



**2020–2021**  
**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of a disability, please email [kristin.baum@pfisd.net](mailto:kristin.baum@pfisd.net).

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# Employee Handbook Receipt

All employees must go online and log-in to the True North Professional Learning Platform to review and complete an employee handbook receipt by September 1, 2020 or within 15 days of beginning work, whichever is later.

Go to [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net) . Click on “Departments,” “Professional Learning,” then “True North Professional Learning Platform.”

# Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included, but those that are included are summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to the Department of Human Resources.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. District policies can be accessed online at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1147> or go to [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), "About Us," and then click "Board Policy Online."

# District Information

## Description of the District

The Pflugerville Independent School District is located in northeast Travis County and covers over 96 square miles. In the 2020-21 school year, PfISD will serve almost 27,000 students at 32 campuses. The district's comprehensive academic program includes special education for students ages 3 through 21. A prekindergarten (PK) program is offered for eligible students who meet federal lunch program guidelines or who have difficulty speaking and understanding English. A Spanish bilingual program is offered in grades PK-5 as well as some Vietnamese bilingual classes. PfISD offers numerous other programs including gifted and talented, career and technology, and advanced placement. In addition to excellent academic offerings, the district provides outstanding extra-curricular programs. Connally, Hendrickson, Pflugerville, and Weiss High Schools are members of the University Interscholastic League's division 5A.

## Mission Statement, Vision, and Beliefs

### *Policy AE*

The mission of Pflugerville ISD is to provide an inspiring, engaging, and relevant education that empowers students to reach their full potential as productive members of a diverse global community

### **Vision:**

Pflugerville ISD... Passionately Serving the Best Interests of Students

### **Beliefs:**

- All individuals have worth
- Relationships are foundational to success
- In educating the whole child both academically and emotionally/socially
- In developing civic-minded students
- In providing diverse educational opportunities for all students
- Diversity is our strength
- In providing a safe and nurturing environment for all students and staff
- High expectations from and partnerships with our community promote student success.
- A strong work ethic and a focus on innovation are vital for staff and students to reach excellence



## **Board of Trustees**

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

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

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

Current board members include:

- Vernagene Mott, President
- Mary Kimmins, Vice President
- Tony Hanson, Secretary
- Brian Allen, Member
- Larry Bradley, Member
- Renae Mitchell, Member
- Rob Reyes, Member

The board usually meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the PfISD Administration Office Board Room. In the event that large attendance is anticipated, the board may meet at an alternative location. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the district website and in the Agenda Box outside the Administration Building at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a one-hour notice.

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

## Administration

Doug Killian, Ph.D.	Superintendent of Schools
Troy Galow, Ed.D.	Chief of Staff
Brandy Baker	Chief Academic Innovation Officer of Curriculum and Instruction
Eduardo Ramos	Chief Operations Officer
Willie Watson, Jr.	Chief Human Resources Officer
Victor Valdez	Chief Technology Officer
Tamra Spence	Chief Communications Officer
Trana Allen	Area Executive Director of School Support
Brian Dawson, Ed.D.	Area Executive Director of School Support
Alma Gonzalez-Castillo	Area Executive Director of School Support
John O'Hare, Ed.D.	Area Executive Director of School Support
Denise Kablaitis, RN	Executive Director of Health, Safety, Emergency, and Crisis Management
Cara Schwartz	Executive Director of Special Programs
Karen Shah	Executive Director of Accountability and Compliance
Hutchison Hill	Executive Director of Student Affairs
David Vesling	Executive Director of Facilities & Support Services
Michael Brassfield	Executive Director of Transportation

The District's organizational chart can be found at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), under "About Us," click on "Leadership," then "PfISD Organizational Chart."

## **School Calendar**

The school calendar is available at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net) under the “Our Schools” tab.

## **Helpful Contacts**

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact Central Administration at 512-594-0000, the Human Resources Department at 512-594-0017, or the appropriate department.

## **School Directory**

For the school directory, click [here](#) or go to [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), under “Contact,” then “Contact Methods,” click “Campus Directory.”

## **Administration Directory**

For the administration directory, click [here](#) or go to [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), under “Contact,” then “Contact Methods,” click “PfISD Administration Directory.”

## **Staff Directory**

For the staff directory, click [here](#) or go to [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), under “Contact,” then “Contact Methods,” click “Staff Directory.”

## **COVID-19 Information**

The safety of our employees is a top priority for PfISD. The district has provided employees with the protocols and new practices that have been implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to ensure that employees feel safe and secure to effectively work under the present circumstances.

We will continue to monitor best practices and guidelines provided by federal, state and local health officials for preventing COVID-19 in the workplace and update employees accordingly. Please click [here](#) to review COVID-19 employee updates and guidelines for staff.

# Employment

## Equal Employment Opportunity

*Policies DAA, DIA*

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

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

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator for employees to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: [Willie Watson, Jr., Chief Human Resources Officer, 1401 West Pecan, Pflugerville, Texas 78660, [willie.watson@pfisd.net](mailto:willie.watson@pfisd.net), 512.594.0015]. Reports can be made at any time and by any person, including during non-business hours, by mail, email, or phone. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person.

The district designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator for employees for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: [Hutcherson Hill, Executive Director of Student Affairs, [Hutcherson.hill@pfisd.net](mailto:Hutcherson.hill@pfisd.net) and 512.594-0046].

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any of the reasons listed above should contact Willie Watson, Jr., Chief Human Resources Officer, at 512-594-0015.

## **Reasonable Accommodation for Qualified Individuals with Disabilities**

### *Policy DAA*

Pflugerville ISD complies fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act and subsequent amendments. Pflugerville ISD is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to its applicants and employees, in accordance with the law, in order to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities enjoy full access to equal employment opportunities.

Requests for reasonable accommodations should be made in writing using the form found at [www.pfisd.net/Page/786](http://www.pfisd.net/Page/786) or at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), click on "Departments," "Human Resources," "Forms and Documents," then "Americans with Disabilities Act Request for Accommodations Form." The form should be directed to the Leave Office. Pflugerville ISD will process requests for reasonable accommodation and, when appropriate, provide reasonable accommodations in a prompt, fair, and efficient manner. Individuals unable to submit this form in writing or needing assistance with completing this form should contact the Leave Office for assistance at 512-594-0026.

## **Job Vacancy Announcements**

### *Policy DC*

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

## **Employment after Retirement**

### *Policy DC*

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed under certain circumstances on a full- or part-time basis without affecting their benefits, according to TRS rules and state law. PfISD requires any new hire that is a retiree/rehire to reimburse the monthly pension surcharge plus any state contribution of TRS healthcare. The surcharge may increase as per TRS mandate. Please contact the PfISD Payroll Coordinator if you have questions.

Detailed information about employment after retirement is available in the TRS publication Employment After Retirement. Employees can contact TRS for additional information by calling 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. Information is also available on the TRS Website ([www.trs.texas.gov](http://www.trs.texas.gov)).

## **Contract and Noncontract Employment**

### *Policy DC series*

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

**Probationary Contracts.** Registered nurses, full-time professional employees employed in positions requiring SBEC certification and those specifically designated in Board Policy DCB (LOCAL), that are new to the district, must receive a probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after a two-year lapse in district employment or employees who move to a position requiring a new class of certification may also be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one-year contracts. The probationary period for those who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district may not exceed one school year. For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three school years (i.e., three one-year contracts) with an optional fourth school year if the board determines it is doubtful whether a term contract should be given.

**Term Contracts.** Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring SBEC certification, registered nurses, and those specifically designated in Board Policy DCB (LOCAL) will be employed by term contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All employees will receive a copy of their contract. Employment policies can be accessed online or copies will be provided upon request.

**Dual Assignment Probationary or Term Contracts.** PfISD issues dual assignment contracts to individuals serving as a teacher and a coach. Whether the dual assignment contract is probationary or term is determined based on the information above. An employee serving under a dual assignment contract cannot resign one position without also resigning the other.

**Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees.** Certain employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as non-instructional administrators) are employed by a one-year contract that is not subject to the provisions for nonrenewal or termination under the Texas Education Code.

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

## **Certification and Licenses**

*Policies DBA, DF*

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to the Certification Supervisor in the Human Resources Department in a timely manner. Employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations (TDLR) must notify Willie Watson, Jr., Chief HR Officer, when there is action against, or revocation of, their license.

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

## **Recertification of Employment Authorization**

*Policy DC*

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

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

## **Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing**

*Policy CQ, DHE*

Non-investigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the district reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The district may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including district-owned technology resources,

lockers, and private vehicles parked on district premises or work sites or used in district business.

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug testing policies and related educational material should contact Willie Watson, Jr, Chief HR Officer.

## **Health Safety Training**

*Policies DBA, DMA*

Certain employees who are involved in physical activities for students must maintain and submit to the district proof of current certification or training in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), concussion, and extracurricular athletic activity safety. Certification or documentation of training must be issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, University Interscholastic League, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to the Human Resources Department by September 1, 2020.

