



**Spring Hill ISD**

**District  
Employee  
Handbook  
2016 - 2017**

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*3101 Spring Hill Road, Longview, TX 75605*

*903-759-4404*

# Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all district policies and procedures are included. Those that are have been summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to Cathy Reed, [creed@shisd.net](mailto:creed@shisd.net).

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisors or call the appropriate district office. The policy manual is located at central administration and is available for employee review during normal working hours. District policies can be accessed on line at [www.shisd.net](http://www.shisd.net). The employee handbook can also be viewed on-line on the Administration page at [www.shisd.net](http://www.shisd.net).

# Spring Hill ISD

## Employee Handbook 2016-2017

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## **District Information**

### **Spring Hill ISD Vision Statement**

Our vision is to be a premier school district focused on engaged learning and student success.

### **Spring Hill ISD Mission Statement**

*Policy AE*

As the center of our community, Spring Hill ISD is committed to the fulfillment of each learner's intellectual, creative and physical potential through the collaborative efforts of exceptional educators, dedicated parents and integrated rigorous instruction provided in a safe environment.

### **Spring Hill ISD Beliefs**

We Believe:

- Spring Hill ISD is the best school district in the State of Texas.
- The safety and security of all is a top priority.
- Every decision we make is truly made in the best interest of students.
- Every student is important.
- All students are of value and should be given the opportunity to succeed in life.
- In recruiting and retaining the best staff.
- All staff are of value and should be given the opportunity to contribute and succeed.
- All students will be well-balanced and taught the value of hard work.
- Embracing diversity is a strength.
- In good stewardship of the taxpayer's dollars.
- The educational needs of all students must be met.
- Parents are our most valuable partners in student success.
- Communication will move our district forward.
- Character is as important as academics.
- We are able to accomplish more together than on our own.
- Successful people must be excellent communicators and be relationship-centered.

### **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, and 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 law 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 in May and serve three-year terms. Board Members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the district.

Current board members include:

<b>Mark White</b>	<b>President</b> (Elected 2012 / serving 2 <sup>nd</sup> term)
<b>John Borens</b>	<b>Vice President</b> (Elected 2008 / serving 3 <sup>rd</sup> term)
<b>Karen Wright</b>	<b>Secretary</b> (Elected 2003 / serving 5 <sup>th</sup> term)
<b>Frank Bufkin</b>	<b>Trustee</b> (Elected 2015 / serving 1 <sup>st</sup> term)
<b>Mike Henry</b>	<b>Trustee</b> (Elected 2016 / serving 1 <sup>st</sup> term)
<b>Brad Rogers</b>	<b>Trustee</b> (Elected 2016 / serving 1 <sup>st</sup> term)
<b>Ben Shelton</b>	<b>Trustee</b> (Elected 2016 / serving 1 <sup>st</sup> term)

The board usually meets the third Monday of the month in the board room at Central Administration, 3101 Spring Hill Rd, Longview, TX at 6 p.m. In the event that large attendance is anticipated, the board may meet at one of the school's cafeterias. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the district website and outside Central Administration 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 two-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. If needed, closed session will be at the end of the meeting.



# Employment

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## Equal Employment Opportunity

*Policies DAA, DIA*

Spring Hill ISD does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, 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.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to discrimination on any of the bases listed above should contact Gloria Willeford, [gwilleford@shisd.net](mailto:gwilleford@shisd.net), Coordinator of Human Resources.

## Job Vacancy Announcements

*Policy DC*

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

## Employment after Retirement

*Policy DC*

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

## Contract and Non-Contract Employment

*Policy DC series*

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

**Probationary Contracts.** Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the district and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification must receive a probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after a two-year lapse in district employment or employees who move to a position requiring a new class of certification also may be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one-year contracts. The probationary period for those who have been employed in public schools 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 certification and nurses will be employed by term contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. Teachers employed after that date are employed by term contracts. 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 at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/543> or copies will be provided upon request.

**Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees.** Some 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 procedures for non-renewal 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 HR in a timely manner.

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 Cathy Reed, [creed@shisd.net](mailto:creed@shisd.net), if you have any questions regarding certification or licensure requirements.

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

*Policies 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, work areas including district-owned computers, 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 who is required to have 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 when 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 policies and related educational material should contact Tony White, Director of Transportation, [twhite@shisd.net](mailto:twhite@shisd.net).

