. Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition is required by the West Jasper School District to care for a covered family member with a serious health condition. 29 U. S. C. §§ 2613, 2614(c)(3).
5. The West Jasper School District retains the right to request a second or third medical certification opinion at the districts' expense. The opinion must be provided by an independent health official selected by the district. Third opinion will be selected by the district and employee.

Protected Employment Benefits

1. Employees who comply fully with FMLA leave provisions shall be returned to the same position held before taking leave or to a position equivalent (comparable or similar job) in pay, benefits, and other terms of employment.
2. Taking of leave shall not result in the loss of any accrued seniority or employment benefits. **Only health benefits will accrue during FMLA leave period.**
3. The district may exempt from the restoration requirement in paragraph A, key employee in the highest paid 10 percent of the district's workforce within a 75- mile radius of the school facility if restoring the key employee would cause substantial and grievous injury to the classroom and instructional program.

4. The district shall notify the key employee of its intent not to restore when the determination is made. The key employee shall have the option to return or not to return after receipt of notice if leave is in progress. A key employee not restored to original position shall be considered on leave for the duration of the leave period.
5. Health benefits will continue for employees during the leave period, including key employees notified of denied reinstatement. The district shall recover paid health premiums at the return, except:
 - a. No recovery will be made from a key employee who has chosen to take or continue leave after receiving notice of non-reinstatement.
 - b. No recovery will be made from an employee who fails to return from leave due to the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition, or an event beyond the employee's control.

Failure to Return from Leave/Recovery Health Premiums: If an employee fails to return to work after the leave period has expired (other than family or personal illness or other circumstances beyond control), the school district may recover premium expenditures extended during the leave period.

Prohibited Acts

Eligible employees of the West Jasper School District shall exercise their FMLA rights for matters protected under the provisions of the law. The District shall not:

1. Interfere, restrain, or deny the exercise of or the attempt to exercise any FMLA right.
2. Discriminate or retaliate against an employee for having exercised or attempted to exercise any FMLA rights.
3. Discharge or discriminate against an employee for exercising FMLA rights. Including the following:
 - a. Filed a charge, or instituted proceedings related to any right under FMLA;
 - b. Provide information in connection with an inquiry or proceedings relating to FMLA rights;
 - c. Testified or scheduled to provide testimony in a proceeding or inquiry relating to a FMLA right.

DONATION OF LEAVE

Donating Leave to another Employee

In compliance with MS Code §37-7-307(9) 2012:

Any employee of the West Jasper School District may donate a portion of his/her unused accumulated personal leave or sick leave to another employee of the same school district who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, or who has a member of his or her immediate family suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with the following.

A summary of MS Code §37-7-307, which governs the donation of leave to other employees follows:

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

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

SB 2297 (2004) redefined the meaning of catastrophic injury or illness. The definition no longer includes pregnancy as a catastrophic injury or illness.

For the purpose of this policy:

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

RETIREMENT CREDIT

House Bill 1176 amended Mississippi Code §37-7-307 (1972) that establishes provision for payment of unused leave to certified and non-certified public school employees. Each local school board is responsible for adoption and implementation of leave policies.

Upon PERS retirement, certified employees may choose to be paid for all unused accumulated leave up to 30 days at a rate of \$100.00 per day. All unused accumulated leave for which compensation is not received will be certified toward retirement. This provision is subject to and shall conform to the requirements of state law and the retirement system.

Upon PERS retirement, non-certified employees may choose to be paid for all unused accumulated leave up to 30 days at a rate equal to the federal minimum wage. Non-certified employees who terminate employment shall have any portion or all unused leave certified to Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) for use as service credit toward retirement.

SB2297 provides that no payment for unused accumulated leave may be made to either a licensed or non-licensed employee at termination or separation from service for any purpose other than for the purpose of retirement.

PAYROLL DEDUCTION

For certified/licensed personnel, the first 10 days of sick leave taken in excess of the number of accumulated leave days will result in a payroll deduction of an amount equal to substitute pay. Any sick

leave taken in excess of the number of accumulated leave days plus the 10 additional days will result in a payroll deduction of an amount equal to regular pay.

For non-certified support staff, a payroll deduction in the amount of the employee's daily rate shall be made for each absence beyond accumulated leave.

Employees may be required to present a physician's certification of illness when absent for four or more consecutive school days, for one day immediately preceding or following a holiday, or at any other time requested by the principal and/or superintendent.

If an employee is absent the first day of school or the last day of school or the day before or after a school holiday, a written doctor's statement regarding an illness or a written substantiating statement regarding a death is required before the absence is classified as a sick day. The written statement must be sent to the payroll office. Failure to provide the required statement will result in the full loss of pay.

Employees who abuse leave policies or who falsify leave records or reasons for absence are subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Employees who miss thirty days or more beyond accumulated leave, either consecutive or non-consecutive, are required to request a leave of absence without pay for the remainder of the school year. Family Medical Leave may also be applicable to such employees.

Certified and Non-Certified personnel shall be charged for leave in half-day increments. Absence for four (4) hours or more during a pay period shall be charged as a full day. Absences for less than four (4) hours may be charged as one half day.

LEAVE DOCUMENTATION

Upon returning to work, employees will file the West Jasper School District Absentee Form with their principal or site supervisor. Failure to file the form in a timely manner will result in loss of pay. Falsification of the form is grounds for dismissal. The superintendent is directed to develop administrative regulations necessary for implementation of this policy.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

When an employee is absent from work due to a work-related injury, he/she will receive his/her regular pay for the first five days of absence; but these days must be charged against the employee's accumulated sick or personal leave time. If an employee has no accumulated leave time, she/he will not receive pay from the school district. Worker's Compensation pay will be in accordance with the statute governing Worker's Compensation.

Employees may be subjected to the Alcohol and Drug Testing policy at the discretion of the principal or supervisor if there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is using or has used drugs or consumed alcohol in violation of the district's policy and has an on-the-job accident that requires medical attention or resulting in absence from work.

The employee has the option to continue receiving his/her regular rate of pay as well as Worker's Compensation benefits until he/she returns to work, the physician has declared the employee able to return to work, or until the accumulated leave is exhausted—whichever comes first. If the period of disability extends beyond the point at which the employee's accumulated leave is exhausted, then from that point, the employee will only receive that which is available through Worker's Compensation.

INSURANCE/DEFERRED COMPENSATION

Pursuant to state law, all full-time employees are provided employee health insurance under the State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan. New employees are covered upon enrollment on their first day of work. Existing employees may apply for benefits during the Open Enrollment Period. The cost of coverage is set by the Department of Mississippi Office of Insurance.

Group life insurance is available through a state program. The cost of coverage is shared between the employee and the state. Enrollment is held at the beginning of each year.

Insurance plans approved by the superintendent are made available through payroll deduction. Cafeteria approved deductions are deducted prior to taxation under the district's IRS cafeteria plan. Available plans include dental, life, cancer, disability, intensive care, hospital indemnity, accident, and vision. Other programs include deferred compensation.

Information regarding available plans or programs and enrollment will be made available at each site and in the business office.

Cancellation of insurance must be made in writing and directed to the payroll department and must not conflict with the cafeteria plan or enrollment regulations.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH

An employee with a communicable disease should remain at home until the disease is no longer a threat to others. Cases of communicable diseases that might pose a threat to the health of the school or community should be reported to the appropriate supervisor (elementary/middle or secondary). When concerned with a unique individual case, the welfare of all students and employees should be the prime consideration. Each individual case shall be resolved in consultation with the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Decisions regarding a person infected with HIV, Hepatitis B, or other blood borne diseases shall be based on an individual basis with regard to the behavior of the disease, physical condition of the employee, and the expected type of interaction with others in that setting. These decisions shall be made using the team approach including the employee's physician, public health personnel, and personnel associated with the educational setting and/or work place. In each case, risks and benefits to both the infected employee and to others in the setting shall be weighed. As conditions change, cases may be reevaluated.

The West Jasper School District Board of Education authorizes the administration to require any employee to have a medical examination whenever deemed necessary for the health and welfare of children, or as required by the State Board of Education of State Board of Health. MS Code §37-7-301(h) (i) (p), 37-11-17, and 41-23-37 (1972).

EMPLOYEE PROTECTION

The West Jasper School District will be vigorous in its protection of all employees from physical and/or psychological abuse. Personnel are also protected by MS Code §37-11-21 (1992) and MS Code §37-11-23 (1970) which state:

1. Any parent, guardian or other person who abuses the superintendent, any principal, teacher or school bus driver while school is in session or at a school-related activity in the presence of school pupils, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$10 nor more than \$50. MS Code §37-11-21 (1992)

2. Any person who willfully disturbs any session of the public school or any public school meeting shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$10 nor more than \$50. MS Code §37-11-23 (1970)

It is the policy of the board to interpret these statutes to include any striking, assaulting, or physical attack, as well as verbal abuse or insult, upon any certified/licensed or classified personnel of the district or a willful disturbance of any school classroom, bus, meeting or activity by a parent, guardian, or other persons while school is in session or while the employee is lawfully in performance of his/her duties on school grounds or at a school activity.

In addition, the district supports the filing of charges with legal authorities against any individual who commits a crime, either felony or misdemeanor, against the person or any employee while on school property or in the performance of their duties at locations other than school property.

An employee who is threatened with harm is to notify the building principal or supervisor immediately, and steps are to be taken at once to protect the employee's safety. Additionally all West Jasper School District personnel are responsible for notifying the management representative designated of any threats that they have witnessed or have been made aware of the situation. Even without an actual threat, personnel should also report any behavior they have witnessed that they regard as threatening or violent when the behavior is job related or might be carried out on a school site.

Employees are responsible for making this report regardless of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person or persons who were threatened or were the focus of the threatening behavior. If the principal or supervisor is not available, personnel should report the threat to another member of the district administration.

All individuals who apply for or obtain a protective or restraining order that lists school sites as being protected areas must provide to the principal or supervisor a copy of the petition and declarations used to seek the order, a copy of any temporary protective or restraining order that is granted, and a copy of any protective or restraining order that is made permanent.

The district shall use the full protection of the courts with respect to threats and intimidation of school personnel. Further, the district shall protect its employees through a comprehensive liability insurance program, and shall hold harmless and defend any district employee from claims for damages caused or alleged to have been caused in whole or in part by the employee while performing assigned duties as an employee of the district. However, the district shall not be obligated to assume any costs or judgments held against an employee when damages are proved to be due to the employee's willful negligence, violation of the law, or criminal act as determined by a court of law.

LIABILITY AND ERRORS AND OMISSIONS INSURANCE

The West Jasper School District Board of Education maintains both general liability and Errors and Omissions Insurance to protect the district, school board, superintendent, and district employees from claims of liability consistent with the provisions of the Mississippi Torts Claim Act §11-46-1 et. seq.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

All school employees shall consider employee personnel records confidential information. Employees will have the right to review the non-confidential contents of their personnel file. Confidential records such as application references, promotional references, etc. will not be made available to an employee in compliance with waiver of access to confidential references. The release of any identifiable information from an employee's personnel record shall be in accordance with the provisions set forth in

PL 93-380—Family Rights and Privacy Act. Upon request, an employee will be given one copy of any non-confidential item from their personnel file. Additional copies will be provided with charges to the employee as established in Policy CLB. Spouses of employees will not be granted access to an employee's personnel file unless the employee has completed a notarized permission form in the superintendent's office. See also Policy CLBA.