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



## Reassignments and Transfers

*Policy DK*

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department through the voluntary employee transfer process only during the designated transfer request timeline. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only in special circumstances and under the review of the appropriate Assistant Superintendent(s) when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the Human Resources Department and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

## Workload and Work Schedules

*Policies DEAB, DK, DL*

**Professional Employees.** Professional employees and academic administrators are exempt from overtime pay and are employed on a 10-, 11-, or 12-month basis, according to the work schedules set by the district. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be available on the district's website each school year. Professional employees will observe the normal workday schedule for each campus/department and will have responsibilities which extend beyond the normal workday such as staff meetings, horizontal/vertical teams, meetings, special events, duty assignments, etc.

Classroom teachers will have planning periods for instructional preparation including conferences. The schedule of planning periods is set at the campus level but must provide at least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. Teachers and librarians are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The district may require teachers to supervise students during lunch when an exception, allowed by law, applies. See Board Policy DL (LEGAL). There are no paid holidays in the professional calendar.

**Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees.** Support employees are employed at-will and receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on

an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. See *Overtime Compensation* in this handbook for additional information.

### **General Work Hours**

Campus hours for **teachers** are as follows (principals can slightly modify times based on need):

**Elementary:** 7:20 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

**Middle School:** 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

**High School:** 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Clerical employees** work 40 hours per week. Principals have some discretion in determining both start and end times within the 40 hours worked per week.

#### **Administration building employees:**

**Exempt employees:** 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (M-Th) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Fri)

**Non-Exempt employees:** 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (M-Th) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Fri)

#### **Support Services building employees:**

Both start and end times vary widely depending on the position.

## **Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk**

*Policies DEAB, DG*

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

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

## **Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications**

*Policies DK, DBA*

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

Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate. This notice is not required if parental notice under ESSA is sent. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit. Information relating to teacher certification will be made available to the public upon request. Employees who have questions about their certification status can call the Certification Supervisor in the Human Resources Department at 512-594-0023.

## **Outside Employment and Tutoring**

### *Policy DBD*

Employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor annually any outside employment that may create a potential conflict of interest with their assigned duties and responsibilities or the best interest of the district. Supervisors will consider outside employment on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it should be prohibited because of a conflict of interest.

The District prohibits contract employees from tutoring their own assigned students for pay during the school year.

## **Performance Evaluation**

### *Policy DN series*

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

### **Texas Teacher Evaluation Support System (T-TESS)**

Texas Education Code 150.1001. General Provisions: The statutorily required components of teacher appraisal are defined as follows:

- (1) The implementation of discipline management procedures is the teacher's pedagogical practices that produce student engagement and establish the learning environment.
- (2) The performance of teachers' students is how the individual teacher's students' progress academically in response to the teacher's pedagogical practice as measured at the individual teacher level by one or more of the following student growth measures:

- (A) student learning objectives;
- (B) student portfolios;
- (C) pre- and post-test results on district-level assessments; or
- (D) value-added data based on student state assessment results.

Each teacher shall be appraised on the following domains and dimensions of the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) rubric:

- Domain I. Planning
  - Standards and alignment;
  - Data and assessment;
  - Knowledge of students; and
  - Activities.
- Domain II. Instruction
  - Achieving expectations;
  - Content knowledge and expertise;
  - Communication;
  - Differentiation; and
  - Monitor and adjust.
- Domain III. Learning Environment
  - Classroom environment, routines, and procedures;
  - Managing student behavior; and
  - Classroom culture.
- Domain IV. Professional Practices and Responsibilities
  - Professional demeanor and ethics;
  - Goal setting;
  - Professional development; and
  - School community involvement.

Data for the appraisal of each dimension shall be gathered from pre-conferences, observations, post-conferences, end-of-year conferences, the Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan process, and other sources.

Each teacher shall be evaluated on the 16 dimensions using the following categories:

- Distinguished or well above expectations;
- Accomplished or above expectations;
- Proficient or at expectations; (Note: Proficient is recognized as rock-solid teaching)
- Developing or below expectations; and
- Improvement needed or well below expectations.

The **annual (full) teacher appraisal** shall include:

**1. Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan**

2. **A pre-observation conference.** The teacher may not waive the pre-observation conference.
3. At least one **classroom observation** of a minimum of 45 minutes, with additional walk-throughs and observations conducted at the discretion of the certified appraiser.
4. An **observation post-conference** that:
  - a. Shall be conducted within 10 working days after completion of an observation.
  - b. After each formal lesson observation, the teacher who was observed will complete and submit a self-evaluation to the appraiser within two school days of the observation.
5. **Cumulative data** from written documentation collected regarding job-related teacher performance in addition to formal classroom observations;
6. An **end-of-year conference** that:
  - a. Occurs no later than 15 days before the last day of instruction.
  - b. Examines and discussed evidence related to the teacher’s performance on the four dimensions of Domain IV of the T-TESS rubric;
  - c. A written summative annual appraisal must be provided to the teacher within 10 working days of the conclusion of the end-of-year conference, but no later than 15 working days before the last day of instruction.

In special circumstances only, by mutual consent of the teacher and the certified appraiser, the required minimum 45 minutes of observation may be conducted in shorter time segments that aggregate to 45 minutes.

Any teacher may request a practice observation prior to completing a formal evaluation.

In the school year 2020-21, certain teachers will be authorized for a less than annual appraisal where as the other teacher will receive a full T-TESS appraisal. The current less than annual appraisal options are as follows:

In accordance with DNA (Local), certain teachers are eligible for less-than-annual appraisals.

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements in state rules, to be eligible for less-than-annual evaluations under T-TESS, a teacher shall:

1. Be employed on an educator term contract;
2. Hold SBEC certification;
3. Be assigned in his or her certification area;
4. Have been employed by the District as a teacher for at least 3 consecutive years;
5. Have served on the current campus as a teacher for at least 1 year;
6. Have received a “Proficient” rating in 12 of the 16 dimensions; and
7. Have not received a rating of “Improvement Needed” on any dimension of the most recent full appraisal or the Student Learning Objectives process.

Eligible teachers who wish to have less-than-annual appraisal shall submit the request in writing no later than the 15th day of instruction (i.e., September 2 for the 2020-21 school year). The request must be approved by the teacher's supervisor.

#### Frequency

- Eligible teachers shall be appraised every 3 years.
- Teachers on improvement required campus **may** be required to return to a traditional appraisal cycle.
- During any school year when a full appraisal is not scheduled for an eligible teacher, either the teacher or the supervisor may require that a T-TESS appraisal be conducted by providing written notice to the other party.
- A teacher's supervisor shall have the authority to return a teacher to the traditional appraisal cycle as a result of performance deficiencies documented in accordance with state rule.

#### Annual Less-than-Annual Review Process:

In a year in which a T-TESS appraisal is not scheduled for an eligible teacher, the teacher shall participate in:

1. The Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan process;
2. The Student Learning Objectives process; and
3. A modified end-of-year conference that addresses
  - a. The progress on the Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan;
  - b. The performance on the Student Learning Objectives Process; and
  - c. The following year's Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan.

At the conclusion of the school year, the district may modify appraisal options through Board policy and make changes to expectations for appraisals that apply to all teachers regardless of a teacher's participation in the appraisal in the previous year(s).

#### Teacher Response and Appeals

- A teacher may submit a **written response or rebuttal** at the following times:
  - For Domains I, II, and III after receiving a written observation summary or any other written documentation related to the ratings of those three domains; or
  - For Domain IV and for the performance of teachers' students, as defined in §150.1001 (relating to General Provisions) after receiving written summative annual appraisal report.
- Any written response or rebuttal must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving a written observation summary, a written summative annual appraisal report, or any other documentation associated with the teacher's appraisal.
- A teacher may request a **second appraisal** at the following times:

- For Domains I, II, and III written observation summary with which the teacher disagrees; or
- For Domain IV and for the performance of teachers' students, as defined in §150.1001 (relating to General Provisions) after receiving a written summative annual appraisal report with which the teacher disagrees.
- The second appraisal must be requested in writing to the campus principal within 10 working days of a written observation summary or written summative annual appraisal report.
- Advance notice of the date or time of a second appraisal is not required.
- The second appraiser shall make observations and walk-throughs as necessary to evaluate Domains I-III or shall review the Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan for evidence of goal attainment and professional development activities, when applicable. Cumulative data may also be used by the second appraiser to evaluate other dimensions. The weighting of the second appraisal will be 40% with the primary appraisal weighting as 60%.

## Substitute Evaluation Procedure

**Regular Teacher's Responsibility.** Regular teachers are asked to provide feedback to the Substitute Office concerning the success of the classroom/duty station under the direction of a substitute. Evaluations are requested for substitute teachers who do not meet Pflugerville ISD standards.

**Campus Principal's Responsibility.** Campus principals review substitute comments made by regular teachers, sign substitute evaluation forms, and make determinations of whether the substitute should return to campus for future assignments.