## **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 district's Director of Maintenance, Billy Miller, prior to expiration of the current certification.

## **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 of a contract employee. Any change in an employee's contract shall be in accordance with policy DC. 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. Employees who object to a reassignment may follow the district process for employee complaints as outlined in this handbook and district policy DGBA (LOCAL).

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit his or her request by the established deadline. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has

been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by HR and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

## **Workload and Work Schedules**

*Policies DEA, DEAB, DK, DL*

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

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

Classroom teachers are expected to provide before school and/or after school tutoring opportunities for their assigned students.

**Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees.** Support employees are employed at will and receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor. See *Overtime Compensation* on page 16 for additional information.

**Moving between positions: Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees.** Increase in pay for promotions or decreases in pay due to demotion are determined in accordance with the administrative guidelines established for the employee pay plan.

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

*Policies DEA, 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.

## **Notifications 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. 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 Cathy Reed, 903-323-7740.

## **Outside Employment and Tutoring**

### *Policy DBD*

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

A teacher may not tutor, for money, a student enrolled in their class (es) or that they directly teach/assign grades to.

## **Performance Evaluation**

### *Policy DN series*

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

## **Employee Involvement**

### *Policies BQA, BQB*

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

## **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. Copies of professional development certificates applied toward SBEC certification renewal should be uploaded to *eduphoria!* when certificates are earned.

# Compensation and Benefits

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## 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 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 overtime hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek. (See *Overtime Compensation*, page 16)

Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time registered nurses, and full-time school counselors will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule. Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule.

For questions concerning their own rate of pay, employees should contact Gloria Willeford ([gwilleford@shisd.net](mailto:gwilleford@shisd.net)) in Human Resources.

Specific questions related to paychecks and payroll deductions should be directed to Edie Benton ([ebenton@shisd.net](mailto:ebenton@shisd.net)) in the Payroll Office.

## Paychecks

Employees can access their pay information through Skyward Employee on the home page on the website. When a hard copy of a paycheck is printed, it will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization. An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions and withholding information.

## Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification by the 2<sup>nd</sup> business day of the month is necessary to activate this service. Contact Edith Benton, [ebenton@shisd.net](mailto:ebenton@shisd.net), for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

## Payroll Deductions

*Policy CFEA*

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

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)
- Federal income tax
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired in this district after March 31, 1986)

Other payroll deductions that employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, vision, medical gap, supplemental accident, disability and cancer,

insurance; and annuities. 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*

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. All employees are classified as exempt or nonexempt for purposes of overtime compensation. Professional and administrative employees are ineligible for overtime compensation. 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.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours weekly and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour work week and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours. For the purpose of calculating overtime a work week begins at 12:00 a.m. on Saturday and ends 11:59 p.m. on Friday.

Employees may be compensated for overtime at time-and-a-half rate with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees may accumulate up to 80 hours of compensatory time.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- The district requires employees to use comp time before using any other available paid leave (i.e., sick, personal, vacation).
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

### *Policy DEE*

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and the Business Director 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 the extent possible, to be reimbursed for expenses other than mileage and meals.

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

### *Policy CRD*

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school employee health insurance program. The district's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees who choose a plan that costs more than the district's contribution are electing to pay the remainder of the premium from salary earned. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

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

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

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. Current employees may only make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment each year unless there is a qualifying event. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees should contact HR for more information.

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.

## **Supplemental Insurance Benefits**

### *Policy CRD*

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for dental, vision, medical gap, supplemental accident, life, disability and cancer. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact HR for more information.

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

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis. A third-party administrator handles employee claims made on these accounts. Employees may also choose to set aside additional dollars under the Flex Plan to cover out of pocket medical expenses or dependent care expenses incurred throughout the plan year. Such expenses must meet IRS guidelines to be eligible. Information is provided to employees at the beginning of each school year and then on an as needed basis.

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

## **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

### *Policy CRE*

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from CAS, effective Sept 1 to August 31 of the current school year.

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

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to their supervisor. The supervisor must report the incident to HR. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See *Workers' Compensation Benefits*, page 25 for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

## Unemployment Compensation Insurance

### *Policy CRF*

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation. 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 HR.