Each staff member of the West Jasper School District must have on file with the building principal/ immediate supervisor and the superintendent his/her current home telephone number, an emergency telephone number, and current home address. Any change must be reported immediately. See also Policy GBJA.

DIRECT DEPOSIT AND SALARY

Teachers and administrators in the district are paid according to a salary schedule approved by the board. The district makes every effort to adequately compensate its professional staff.

State law mandated that all school districts process a single monthly payroll with electronic settlement of payroll checks secured through direct deposits of net pay for all school district employees. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the payroll department of any changes to their direct deposit accounts.

PAY FOR EXTRA DUTIES

When a licensed employee is compensated for performing duties in addition to their regular assigned duties, the federal and state income taxes will be withheld along with retirement in accordance with his/her last filed Form W-4 and Form 62-420. Employees will be paid in the pay cycle from which they are normally paid.

Checks will not be processed between payrolls. It will be the duty of each person administering special projects to get pay information into the district business office in a timely manner to be included in the appropriate payrolls.

Example: A teacher, who is contracted to work 187 days, but also teaches summer school and works for summer counseling, etc. will receive pay for all assignments at the end of the month, and the pay will be taxed at the regular monthly rate as shown on the tax tables.

NATIONAL BOARD PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

The following employees shall receive an annual salary supplement in the amount of \$6,000, plus fringe benefits, when funds are appropriated by the state, in addition to any other compensation to which the employee may be entitled:

1. Any licensed teacher who has met the requirements and acquired a certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who is employed by a local school board or the Mississippi State Board of Education as a teacher and not as an administrator.
2. Any licensed school counselor who has met the requirements and acquired a National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) endorsement from the National Board of Certified Counselors and who is employed by a local school board or the Mississippi State Board of Education as a counselor and not as an administrator.
3. Any licensed speech-language pathologist and audiologist who has met the requirements and acquired a National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) endorsement from the National Board of Certified Counselors and who is employed by a local school board or the Mississippi State Board of Education as a counselor and not as an administrator. MS Code §37-19-7 (2) (1999)
4. Any licensed nurse who has met the requirements and acquired a certificate from the National Board of Certification of School Nurses, Inc. and who is employed by a local school board of

Education as a school nurse and not as an administrator. SB 2302(2004) limits the number of nurses who may receive this supplement to a maximum of twenty.

In the first year of certification, the salary supplement may be prorated as provided by law or Mississippi Department of Education regulation. To receive the full supplement, documentation must be provided to the MDE before October 15. To receive a prorated supplement beginning with the second term of the school year, documentation must be provided to the MDE before February 15. Policy GBC

REIMBURSEMENT FOR TUITION/TESTING FEES FOR STAFF POLICY

1. No employee of the West Jasper School District shall be reimbursed by the district for tuition costs or any costs incurred in the employee's work toward advanced degree(s).
2. No employee of the West Jasper School District shall be reimbursed by the district for tuition costs or any costs incurred in the employee's work toward acquiring the Master Teacher Certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

STAFF SEPARATION

There are a number of ways that professional staff may end their employment with the West Jasper School District. Some of these ways or types of separation are voluntary and others are involuntary. Regardless of the reason, the purpose of this section is to guide professional staff in making those decisions.

Resignation or Release from Employment

Should a licensed employee, not under contract, wish to be released, a letter of resignation should be tendered to the District through the superintendent. A release is given at superintendent's discretion and approval of the School Board.

Should a licensed employee, with a signed contract, wish to be released from the District after June 15th or during the school year, a replacement must be found before granting the release. After a replacement is found, a letter of release may be given.

Should a non-licensed or at-will employee intend to resign, two weeks' notice would be appreciated so that the supervisor can arrange to fill the vacancy created. Notice from at will employees is not required but will facilitate final payment.

As provided by state law, the District will seek revocation of the license of any professional employee who abandons their contract as provided in the following section.

Breach of Contract

If any licensed employee shall arbitrarily or willfully breach their contract and abandon their employment without being released as provided in MS Code §37-9-55, the contract of the licensed employee shall be null and void. In addition, the State Board of Education shall suspend the license of the licensed employee for a period of one year as provided in MS Code §37-3-2(8) upon written recommendation of the majority of the members of the West Jasper school board.

Retirement

If retirement is planned, notice should be given at least three months in advance to the district and to the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). To request a retirement package an employee must contact the district's Payroll Department. The Payroll Office will provide retirement papers at the request of employee.

Reduction in Force

Professional Staff Reduction in Force – Policy GBKAR

The Board of Trustees has the responsibility for providing and maintaining quality schools within the district. In order to carry out its responsibility, the board may:

- (1) abolish or combine job positions,
- (2) reduce the length of the work year with a concomitant reduction in salary (the same to be in no event less than 187 days per contract year),
- (3) reduce administrative supplements,
- (4) reduce the number of employees. Initially, staff reduction will be accomplished by attrition.

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

1. Enrollment declines,
2. Financial decline/reduction
3. Educational program(s) elimination, and
4. Priority need for human, material and financial resources.

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

1. Criticality of the position to the mission, goals, and objectives of the school district
2. Subject area(s) and advanced degrees by certification.
3. Experience, professional training, length of service within the district and work assignment.
4. Quality of performance including the proven ability to accomplishment the educational mission of the school district.
5. Executive ability.
6. Employee attendance and discipline history.
7. Skills and licensure in the area(s) where the district has instructional and/or supervisory needs.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL SUSPENSION/DISMISSAL – POLICY GBK

It shall be the policy of the Board of Education of the West Jasper School District to assist personnel in adjusting to their positions and in performing their duties satisfactorily. Every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid the necessity of dismissing personnel at any level. The board may dismiss any teacher in accordance with state laws, regulations, and current judicial decisions/opinions. Mid-year dismissal or termination shall be made only for just and reasonable cause.

Breach of Contract

If licensed employee in this school district shall arbitrarily or willfully breach his/her contract and abandon his/her employment without being released therefrom as provided by law, the contract of such principal or licensed employee shall be null and void. In addition, upon the written recommendation of the majority of the members of the school board the license or certificate of the licensed employee may be suspended by the State Board of Education for a period of one (1) year as provided by law.

Reasons for Dismissal or Suspension

For incompetence, neglect of duty, immoral conduct, intemperance, and brutal treatment of a pupil or other good cause, including insubordination, the superintendent may dismiss or suspend any licensed employee. Before being so removed or suspended, any licensed employee shall be notified of the charges against him/her; and he/she shall be advised that he/she is entitled to a public hearing upon said charges.

Immediate Release

In the event the continued presence of an employee on school premises poses a potential threat or danger to the health, safety or general welfare of the students, or in the discretion of the superintendent, may interfere with or cause a disruption of normal school operations, the superintendent may immediately release said employee of all duties pending a hearing if one is requested by the employee. In the event a licensed employee is arrested, indicted or otherwise charged with a felony by a recognized law enforcement official, the continued presence of the licensed employee on school premises shall be deemed to constitute a disruption of normal school operations.

Hearing

The West Jasper School Board, upon a request for a hearing by the person so suspended or removed shall set a date, time and place for the hearing which shall be not sooner than five (5) days nor later than thirty (30) days from the date of the request. The procedure for such hearing shall be as prescribed for hearings before this board or hearing officer in MS Code §37-9-111. From the decision made at said hearing, any licensed employee shall be allowed an appeal to the chancery court in the same manner as appeals are authorized in MS Code §37-9-113.

Appeal

Any party aggrieved by action of the chancery court may appeal to the Mississippi Supreme Court as provided by law. In the event that a licensed employee is immediately relieved of duties pending a hearing, as provided in this section, said employee shall be entitled to compensation for a period up to and including the date that the initial hearing is set by the school board, in the event that there is a request for such a hearing by the employee.

In the event that an employee does not request a hearing within five (5) calendar days of the date of the notice of discharge or suspension, it shall constitute a waiver of all rights by said employee and such discharge or suspension shall be effective on the date set out in the notice to the employee. MS Code §37-9-59 (1997)

Insubordination is one of the "other good causes" for which one may be dismissed.

At a suspension or dismissal hearing before the school board, the burden rests upon the superintendent to prove by a preponderance of evidence that adequate grounds for dismissal exist.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF NON-RENEWAL OF CONTRACT – POLICY GBN

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This policy is applicable only to professional personnel covered under the Education Employment Procedures Law (EEPL) as defined in MS Code '37-9-103. Refer to the Education Employment Procedures Law Handbook, published by MSBA.

The West Jasper School District Board of Education recognizes that it is necessary, from time to time, to release from future employment certified/licensed personnel where their performance fails to meet the standards established by the State Department of Education and/or this board or where their services are no longer needed.

NOTICE OF NONRENEWAL

If a recommendation is made by the school district not to offer an employee a renewal contract for a successive year, written notice of the proposed non-reemployment stating the reasons for the proposed non-reemployment shall be given no later than the following:

1. If the employee is a principal, the superintendent, without further board action, shall give notice of non-reemployment on or before March 1; or
2. If the employee is a teacher, administrator or other professional educator covered under Sections 37-9-101 through 37-9-113, the superintendent, without further board action, shall give notice of non-reemployment on or before April 15, or within ten (10) calendar days after the date that the Governor approves the appropriation bill(s) comprising the state's education budget for funding K-12, whichever date is later.

An interim superintendent appointed pursuant to Section 37-17-6(14)(a) or a school board acting on the recommendation of a school district financial advisor appointed pursuant to Section 37-9-18 shall not be required to comply with the time limitations prescribed in this section for recommending the reemployment of principals, teachers, administrators or other professional educators.'37-9-105.

A decision not to renew licensed employees of this school district shall be based upon valid educational reasons or noncompliance with school district personnel policies.

LICENSED EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

A principal or other professional educator receiving written notice under the provisions of this policy shall, upon written request within ten (10) calendar days of notice of proposed non-reemployment, be entitled to:

1. Written notice of the specific reasons for non-reemployment, together with a summary of the factual basis therefor, a list of witnesses and a copy of documentary evidence substantiating the reasons intended to be presented at the hearing. The school district shall give this notice to the principal or other professional educator at least fourteen (14) days prior to any hearing. If the district fails to provide this information to the employee, then the recommendation for non-reemployment shall be null and void and the board shall order the execution of a contract with the employee for an additional period of one (1) year;
2. An opportunity for a hearing at which to present matters relevant to the reasons given for the proposed non-reemployment, including any reasons alleged by the employee to be the reason for non-reemployment; provided, however, that any school superintendent whose employment has been terminated by the school board under Section 37-9-59, or whose employment contract has not been renewed by the school board shall not have the right to request a hearing before the school board or a hearing officer;
3. Receive a fair and impartial hearing before the board or hearing officer; provided, however, that any school superintendent whose employment has been terminated by the school board under Section 37-9-59, or whose employment contract has not been renewed by the school board shall not have the right to request a hearing before the school board or a hearing officer;
4. Be represented by legal counsel, at his/her own expense.

If the employee does not request a hearing, the recommendation regarding the non-reemployment of the employee shall be final.

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

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

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

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES RULES/REGULATIONS LAW OF 2001 - POLICY GBN-R

Rules of Procedure Under the Education Employment Procedures Law

The West Jasper School District recognizes that it is necessary, from time to time, to release from future employment certified/licensed personnel whose performance fails to meet the standards established by the State Department of Education and/or the board. Certain employees are entitled to a hearing on the non-renewal decision; others are exempt from the right to a hearing. A summary of the requirements of the Education Employment Procedures Law of 2001 is contained in this section.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This policy is applicable only to professional personnel covered under the Education Employment Procedures Law (EEPL) as defined in MS Code §37-9-103. Please refer to the Education Employment Procedures Law Handbook, published by MSBA.