**Substitute Office/Administration Building.** Once the evaluation is received, the substitute office will send an official PfISD written communication to the substitute teacher. If the campus principal believes it is in the best interest of the campus for the substitute to be removed from the campus substitute list, a directive letter will be mailed to the substitute teacher. If necessary, after a review of negative performance related concerns made by one or more campuses, the substitute office in conjunction with a Human Resources Administrator will provide written notice to the substitute teacher of his/her permanent removal from the district-wide substitute list.

## Employee Involvement

*Policies BQA, BQB*

At both the campus and district levels, PfISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-

level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from the Chief of Staff.

## **Staff Development**

### *Policy DMA*

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

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

### *Obtaining Credit for Professional Development Requirements*

Principals or department directors are responsible for ensuring that exempt personnel (counselors, librarians, teachers, nurses and other certified professionals) participate in appropriate and/or required district professional learning. In addition, principals and department directors may require professional development beyond the district requirement.

#### *I. Existing PfISD Exempt Personnel*

Valid professional development requires principal approval and may include:

- Local PfISD trainings;
- Education Service Center workshops;
- Department of Curriculum approved trainings sponsored by a party other than the Education Service Center or PfISD;
- State or national conference sessions. Professional development credit may be earned annually by attending professional conferences/meetings offered by state or national associations. No more than one staff development day may be earned from coaching school;
- Activities designed to specifically meet a teacher's instructional needs. Written agreement between the principal and the exempt employee is required; or
- College courses that directly relate to an exempt employee's professional assignment. Professional development credit earned through college courses is limited to two days annually and is subject to principal approval, an Out of District Request Form must be completed.

Examples of college courses that would directly relate to a teaching assignment:

- Curriculum design
- Graduate reading courses for an elementary teacher
- Methods courses in the teacher's content area



Examples of courses which would not directly relate to a teaching assignment:

- School law
- Real estate courses
- Personnel Management

*II. Part-Time Exempt Personnel*

It is essential that every teacher participate in quality and relevant learning opportunities that provide them with the skills and knowledge to better meet the needs of all students. Therefore, exempt personnel who work part-time shall complete the same amount of required professional development as full-time personnel. This includes:

- Professional Development provided on Early Dismissal Days
- Professional development provided on PD days scheduled during the school year
- Professional Development required during summer workshops

*III. Exempt Personnel New to PfISD*

Exempt personnel hired on or before the start date for new teachers must meet professional development requirements specific to new teachers.

# Compensation and Benefits

## Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

*Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB*

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

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

Employees should contact Position Management in the Human Resources Department for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

## Paychecks

All professional and salaried employees are paid monthly. Auxiliary employees are paid every two weeks (26 times a year). Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization. The initial paycheck will be a live check and, thereafter, employee pay will be direct deposited. An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated. Payroll statements can be found through a secure log-in on the internet. From the district's home page at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), go to the "Staff" tab, then select, "Employee Access" or go to <https://itccs.esc13.net:3074/wempacc?distid=227904>.

Employees paid on a monthly basis will receive their paycheck on the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month. If the 27<sup>th</sup> falls on a holiday or weekend, the employee will be paid on the last business day prior to the 27<sup>th</sup>. New employees hired before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will receive their first paycheck on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the same month. Those hired after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will receive their first paycheck the following month. In all cases, new hire paperwork must be provided to Human Resources timely.

Payday for auxiliary employees and substitutes is every other Friday, unless the Friday falls on a holiday. In that case, the checks will be issued the last working day prior to that Friday. Auxiliary personnel can visit the PfISD Payroll website or their supervisor/manager to review the auxiliary compensation calendar.

## **Automatic Payroll Deposit**

As a condition of employment at PfISD, employees are required to participate in payroll direct deposit. Payroll will be deposited directly into the employee's bank account each pay date. Should an employee not provide Electronic Funds Transfer Agreement (EFT) information, PfISD will establish a payroll card account for the purpose of direct deposit. All direct deposit statements are accessible via the PfISD website under "Employee Access." Enrollment forms are available via the PfISD website under the "Departments" tab, "Payroll," and "Payroll Forms." Payroll payments that cannot be deposited are delivered to the employee's assigned campus when school is in session. During the summer break, payments that cannot be deposited are mailed to the employee's address of record.

The employee is responsible for notifying the Payroll Office of any change in the employee's bank account affecting their payroll direct deposit. EFT changes must be received by the Payroll Office on or before the 10th of the month in which the change is to occur.

## **Payroll Deductions**

### *Policy CFEA*

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

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

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

## **Overtime Compensation**

*Policy DEAB, DEC*

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

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12 a.m. Monday and ends at 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for the hours set by the normal work schedule.

Employees will be compensated for overtime (i.e., hours beyond 40 in a workweek) with direct pay. Police Officers can accumulate up to 80 hours of comp time. Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

*Policy DEE*

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and Central Administration must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the district. Employees must submit receipts to be reimbursed for expenses other than mileage.

## **Electronic Reimbursement**

All District business expense reimbursements will be completed electronically. Payment will be deposited to the employee's bank account or an appropriate debit card account. PfISD reimburses reasonable authorized travel expenses incurred in connection with the conduct of PfISD business. Employees who travel on PfISD business are responsible for complying with PfISD procedures and are responsible for obtaining approval from their manager authorizing expenses incurred. PfISD will electronically reimburse employees for all reasonable, necessary, and approved expenses incurred while on authorized District business. Questions relating to this topic should be referred to the Accounts Payable Office.

Employees must complete ACH authorization on the Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Agreement form and submit it to the Accounts Payable Office. If an ACH authorization is not completed and submitted, an employee's reimbursement check will be voided and not issued until this process

is completed. If an employee changes his/her bank account, then he/she must submit a new ACH authorization.

## **Health, Dental, and Life Insurance**

### *Policy CRD*

Group health insurance coverage is available to PfISD employees. The district's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees that are full-time employees are eligible for the district contribution. If an employee works more than 30 hours a week or 130 hours in a month for more than 120 days in a year, they are considered full-time employees under the Affordable Care Act guidelines and will be offered coverage. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, prices, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees upon commencement of employment. In addition, information is available on the PfISD website under Human Resources.

The health insurance plan year is from January 1 through December 31. New employees must complete enrollment forms within the first 31 days of employment. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage one time per year during the designated open enrollment period or at any time throughout the year with a qualifying event. Employees should contact the Benefits Office at 512-594-0026 for more information.

Employees who work less than 30 hours per week are eligible to elect coverage for themselves at their own expense. Employees electing coverage must receive a paycheck all 12 months and employee's paycheck must be able to cover monthly deductions. These employees may only elect the lowest cost option, employee-only medical coverage and any of the other supplemental products offered.

## **Supplemental Insurance Benefits**

### *Policy CRD*

At their own expense, all employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs such as dental, vision, life, disability, cancer, and accident insurance as well as tax sheltered annuities. Premiums for these programs are paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact the Benefits Office at 512-594-0026 for more information.

Without exception, all employees are allowed to participate in the District's qualified investment program. Employees may enter into a salary reduction agreement for qualified investment products as approved by the Internal Revenue Service, such as 403(b), Roth 403(b), and 457 plans.

## **Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)**

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e., medical, dental, vision, cancer, medical, and childcare reimbursement).

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

## **Flexible Spending Accounts**

Employees may be eligible to participate in flexible spending accounts, including medical reimbursement and dependent care reimbursement accounts. These accounts enable eligible employees to save tax dollars on eligible medical expenses and/or dependent care. The amount selected by the employee is deducted from the employee's paycheck before taxes. Under IRS regulations, this election is locked in for the plan year and cannot be changed during that time. A third-party administrator manages the accounts for reimbursement to the employee.

## **Health Savings Account (HSA)**

Employees enrolled on a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) are eligible to enroll in a Health Savings Account (HSA). An HSA is a special account owned by an individual used to pay for current and future medical expenses.

## **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

### *Policy CRE*

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district's workers' compensation coverage from Tristar has been effective since September 1, 1999. Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported within 24 hours to the employee's supervisor and then immediately to the Leave Department at 512-594-0026. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See *Workers' Compensation Benefits* for information on use of paid leave for such absences. For more information, the Accident Prevention handbook can be found on the Pfisd website (<http://www.pfisd.net>) under the "Departments" tab, and then click "Human Resources," and "Forms & Documents."

## **Unemployment Compensation Insurance**

### *Policy CRF*

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact the Leave Department at 512-594-0026.

## **Teacher Retirement**

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

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

## **Employee Assistance Program and Work-Life Assistance**

The district offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as well as Work-Life assistance. An EAP offers short-term counseling up to three visits per issue per year to help you and members of your household manage everyday life issues. Telephone counseling is available seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Work-Life offers extensive assistance, information, and support to help employees achieve a better balance between work, life, and family to help make employees' lives easier. More information on how to access these programs can be found at <http://www.pfisd.net/Page/5707> or at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), under "Departments," "Human Resources," then "Employee Benefits."