## Teacher Retirement

To be eligible to participate in Teacher Retirement, employment must be on a regular basis for either an indefinite period of time e.g., at-will employment, or a definite period of 4 ½ months or more. It must also be for one-half or more of the time required of the standard workload for the same or similar full-time position. Employees in a TRS eligible position must work a minimum of 15 hours per week to remain eligible. All personnel who meet these requirements 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 Edith Benton, [ebenton@shisd.net](mailto:ebenton@shisd.net), as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the web ([www.trs.texas.gov](http://www.trs.texas.gov)). See page 9 for information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

## Other Benefit Programs

- **Transfers for employees' children:** Employees living outside the district may enroll their children in the Spring Hill Schools without being subject to any tuition charge. This does not include substitute teachers.
- **College tuition and partial fee exemption for certified educational aides:** House Bill 571, passed by the 75th Legislature, created a college tuition and partial fee exemption program for individuals who have been employed as certified educational aides for at least two years at a public school in Texas and who are attending a public institution of higher education in Texas to become certified as a teacher. This program became effective during the 1997 fall term. If you would like further information regarding college tuition and partial fee exemption, please contact the financial aid office of the college/university where you plan to enroll.
- **Sick leave bank/catastrophic illness:** Spring Hill ISD employees may join the Sick Leave Bank by donating one local personal day to the bank. The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide additional leave days to members of the bank in the event of an unexpected extended illness, non- elective surgery, or a temporary disability due to an injury. Days may be requested only after the member has exhausted all accumulated state and local personal leave. Complete guidelines, membership form and application form is located in the Payroll department.
- **Free admission to athletic events w/ Employee IDs:** Allow the employee plus three

immediate family members into home athletic events for no charge.

- **Perfect Attendance Incentive:** Employees who have perfect attendance during a semester shall be paid \$100 at the end of the semester.

# Leaves and Absences

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## Leaves and Absences

*Policies DEC, DECA, DECB*

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

**Use of Leave.** Earned compensatory time shall be used before any available state and local leave if the employee has more than four hours of compensatory time available. State or local leave shall be used if the employee has less than four hours of compensatory time available. Leave must be used in half-day or full-day increments. However, if an employee is taking intermittent family and medical leave, leave shall be recorded in one-hour increments. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order: current local sick leave, former local sick leave, state sick leave accumulated before the 1995-96 school year, and then state personal. Any employee wanting to request a different order of use must notify payroll in advance of the absence so that the change can be manually entered.

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

**Medical Certification.** Any employee who is absent more than **5** days because of a personal or family illness must submit medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee’s fitness to return to work. Other times that the district may require medical certification are due to a questionable pattern of absences or when deemed necessary by the supervisor or superintendent; when an employee request FMLA leave for the employee’s serious health condition or that of a spouse, parent, or child; or when the employee requests FMLA leave for military caregiver purposes.

The term “immediate family” is defined as:

- Spouse.
- Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or 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.

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's 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 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.

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

## **Personal Leave**

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

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

**Discretionary.** Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit the request to his or her principal or supervisor **three days in advance** of the anticipated absence. The effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the principal or supervisor. **Discretionary personal leave cannot be taken for more than two consecutive days. Discretionary leave shall not be allowed before a school holiday, the day after a school holiday, days scheduled for state mandated assessments, professional or staff development days, workdays at the beginning or end of a semester, or other days critical to an employee's job responsibilities.**

**Leave Proration.** Leave is advanced in July of each year. For employees who do not work the full assignment for the school year, leave days advanced will be prorated to reflect the actual number of days earned based on the number of days worked for the school year. 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 and local personal leave will be prorated based on the actual time employed. When an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck will be reduced by the amount of local and state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year.

## State Sick Leave

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

Sick leave may be used for the following reasons only:

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

## Local Leave

### Local Personal Days

All employees shall earn an additional 5 equivalent workdays of local sick leave per school year, concurrently with state leave. Local sick leave shall accumulate to a maximum of 30 equivalent workdays and shall be taken with no loss of pay. Local sick leave must be used in the same manner as state sick leave. All employees called to active military service may use available state and local sick and personal leave