Application of Policy

The policies and procedures as set forth herein shall be applicable only to teachers, principals or other professional instructional personnel who are required to have a valid license issued by the State Department of Education as a prerequisite of employment and are under formal contract of employment under §37-9-23 and §37-9-25 of the Mississippi Code of 1972.

Determination of Separation

In the event that a determination that the best interests of the school district would be served by the release from future employment of the employee, the school district shall send notice of the determination to the employee on or before the applicable date as established by the policies of this district.

Rights of Employees: Notices

An employee who is notified of non-renewal shall be entitled to a written statement of the specific reasons for non-reemployment, together with a summary of the factual basis therefor, a list of witnesses and a copy of the documentary evidence substantiating the reasons intended to be presented at the hearing" The employee must provide the superintendent with a written request within ten (10) calendar days of the receipt of the notice of non-reemployment. This information shall be given at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the hearing.

If a hearing is requested by the employee within ten (10) days of receipt of the notice of non-reemployment the board will schedule a hearing before itself or a hearing officer at its discretion. If a request is not made within this ten (10) day period, the decision of the superintendent to non-renew the employee shall be final. For purposes of this section, notice shall be deemed to have been sent to the employee upon the date of actual receipt thereof or the date of delivery to the United States Postal Service for delivery by certified mail.

If a hearing is held pursuant to these rules, the board shall set the time, place, and date of such hearing to be held not sooner than five (5) days, nor later than thirty (30) days from the date of the request from the employee and notify the employee in writing of the same.

Board Hearing

A quorum of the board may conduct the hearing or it may designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing as hereinafter provided.

The board may appoint a presiding officer for the hearing, who will make all rulings on procedure and evidence and will generally conduct the hearing, subject to being overridden by a majority vote of the members present. The presiding officer may be a member of the board, the superintendent, the board attorney, or any other impartial person chosen by the board, provided that the person was not responsible for the initial decision of non-reemployment.

The presiding officer shall have full power and authority to conduct hearings in such manner as is appropriate to ascertain the facts and facilitate the hearing, which shall include but not be limited to the authority to:

1. administer oaths and affirmations;
2. issue subpoenas, subject to the provisions of Section 7 of these rules;
3. examine witnesses;
4. receive depositions or affidavits or have them taken when the ends of justice would be served, as hereinafter provided;
5. regulate the course of the hearing;
6. hold conferences for the settlement or simplification of the issues by consent of the parties;
7. dispose of procedural requests or similar matters;
8. make or recommend decisions in accordance with Section 10 of these rules; and
9. take other action authorized by the board consistent with the rules and policies.

In conducting the hearing, the presiding officer shall not be bound by common law or statutory rules of evidence or by technical or formal rules of procedure except as provided in the Education Employment Procedures Law and by these rules.

Hearing Officer

The board may, at its discretion, appoint one or more hearing officer(s) to conduct the hearing. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit a member of the board or an employee of the school district from serving as the hearing officer or to require that he be legally trained, provided that such person was not responsible for the initial decision of non-reemployment.

The hearing officer shall have all the powers of the presiding officer of a board hearing to conduct the hearing as enumerated in this policy.

Once a hearing officer has been appointed, then no ex parte communications may be held with any parties regarding the details or the merits of the hearing.

The Hearing

The administration of the school district has the burden of establishing that the determination to non-renew the employee from future employment is a proper employment decision and that is based upon valid educational reasons or noncompliance with school district personnel policies.

The employee shall have the burden of establishing that the determination to release him from future employment is based upon legally impermissible reasons (such as sex, race, religion, exercise of first amendment rights, etc.) or that the decision is arbitrary and capricious.

Any oral or documentary evidence may be received, but evidence that is irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious may be excluded.

An employee may present his case by oral or documentary evidence and may cross-examine witnesses against him.

The attorney for the school board and the staff member responsible for the determination to non-renew the employee are also entitled to cross-examine witnesses presented at the hearing.

The employee shall not be required to testify in his own behalf, but upon doing so shall be subject to cross-examination.

A transcript of testimony and exhibits, together with all papers and requests filed in the proceeding, shall be prepared and shall constitute the exclusive record for decision. A copy of the record shall be made available to a party in interest upon payment of a charge not in excess of the reporter's fees under §9-13-33 of the Mississippi Code of 1972. In the event of a judicial appeal of the board's decision, the entire expense of the transcript and notes shall be assessed as court cost.

Subpoenas

Requests for subpoenas may be made by the employee, the staff member responsible for the decision of non-reemployment, a representative of the administration or the board not later than five (5) days prior to the hearing date.

The presiding officer is authorized to issue subpoenas, at his sole discretion, upon his own motion or upon request where there is a statement or showing of general relevance and reasonable scope of the evidence sought.

If a request for subpoena is approved, one shall be issued upon prepayment of a fee to the hearing officer in an amount sufficient to defray the cost of service of the subpoena by a lawful officer, together with the required witness fee and mileage allowance as set by the hearing officer.

Any person compelled to appear before the board or hearing officer is entitled to be accompanied, represented, and advised by counsel and, if the witness is a minor, by a parent or legal guardian. In the event it becomes necessary to enforce or to quash a subpoena issued to compel attendance of a witness, the proponent may petition the Chancery Court of Jasper County.

Depositions

It is the policy of the school district that depositions will be allowed only in extraordinary cases in which the personal attendance of the witness is impossible or would impose an unreasonable hardship.

Depositions shall be allowed only if an application by a party is approved by the hearing officer, at his sole discretion.

Any costs associated with the taking of depositions shall be the responsibility of the party requesting it, which shall not include attorney fees.

Conduct of Hearing

The first order of business after the hearing is convened is to dispose of any procedural matters.

Prior to receiving any testimony, evidence will be received that all notices and information was timely sent to the employee and that the employee made timely requests for information and a hearing. If a notice or a request is defective or untimely, the presiding officer may order such relief as is appropriate.

Witnesses and other evidence in support of the determination to release the employee from future employment will be introduced first. The presiding officer may interrogate witnesses himself or he may allow a representative of the administration or the board to examine witnesses. The employee or his attorney will also be allowed to cross-examine each witness presenting evidence against him at the hearing.

The hearing will be held in executive session unless the employee elects to have a public hearing, and shall be considered a confidential personnel record. If the hearing is public, the board or hearing officer may order any part of the hearing to be held in executive session, if, in the opinion of the board or hearing officer, the testimony to be elicited deals with matters involving the reputation or character of another person. Testimony by minors shall be held in executive session.

After the evidence in support of the determination has been submitted, the employee will be allowed an opportunity to present his witnesses and evidence. The presiding officer and a representative of the administration or the board will be allowed an opportunity to cross-examine any witnesses for the employee.

After the employee concludes his case, the administration will be allowed an opportunity to present rebuttal evidence, either at the time of the hearing or within a reasonable time upon recess of the hearing.

The presiding officer, at his discretion, may require any portion of the evidence to be submitted in the form of depositions or affidavits. If affidavits are received, counter-affidavits may be presented within such time as the hearing officer may allow.

At the conclusion of the hearing, each party may be allowed an opportunity for closing arguments, if requested by the presiding officer, at his discretion.

Recommended Decision of Hearing Officer

If the board appoints a hearing officer, he/she shall make a report unless the board orders that the record be transmitted to it without such report.

The hearing officer may, at his discretion, prior to the conclusion of the hearing and to making his report, request proposed findings from all parties.

Final Decision

If the board initially hears the matter, it will make its decision on the basis of the matters presented before it and will send notices of its decision to the parties within 10 days of the conclusion of the hearing.

If the board does not initially hear the matter, the parties will be given a reasonable opportunity to appear before the board, in person or by counsel, to present statements in their behalf. The board will send notice of its decision to the parties within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the hearing.

The board shall receive the hearing officer's report and the record and shall prepare its own findings and final decision.

LICENSED STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES – Policy GAE

As the primary means of solving staff complaints and grievances, the board expects each administrator to:

1. Discover and practice effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and administrators;
2. Reduce potential reasons of complaints and grievances; and
3. Establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration, and board.

When and if the primary means fail, the administration shall have established and the board shall have approved formal procedures for the prompt and equitable adjustment of serious grievances. In this context, a serious grievance shall be defined as:

A disagreement involving the work situation in which one individual or group of individuals believes that an injustice has been done because of a lack of policy or because of a policy that is unfair, deviation from, or misapplication, or interpretation of a policy or contract. Policies dictated by law are not included in this definition.

Such procedures shall provide for the resolution of grievances at the lowest possible administrative level and for ultimate appeal of any unresolved grievance to the board. In the resolution of grievances, hearing at all administration levels shall be:

1. Conducted in the presence of the administrator who made the ruling, which is the subject of the grievance and the presence of any other staff member personally involved.
2. Held only after due written notification to all persons concerned.
3. Free from interference, coercion, restraint, discrimination, or reprisal.
4. Held in private, with only the persons involved and/or their representatives present.
5. Summarized in writing or on tape, with an official record kept for the district.

At all hearing levels, the employee or an employee group involved shall at his/her own expense, have the right to be represented by legal counsel. Either party to the dispute shall have the right to call and cross-examine witnesses.

Reasonable time limits, as set forth in the procedures for implementing this policy shall be observed by the person or group presenting the grievance, by the administration, and by the board. No employee shall suffer a reprisal or reduction in status as a result of having presented a grievance for review or of having represented an employee in a grievance.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES– Licensed Personnel Appraisal Policy GAE-P

Any employee of the West Jasper School District shall have the right to appeal the application of policies and administrative regulations affecting the employee. The employee shall be assured freedom from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal in presenting the appeal with respect to a personal grievance. However, any employee who abuses the policy through the filing of frivolous complaints or who uses the policy so as to disrupt school or district operations or to harass or intimidate other district personnel shall be subject to discipline. In most cases, people of goodwill working

together should be able to resolve concerns or complaints without resorting to a formal process. An individual employee wishing to file a formal complaint or grievance will do so in written form and will follow the process outlined below.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this grievance procedure is to provide the licensed employee an equitable solution to a grievance filed in connection with a personal appraisal.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions shall apply in this grievance procedure:

1. "Personnel appraisal" refers to the system of annual performance evaluation of all licensed staff, as is mandated by state law. This grievance procedure has been approved by the school board for use in this district as part of its "Personnel Appraisal System."
2. A "grievance" is a complaint by an individual based upon an alleged violation of his or her rights under state or federal law or board policy related to the personnel appraisal process for that individual.
3. A "grievant" is a person or persons making the complaint.
4. The term "days" shall mean calendar days.

PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING GRIEVANCES: Grievances shall be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

Level One

1. All grievances, as defined above, must be presented orally to the principal of the grievant within five (5) days of the act or omission complained of, and the principal and grievant will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
2. If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given by his principal the grievant shall, within five (5) days after meeting with his principal, file a written statement with his principal setting forth in detail how the grievant claims to have been discriminated against. This written statement shall contain, in addition to the above, the time, place, and nature of the alleged act or omission and the state or federal law or board policy violated. The statement must be signed by the grievant.
3. In the event the grievant does not submit to his principal a written statement as required, his failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by his principal.
4. Within five (5) days after receiving the grievant's signed statement the principal shall send to the superintendent a copy of the grievant's statement along with a statement from the principal setting forth his response to the grievant and/or his decisions, as is applicable. At the same time, the principal shall also provide a copy of his written statement to the grievant.