## **Employee Wellness**

In addition to PfISD's excellent benefits, collaborative team members, and supportive community, PfISD employees will benefit from our investment in personal wellness. Each site's wellness CHAMP engages staff in activities and awareness campaigns designed to improve health outcomes. We value learning cultures that empower students, staff and families to be physically active, nutritionally aware and effective stress managers.



Visit our Pflugerville Wellness Program page at <http://www.pfisd.net/Page/1078> and to find a site CHAMP's name. We welcome employee input and ideas for positively impacting staff and student wellness.

## Extended Day Program

The PfISD Extended Day Program (EDP) is a licensed childcare, tuition-based program operating at all elementary campuses during the school year. EDP offers a safe and secure environment out-of-school-time for children in Grades Pre-K through 5. This district-based program allows for seamless transition from the end of the instructional day until 6:30 p.m. The program is open during early dismissal and staff development days, and these dates are included in regular tuition payments for students enrolled in the afterschool program. The Extended Day Program (EDP) is owned and operated by the school district and employees of the program work for Pflugerville ISD. Registration for the program is conducted on a first come, first served basis until sites fill to capacity. As a benefit to employees of PfISD who enroll their children in the afterschool care program, the annual registration fee for afterschool services is waived and a monthly discount is applied throughout the school year.

In addition, employees may take advantage of low cost childcare on most staff development and staff work days. During most August staff work days prior to the beginning of the school year, EDP offers an unlicensed childcare option for children of PfISD employees. Holiday and summer programs do not have any employee discounts; however, during the school year, current PfISD employees may enroll part time in the regular Extended Day Program for the date of a PD/work day or early release date as an employee benefit pending space available at the requested site and as long as all registration paperwork and payment has been received at least three business days in advance. For more information about EDP afterschool and other services such as holiday and summer camps, please visit our webpage at <http://www.pfisd.net/edp> or contact our office by phone at 512-594-0148 or email [ExtendedDay@pfisd.net](mailto:ExtendedDay@pfisd.net).

## Pegasus

The Pegasus program is an inclusive early childhood program for children of PfISD employees between the ages of 3 – 4 years of age.

The purpose of the Pegasus Program is to provide onsite preschool for children of district staff members while also providing preschoolers with disabilities an instructional setting in which they have the opportunity to interact with typically developing peers. The role of the child of the district employee is one of a mentor or role model for the children identified with special needs. This classroom model is beneficial to both the role models and the children with special needs. Both are provided with a quality pre – school classroom with state of the art, high



quality instruction. The Pegasus program implements the PFISD curriculum maps designed for the Pre – Kindergarten program. The Pegasus program is highly respected in the Early Childhood community. Classrooms are visited on a regular basis from ISDs throughout Texas. It is a highly duplicated program due to the positive results for the children who attend.

If you are interested in learning more about the Pegasus program, please visit the PFISD website. Click the “Staff” tab, then “Pegasus.” You can also access the documents at <http://www.pfisd.net/Page/3520> . For more information, feel free to contact the Early Childhood Coordinator at 512-594-0173.

## **Exclusive Discounts**

If you are looking for exclusive discounts for PfISD employees, check out The Pfair at [www.pfisd.net/pfair](http://www.pfisd.net/pfair) . Local and national businesses offer special discounts through The Pfair.

# Leaves and Absences

*Policies DEC, DECA, DECB*

The district offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of more than five (5) days should contact the Leave Department at 512-594-0026 for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the district.

Absences, in excess of the time allowed annually under Board Policy (ten days), are considered to be excessive absenteeism. Absences due to approved Family and Medical Leave, Temporary Disability Leave, assault leave, jury duty, subpoena, bereavement leave, or an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act are not considered when determining excessive absenteeism. Additionally, for 226 or more day employees, non-contract leave days (vacation days), are not counted when determining excessive absenteeism.

An employee may not use leave to work for the district in another capacity for additional compensation (i.e. when summer school overlaps with current position workdays).

The District does not approve unpaid leave of absences. Employees who do not have available earned leave will not be approved for absences unless they are out under a protected leave (Family and Medical Leave, Temporary Disability Leave or Americans with Disabilities Act).

Use of leave is available for the employee's use after hire. If an employee leaves the district before the end of the work year, the cost of any unearned leave days already taken shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

Paid leave must be used in ¼ day (2 hours), ½ day, and full day increments. Employees absent five (5) or more hours are charged a full day of leave. Earned comp time (Police Officers only) must be used before any available paid State personal and local sick leave. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid State personal and local sick leave will be used in the following order:

- Local Sick Leave
- Local Sick Leave (earned prior to 1999)
- Old State Sick Leave (accumulated before 1995-96 school year)
- State Personal Leave

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

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

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

For purposes of Family and Medical Leave, the definition of family is limited to spouse, parent, son or daughter under the age of 18, and next of kin of a servicemember. The definition of these are found in Policy DECA (LEGAL).

### **Medical Certification and Absences**

An employee absent more than five (5) consecutive workdays because of personal illness or family illness must submit a medical certification form from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and, in the case of personal illness, the employee's fitness to return to work.

In addition, medical certification/bereavement documentation is required for campus employee's absences occurring in the following circumstances, if supervisor approval is not provided in advance:

- on the day before or after a school holiday\*
- on the first or last day of a semester\*
- on days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams\*
- on days scheduled for state assessment tests\*
- on professional or staff development days\*

*\* If prior approval from the campus principal is not secured for any of the above absences or medical certification/documentation is not provided, the employee's pay will be "docked" at their daily rate the month after the occurrence. Employees must submit the Request for Leave on a Non-Discretionary Form to their Principal at least one week prior to the absence. Principals will not approve more than 6% of campus total employee absences on these days. The staff leave calendar (also known as the non-discretionary calendar) can be found on the PfISD website under the "Staff" tab. **Documentation must be received during the current school year.***

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits covered employers from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we ask that employees and health care providers do not provide any genetic information in any medical certification. 'Genetic information,' as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an

individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

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

Additionally, FMLA Regulation 825.311 (b) applies if the employee resigns during their FML. If an employee gives unequivocal notice of their intent not to return to work, the employer's obligations under FMLA to maintain health benefits cease. The employee's coverage will end on the last day of the month of the employee's last physical day worked and COBRA will be offered to continue coverage.

An employee, who is not on FML, will no longer be eligible for insurance through the district if one of the following applies: (1) after 180 days of unpaid leave or (2) an employee fails to make a timely benefits payment while on unpaid leave. Payment is due by the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month. If premium payment is more than 30 days overdue, the employee's coverage will be dropped after 15 days of written notice. When an employee is no longer eligible for insurance through the district, notice of COBRA rights will be mailed to the employee.

## **State Personal Leave**

State law entitles all employees to five (5) days of State personal leave per year. State personal leave is available for use at the beginning of the year. A day of State personal leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time. Unless the employee is on a protected leave, discretionary use of State personal leave shall not exceed three (3) consecutive workdays. State personal leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers.

## **Local Sick Leave**

All but bi-weekly employees shall earn five (5) paid local sick leave days per school year. Bi-weekly employees local sick leave shall be made available as earned. Local sick leave is earned at a rate of one-half workday for each 18 days worked, up to the five-day maximum. Local sick leave shall accumulate without limit. Local sick leave shall be recorded in  $\frac{1}{4}$  day (2 hours),  $\frac{1}{2}$  day, and whole days. Employees absent or anticipating being absent from work for more than five (5) consecutive days for a personal or family member's illness will have their leave adjusted to reflect the amount of days earned prior to going out on leave. Upon return from leave,

employees will be given the amount of local sick leave earned for the days they work through the remainder of the year. Local sick leave may not be used for personal reasons.

## **Planned Leave**

Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered planned leave. An employee wishing to take planned leave must submit a request to his or her principal at least one (1) week in advance of the anticipated absence. The effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor. Campus Senior Administrative Associates have the Planned Leave Request Form or it can be found on the PfISD website under HR forms. Leave for a serious medical condition of more than five consecutive days must be requested under the appropriate Family Medical Leave (FML)/Temporary Disability guidelines.

## **Schedule Limitations / Non-Discretionary Days**

Employees requesting discretionary leave on a non-discretionary day must be approved in advance. Leave at the campus level shall not exceed 6 percent of campus staff enrollment on the day before or after a school holiday, first or last day of a semester, days scheduled for semester exams, professional or staff development days, or on state-mandated assessment testing days. Employees must submit their request on the Planned Leave Request form to their Principal at least one (1) week in advance of the anticipated absence. Campus Senior Administrative Associates have the "Request for Leave on a Non-Discretionary Day" form or it can be found on the PfISD website under HR forms.

## **Leave without Pay**

The District shall not approve paid leave for more days than have been accumulated in prior years plus leave currently earned. Any unapproved absences beyond accumulated and available paid leave shall result in a deduction of the daily rate of pay for each absence from the employee's paycheck and is considered excessive and are subject to disciplinary action. If an employee is docked for four or more days, the employee may request the docked pay be spread out over a maximum of three months. Dock proration must also take place in the school year that the leave was taken. This request is allowed one time per school year. Contact the Leave Department at 512-594-0026 for more information.