## Sick Leave Bank

### *Policy DEC*

The purpose of the sick leave bank is to provide leave to a full-time District employee in the event of a personal catastrophic illness or injury or that of an immediate family member. Catastrophic illness or injury shall be defined as an illness, injury, or disability that is life-threatening and requires major medical treatment such as surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, and the like. A District employee may voluntarily donate local or state sick leave days up to 5 days per school year. Employees who donate days must keep a minimum of 9 days, either state and/or local, in their sick leave record. The donation shall be voluntary and not solicited. When days are donated to the bank, they become the property of the District and are not returned to the employee. In order to receive days from the catastrophic sick leave bank, an employee suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury shall have exhausted all available paid leave. An employee must donate at least 1 day per school year by September 30 to be eligible to participate in the sick leave bank for that year. An employee may receive up to 20 days from the bank per school year, provided the bank has days for withdrawal. Requests for catastrophic sick leave bank days shall be submitted to the Superintendent on the official request form. The Superintendent will determine if the employee's illness or disability, or that of an immediate family member, qualifies for use of days from the bank and the number of days the employee may use. Any decision made by the Superintendent may be appealed in accordance with DGBA (Local).

## Family and Medical Leave (FML)—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.

**Basic 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.

**Military Family Leave Entitlements.** An eligible employee whose spouse, son, daughter or parent is on covered active duty or called to covered active duty status may use his or her 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness\*; or (2) a veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.\*

**\*The FMLA definitions of “serious injury or illness” for current service members and veterans are distinct from the FMLA definition of “serious health condition.”**

**Benefits and Protections.** During FML, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any “group health plan” on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FML, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FML cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

**Eligibility Requirements.** Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months\*, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

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

**Definition of Serious Health Condition.** A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity



of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

**Use of Leave.** An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

**Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave.** Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FML. In order to use paid leave for FML, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

**Employee Responsibilities.** Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FML when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days' notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FML was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

**Employer Responsibilities.** Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are eligible, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility. Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FML and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FML, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility to the employee.

**Unlawful Acts by Employers.** The FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right protected under the FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to the FMLA.

**Enforcement.** An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor 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.

*FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) required FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300 (a) may require additional disclosures.*

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 Act Provisions

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period measured forward from the date an individual employee's first FML begins.

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

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

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

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

## Temporary Disability Leave

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

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

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

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

principal. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, the employee will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

### **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

An employee absent from duty because of a job-related illness or injury may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits if the absence exceeds seven (7) calendar days.

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use accumulated sick 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 pre-injury wage.

### **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 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 personal leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Use of state leave and/or local sick leave for death in the immediate family shall not exceed five workdays per occurrence, subject to approval of the district.

### **Jury Duty**

Employees will receive leave with pay and without loss of accumulated leave for jury duty. Employees must present documentation of the service and may keep any compensation they receive.

### **Other Court Appearances**

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

### **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 a paid leave for authorized training or duty orders. Paid military leave is limited to 15 days each fiscal year. In addition, an employee is entitled to use available state and local personal or sick leave during a time of active military service.

**Reemployment after Military Leave.** Employees who leave the district to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. To be eligible for reemployment, employees must provide notice of their obligation or intent to perform military service, provide evidence of honorable discharge or release, and submit an application for reemployment within the period of time specified by law to HR. 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 HR for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

# Employee Relations and Communications

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## 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 and through special events and activities.

## District Communications

Throughout the school year, the central administration office publishes district communication materials, including newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements.

Communication materials and publications can be found on the district website. The district also uses social media tools Facebook and Twitter to communicate information pertaining to school activities, events and achievements.

# Complaints and Grievances

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## 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 DGBA (LOCAL) concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints is available on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/543?filter=DGBA>.

# Employee Conduct and Welfare

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## Standards of Conduct

### *Policy DH*

**At Spring Hill ISD, the belief is that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.**

Consequently, 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 may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day after the superintendent knew of the incident. See *Reports to Texas Education Agency*, page 44 for additional information.

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

## Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

### **Purpose and Scope**

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. (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, education preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

**Standard 1.2** The educator shall not knowingly 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 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 or knowingly 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 or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.

**Standard 1.13** The educator shall not 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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

*Policies DH, DIA*

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

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

The district's policy, DIA (LOCAL) that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment can be found on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/543?filter=DIA> or in policy manuals located at Central Administration.

## **Harassment of Students**

*Policies DH, DHB, FFG, FFH*

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*, page 32 and *Bullying*, page 50 for additional information.

The district's policies DF (LEGAL) and FFH (LOCAL) that include definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students can be found on line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/543> or in policy manuals located at Central Administration.

“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.