Level Two

1. Upon receipt by the superintendent of the written notice that the grievant intends to appeal the decision of his principal, the superintendent shall notify the grievant in writing within five (5) days and shall advise the grievant of the date, time, and place upon which the matter will be considered by the superintendent. The superintendent shall schedule a hearing on the matter no later than ten (10) days from the date of receipt of the grievant's written notice of intention to appeal the written decision of his principal.
2. The written statement submitted by the grievant to his principal in Level One shall form the basis of the grievance before the superintendent. The grievant shall submit in writing any and all additional information on his behalf which he desires to the superintendent not later than five (5) days prior to the date upon which the matter is scheduled for hearing by the superintendent.
3. In the event the grievant does not personally attend the hearing scheduled by the superintendent, his failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the written decision rendered by his principal at LEVEL ONE.

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

Level Three

1. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at LEVEL TWO, or if the superintendent does not render a decision within five (5) days, the grievant may file the grievance with the secretary of the school board.
2. If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the school board within five (5) days of the hearing at LEVEL TWO, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
3. Within five (5) days after receipt of the grievance, the board secretary, in concert with the board chairman and superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the school board on the grievance.
4. The board shall render its decision within seven (7) days of the hearing.

At all hearing levels, the employee or an employee group involved shall at his/her own expense, have the right to be represented by legal counsel. Either party to the dispute shall have the right to call and cross-examine witnesses.

Professional Educator Code of Ethics/Standards of Conduct – Policy GAA

All professional educators in the West Jasper School District shall comply with the Mississippi Professional Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct as outlined in the Mississippi Department of Education Rules 14.10 and 14.17.

The superintendent or his or her designee shall establish procedures to assure that all school district employees comply with this policy. The procedures shall include, but are not limited to:

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

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

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The West Jasper School District affirms employee protection provided under Title VII and Title IX and, therefore, "shall not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any employee, male or female, which harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment." It is the intent of the school board to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Therefore, unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited. Contact the West Jasper School District Central Office for information regarding the district's sexual harassment policies, the filing of complaints, and requests for copies of Title VII and Title IX complaint procedures.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

Students and employees in the West Jasper School District are protected from sexual discrimination, including sexual harassment, by Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 to the Civil Rights Act. It is the intent of the Board to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Therefore,

unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited. This complaint procedure shall provide a process for filing, processing and resolving complaints on such matters. Adherence to these procedures is mandatory. The failure of any person to follow these procedures will constitute a waiver of the right to pursue a complaint at any level, including review by the board.

SECTION 504/AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT PROCEDURES – POLICY IDHHA

Contact the West Jasper School District Central Office for information regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies, the filing of grievances, and requests for copies of grievance procedures covering discrimination on the basis of disabilities.

Any person who believes that he/she or any class of individuals have been subjected to discrimination as prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans With Disabilities Act may file a complaint pursuant to the procedures set forth below, on his/her own behalf, or on behalf of another person or on behalf of handicapped persons as a class. All persons are encouraged to file grievances to resolve any disputes arising under these laws. Your filing a complaint will not subject you to any form of adverse action, reprimand, retaliation or otherwise negative treatment by school district personnel.

1. Within ten (10) days of when a complainant knew or should have known of discriminatory conduct, a complaint shall be given in writing to the Section 504/ADA Coordinator. The complaint shall describe specifically the time, place and nature of, and the participants in the alleged discriminatory acts. The Section 504/ADA Coordinator shall, within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, conduct or cause to be conducted a thorough investigation including questioning of all parties involved in the complaint. A written record shall be made of the statements by all parties involved. After the investigation is complete, the Section 504/ADA Coordinator shall meet with the complaining party and give a full report of the findings.
2. If the grievance or complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at Step 1, the complainant shall have ten (10) days to appeal the Step1 findings to the Superintendent. The complainant shall present his complaint in writing, describing the reasons for his/her dissatisfaction with the results of Step 1. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review all aspects of the complaint and complete an additional investigation if necessary. The Superintendent shall respond to the complainant in writing within ten (10) days of receipt of the written appeal.
3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of Step 2, the complaining party shall have fifteen (15) days from receipt of the Superintendent's decision to appeal the complaint to the school board. The appeal shall be in writing, describing the reasons for complainant's dissatisfaction with the results of Steps 1 and 2. The complainant shall have the opportunity to present an oral statement to the board before the board makes its decision. The board's decision shall be rendered within fifteen (15) days after receipt of the appeal.

TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS

Consistent with the provisions of Public Law 103-227, 20 USC 6083, the board bans the use of all tobacco products in all school buildings in the district and on all school vehicles by all persons at all times. This ban extends to all employees, students, and patrons attending school-sponsored events and meetings. The ban extends to school-owned or operated vehicles and facilities. Employees who violate this policy may be non-renewed, suspended, or terminated at the discretion of the board. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary measures as prescribed by the student handbook. Non-school individuals are subject to removal from district premises and/or arrest.

VAPING POLICY – POLICY GBRMB

Electronic cigarettes have recently surpassed conventional cigarettes as the most commonly used tobacco product among youths. The West Jasper Board of Education recognizes that the use of electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices, or any tobacco products, is detrimental to the health and safety of students, staff and visitors and is therefore prohibited at all times. This policy applies to all students, school staff, parents, and any visitors while on school grounds, in school buildings and facilities, in any school bus, on school property or at school-related activities or school-sponsored events which includes, but is not limited to, athletic events.

Definition: Vaping – The act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol (often called vapor) produced by an electronic cigarette or similar battery-powered device.

Vaping Device – Battery-operated devices that people use to inhale an aerosol, which typically contains nicotine, flavorings, and/or other chemicals. They can resemble traditional tobacco cigarettes, cigars, pipes, devices with fillable tanks, or everyday items like pens or USB memory sticks. They may also be known as e-cigarettes, e-vaporizers, or electronic nicotine delivery systems.

Confiscation – When there is evidence that a student is in possession of any tobacco products or tobacco paraphernalia, administrators or other designated staff may confiscate such items.

Violations - Anyone found in violation of this policy shall be disciplined in accordance with corresponding district policies. Any adult in violation shall also be subject to discipline under Miss. Code § 97-32-29.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE - POLICY GBRL

No employee engaged in work in connection with the West Jasper School District School District shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use on or in the workplace any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance, as defined under state and federal law.

"Workplace" is defined to mean the site for the performance of work done in connection the West Jasper School District School District. That includes any school building or any school premises; any school-owned vehicle or any other school approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; off school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.

As a condition of employment in the West Jasper School District School District, each employee shall notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace as defined above, no later than 5 days after such conviction.

As a condition of employment in the West Jasper School District School District, each employee shall abide by the terms of the school district policy respecting a drug-free workplace.

An employee who violates the terms of this policy may be nonrenewed or his or her employment may be suspended or terminated, at the discretion of the board. Sanctions against employees, including non-renewal, suspension, and termination shall be in accordance with prescribed school district administrative regulations and procedures.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA: This policy applies to medical cannabis. Under the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act, this school district:

1. Is not required to permit, accommodate, or allow the medical use of medical cannabis, or to modify any job or working conditions of any employee who engages in the medical use of medical cannabis or who for any reason seeks to engage in the medical use of medical cannabis.
2. May refuse to hire, discharge, discipline, or otherwise take an adverse employment action against an individual with respect to hiring, discharging, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment as a

result, in whole or in part, of that individual's use of medical cannabis, regardless of the individual's impairment or lack of impairment resulting from the medical use of medical cannabis.

3. Does not allow the use of medical cannabis by employees while on district property, while at a district sponsored event, or while performing district business.

DENIAL OF LICENSE

The State Board of Education, acting through the commission, may deny an application for any teacher or administrator license if the applicant is actively addicted to or actively dependent on alcohol or other habit-forming drugs or is a habitual user of narcotics, barbiturates, amphetamines, hallucinogens, or other drugs having a similar effect, at the time of application for a license. 37-3-2 (11) (c)

SUSPENSION OF LICENSE

The State Board of Education, acting on the recommendation of the commission, may revoke or suspend any teacher or administrator license for specified periods of time if the teacher or administrator has been convicted, has pled guilty or entered a plea of nolo contendere to a felony, as defined by federal or state law. 37-3-2 (12) (d)

Dismissal or suspension of a licensed employee by a local school board pursuant to Section 37-9-59 may result in the suspension or revocation of a license for a length of time which shall be determined by the commission and based upon the severity of the offense. 37-3-2 (13) (a)

WEAPONS/GUN FREE SCHOOLS – POLICY JCDAE

No student or employee of the West Jasper School District may possess a weapon in, on or about school buildings, grounds, athletic fields or any other property used for school-related purposes, except as permitted by law.

"School property" includes any school building, bus, campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field or other property owned, used or operated by the district.

Definitions

A "firearm" means any type of weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any destructive device, including any explosive, incendiary, poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket, missile, mine or other similar device; and any type of weapon; any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled; or as otherwise defined by federal law.

Prohibited Weapons

Prohibited weapons include, but may not be limited to, the following:

1. Gun, rifle, pistol, other firearm;
2. Dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, other explosive or mine;
3. BB gun, air rifle, air pistol;
4. Bowie knife, dirk, dagger, switchblade, pocketknife or other knife;
5. Slingshot,
6. Leaded cane, blackjack
7. Metallic or other artificial knuckles;
8. Razors, razor blades, box cutters;
9. Any sharp-pointed or edged instrument (except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips and tools used only to prepare food or for instruction and maintenance of school property);
10. Bully club, throwing stars, pipe club, brick, bat, chain;

11. Any hard or sharp object, regardless of its original purpose, that may be considered a weapon on school property, on the school bus, or at any school function.
12. Any look-alike instrument which has the effect or appearance of a weapon (including utensils, imitation firearms, or knives, etc.)

Permitted Uses

The superintendent, with board approval, as appropriate and in his/her discretion, may give prior approval for weapons to be on or about campus under the following circumstances:

1. Students and employees may possess weapons on school grounds only when the weapons are used for valid educational purposes or school-sanctioned ceremonies.
2. Those used within the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) program in conducting training when such training is a normal element of such programs; such programs may include training in the use of pneumatic guns. Such training shall occur at a location or locations approved by the Superintendent;
3. Law enforcement officers and other government officials may carry weapons onto school grounds as permitted by law.
4. MHSAA sanctioned or school board approved activities (ex. Archery or Shooting Sports);
5. Replica firearms by a ceremonial color guard; and
6. Approved safety classes. This approval must be in writing and granted prior to the weapon being brought to school.
7. Visitors who lawfully possess an enhanced carry license/permit may enter only in the public areas of schools permitted by law without being subject to possible charge of trespass.
8. No persons, including persons with enhanced carry permits, are allowed in areas of the school to which the general public is not allowed. i.e. hallways, classrooms, offices, cafeterias, etc.

Penalties for Violations

Any person violating this policy may be subject to criminal action and penalties as provided in MS §97-37-17.

1. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
2. Any visitor who violates this policy will be asked to leave school property immediately and further action, including but not limited to filing criminal charges, shall be taken as necessary.
3. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
4. Any person violating this policy may be subject to criminal action and penalties as provided in Miss. Code Ann. '97-37-17.

Reporting

Violations of the firearm prohibition stated in this policy shall be reported in accordance with Policies JCBE, including reporting violations to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

VIOLENCE FREE SCHOOLS - REPORTING OF UNLAWFUL OR VIOLENT ACTS – POLICY JCBE

Employees of the West Jasper School District shall comply with all requirements imposed by law with regard to reporting unlawful or violent acts that have or may have occurred on school property or during school related activities or for which students have been expelled. The following reports shall be made in accordance with the law and board policy.