## **Leave Proration**

If an employee separates from employment with the district before his or her last duty day of the year, or begins employment after the first duty day, state personal and local sick leave will be prorated based on the actual time employed. When an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck will be reduced by the amount of state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year and local sick leave the employee used but had not earned.

## **Leave Availability**

For all employees the District shall make State personal leave available for use at the beginning of the school year. For monthly employees local sick shall be made available at the beginning of the school year and for bi-weekly employees local sick leave shall be made available as earned. Paid leave shall not be approved for more workdays than have been accumulated in prior years plus those to be available for the current year. When an employee, who has used more leave than he or she has available ceases to be employed by the District, the cost of the unearned leave days shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

## **Non-Contracted Day Leave (Vacation)**

Only employees working 226 days or more are eligible for non-contracted (non-paid days between calendar years referred to as vacation days). This leave can be taken at any time throughout the year and is exempt from the staff leave calendar (also known as the non-discretionary calendar).

Effective with the 2018-2019 school year, exempt employees can carry an unlimited amount of non-contract days from year to year, however upon resignation they will only be paid up to 10 non-contract leave days. Non-Exempt employees should be encouraged to use any non-contract days they have over 10 days by June 30<sup>th</sup>. If there is a balance, the employee will be paid out any unused non-contract days, in excess of 10 days, at their daily rate at the end of the following year.

Employees working 226 or more days per school year must work through June 30<sup>th</sup> in order to earn all of the current year's non-contract days. These days will be loaded after the July monthly payroll for employees who work 226 days and after the first July payroll for bi-weekly 237-day employees. Employees who are absent for any of the current year's non-contract days will be provided the number of non-contract days actually worked. Days are allocated according to the present year calendar and vary from year to year.

If employment ends with earned vacation days unused or if the employee transfers to a 10 or 11-month position, the employee must use the remaining vacation days or he/she will be paid at their current daily rate at the time of separation or transfer.

For all employment groups, non-contract/vacation days must be approved by the employee's supervisor in advance. Approval is based on a first come, first serve basis dependent on calendar availability.

## **Reimbursement of Local Sick Leave upon Retirement**

*Policy DEC (LOCAL)*

The following leave provisions shall apply to local sick leave earned. An employee who retires from employment with the District shall be eligible for reimbursement of local sick leave under the following conditions:

- The employee retires under the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS).
- The employee provides advance written notice of intent to separate from employment.
- The employee has at least four years of service with the District.
- The employee has at least 22 days of available local leave.

The employee shall be reimbursed for each day of local sick leave at a rate established by the Board (\$60 per day for non-exempt personnel and \$150 per day for exempt personnel). If the employee is reemployed with the District, days for which the employee received payment shall not be available to that employee.

The rate established by the Board shall be in effect until the Board adopts a new rate.

## **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions**

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

### **Leave Entitlement**

The FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

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

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

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

### **Benefits and Protections**

While the employees are on FMLA leave, employers must maintain the employee's health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

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

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

### **Eligibility Requirements**

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

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

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

### **Requesting Leave**

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

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.



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

### **Employer Responsibilities**

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

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

### **Enforcement**

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

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

For additional information:

1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627

[www.wagehour.dol.gov](http://www.wagehour.dol.gov)

## **Local Family and Medical Leave Provisions**

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period from July 1 through June 30. Employees must request approval for Family and Medical Leave (FML). An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition or for a family member's medical condition shall be accepted as a request for FML. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement (forms WH-380-E or WH-380-F) confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. Completed paperwork must be received in the Leave Department as soon as the need of leave is known or within 30 days of the estimated first day out.

**Use of Paid Leave.** FML runs concurrently with accrued local sick and state personal leave, Temporary Disability Leave, compensatory time, assault leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The district will designate the leave as FML, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

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

**Intermittent Leave.** When medically necessary or in the case of a qualifying exigency, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. The district also permits the use of intermittent or reduced-schedule leave for the care of a newborn child or for adoption or placement of a child with the employee with supervisor approval.

**Premiums.** If at the expiration of FMLA leave the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the District will require reimbursement of premiums that were paid by the District during the leave. If the employee is unable to pay the premiums while on leave, the District will make payment for the employee and will collect the amount paid from the employee's first paycheck upon return. Premiums are not able to be partially paid or split between months.

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

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

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

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

**District Contact.** Employees that require FML or have questions should contact the Leave Department at 512-594-0026 for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## **Catastrophic Sick Leave**

A school employee suffering from a life-threatening catastrophic illness or injury may be eligible to participate in the district's catastrophic sick pool if they meet the following requirements. The employee must qualify for FML and their leave must be designated as FML (i.e., be employed with the district for at least a year and work 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period). The employee can participate in the pool for up to 60 days during the course of their employment with the district. If an employee's spouse or child is suffering from a life-threatening catastrophic illness or injury the employee may participate in the leave program. To receive days from the pool, the requesting employee must first use all of his or her state leave, local sick leave, comp-time, and non-contract (vacation) days. Catastrophic leave days may only be used for the illness that has been approved.

## **Extended Sick Leave**

Extended sick leave is a form of support to assist employees, that have been employed full-time for at least one semester or have worked for five full months, or immediate family (spouse, son or daughter, including biological, adopted, foster child, or legal ward or parent) with additional leave days in the event of an unexpected medical emergency. The illness must be verified by a physician on the Extended Sick Leave request form that extended beyond an employee's accumulated leave including local sick leave, state personal leave, comp time, and non-contract (vacation) days. In a given school year, up to three extended sick leave days can be requested; however, a maximum of nine extended sick leave days can be granted to employee during the period of his/her employment with the district. Contact the Leave Department at 512-594-0026 for the request form.

## **Maternity/Medical Leave**

The district will allow leave after the birth/adoption of a child or in the event of a medical illness for you or your immediate family member. This time off is taken under Family and Medical Leave (FML) and/or Temporary Disability Leave, which run concurrently. The District does not permit the use of intermittent or reduce FML for the care of a newborn child or for the adoption or placement of the child with the employee. During this time, all earned leave balances must be exhausted. Days not covered by earned leave will either be docked or paid the balance of your salary due at that time. Employees who are paid the balance of their salary must return back to work by the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month to be reinstated on that month's payroll. Employees returning after the 6<sup>th</sup> will be reinstated on the following months payroll. Accrued local sick leave will be determined as of the date the employee begins his/her leave. Employees do not accrue non-contract (vacation) and/or local sick leave while on unpaid leave. Normal childbirth and recovery are not considered a catastrophic personal illness or catastrophic disability.

## **Temporary Disability Leave**

### *Policy DEC*

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

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be accepted as a request for temporary disability leave. The request must be accompanied by a physician's statement (forms WH-380-E or WH-380-F) confirming the date the leave is to begin, employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If temporary disability leave is approved, the length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days and will run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave (FML), if FML is applicable. Employees are required to provide medical documentation every 30 days confirming their continued inability to return to work until they are released or reach 180 calendar days. Employees on temporary disability are not eligible to receive the District contribution towards their medical premium

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

When an employee is ready to return to work, the Leave Coordinator should be notified at least 30 days in advance. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able to resume regular duties.

Certified employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned if an appropriate position is available. If an appropriate position is not available, the employee may be assigned to another campus, subject to the approval of the campus principal. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, the employee will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

## **Local Temporary Disability Leave**

The District shall grant an employee who is not eligible for State temporary disability leave a maximum of 45 calendar days of local temporary disability leave after 30 work days of continuous employment under the same terms and conditions as State temporary disability leave.

## **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

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

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use accumulated local leave or any other paid leave benefits. An employee choosing to use paid leave will not receive workers' compensation weekly income benefits until all paid leave is exhausted or to the extent that paid leave does not equal the pre-illness or -injury wage. If the use of paid leave is not elected, then the employee will only receive workers' compensation wage benefits for any absence resulting from a work-related illness or injury, which may not equal his or her pre-illness or -injury wage.

The worker's compensation program is not a form of leave. The program provides medical treatment and income benefits once the worker's compensation physician has restricted the employee's ability to work for more than 7 days. Employees will use their earned leave for all physician appointments, therapy sessions, and absences that do not qualify for worker's compensation income benefits. Employees that do not have any available leave will be docked at their daily rate of pay.

## **Assault Leave**

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

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

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

Assault leave pay is coordinated with worker's compensation Temporary Income Benefits (TIB's) and will be paid by TriStar Risk Management, the Districts workers' compensation claims administrator. Employee's paycheck will be offset by the TIB's received.

## **Bereavement Leave**

Use of state personal or local sick leave for a death shall not exceed five (5) workdays per occurrence and is deducted from the employee's leave. Two additional days may be granted by the Chief Human Resources Officer upon written request, if out-of-state travel is required. Employees with no accumulated leave will be docked their daily rate of pay.