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

*Policies DG, DH, DHB, FFG, GRA*

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services, or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Abuse is defined by SBEC and includes the following acts or omissions:

- Mental or emotional injury to a student or minor that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning, or psychological functioning;
- Causing or permitting a student or minor to be in a situation in which the student or minor sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning, or psychological functioning;

- Physical injury that results in substantial harm to a student or minor, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the student or minor, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given and excluding an accident or reasonable discipline; or
- Sexual conduct harmful to a student's or minor's mental, emotional, or physical welfare.

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 or disabled person.

Reports to Child Protective Services can be made 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 retaliating against an employee 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. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of 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 [www.shisd.net](http://www.shisd.net). As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or otherwise 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 to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Employees are required to follow the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

## **Reporting Crime**

### *Policy DG*

The Texas Whistleblower Act protect 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.

## **Technology Resources**

### *Policy CQ*

The district's technology resources, including its networks, computer systems, e-mail 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 technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the district's acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures.

Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact John Kachmar, Director of Technology. Specific guidelines on Spring Hill ISD's acceptable use policy are located in the appendix of this handbook.

## **Personal Use of Electronic Media**

### *Policies CQ, DH*

Electronic media 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 Web sites (e.g., *YouTube*), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., *Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram*). Electronic media also includes 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 media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for Web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining

privacy settings appropriate to the content.

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

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the district's computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct district business.
- The employee shall not use the district's logo or other copyrighted material of the district without express, written consent.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on district business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the 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 Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]
  - Confidentiality of district records, including educator evaluations and private e-mail 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 Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]

See *Use of Electronic Media with Students*, below, for regulations on employee communication with students through electronic media.

## **Use of Electronic Media with Students**

### *Policy DH*

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may communicate through electronic media with students who are currently enrolled in the district. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. All other employees are prohibited from communicating with students who are enrolled in the district through electronic media.

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

parent that:

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

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

- *Electronic media* 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*). One-way electronic communication is allowed as long as it is in compliance with the protocol for text messaging (e.g., *remind*).
- *Electronic media* also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and Web-based applications.
- *Communicate* means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee's personal social network page or a blog) is not a *communication*: however, the employee may be subject to district regulations on personal electronic communications. *See Personal Use of Electronic Media*, above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not a *communication*.
- *Certified or licensed employee* means a person employed in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, school counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, licensed therapists, and athletic trainers.

An employee who uses electronic media to communicate with students shall observe the following:

- The employee may use any form of electronic media **except** text messaging. Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. Also included in list that may communicate through text messaging are homebound teachers, alternative education teachers and staff designated by the superintendent or his designee whose job responsibilities require contact in relation to practices, appointment or attendance. 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;
  - 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 e-mail address.



- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).
- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page (“professional page”) for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee’s professional page.
- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. An exception to the direction communication hours allows employees responsible for extracurricular activities that start or end outside of the specified hours to communicate with participating students if a justifiable need arises. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators Code of Ethics, including:
  - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
  - Copyright law [see Policy CY]
  - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DHB]
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.

## **Criminal History Background Checks**

### *Policy DBAA*

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

## **Employee Arrests and Convictions**

### *Policy DH*

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

any of the other offenses listed below:

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

turpitude Moral turpitude includes the following:

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

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

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

*Policies DH, DI*

Spring Hill 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 of school property. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours may be dismissed. The district's policy DH(LOCAL), DI(LOCAL) and DI(EXHIBIT) regarding employee drug use can be found on line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/543> or in policy manuals at Central Administration.

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

*Policies DH, FNCD, GKA*

State law prohibits smoking using tobacco products, smokeless products, or electronic 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.

## **Dress and Grooming Expectations**

Educators have a tremendous responsibility in educating our children. Teachers' respect in the classroom begins with appearance and they should strive to be a positive role model for each student.



The key point to maintaining appropriate attire is the use of common sense and good judgment. If you question the appropriateness of your attire, it probably isn't appropriate. Dressing for success has three main effects:

- (1) it helps to maintain respect,
- (2) it establishes credibility, and
- (3) it helps to establish you as an authority figure.