Notification to Principal

Any school employee shall notify his/her principal immediately upon obtaining knowledge that one of the following unlawful activities or a violent act has or may have occurred on school property or during a school-related activity:

1. Aggravated assault, including but not limited to: assault resulting in serious physical injury or assault involving use of weapon;
2. Assault on a school employee, simple or aggravated;
3. Indecent liberties with a minor;

4. Possession of a firearm or other weapon;
5. Possession, use or sale of any controlled substance;
6. Rape;
7. Sexual battery;
8. Other sexual offense;
9. Murder or other homicide;
10. Kidnapping; or
11. Other violent act.

When an emergency exists and the principal is not available for immediate notification, the employee shall immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and, as soon as possible thereafter, shall notify the principal or other school administrator.

Notification to Superintendent

A principal receiving an employee's report or having personal knowledge of such acts shall immediately notify the superintendent or his/her designee.

Notification to Law Enforcement

A principal shall orally notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when he has a reasonable belief that one of the above-stated acts has occurred and shall thereafter notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency in writing.

Notification to Parents, Court, and Law Enforcement

The superintendent shall notify the parents/legal guardians, the youth court and appropriate local law enforcement agency when a student is expelled because of unlawful or violent activity. The superintendent or designee shall notify the parents/legal guardians, youth court and appropriate local law enforcement agency when a student on school property or during a school-related event has committed a crime.

Notification to District Attorney

The superintendent or principal shall notify the district attorney of an accusation of fondling or sexual involvement with a minor student (under 18) by a school employee (18 or older) upon determination that there is a reasonable basis to believe that the accusation is true.

Reporting Procedures

When any school employee, principal or the superintendent has knowledge that an unlawful or violent act has or may have occurred on school property or at a school-related event the following steps will be taken:

1. IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIVING INFORMATION OF SUCH ACT, the following oral reports shall immediately be made:
 - a. The employee shall notify his/her principal.
 - b. The principal shall notify the superintendent or his/her designee.
2. ORAL NOTICE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT
 - a. IF AN EMERGENCY ("911-LIFE THREATENING") SITUATION EXISTS AND THE PRINCIPAL IS NOT IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE, the employee is authorized to immediately contact the appropriate law enforcement official and, as soon as possible thereafter, to notify the principal or other school administrator.
 - b. IF THE PRINCIPAL HAS A REASONABLE BELIEF THAT AN UNLAWFUL OR VIOLENT ACT HAS BEEN COMMITTED, the principal shall also orally notify law enforcement officials immediately following receipt of the employee's report.
3. AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, and in no event more than 24 hours of the oral report, the following written reports shall be made:
 - a. An employee making the oral report shall complete and submit to the principal a written report on a form provided by the superintendent for such purposes.

- b. If the principal has a reasonable belief that an unlawful or violent act has been committed, he shall complete and submit to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and to the superintendent a written report on a form provided by the State Board of Education for such purposes.
 - c. If a crime was committed by a student, the superintendent shall complete and submit to the youth court and the appropriate local law enforcement agency an affidavit in a form prescribed for such purposes. If expulsion resulted from a student's unlawful activity or violent act, the affidavit shall contain such notice.
 - d. If the offense involved possession of a firearm in violation of the Policy JICI—Weapons in School, the superintendent shall also submit the written report to the appropriate division of the Mississippi Department of Education.
4. Copies of all written reports and notices shall be retained by the principal and the superintendent.

TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Administrative personnel and others who have first been authorized by the superintendent to travel in the performance of their duties shall be reimbursed their expenses by the school district for travel as indicated below:

1. For each mile actually and necessarily traveled in the employee's automobile or other private motor vehicle, the same rate of pay per mile as set by the Mississippi State Department of Finance and Administration. The board expects employees to car pool where two or more employees are traveling to the same destination. In such an event only one (1) travel expense allowance at the authorized rate per mile shall be allowed for any one (1) trip.
2. When such travel is done by means of a public carrier or other means not involving a private motor vehicle, the employee shall receive as travel expense the actual fare or other expenses incurred in such travel.
3. Employees shall be reimbursed for other actual expenses such as per diem for meals, lodging, other necessary expenses incurred in the course of such travel, subject to limitations placed on meals for intrastate and interstate official travel by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration with rules/ regulations adopted by the State Department of Audit.

Reimbursement Rates

1. Single standard room rate for accommodations.
2. Maximum daily reimbursement for meals for in state and out-of-state as defined by the State Department of Finance and Administration.
3. Mileage for private vehicle, *see above
4. Actual registration fees.
5. Actual fare or other expenses incurred in travel by public carrier.
6. Incidental expenses—reasonable gratuities, parking, etc.

The superintendent shall comply with the rules and regulations of the Mississippi Department of Audit regarding itemized expense accounts upon return of the employee.

Regarding Travel Advances

1. Only the superintendent is authorized to approve travel advances.
2. The superintendent shall comply with all rules and regulations of the Mississippi Department of Audit regarding travel advances.
3. The superintendent shall comply with the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration daily limits on expenditures for meals.
4. All official travel must be preapproved.
5. Persons receiving advances must be officers or employees of the school district.
6. Travel advances may not be used for personal expenses or for any purpose other than the actual expenses of the authorized travel.
7. Accounting for any travel advance shall be made within five (5) working days at the next board meeting in which the official travel was made.
 - a. Any money not used for travel-related expenses shall be repaid to the school district at this time.

- b. The travel reimbursement form prescribed by the State Department of Finance and Administration shall be completed and submitted for all money not refunded to the school district.
- c. Actual receipts for all travel expenses except meals and travel in personal vehicles are to be included.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF STAFF MEMBERS

The Board of Education of the West Jasper School District recognizes the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in political activities that exemplify good citizenship. The Board also recognizes that employees of the school district have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens, among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office. However, school property and school time shall not be used by civic and political organizations for political purposes.

Employees may not use the West Jasper School District as a forum for public office or for the endorsement of any specific candidate for public office. The right of the employee to support and/or work for a candidate or cause is acknowledged to the extent that the right does not conflict with the interest of the West Jasper School District.

SCHOOL TIME:

"School time" shall be defined as the time employees are required to be on school grounds during the school day and includes:

- the specified time before school begins
- the specified time after school is dismissed
- the specified time immediately prior to and after school-sponsored events
- the specified time immediately prior to and after extra-curricular activities

CANDIDACY FOR POLITICAL OFFICE

An employee who intends to campaign for an elective public office shall, at the earliest possible moment, notify the superintendent of schools, in writing, of the office which he intends to seek, together with his decision as to whether he wishes to continue his employment and under what terms and conditions. The superintendent will meet with and discuss these matters with the employee involved and will present a proposed solution to the board for consideration.

The essential element to be determined by the Board is whether the activities proposed by the employee are compatible with the time requirements for fulfilling his responsibilities to the district. The board shall determine the terms and conditions under which the employee may continue employment as public office is sought.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

All employees shall be encouraged to exercise their constitutional rights as citizens, but they shall not involve their schools in political campaigns.

Employees may not use the West Jasper School District as a forum for public office or for the endorsement of any specific candidate for public office. The right of the employee to support and/or work for a candidate or cause is acknowledged to the extent that the right does not conflict with the interest of the West Jasper School District.

Campaign literature supporting one or more candidates shall not be distributed within the schools or on school buses by pupils, teachers, or others, nor shall campaign posters be displayed on school owned property.

Customary community political activities may be expected on election days at schools when schools are used as polling places. Employees shall not poll their pupils to determine how their parents are voting on any issue, and shall not attempt to indoctrinate pupils with personal political and social philosophy; however, employees are

not prohibited from political activity after hours of official employment.

The board recognizes the right of each employee to vote as he/she chooses and to express his/her opinions on political subjects and candidates.

SPECIFIC PROHIBITIONS

Activities specifically prohibited during school time include, but are not limited to:

1. The circulation of political posters, petitions or other campaign material;
2. The collection or solicitation of funds in support of a candidate's campaign;
3. The solicitation for campaign workers;
4. The writing or addressing of campaign material and distribution of campaign materials on school property;
5. Any activity that indicates that an employee is using his or her position to further personal views on candidates for office;
6. The intimidating, harassing or coercing an employee relative to a political race or issue;
7. The use of school system facilities, equipment or supplies;
8. A candidate talking to school personnel during school time regarding the candidate's campaign.

The board specifically prohibits the expenditure of district, state, or federal funds for partisan political activity.

SOLICITATION/DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

No one other than commercial sales people, with written permission from the superintendent, may call on schools or employees or come onto school property at any time to solicit for any cause or to distribute material of any kind for any purpose. Employees may not engage in solicitation or in the distribution of materials of any type for any purpose during working time on District property, except for that which is necessary to carry out their assigned job duties. No exceptions will be made.

FIXED ASSET MANAGEMENT

The West Jasper School District maintains a fixed asset record and inventory control system for all capital assets located within the school district. Administrative heads/directors/employees may be financially responsible for all district equipment, furniture, fixture, or other fixed assets assigned to their departments or designated under their control. All employees who are assigned areas of responsibility under the plan shall exercise reasonable care to insure that the fixed assets of the district are properly accounted for. While it is recognized that public employees are not insurers of school property, all employees charged with areas of responsibility under the plan shall be financially responsible for losses which might occur to the district as a result of the failure to reasonable perform the custodial duties assigned to the employee under the plan. All employees of the district owe a duty to due care and diligence to protect and preserve all fixed assets and other property of the district. Any employee guilty of gross negligence or misconduct that results in the destruction, theft, or other loss of property of the district may be responsible for providing replacement of the property or adequate compensation for the loss, as may be determined by the school board. All employees shall report any destroyed, stolen, or other loss of district equipment, furniture, fixtures, or other fixed assets immediately to their supervisors. In the event of destroyed, stolen, or lost property and as described above, all classroom teachers and other employees shall report incidents to their building principals and property managers. The loss will be reported to the local law enforcement agency.

PURCHASING

All purchases made by employees of WSJD shall be made pursuant to the purchasing laws of the State of MS Code 37-7-1. All employees are required to use purchase orders. Under no circumstances, should employees order or purchase any school related items without a properly signed purchase order approved by their

supervising principal and the district office. Employees may be financially responsible for purchases bought without the appropriate paperwork.

CASH IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Funds entrusted to the care of school employees are the complete responsibility of the employees. Daily receipts are required, and all money must be receipted on a daily basis at the time specified by the principal or his/her designee. Money shall not be left unattended in classrooms, band halls/offices, athletic facilities/offices, etc. Other than change cash, no more than \$50 shall be left in the school overnight. Consequently, daily deposits and receipts are required. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in the individual's personal liability for the amount of loss and other discipline as may be determined by the district.

EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT FUNDS (2440 FUNDS) – POLICY DJEAB

Cardholders are responsible for documenting all purchasing and transactions and knowing card balance. They should retain all receipt copies and supporting documentations for at least five years for audit purposes. By signing for and using the EEF procurement card, you agree to abide by the terms of the Teacher Cardholder Agreement and the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct. Personnel are required to sign a teacher cardholder agreement that the funds available on the card are public funds and must only be used to purchase supplies, materials, and equipment for use in their classrooms. Teachers may be responsible for repaying the state for any purchases that are considered unallowable (at the determination of an audit of the teacher's purchases). Teachers are required to turn in the card to the district by the deadline set by the district or if the teacher leaves the district. Teachers must notify the school district immediately if the card is lost, destroyed or stolen. If you leave employment with the district during the school year due to resignation, retirement, or termination, the EEF procurement card must be turned in immediately to the principal. Audits of purchases made by teachers using the procurement card would be an audit of the individual teacher and not part of the school district's annual financial audit. School districts will be responsible for tracking each card issued to teachers. Local school districts must maintain a roster that shows by card account number the teacher who received the card.