## **Jury Duty**

Policies DEC, DG

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

An employee may be required to report back to work as soon as they are released from jury duty. The supervisor may consider the travel time required and the nature of the individual's position when determining the need to report to work. A copy of the release from jury duty or documentation of time spent at the court may be required.

## **Compliance with a Subpoena**

Employees will be paid while on leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding and will not be required to use their leave. Employees are required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances. Absences for court appearances without a valid subpoena will be deducted from the employee's leave balance. This provision is not applicable if the employee must be in court because employee is a defendant in a criminal case or is a party to a civil suit.

## **Truancy Court Appearances**

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

## Religious Observance

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

## Military Leave

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

**Reemployment after Military Leave.** Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. Employees returning to work following military leave should contact Kristin Baum, Coordinator of Benefits and Leaves. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

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

## Leave Time for Advanced Degrees

If an employee is pursuing an advanced degree, he/she will gain approval from the principal or supervisor and will use personal leave time for time missed during regular working hours. Leave will not be granted if the employee does not have the available leave for the absences.

## Absence Reporting Procedures

PfISD believes that its employees are the key to what makes a great school system. We also believe that strong workforce attendance is essential for a high performing operation. We further believe that accurate and timely compensation for work is essential. To help foster

these ideas, the district has developed professional expectations and procedures for reporting time off from work.

### **Procedures**

- A Planned Absence
  - Employee must notify his/her direct supervisor to obtain approval and report the planned absence in the Frontline AESOP Absence Management System at least one (1) week in advance.
- Unplanned Absences
  - Employee must contact his/her supervisor to report the absence as soon as possible.
  - If the supervisor is not available, contact the designated senior or executive associate. If this person is not available, contact another employee within the department.
  - If necessary, the contacted person should inform others within the department of the employee's absence.
  - The employee is expected to enter the absence into the AESOP system any time prior to the start time of the date of absence. If the AESOP deadlines cannot be met and the absence has been not entered by the employee, the supervisor or designee must be informed so the absence can be entered into the system for the employee.
- All absences exceeding two or more hours must be entered into the AESOP system.

## **Timesheets for Nonexempt Employees and Retire/Rehires**

Nonexempt and retire/rehire employees must accurately record the time they begin and end their work day, as well as the beginning and ending time of the lunch period. They must also record the beginning and ending time of any departure for leave.

It is the employee's responsibility to sign his/her time record to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. The department supervisor is responsible for reviewing and approving timesheets prior to submission for payroll processing.

The exact time of arrival and departures must be accurately recorded daily on an employee time sheet.

These timesheets are legal records and must reflect actual time worked. Time worked includes all time (on or off premises) that an employee is physically at work for the school district. Time worked is used to determine overtime/comp time for nonexempt employees. Time worked for Retire/Rehire employee is used to report actual hours and actual days worked to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas for to satisfy reporting requirements.



Leave is calculated as quarter day (2 hours), half day and whole day. Employees absent 5 or more hours are charged a full day.

AESOP job numbers should be documented on time sheets to confirm the reporting of the absence for any part of the work day. Comp time used must be reported in AESOP as well as on the employee's timesheet.

All lunch breaks must be reported.

Overtime must be approved by a supervisor before the occurrence.

Anything under two hours may be made up within the same day by taking a shorter lunch break and/or staying longer in the afternoon. This must be approved by your supervisor. Late arrivals or early departures exceeding two hours must be entered into AESOP.

### **Absences Requiring Substitutes/Substitute Hours**

Substitute teachers will only be provided for absences  $\frac{1}{2}$  day or whole day. A substitute will not be provided for less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  day. Campuses will need to find coverage.

High School substitute hours are from 8:40 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Middle School substitute hours are from 8:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Elementary substitute hours are from 7:15 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.

# Employee Relations and Communications

## Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the district. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the Superintendent's newsletter, and through special events and activities. Employees are also recognized at the PfISD Annual Employee Awards Banquet in the spring semester.

Outstanding PfISD employees are recognized at the District level, both as a reward for exceptional performance and as a model to other employees. Based upon nominations from other PfISD staff, PfISD will name a Professional and a Support Employee of the Month (EOM) each month. Any PfISD employee can nominate another employee as EOM. Once the Employees of the Month are determined, they will be recognized by the Board of Trustees and on the PfISD website. This is a great way to recognize employees who are observed going above and beyond in PfISD. For each month's EOM, nominations will be accepted through the 15th of the prior month. To nominate or learn more about Employee of the Month go to the district's homepage at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), click on "Departments," "Human Resources," then "Employee of the Month" or go to <http://www.pfisd.net/site/Default.aspx?PageID=6265> .

## District Communications

Throughout the school year, PfISD Community Relations Department publishes brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. Additionally, the district maintains a wellness website titled *Pflugerville Wellness Program* for general exercise, nutrition, and helpful health information. Please see the staff section of the district website for more information.

# Complaints and Grievances

## *Policy DGBA*

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

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees. For ease of reference, the district's policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints can be found at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1147?filter=DGBA> or [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), "About Us," "Board Policy Online," then "DGBA." This policy is also found in the appendix of this handbook.

Employee complaint forms can be obtained in the following ways:

1. from the front desk in the Administration Building;
2. online at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), under the "Departments" tab, "Human Resources," and "Parent and Staff Concerns;" and
3. in the appendix of this handbook.

Informal resolution is encouraged, but, please note, formal employee complaints must be filed with the Chief Human Resources Officer within 15 business days of the date the employee first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance. Contact the Chief Human Resources Officer to request an extension in writing to the formal grievance timeline, before the 15 business days have passed, if you would like more time to pursue informal resolution.

An employee who receives a disciplinary memorandum has 10 business days to write a rebuttal, if the employee wishes to do so. This is the employee's opportunity to explain things from his or her viewpoint. The employee must give the rebuttal statement to the person who issued the memorandum. The person reviews the memorandum and determines whether or not the memorandum should be changed as a result. The memorandum and rebuttal statement are sent to Human Resources for filing. The rebuttal is attached to the memorandum in the employee's personnel file.

Employees may also contact the Chief Human Resources Officer for additional information about employee complaints.

# Employee Conduct and Welfare

## Standards of Conduct

### *Policy DH*

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

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

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

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

### ***Texas Educators' Code of Ethics***

#### **Statement of Purpose**

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator,

in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification. (19 TAC 247.1(b))

## **Enforceable Standards**

### **1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **2. Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **3. Ethical Conduct toward Students**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
- (ii) the subject matter of the communication;
- (iii) whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
- (iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- (v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- (vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

## **Employee's Dress and Grooming**

### *Policy DH*

An employee's dress and grooming shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment, and in accordance with any additional standards established by his or her supervisor and approved by the Superintendent.

## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

*Policies DH, DIA*

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

Any district employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, or believes that another employee has experienced such prohibited conduct, should immediately report the alleged acts. The employee may report the alleged acts to his or her supervisor, the campus principal, the Title IX coordinator, or the superintendent.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated or retaliated against or harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator for employees, Willie Watson, Jr., or the Superintendent, as applicable. If the district official is the subject of a complaint, the complaint should be made directly to the superintendent. A complaint against the superintendent may be made directly to the board.

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation can be found at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1147?filter=DIA> or [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), "About Us," "Board Policy Online," "DIA." This policy is also found in the appendix of this handbook.

## **Harassment of Students**

*Policies DH, DHB, FFG, FFH, FFI*

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the Title IX Coordinator for students, Hutcherson Hill, the Section 504/ADA Coordinator for students, Dr. Holly Galloway, or the Superintendent of Schools, as applicable. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. Any district employee who suspects or receives direct or indirect notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, of a student shall immediately notify the district's Title IX coordinator, the ADA/Section 504 coordinator, or superintendent and take any other steps required by district policy. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Bullying*, for additional information.



The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students can be found at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1147?filter=FFH> or [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), "About Us," "Board Policy Online," "FFH." This policy is also found in the appendix of this handbook.

"Solicitation of a romantic relationship" means deliberate or repeated acts that can be reasonably interpreted as the solicitation by an educator of a relationship with a student that is romantic in nature. A romantic relationship is often characterized by a strong emotional or sexual attachment and/or patterns of exclusivity, but does not include appropriate educator-student relationships that arise out of legitimate contexts such as familial connections or longtime acquaintance. The following acts, considered in context, may constitute prima facie evidence of the solicitation by an educator of a romantic relationship with a student:

1. Behavior, gestures, expressions, or communications with a student that are unrelated to the educator's job duties and evidence a romantic intent or interest in the student, including statements of love, affection, or attraction. Factors that may be considered in determining the romantic intent of such communications or behavior include:
  - a. The nature of the communications;
  - b. The timing of the communications;
  - c. The extent of the communications;
  - d. Whether the communications were made openly or secretly;
  - e. The extent that the educator attempts to conceal the communications;
  - f. If the educator claims to be counseling a student, SBEC may consider whether the educator's job duties included counseling, whether the educator reported the subject of the counseling to the student's guardians or to the appropriate school personnel, or, in the case of alleged abuse or neglect, whether the educator reported the abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities; and
  - g. Any other evidence tending to show the context of the communications between educator and student.
2. Making inappropriate comments about a student's body, creating or transmitting sexually suggestive photographs or images, or encouraging the student to transmit sexually suggestive photographs or images.
3. Making sexually demeaning comments to a student.
4. Making comments about a student's potential sexual performance.
5. Requesting details of a student's sexual history.
6. Requesting a date, sexual contact, or any activity intended for the sexual gratification of the educator.
7. Engaging in conversations regarding the sexual problems, preferences, or fantasies of either party.
8. Inappropriate hugging, kissing, or excessive touching.
9. Providing the student with drugs or alcohol.
10. Suggestions that a romantic relationship is desired after the student graduates, including post-graduation plans for dating or marriage.