With that in mind, you are encouraged to dress in at least a business casual manner. Minimum requirements, however, are listed below:

**Men:** casual slacks (khakis included) with a collared shirt

**Women:** casual slacks, skirts, dresses, appropriate tops including sleeveless tops (full shoulder width/ no straps)

**All:**

- Tattoos will be covered
- Piercings limited to the ears
- Clean and well maintained footwear, no flip flops of any kind (slides, wedges, and other shoes with a heel of one inch or higher are permissible, any flat shoes without backing are not permissible)
- No exposed cleavage, lower back, stomach, or underwear
- Jeans with school spirit shirts may be worn on Fridays and special days designated by the principal or superintendent
- On lengths of skirts and other specific standards, the employee should refer to the secondary student handbook
- Teachers in positions with special requirements (PE, etc.) should defer to their principal for guidance

**Inappropriate items include but are not limited to:** sweatpants, wind suits, shorts, Bermuda shorts, Capri pants/culottes that come above the knees, cut-offs, any pants with rips or holes, leggings with short skirts or long tops, spandex, bib overalls, tank tops, sweatshirts (exception: Spring Hill ISD school sweatshirt), halter-tops, see-through items, and any flat shoe without backing

**Enforcement:** Administrators/supervisors are responsible for monitoring and enforcing this policy. The policy will be administered according to the following action steps:

1. Any employee, who, because of documented religious beliefs, asks for variations from these requirements, will be granted an exception(s).
2. If questionable attire is worn, the respective administrators/supervisors will hold a personal, private discussion with the employee to advise and counsel the employee regarding the inappropriateness of the attire.
3. If an obvious policy violation occurs, the administrator/supervisor will hold a private discussion with the employee and ask the employee to change and/or go home and change his/her attire immediately.
4. Repeated policy violations will result in further disciplinary action.

**Distribution:** All administrators, teachers, para-professionals, and central office employees will be provided with a copy of this policy. Employees working in maintenance and operations, food service,

transportation, and technology will follow the dress expectations set by their supervisors.

**Review and revision:** Spring Hill ISD reserves the right to continue, extend, revise or revoke these administrative procedures policy at its discretion.

## **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 includes, but is not limited to, the following:

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

## **Conflict of Interest**

*Policy CD, DBD*

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

- A personal financial interest
- A business interest
- Any other obligation or relationship
- Non-school employment
- Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information

## **Gifts and Favors**

*Policy DBD*

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

In addition, videos must be a beneficial learning medium, must be utilized judiciously and must serve a specific educational purpose. **Staff must secure prior approval from the campus principal before showing any video.** A principal will review the following requirements prior to giving approval:

- Only snippets/clips are being used;
- Lesson plans reflect the use; and
- Videos are not from a personal library, are not being used as a reward and/or as a daycare
- Order to use a film or video in the educational program without having to pay royalties, the use must meet all four of the following criteria:
  - The performance must take place in a classroom or other place of instruction in a non-profit educational institution;
  - The performance must be directed by students or teachers of the institution;
  - The performance must be in the course of face-to-face teaching activities; and
  - The performance must be made from a copy of the work which was legally made or acquired.

## **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.

## **Charitable Contributions**

### *Policy DG*

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

any employee may not directly or indirectly require or coerce an employee to refrain from making a contribution to a charitable organization or in response to a fund raiser 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. 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 campus administration, the director of health and safety, and/or the director of facilities and operations.

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

### *Policies 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. In accordance with local policy GKA, no violation of this policy occurs when a District employee who is a concealed handgun license holder properly stores a handgun in a vehicle parked in a parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area on District property. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should immediately notify their supervisors, campus administration or campus resource officer.

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

### *Policy GKC*

All visitors are expected to enter any district facility through the main entrance and report to the building's main office. Spring Hill ISD uses the Raptor V-Soft Visitor Management System to increase the safety of its campuses. Uniform badges will be produced for all visitors, and all visitors will be electronically checked against registered sexual offender databases. 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 central office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

## **Pest Control Treatment**

*Policies CLB, DI*

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

Notices of planned pest control treatment will be posted in a district building 48 hours before the treatment begins. Notices are generally located on the front of doors to buildings. 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 the maintenance department upon request.

## **Telephones and Cell Phones**

Telephones are available for teachers to transact school business. Calls are expected to take place outside of class time. Should long distance calls be required, toll free numbers must be used if available. Whenever possible, the staff should utilize the mail service over long distance calling. Cell phones should not be activated during instructional time. Teachers are asked to make personal calls on cell phones during their lunch breaks and conference periods.

## **Use of District Property**

Use of district property and resources for personal benefit is strictly prohibited unless approved by the superintendent of schools.