EMPLOYEE STANDARD OF STUDENT CARE

Teachers and other school employees are legally responsible to act in a reasonable and prudent manner at all times and to act in strict accordance with policies and procedures of the district. Specifically, those charged with the responsibility for the supervision of students must do the following:

1. Never leave students unsupervised.
2. Require students to conduct themselves in an orderly, safe manner and administer any disciplinary actions that are reasonable and proper in any situation involving student misconduct.
3. Report any unsafe condition in the school plan or on campus to the principal so it may be corrected.
4. Strictly adhere to all stated policies of the district and the individual school.

Failure by teachers and other employees to meet their responsibilities may have severe employment consequences.

USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

The West Jasper School District Board of Education realizes that severe penalties are provided for unauthorized copying of audio, visual, printed, or computer materials unless the copying falls within the bounds of "fair use" doctrine, or prior written permission to duplicate the copyrighted materials has been secured from the copyright holder. The board, therefore, directs the superintendent to inform all personnel that unauthorized reproduction and/or use of copyrighted material is unethical, illegal and that violates the copyright laws may result in criminal or civil suits and/or suspension or dismissal from employment with the school district. Copyright regulations are contained in board policy, which is available in the principal's office.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and any other electronic device provided for use by district personnel in the performance of duties related to their individual jobs entail certain responsibilities. The following guidelines will be part of a usage contract to be signed by the employee upon receipt of a school-owned cellular phone:

School Owned Phones

District-owned cellular telephones are for business purposes only. The cellular telephone is not to be used for non-work related communications except in emergencies. Reasonable precautions should be made to prevent equipment vandalism or theft. If either vandalism or theft occurs, the employee should notify the principal and the district's property manager immediately so phone service may be suspended.

Personal Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Employees shall not use cell phones and any other electronic devices during instructional time except with prior permission from the principal. Employees' cell phones and other electronic devices should not be used to access the internet or any social networking/instant messaging sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., during the instructional day. Employees should not bring personal laptops or other electronic devices to the workplace nor use personal devices to access the district's internet. Employees are advised to maintain a "strict" policy of avoiding electronic communication with students. The district is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION

The public perception of the West Jasper School District is largely the direct result of communication activities carried out by students and by, teachers, administrators and other employees. These external communications have a significant impact on our schools. In order to present the best image of the District, it is important that the messages we communicate are consistent with District philosophy, policies and procedures.

Electronic Communication

Electronic social Networking/instant messaging among staff and students is not **allowed**. Employees are expected to abide by the Technology Security Policy and its accompanying procedures for safeguarding and protecting the employees and students.

Social Media Websites – POLICY GABBA

All employees, faculty, and staff are solely responsible for what they post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow associates or otherwise adversely affects students may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. This policy applies to activities at school and also applies to off campus activities when your actions impact the educational process.

1. Access of social media websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited.
2. Employees, faculty, and staff shall not friend students on any social media platforms.
3. Employees, faculty, and staff shall not give social media passwords to students.
4. Employees, faculty, and staff shall not post any data, documents, photos, or inappropriate information on any website or application that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. This determination will be made by the Superintendent.
5. Employees, faculty, and staff are solely responsible for the security of their social media accounts.
6. Employees, faculty, and staff should not contact or communicate with a student on any social media.
7. Employees, faculty, and staff shall NEVER use their personal social media accounts in any way purporting to be or speaking for the West Jasper School District.
8. Employees who associate themselves with WJSD and engage in social networking should be aware that their postings or comments could have an adverse effect on WJSD and require disciplinary action. This includes media postings or comments made off campus and outside of the school day.

Social networking is subject to all of the policies and procedures in the WJSD Professional Staff Handbook and is a violation of the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct.

Fraternization via the internet between employees, faculty, or staff and any student is prohibited and is a violation of the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct.

Communication with both students and parents shall be done in person, over the telephone, through standard mail, and/or through school sponsored email, or school district approved program/software. Social media shall never be used and is not an appropriate form of communication.

Violation of any of these policies will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment consistent with the Mississippi Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct.

Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of educational websites, since educational sites are used solely for educational purposes.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Serious problems could be created for the District by disclosure of confidential internal information. District personnel should not discuss confidential internal district matters or developments with anyone outside the District, except as required in the performance of regular job duties. At no time shall any student information be shared unless there is authorization to do so. Outside inquiries, regarding district concerns must be referred to the Superintendent. At the building or department level, inquiries are referred to the administrator in charge.

Employees should understand that conversations about confidential matters in lounges and offices, cell phones, and through the use of other electronic devices, can often be overheard or seen by persons not authorized to receive such information.

MEDIA CONTACT

Employees may not comment on any district business to representatives of the press (radio, television, print, online or other media) without authorization from the Superintendent. Inquiries from media must be referred to the Superintendent.

REVIEW OF INFORMATION

Before distribution, the principal should review written communication, other than that between a teacher and an individual parent. Principals should ask the superintendent to read any material that they believe requires a general review before it is distributed. The superintendent is the official spokesman for the district.

LICENSE RENEWAL

All professional educators are approved for licensure by the Mississippi Department of Education. Renewal of a standard license is accomplished by completion of the required continuing educational units (CEU's) or college credits. Only state approved CEU programs will be accepted by MDE. (list available at: www.mde.k12.ms.us)

It is the sole responsibility of the licensed employee to complete requirements for renewal and to submit the original Continuing Education Unit (CEU) documentation/s to the Online Teacher Licensure at the Department of Teacher Licensure, Mississippi Department of Education on the website. (www.mde.k12.ms.us).

Professional employees who fail to maintain all certifications or licenses, which they held at the time of their employment, or who willfully relinquish licensure or certification in any area shall be subject to non-renewal or termination.

Failure to present a certificate or license valid in the employee's area of assignment for the following school year by April 1 will result in non-renewal. The district will not hold the position open pending completion of certification.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEFINITION OF YEAR OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

The term "year of teaching experience" shall mean nine months of actual teaching in the public or private schools of this or some other state. In no case shall more than one year of teaching experience be given for all services in one calendar or school year. In determining a teacher's experience, no deduction shall be made because of the temporary absence of the teacher because of illness or other good cause, and the teacher shall be given credit. HB 635 (2004) establishes that to be considered to have been in full-time employment for a regular scholastic term, a teacher may not be under a contract of employment for a period not to exceed 25 consecutive school days during any school year. In determining the experience of school librarians, each complete year of continuous, full-time employment as a professional librarian in a public library in this or some other state shall be considered a year of teaching experience. If a full-time school administrator returns to actual teaching in the public schools, the term "year of teaching experience" shall include the period of time he or she served as a school administrator. In determining the salaries of teachers who have experience in any branch of the military, the term "year of teaching experience" shall include each complete year of actual classroom instruction while serving in the military. SB 2168 (2002) State law requires that if a teacher exceeds the 45 consecutive school days that a teacher may not be under contract, but may still be employed, that teacher shall not be credited with a year of teaching experience.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF APPRAISAL

The most important indicator of the effectiveness and efficiency of a school is the quality of the district staff. Staff selection evaluation and development are critical components of a sound personnel program.

The West Jasper School District Board of Education recognizes that a thorough, regular appraisal of staff is essential to the realization of district goals. Evaluation is viewed as a means of confirming strengths and contributions, identifying and correcting deficiencies, improving professional competence, establishing a means for determining re-employment, and improving the quality of instruction.

The superintendent is responsible for implementing a formal annual performance appraisal system (regulations, procedures, and instruments) based on job descriptions and on-the-job performance of every professional employee. Each year the superintendent will report to the board the status of all personnel evaluated and the status of the appraisal system.

When it is determined that the employee is not performing at minimum job standards, the supervisor may prescribe an individualized improvement plan to assist the employee. The plan shall be remediation for noted deficiencies and checkpoints to assist the employee. The employee should demonstrate proficiency in all areas of concern before being recommended for continued employment.

As a general rule, principals may place any professional staff member under an individualized improvement plan if the school's annual test scores are not proficient in order to improve overall delivery of instruction.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The board recognizes its responsibility to provide opportunity for the continual professional growth of its staff. The opportunities include, but are not limited to, staff training workshops, focused faculty meetings, a professional library, assistance from supervisors and consultants, and within budgetary limitations, school visitation and attendance at professional conferences, workshops, and meetings. Annually, the administrative staff is directed to develop and submit a *Staff Development Plan* for board approval that shall contain both training and support activities. The plan shall be based on, but not limited to, results from personnel evaluation and need assessments, established trends in education, and requirements of state and accrediting agencies. The

plan shall comply with and include the components required by the Mississippi Department of Education. Employees are required to participate in the professional development activities provided by the district.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Classroom teachers are expected to maintain close contact with the parents or guardians of students throughout the school term. The parents or the classroom teacher may initiate parent conferences. Conferences may not be held during instructional time. Conferences should be well planned and non-threatening for all parties involved.

Subject area teachers or other appropriate school personnel, are required to schedule a conference and discuss failing State test scores with the parent and student during the school year. Teachers are required to notify every parent and student if the student is in danger of failure. Documentation is required for both conferences.

Parents and visitors are always welcome but first must sign in at the office to obtain a pass from the principal or school secretary. Classes must not be disturbed. Formal parent/teacher conferences should be arranged by prior appointment for the time set aside each day which includes: (1) immediately following the close of school, or (2) during a teacher's planning period. Teachers and/or parents may request the principal to attend any parent-teacher conferences.

Informal contacts between parents and teachers may be made outside of the instructional day to promote teamwork and healthy relationships between the parents and the school. However, any contact that leads to confrontation or harassment by either party shall be terminated immediately. A formal parent/teacher conference may be arranged for a later time. Any complaints should first be reported to the school principal.

It is imperative that parents, teachers, and other district employees not discuss student data or problems during public events when other people are present. This violates the confidentiality laws and the privacy of the individual student. Discussion of problems regarding student behavior and academic achievement should take place in formal parent/teacher conferences when privacy is guaranteed and the time-frame is conducive to reaching a satisfactory solution that will be in the best interests of the student.

TEACHER ASSISTANTS

Teacher Assistants work under the direct supervision of a professional staff member, usually a classroom teacher; however, assistants are ultimately responsible to the site administrator. Teacher Assistants are to follow all rules and regulations contained in this handbook, which are not directly applicable to, or reserved for, licensed personnel. Assistant teachers do not have the authority to give grades to students, grade papers, or call parents in regard to grades or discipline. Assistant teachers or Teacher Assistants are covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act and cannot work more than 40 hours per week without written permission from the principal.

TEACHER SUBSTITUTES

Should a teacher be absent because of illness or for any other reason, a qualified substitute teacher must be obtained to carry out the normal duties of the absent teacher or arrangements must be made by the principal to assure that students are properly supervised at all times. It is the responsibility of the teacher to follow the procedures established by the administration regarding absences and substitutes.