11. Any other acts tending to show that the educator solicited a romantic relationship with the student.

19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 249.3(50)

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

*Policies DG, GRA*

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

Employees are also required to make a report if they have cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or person with a disability.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children**

The district has established a plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed at <http://www.pfisd.net/Page/880> or [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), "About Us," "District Plan." As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or maltreated. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Maltreatment is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

## **Reporting Crime**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Scope and Sequence**

### *Policy DG*

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

The district may take appropriate action if a teacher does not follow the district's scope and sequence based on documented evidence of a deficiency in classroom instruction. This

documentation can be obtained through observation or substantiated and documented third-party information.

## **Technology Resources**

### *Policy CQ*

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

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

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

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact Technology Department at 512-594-0230.

## **Personal Use of Electronic Communications**

### *Policy CQ, DH*

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

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

settings appropriate to the content. An employee who uses electronic communications for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee’s personal social network page(s) using the district’s computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct district business.
- The employee shall not use the district or campus’s logo or other copyrighted material of the district without express, written consent of the employee’s supervisor and written notice to the Community Relations Department regarding how the district or campus’s logo or other copyrighted material of the district is intended to be used.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on district business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee’s immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Educators’ Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
  - Confidentiality of student records. [See Policy FL]
  - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law. [See DH (EXHIBIT)]
  - Confidentiality of district records, including educator evaluations and private email addresses. [See Policy GBA]
  - Copyright law [See Policy CY]
  - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system. [See DH (EXHIBIT)]

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

## **Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents**

### *Policy DH*

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may use electronic communications with students who

are currently enrolled in the district. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. Electronic communications between all other employees and students who are enrolled in the district are prohibited.

Employees are not required to provide students with their personal phone number or email address.

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

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

In the rare situation when an employee is also a student, the student-employee is excepted from these Use of Electronic Communications between Employees and Students rules.

As to the student-employee's co-workers and supervisors, before beginning employment, the student worker's parent or guardian must acknowledge and agree to excepting the student-employee's co-workers and supervisors from the Use of Electronic Communications between Employees and Students rules. The student-employee's supervisor and the Department of Human Resources have copies of the Student-Employee Exception form.

As to romantic relationships of student-employees:

- The student-employee may not solicit or engage in a romantic relationship with an employee of the district;
- No student-employee may work at a campus where a student, in which the student-employee is involved in a permissible romantic relationship, attends; and
  - A permissible romantic relationship between a student-employee and a student is one where
    - the student-employee is not certified or licensed,
    - the student the student-employee has a romantic relationship with does not attend the same campus, and
    - the student-employee has timely disclosed to the student-employee's supervisor in writing.

- No certified or licensed student-employee may solicit or engage in a romantic relationship with a student at any time.

Because of the legal prohibitions on relationships between employees and students, all student-employees must immediately disclose in writing to his or her supervisor any romantic relationship with any student or employee in the District. Student-employees should be aware of Texas Penal Code § 21.12, Improper Relationship Between Educator and Student, as it applies to an employee, not just educators, of a primary or secondary school.

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

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

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

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the district unless a specific exception is noted below. Only an administrator, teacher, or other certified or licensed employee may use a group text application, like Remind, if all of the following protocol are followed:
  - For non-administrators, the employee must annually complete a form requesting permission to use a group texting application (disclosing the application to be used and the intended purpose of using a group text application) to his or her campus principal, and the employee must have received written approval from the campus principal authorizing the use of the group text application.
  - The employee using the group text application must ensure that the settings for the group text application are set for one-way communication only at all times.

- The employee using the group text application must ensure that the settings for the group text application are set so that users cannot see the names of others (students or parents) that are using the group text application.
  - A copy of each message sent must be sent to the employee's district email.
- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging (other than through a group text application mentioned above), and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:
  - The employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message;
  - The employee shall include his or her immediate supervisor as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and supervisor receive the same message; or
  - For each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee shall send a copy of the text message to the employee's district email address.
- For all electronic communications, the employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must seek written approval from the employee's supervisor annually to establish and maintain a professional social network page. The employee must give a designated administrator administrative rights to the social network page and provide parents notice and access to the employee's professional page. The employee, not the designated administrator, is responsible for the content of the professional page.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics including:
  - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidential student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
  - Copyright law [See Policy CY]
  - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Board Policy DH]



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

## Acceptable Use Policy for Technology Resources

All employees must adhere to and complete annual training on the Acceptable Use Policy. It is available for review at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), under the “Departments” tab, click “Human Resources,” then “Handbooks.”

### Technology Security

An employee may not share his/her account with anyone or leave the account open or unattended. Attempting to log on or logging onto a computer or email system by using another’s password is prohibited. Assisting others in violating this rule by sharing information or passwords is unacceptable.

Users will be required to change passwords twice per school year using the following minimum requirements to fulfill the district’s complex passwords setup:

- Passwords must be a minimum of 8 characters.
- Passwords must contain characters from three of the following five categories:
  - Uppercase characters (A through Z)
  - Lowercase characters (a through z)
  - Numbers (0 through 9)
  - Non-alphanumeric characters: ~!@#\$%^&\* \_-+=`|\(){}[]:;'"<>.,?/

Users are not to install or connect personal network devices including personal switches or wireless network routers. Users are responsible for saving all documents to the server. Department of Technology staff will attempt to recover documents only if they have been saved to the district’s server environment.

### Internet Safety/ Filtering

The District adheres to the federal Children’s Internet Protection Act Guidelines (CIPA). The District network maintains a filtering device that blocks access to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students or harmful to minors as defined by the federal CIPA. The District shall enforce the use of such filtering devices and shall not authorize the disability of a filtering device for any reason. The following are in place to protect students’ Internet use.

- Student’s access to inappropriate content is controlled through the Internet filter.
- The district’s private email system does not allow outside access to the directory of names. Students are not allowed to reveal personal address or phone number information when using the electronic communication system.

- Students may participate in prearranged Internet chats, video, or other communication with experts that have been scheduled by PfISD staff.

Although the district will use these preventative practices, system users and parents should be aware that use of the system may provide access to other electronic communications systems in the global electronic network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material.

## **Email**

- Email cannot be used for private or commercial offerings of products or services for sale or to solicit products or services.
- Email cannot be used for political or religious purposes.
- Email messages that cause network congestion or interfere with the delivery of mail to others are not acceptable.
- Email from list serves must not affect the system's performance.
- Email shall be archived for one year per district retention procedures and requirements.

System users are to observe the following network etiquette:

- Email messages and conference postings will not contain improper language, swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs or any other inflammatory language.
- Social Media postings will follow district guidelines, or be removed.
- Do not reveal personal information of users or others.
- Users are responsible for material delivered to their accounts and shall not forward material inappropriate in nature (political religious, profane, etc.).
- Mail from outside email providers must meet the district Acceptable Use Policy and Responsible Use Guidelines.

## **Technology Forgery**

Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic data is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic data or the deliberate interference with an electronic system is prohibited.

## **Software**

Please contact the District Technology Department to install or reinstall any software on district computers. The illegal installation of copyrighted software or files on district computers is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Only software approved, licensed and/or purchased by the district should be installed on district computers. Proper licensing documentation must be maintained.

## **Technology Vandalism**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy district equipment or materials, data of another user of the district's system, or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of district policy and administrative regulations and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal law. This includes, but is not limited to, the physical abuse or modification of district hardware and software settings.

Vandalism as defined above will result in the cancellation of system use privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, hardware, or software costs.

## **Technology Disclaimer**

The district shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic communication resources, violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, users' mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. The district shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the Internet.

The district's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The district does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitation, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein. The district does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on, the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, or that defects will be corrected. Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the district.

The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the district's electronic communications system.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact the campus principal or the Department of Technology.

## **Public Information on Private Devices**

*Policy DH*

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

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

## **Criminal History Background Checks**

### *Policy DBAA*

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

## **Employee Arrests and Convictions**

### *Policy DH*

An employee must notify his or her principal or immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the employee.

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

## **Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention**

### *Policy DH*

Pflugerville ISD is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities on or off school property. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours may be dismissed. The district's policies regarding employee drug use can be found at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1147?filter=DH> and or at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), "About Us," "Board Policy Online," "DH" and "DI." These policies are also found in the appendix of this handbook.