1. The teacher who is absent will fully inform the substitute regarding lesson plans, materials, seating charts, special duties, parking, and other matters of importance. In addition, each teacher is required to make packets of lessons and activities to remain on file in the principal's office for use in the event there are no current lesson plans provided. The failure to provide lesson plans will be noted on the teacher's performance evaluation.

2. The teacher must call the principal or designee as soon as possible if they are to be absent because of illness.

Assistant Teachers as Substitutes

When a classroom teacher who has a full-time assistant teacher in his/her classroom is absent, the site administrator may use the assistant teacher as a substitute for the absent teacher for up to three consecutive days.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Each teacher shall be responsible for maintaining satisfactory discipline on the part of each student assigned to him/her and shall contribute to the discipline of students whom he/she observes during the work day who, for whatever reason, are not under the immediate supervision of another teacher. Included in this responsibility is the duty to plan classroom work and other activities so that their students are engaged in their studies or activities immediately after the class begins. It is expected that student traffic during class periods will be held to an absolute minimum, with students leaving the room only in the event of emergencies that cannot wait until the break between class periods. Failure of the teacher to meet disciplinary and classroom management responsibilities in a consistent matter in accordance with district policies and procedures will constitute grounds for dismissal. The district's discipline plan will be published each year in the student handbook. Each teacher is responsible for obtaining a copy of and adhering to the plan.

SCHOOL SAFETY ACT OF 2001

The Mississippi School Safety Act of 2001 provides additional disciplinary procedures to the school district's existing authority regarding the discipline of students. In conformity with the Act, the school district has adopted policies that recognize the teacher as the authority in classroom matters regarding the school district's written discipline code of conduct, and the right of the teacher to remove from the classroom any student who in the professional judgment of the teacher is disrupting the learning environment, subject to the immediate review of the principal or assistant principal.

In the event the removal is approved by the principal or assistant principal, the student may not be returned to the classroom until a conference has been held with the student's parent, guardian, or custodian during which the disrupting behavior is discussed and agreements are reached that no further disruption will be tolerated. The conference may be in person, by telephone, by e-mail, or by other written communication.

The term "disruptive behavior" means conduct of a student that is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a school teacher's or school administrator's ability to communicate with the students in a classroom, with a student's ability to learn, or with the operation of a school or a school-related activity, and which is not covered by other laws related to violence or possession of weapons or controlled substances on school property, school vehicles, or at school-related activities. Such behaviors include, but are not limited to: foul, profane, obscene, threatening, defiant or abusive language or action toward teachers or other school employees; defiance, ridicule or verbal attack of a teacher; and willful, deliberate and overt acts of disobedience of the directions of a teacher.

If a student commits "disruptive behavior" as determined by the principal or assistant principal for a second time during the school year, the principal, reporting teacher, and the student's parents will develop a behavior modification plan for the student. A student, thirteen years or older, who does not comply with the behavior modification plan may be deemed to be "habitually disruptive" and subject to expulsion if the student commits a third act of "disruptive behavior" during the school year. Students under age thirteen may be subject to expulsion for such conduct pursuant to other school policies and procedures.

The term "habitually disruptive" refers to such actions of a student which cause disruption in a classroom, on school property or vehicles or at a school-related activity on more than two (2) occasions during a school year,

and to disruptive behavior that was initiated, willful and overt on the part of the student and which required the attention of school personnel to deal with the disruption.

Students with disabilities are responsible for adhering to the same rules of conduct as non-disabled students. State and federal regulations relating to students with disabilities will be followed when implementing discipline procedures.

The administration of the West Jasper Public Schools believes that pupils should be capable of conducting themselves in accordance with accepted standards of conduct. Every pupil is expected at all times to keep in mind that his conduct should not interfere with others, but to be an example to others.

Using due process, the school principal has discretionary power to (1) use corporal punishment within bounds of school board regulations; (2) require replacement of damaged or broken property; or (3) suspend the student from school for a limited period of time.

For suspension to occur there must be (1) clearly defined violation of written regulations calling for suspension; or (2) there must be an accumulation of minor disciplinary offenses (documented by records) which indicate the student is generally unable to abide by acceptable school behavior. The principal will maintain written records in each instance of student breach of good conduct reported. The reports will be properly dated by recording who reported the incident, the time of the occurrence, the person involved, and a description of the incident. Parents should be advised in writing if the principal suspects a severe disciplinary problem is developing. In cases of severe emergency, the principal, at his discretion, may suspend a student until the review procedures are complete.

EMERGENCIES

The superintendent of the WJSD shall be ready to respond to any emergency or crisis by incorporating a well-planned and widely known crisis management plan for the district and each district facility and school in to the safety plans at both the school and district levels. To the extent possible, the plans will be consistent from location to location. A warning system and appropriate procedure shall be known and provided to all personnel in the respective schools. Periodic practice drills shall be held at which time all pupils and personnel shall act in accordance with specific locations as set forth in that school plan. All plans shall be on file at the central administration office. Schools shall be dismissed only by superintendent's office. Each school principal shall use his/her judgment in putting the appropriate disaster plan into effect. The superintendent's office shall provide all possible information and subsequent directions to the school principal. Principals should refer to the adopted policies and procedures on natural and nuclear disasters. Each principal shall acquire and maintain a battery operated radio for his/her school.

DRILLS/SAFETY PLANS/PROCEDURES

It is the duty of the principals and teachers in each building of the West Jasper School District to instruct pupils in the methods of safety drills in all programs of emergency management as may be designated by the Mississippi Department of Education. These drills are to be conducted often enough to keep pupils and employees familiar with procedures. Emergency/safety drills will include evacuations for fire, bus accidents, earthquake, weather (tornado, flooding, etc.), bomb threat, or other incidents. In addition, parents are to be advised of the radio/TV stations that will carry emergency response information regarding schools.

FIRE/EXPLOSION

1. Conduct regular monthly fire drills, the majority of which are held without advance notice. Make a monthly report to the superintendent or designee regarding fire drills.
2. Provide written instructions for the evacuation of pupils from each room, using either the room number and/or the teachers' names. Alternate ways to evacuate the building shall also be practiced.
3. Instruct teachers to close all doors and windows and turn off lights, remain with their classes, and move away from the building.

4. Locate and eliminate all fire hazards periodically. Hazard areas include stages, boiler rooms, storage areas, shops, laboratories, occupational training (foods, building trades, etc.), and any other area where hazardous materials are stored or used.
5. Make sure that all exits are clearly marked and functioning.
6. Develop a plan for what to do if it becomes necessary to close the school. This plan should include measures for conveying accurate information to students and parents.

Procedure

1. Sound building fire alarm system that can be operated both automatically and manually to alert school occupants.
2. Call 911 to alert the fire department that an emergency fire condition has begun.
3. Have custodian or other designated person shut off all gas and fuel lines.
4. Check building to ensure evacuation is completed in an orderly, timely manner.
5. Alert superintendent/district public information director as needed.
6. Follow other procedures as outlined in the school/district disaster plan.

BUS EVACUATION

Bus evacuation drills must be conducted at least twice during the school year. Students usually remain on the bus during an emergency. However, students must be evacuated in all cases where there is fire or danger of fire or when the bus stops in an unsafe position.

Fire or Danger of Fire

1. A bus must be evacuated immediately if the engine or any portion of the bus is on fire.
2. Students must move at least 100 feet away from the bus and remain until the driver has determined that no danger remains.
3. Students should be evacuated when the bus is near an existing fire and unable to move away or when near gasoline or other combustible materials.

Unsafe Position

1. If the bus is stopped due to an accident, mechanical failure, road conditions, or human failure, the driver must determine whether it is safer for students to remain on the bus or evacuate.
2. The bus must be evacuated if it is the path of a train or adjacent to railway tracks.
3. Students should be evacuated when the bus is stopped in a position that may change and increase danger, i.e., if the bus is stopped near a precipice.
4. Students should be evacuated if the bus is stopped where there is danger of a collision i.e., on a hill or around a curve.

Buses may be evacuated in the following ways:

1. Everyone exits through the rear emergency door.
2. Everyone exits through the front entrance door.
3. Front half exits through the front entrance door and rear half exits through the rear emergency door.
4. Exit through side emergency door alone (if bus is so equipped) or in combination 1-3 above. In all of the above procedures, pupils should be moved to a place of safety away from the roadway.

EARTHQUAKE

1. Staff members-administrators and teachers will take charge and give instructions in a firm, calm manner.
2. No person should rush outdoors. The greatest danger is just outside entrances and close to walls.
3. Students should take cover under desks, tables, and heavy furniture, in interior doorways, or against weight bearing inside walls. Stay away from windows, light fixtures and gymnasiums, cafeterias, or other large areas.
4. After the quake/drill is over, evacuate the building and move to an open area.
5. Avoid fallen wires.
6. Do not start fires.
7. Do not enter buildings until competent personnel have inspected them.

8. Follow other procedures as outlined in the school/district disaster plan.

BOMB THREAT

Personnel in the West Jasper School District shall cooperate fully with the police in planning and carrying out procedures for handling bomb threats. All personnel, including switchboard/telephone staff and custodians, shall be given instructions for carrying out their responsibilities in the event of a bomb threat. A bomb threat report form that provides a standard set of questions designed to extract vital information should be readily available for use. The principal must evaluate the seriousness of bomb threats or other disruptive types of demonstrations after using input from all sources and then act to ensure the safety and best interests of students and staff. The following guidelines will be considered:

1. The safety of students and personnel shall be of primary concern.
2. The identification of the person or persons making the threat is of primary importance.
3. A report of any incident to the superintendent's office and police department is to be filed immediately.
4. The principal will make the decision to evacuate, complying with any direction given by the superintendent or any order given for evacuation by the police.
5. Establish staff responsibilities for searching the building. The request of an employee to refuse to participate in a search shall be honored.
6. Students shall not be dismissed from school until the end of the school day. Instead, if evacuated, they shall remain in designated areas until the principal and the police are satisfied that no danger exists. Teachers shall remain with their students and be responsible for them.
7. If practical, students are instructed to take their backpacks with them to the evacuation site.
8. Teachers should carry their purses if practical.

Other response procedures and precautions as outlined in the school/district crisis response plan are to be followed.

LOCK DOWN DRILL/INTRUDER/VIOLENT INCIDENT

Personnel in the West Jasper School District shall cooperate fully with the police in planning and carrying out procedures for Lock-Down Drills or Intruder/Violent Incidents. Lock-Down Drill or Intruder/Violent Incident drills will be conducted at least once a year. All personnel, including switchboard/telephone staff and custodians, shall be given instructions for carrying out their responsibilities in the event of a lock down or intruder/violent intruder. An action plan that provides a standard set of questions designed to extract vital information should be readily available for use. The principal must evaluate the seriousness of intruder threats after using input from all sources and then act to ensure the safety and best interests of students and staff. The following guidelines will be considered:

1. The safety of students and personnel shall be of primary concern.
2. The identification of the person or persons making the threat is of primary importance.
3. A report of any incident to the superintendent's office and police department is to be filed immediately.
4. The principal will make the decision to lock down, complying with any direction given by the superintendent or any order given by the police.
5. Establish staff responsibilities for searching the building. The request of an employee to refuse to participate in a search will be honored.
6. Students shall not be dismissed from school until the end of the school day. Instead, if locked down, they shall remain in designed areas until principal and the police are satisfied that no danger exists. Teachers shall remain with their students and be responsible for them.

Other response procedures and precautions as outlined in the school/district crisis response plan are to be followed.

WEATHER-RELATED EMERGENCIES

The West Jasper area is noted for severe unpredictable weather conditions. If a severe weather warning, such as a tornado warning is issued by the United States Weather Bureau, local civil defense officials notify the superintendent or the superintendent's designee. The superintendent shall have a process in place to notify appropriate persons.

Children will be retained in tornado (severe weather) drill until it is deemed safe to dismiss them, unless their parents pick them up. Pupils will not be allowed to use the telephone during severe weather warnings except in cases of emergency. Parents and their children should have an arrangement worked out in advance with regard to transportation during extreme weather conditions. Each school in the district shall have an operational weather radio. MS Code §37-11-6 (1996) Each school should be inspected and shelter areas designated. Schools should use interior hallways on the ground floor that are not southwest, south, or west, since that is the usually the direction the tornado will come. (Tornadoes usually move from southwest to northeast; however, they also move towards the east, the southeast, the north, and even northwest.) Avoid halls that open to the outside in any direction. If there are no interior hallways, avoid those that open to the usual path of a tornado. Avoid windows and other glassed areas. Gymnasiums, auditoriums, or other rooms with wide-span roofs should not be used. Staff and students should be instructed on the following:

1. The difference between a warning and a watch
2. The alarm for drill, watch, warning and instructions for leaving auditoriums, gyms, and other free-span rooms, exiting in an orderly fashion
3. Location of evacuation routes to shelter areas
4. The “drop and tuck” command to assume a protective posture facing an interior wall. If there is something available to cover their heads, it is best to do so; otherwise, they are to use their hands
5. If a teacher or adult is present, students should follow their directions, but they also need to know how to respond appropriately without supervision
6. Peak time for tornadoes to strike varies from region to region. In southeastern states, early morning tornadoes are almost as common as late afternoon ones.

MS Code §37-3-81, §37-7-301(c) (d) (j), §37-11-5 and 49, §37-17-6(20), and §45-11-10 and Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards

SCHOOL CLOSING, DELAYED START AND CANCELLATION

Upon application from the West Jasper Board of Trustees, the Superintendent of the West Jasper School District is hereby authorized to declare an emergency and to close schools and offices or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the safety, health, and welfare of students and staff. However, all such schools so closed shall operate for the required full time after being reopened during the scholastic year, unless the school board of the local school district submits a plan to alter the school term that is approved by the State Board of Education under the authority of Section 37-13-63(2).

It is understood that the superintendent will take action only after consultation with transportation and emergency management or weather authorities or other agencies as necessitated by the circumstances. The Superintendent will notify the school board of the decision to close the schools. Parents, students, and staff shall be informed early in each school year how they will be notified in event of emergency closings or early dismissals. Closings and cancellations may be announced on radio and television as well as AIM Notification System. No announcement means schools will operate on a normal schedule.

DELAYED START OF SCHOOL

The West Jasper School District may at times during the school year utilize a delayed start of the school day. The late start may be used when the Superintendent or designee deems that weather conditions during the normal school starting time are unsafe for bus or student travel. In the case of delayed start the Superintendent will inform the parents and students of the delayed start and will inform parents that school will begin at a designated time which will allow for weather conditions to improve and allow safe travel. Additionally, the Superintendent will coordinate with the transportation director and other department heads in order to communicate the delayed starting time to West Jasper employees. Some employees may be requested to come in to assist in securing the work site. Regardless of conditions, if an employee's work site is open for business as usual, employees who do not report for work must use personal leave or vacation time, where applicable, in order to be paid for the time off, or the time not worked will be without pay.

FIELD TRIPS

The West Jasper School District Board of Education supports field learning experiences and extracurricular activities as a long-standing part of the total educational program. The board approves field trips under regulations established by the superintendent. Guidelines and procedures for scheduling and transporting students for extracurricular activities, special events, and field trips will incorporate educational standards and will be made in consideration of district priorities, constraints of time and human resources, and availability of funds. The following guidelines are set to implement the planning of field trips and excursions as part of and directly related classroom learning activities.

All trips must be well planned, properly timed, and related to regular learning activities.

1. Field trips and other out-of-district activities cannot conflict with the state testing program schedule or with the district's grading period testing program.
2. When possible, trips should be scheduled so as not to interfere with the regular instructional day, i.e., scheduled during holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring break.
3. All field trips must be conducted five school days prior to the week of term examinations.
4. No field trips in Grades 7-12 will be approved for weeks of term tests or in Grades K-12 for five school days before the date designated for state or district testing.
5. No field trips will be approved during the last 15 school days of the year.
6. All trips and the arrangements thereto, must be within budgetary allotment for this purpose.
7. Costs incurred must come from the school's instructional budget and/or the appropriate department's budget and/or the students will assume the entire or partial costs of the field trip when the trip has not been included in the district or school budget. All student fees shall be collected prior to departure.
8. The person initiating the request for the field trip shall be responsible for meeting all requirements related to the trip as defined in this policy.
9. Adequate chaperones will be assigned according to policy.

Educational field trips may be authorized by the Superintendent/designee provided that one-way distance does not exceed 75 miles from the school. The cost for using a school bus for a field trip will be \$1 per mile.

The superintendent and board must approve field trips for distances greater than 75 miles from the school, those that require overnight accommodations and all school-sponsored out-of-state student travel prior to any initial arrangements being made by the sponsor, advisor, coach, or school. The superintendent or designee must approve field trips that require pupils to participate in fundraising activities or to pay a fee to defray expenses, in advance. Money collected for a specific field trip may not be in excess of the actual cost of the trip, and all money collected shall be receipted and deposited as prescribed by board policy.

Each student who goes on a field trip or excursion must have written parental/guardian permission. In addition, this form should include, but not limited to, the following information: name of student, date of birth, name, address, and telephone number of parent/guardian, emergency contact other than parent/guardian, medical insurance policy provider and number, list of allergies and/or medication, including dosage and schedule.

The trip's sponsor/advisor/coach must provide the school's principal the following information: date of trip, name [destination] of trip/excursion, educational objectives, sponsoring group/organization; name(s) of sponsor/advisor/coach, (6) time of departure and estimated time of return, route to be followed with proposed stops, method of transportation, e.g., school bus, school van, commercial carrier, list [name, address, telephone number] of chaperons, list of students with information contained in # 5 above, and list of students and adults, including the bus driver, security guard, etc., according to each vehicle.

Transportation inside and outside the school district is subject to all school policies and regulations.

Accreditation guidelines regarding the number of allowable absences must be considered when field trips are planned.

The principal of the sponsoring school and the sponsoring teacher(s) reserve the right to prevent one or more students from participating in the field trip if they believe that, due to the student's past disciplinary record, the student would be too disruptive to carry on such a trip. Field trips, while part of the educational process, are a privilege that may be withheld.

Overnight and out-of-state field trips that do not pertain to state or national club affiliation will be limited to three days and two nights. All overnight field trips must have male and female chaperones if male and female students are in attendance. There should be a ration of no less than one chaperone per 15 students in Grades 9-12 and one chaperone per 10 students in Grades K-8.

No more than two academic teachers will be allowed to attend as sponsors or chaperons; all others must be parents or other volunteers.

EMPLOYEE AUTOMOBILES ON CAMPUS

Employee vehicles parked on WJSD must be insured according to State Laws. If employees use personal vehicles for school business, WJSD may ask employee to provide current driver's license and insurance. All personal vehicles must be properly registered, licensed, insured, tagged, etc. WJSD is not responsible for any damage to vehicles on school property.

EMPLOYEE WITH COMMERCIAL DRIVING LICENSE (CDL'S)

Employees holding the Commercial Driving License (CDL's) must report any moving traffic violation to **the Director of Operations** by the next working day. All employees holding the CDL will be evaluated annually or as needed based on the following point system assigned to various driving violations:

Category I consists of minor traffic violations and Category II consists of serious traffic violations.

Category I

Violations are assigned one point per incidence over the past three years. Drivers that accumulate four (4) or more points in a three (3) year period are "unacceptable." The incidents and point value are as follows: Moving violation is one (1) incident point value; "At-fault" accident is one (1) incident point value. An accident and a violation earned at the same time count as one (1) point only.

Category II

All violations in Category II are considered serious traffic violations and are assigned five (5) points each. A driver acquiring one (1) serious traffic violation during a three (3) year period is considered "unacceptable." serious traffic violations are listed as follows:

1. DUI or other alcohol or drug related violation
2. Reckless vehicle operation
3. Assault with a motor vehicle
4. Leaving the scene of an accident
5. Driving under suspension or revocation of driver license
6. Excessive speed: twenty (20) miles over posted speed limit

Possible consequences for unacceptable drivers included:

1. Termination of employment with the school district
2. Probation for a specific period of time
3. Placement in non-driving status

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

Under no circumstances should employees use a privately owned vehicle to transport students.

STUDENT ACCIDENTS/FIRST AID/MEDICATION

Building principals and school nurse will publicize, at the start of the school year, staff who are qualified first-aid providers. The following procedures are to be followed in caring for injured students:

1. The teacher who is with the group when the injury occurs or the first staff member to reach the injured student will take charge of the situation. An administrator must be notified.
2. If this staff member is not qualified in or does not know first-aid procedures, a teacher who is qualified, such as a coach, a physical education teacher, the principal or an assistant principal, must be summoned.
3. All basic principles of first-aid will be observed and only first-aid supplies will be used. Depending on the nature and severity of the injury, the student may be taken to the office as soon as possible. No medication other than first-aid will be administered.
4. If the employee determines that the situation appear life-threatening 911 will be called immediately.
5. The school office will attempt to locate and inform the parents of the student's injury or medical problem.
6. An accident/incident report must be completed and submitted to the principal as soon as possible

STUDENT MEDICATION

Employees are responsible for reading and following procedures that are listed in the Student Handbook.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT - REPORTING

School employees are required by state law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the State Department of Human Services. The public school employee who makes this required report or participates in the subsequent judicial proceedings is granted immunity from any liability provided the report is made in good faith. Faculty and staff will report any suspected abuse or neglect to the site supervisor who will notify the State Department of Human services.

MISCELLANEOUS

Any other information not covered in this handbook may be addressed with the immediate supervisor. Employees will strictly adhere to their supervisor's decisions/directives.

Suicide Prevention Education In-Service Training

The Board of Trustees of the West Jasper School District recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. It is the policy of the West Jasper School District that annual in-service training on suicide prevention education will be conducted for all school district employees.

The West Jasper Board of Trustees establishes this policy in an effort to take positive steps toward reducing student suicide through:

1. **Prevention:** To provide in-service training to all school district employees with information about the recognition of the signs of suicidal behavior; including, but not limited to, early identification and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.
2. **Intervention:** To take affirmative action when an immediate referral is warranted and to understand the emergency procedures when a referral is made and to provide support for students.
3. **Postvention:** To respond to suicide or suicide attempt, utilizing the district's crisis response, documentation, and reporting procedures.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the school district shall conduct, every two (2) years, refresher training on mental health and suicide prevention for all school employees and personnel, including cafeteria workers, custodians, teachers, and administrators. This training shall be in connection with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. The district shall report completion of the training to the State Department of Education. The West Jasper School District shall utilize training materials and resources developed by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health and shall comply with all requirements of the Mississippi Department of Education regarding suicide prevention. The Superintendent or his designee shall develop procedures for implementation of this policy.

Appendix A

This form is to be removed from this handbook, signed, and immediately turned in to your building principal or site administrator.

I have received a copy of the West Jasper School District's Professional Staff Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for having read it and for following the information contained therein. I understand that failure to follow these and other policies and procedures of the district is grounds for non-renewal or termination.

Printed Name: _____

Worksite: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____