## **Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use**

### *Policies DH, FNCD, GKA*

State law prohibits smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes on all district-owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off school property. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of district-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco

products, or e-cigarettes while inside the vehicle. Notices stating that smoking is prohibited by law and punishable by a fine are displayed in prominent places in all school buildings.

## **Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

### *Policy CAA*

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

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the district
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other district assets including employee time
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of district financial transactions
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of district information or activities
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the district
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the district, except as otherwise permitted by law or district policy
- Inappropriately destroying, removing, or using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state, or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or district policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the district
- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards

Any employee suspecting fraud or financial impropriety in the District shall report the suspicions immediately to any supervisor, the Superintendent or designee. Such reporting will be treated as confidential. No District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against a person who in good faith reports perceived fraud or financial impropriety.

Individuals are welcome to use the anonymous reporting hotline at 1-800-398-1496 or submit a report online at [www.lighthouse-services.com](http://www.lighthouse-services.com). Lighthouse Services is a worldwide, anonymous reporting provider that helps employers identify improper behavior. PflSD and Lighthouse are committed to protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of employees who use the system. Under "Report an Incident" click on "Submit Report." The user name is "Pflugerville" and the password is "pisd."

Reports of any of the following regarding PfISD or its employees may be made using this system:

- Ethical violations
- Unsafe working conditions
- Sexual harassment
- Discrimination
- Alcohol and substance
- Abuse
- Fraud
- Violation of the law
- Falsification of records
- Wrongful discharge
- Internal controls
- Vandalism and sabotage
- Theft
- Conduct violations
- Threats
- Bribery and kickbacks
- Violation of district policy
- Misuse of district property
- Theft and embezzlement
- Conflict of Interest

## **Conflict of Interest**

*Policy CB, DBD*

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

- A personal financial interest
- A business interest
- A romantic relationship with a subordinate
- Any other obligation or relationship
- Non-school employment
- Fundraising using the district, school, or school organization's name or using school resources to fundraise.

A district employee shall not use his or her position with the District to attempt to sell products or services.

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

## **Gifts and Favors**

*Policy DBD*

Employees may not accept gifts or favors that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor, or service by an

administrator or teacher that might reasonably tend to influence the selection of textbooks, electronic textbooks, instructional materials or technological equipment may result in prosecution of a Class B misdemeanor offense. This does not include staff development, teacher training, or instructional materials such as maps or worksheets that convey information to students or contribute to the learning process.

## **Copyrighted Materials**

### *Policy CY*

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

## **Associations and Political Activities**

### *Policy DGA*

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

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

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

## **Fundraising**

### *Policy FJ*

When fundraising activities are in the name of the district, a campus, or a school-related activity, all funds raised become school funds belonging to the school-sponsored group responsible for raising the money. An accounting of all monies raised must be kept and disclosed to district administrators upon request. At no time should these funds be deposited into a personal banking account. All fundraising activities must be approved by the campus principal in writing and written notification provided to the Accounting Department. At this



time, DonorsChoose is the only crowd fundraising service that may be used by PfISD campuses/departments to support instructional-based campus-wide initiatives. These initiatives must be pre-approved and overseen by the campus principal/department director. No PayPal or GoFundMe accounts are allowed. The district currently uses RevTrak for collecting debit/credit card payments and may be used with an approved fundraiser.

## **Charitable Contributions**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Safety**

### *Policy CK series*

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the Executive Director of Health, Safety, Emergency, and Crisis Management.

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

### *Policies DH, FNCG, GKA*

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a

handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other district provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisor or call Pflugerville ISD Police Department at 512-670-5551 immediately.

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

*Policy GKC*

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

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

*Policy CKA*

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

## **Pest Control Treatment**

*Policies CLB, DI*

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

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

# General Procedures

## Emergency School Closing

The district may close schools because of severe weather, epidemics, or other emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the district's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post a notice on the district's website and the district's Twitter and Facebook pages. Parents will also be notified via phone call as well as text message to those who signed up for the messenger system. Staff will also be notified via PfISD email. The district will also notify local radio and television stations.

**District's website:** [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net)

**Twitter:** <http://www.twitter.com/pfisd>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/pfisd>

### **Messenger System:**

Text "Yes" to 68453 on your mobile device to sign-up for automated PfISD text messages.

### **Local TV Stations:**

KEYE 42, [www.k-eyetv.com](http://www.k-eyetv.com), (800) 563-9742

KVUE 24, [www.kvue.com](http://www.kvue.com), (512) 459-9442

KXAN 36, [www.kxan.com](http://www.kxan.com), (512) 476-2863

KTBC 7, [www.fox7.com](http://www.fox7.com), (512) 472-0988

### **Local Radio Stations:**

KKMJ 95.5 FM, [www.majic.com](http://www.majic.com), (512) 390-5565

KHFI 96.7 FM, [www.967kissfm.com](http://www.967kissfm.com), (800) 750-5434

KEYI 103.5 FM, [www.oldies103austin.com](http://www.oldies103austin.com), (800) 996-5060

KVET 1300 AM, [www.sportsradio1300.com](http://www.sportsradio1300.com), (512) 684-7300

KLBJ 93.7 FM/590 AM, [www.590klbj.com](http://www.590klbj.com), (512) 832-4027

## Emergencies

*Policies CKC, CKD*

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

## **Purchasing Procedures**

### *Policy CH*

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the Accounting Department on an official district purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the district can be made without a PO number. The district will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the district's business office. Contact the Purchasing Department at 512-594-0072 for additional information on purchasing procedures.

## **Name and Address Changes**

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Human Resources Department if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, or emergency contact. The form to process a change in personal information can be obtained from the Human Resources Department or from the district's website at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net) under "Departments," "Human Resources," then "Forms and Documents." Employees can also update their address and telephone number via "Employee Access" under the Staff tab.

## **Personnel Records**

### *Policy DBA, GBA*

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

Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

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

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

An employee may request his/her own personnel record by completing a record request form available at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net) under "Departments," click on "Human Resources," then "Forms and Documents."

## **Facility Use**

*Policies DGA, GKD*

Employees who wish to use district facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. The Support Services Specialist is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact the Facilities Rental Supervisor at 512-594-0268 to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

# Termination of Employment

## Resignations

### *Policy DFE*

**Contract Employees.** Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received at least 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the supervisor or the Human Resources Department. Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent, the Chief Human Resources Officer, or the Board of Trustees. Resignation without consent may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

The principal is required to notify the Superintendent of an educator's resignation within seven business days following an alleged incident of misconduct for any of the acts listed in *Reports to Texas Education Agency*. The Superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee resigns and there is evidence to indicate that the employee engaged in any of the acts listed in *Reports to the Texas Education Agency*.

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

The employee's last physical day worked will serve as the resignation date. Employees may not use paid leave prior to their resignation date unless they have been out under a protected leave and are unable to return.

## Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

### *Policies DF Series*

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

found in the DF series policies that are provided to available online at [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net) under the “About Us” tab, click “Board Policy Online.”

## **Dismissal of Noncontract Employees**

*Policies DCD, DP*

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

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

## **Discharge of Convicted Employees**

*Policy DF*

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

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

## **Job Abandonment**

When an employee is absent from work, his/her employment may be terminated if the employee does not make any direct contact with his/her supervisor before three work days has lapsed. Any combination of three “no-call, no-show” days may result in termination of employment.

## Exit Interviews and Procedures

Exit interviews will be available on request. Upon departure, an employee must complete an exit form. Information on the continuation of benefits will follow by mail. On the exit form, separating employees are asked to provide the district with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the district with feedback on his or her employment experience. All district keys, books, property, including intellectual property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

## Reports to Texas Education Agency

*Policy DF, DHB, DHC*

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

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

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

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



## **Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding**

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

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

# Student Issues

## Equal Educational Opportunities

*Policies FB, FFH*

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

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to Hutcherson Hill, the district Title IX Coordinator for students. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to the district ADA/Section 504 Coordinator Cara Schwartz. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to the Superintendent.

## Student Records

*Policy FL*

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

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

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

## Parent and Student Complaints

*Policy FNG*

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

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

## **Administering Medication to Students**

### *Policy FFAC*

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

## **Dietary Supplements**

### *Policies DH, FFAC*

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

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

### *Policy FFAC*

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

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

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

## **Student Conduct and Discipline**

*Policies in the FN series and FO series*

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

## **Student Attendance**

*Policy FEB*

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

## **Bullying**

*Policy FFI*

All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying to the campus principal or designee. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and can be found at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1147?filter=FFI> or [www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net), "About Us," "Board Policy Online," "FFI." This policy is also found in the appendix of this handbook.

## **Hazing**

*Policy FNCC*

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

# Appendix

The appendix for the Employee Handbook can be found by going to the district's website ([www.pfisd.net](http://www.pfisd.net)), selecting "Departments," then "Human Resources," then "Handbooks." Click on the link that says "Employee Handbook Appendix."