# General Procedures

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## **Bad Weather Closing**

The district may close schools because of bad weather or 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 or to release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post a notice on the district's website and social media pages, will notify parents via the district's all-call and email system and notify the following radio and television stations:

Each school campus and district department has procedures for notifying the employees in the department through phone and/or text messages.

## **Emergencies**

*Policies CKC, CKD*

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to a medical emergency and the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. 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 via SKYWARD (the Spring Hill ISD accounting software) for all merchandise ordered in excess of \$100. Merchandise cannot be ordered until the purchase order has received the authorized approval from the campus principal and the business office. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the district can be made without an approved purchase order. Spring Hill ISD 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 school districts business office. All orders in excess of \$1,000 should include three separate quotes from three different vendors.

Reimbursement requests and other small purchases will be handled through an approved check request. All check requests must be approved by the building principal or Athletic Director for athletic accounts. The same procedures that apply to operating funds shall also apply to activity funds. Please direct all questions regarding purchasing procedures to the business office.

## **Check Acceptance Policy**

In the event that a check written to any Spring Hill ISD campus, club or organization is returned unpaid by your bank, Spring Hill ISD or its agent (Paytek Solutions) will redeposit the check electronically.

Additionally, the originator of the check understands and agrees that the district may electronically collect a returned check fee of \$35.00 plus applicable sales tax. The use of a check for payment is Acknowledgement and Acceptance of this policy and its terms. Individuals may reach PayTek Solution at 1-800-641-9998.

## **Name and Address Changes**

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees should notify either Gloria Willeford in Human Resources or Edie Benton in Payroll if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. For a name or address change a new W4 must be completed, and for a name change additional documentation (copy of new social security card) must be provided.

## **Personnel Records**

*Policies DBA, GBA*

Most district records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. 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
- Personal e-mail address

The choice to not allow public access to this information may be done at any time by submitting a written request to HR. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public upon request.

## **Building Use**

*Policies DGA, GKD*

The campus principal is responsible for scheduling the use of campus facilities after school hours and then forwarded to the superintendent's office for approval. The athletic secretary is responsible for scheduling the use of athletic facilities, including the gyms at all facilities. District facilities are scheduled through the superintendent's office. Contact the appropriate office to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.



# Termination of Employment

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## 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 Superintendent or designee. Contract employees may resign at any other time only with the approval of the superintendent or the board of trustees. Resignation without consent may result in disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

The superintendent will notify SBEC when an employee resigns and reasonable evidence exists to indicate that the employee has engaged in any of the acts listed in *Reports to Texas Education Agency*, on page 47.

**Noncontract employees** Non-contract employees may resign their positions at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the superintendent and the campus supervisor/administrator 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.

## Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

### *Policies DFAA, DFAB, DFBA, DFBB, DFCA, DFD, DFF, DFFA, DFFB, DFFC,*

Employees on probationary and term contracts can be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Employees on probationary or 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 whose certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the DF series policies that are provided to employees or are available on line.

## Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

### *Policy DCD*

Non-contract 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, gender, 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. Non-contract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (See Complaints and Grievances, page 27.)



## **Exit Interviews and Procedures**

*Policies DC, CY*

Exit interviews will be scheduled for all employees leaving the district. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at this time. Separating employees are asked to provide the district with a forwarding address and phone number and complete an on-line survey 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 to their supervisor upon separation from employment.

## **Reports to Texas Education Agency**

*Policy DF, DHB*

The dismissal of a certified employee must be reported to the Division of Investigations at TEA whenever the termination is based on 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 superintendent is also required to notify TEA when a certified employee resigns and there is evidence the educator engaged in the conduct listed above.

The reporting requirements above are in addition to the superintendent's ongoing duty to notify TEA when a certified employee has a reported criminal history. "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 means other than Fingerprint-based Applicant Clearinghouse of Texas (FACT).

## **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 to the court and the individual receiving the support (Texas Family Code §8.210, §158.211). Notice of the following must be sent to the court and support recipient:

- 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

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## Equal Educational Opportunities

*Policies FB, FFH*

Spring Hill ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination of students on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin should be directed to Penny Fleet (pfleet@shisd.net), the district's Title IX Coordinator. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Penny Fleet (pfleet@shisd.net) the district's Director of Curriculum or Dana Robertson (drobertson@shisd.net) the district 504 Coordinator. All other 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 rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A district is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student's records before this time
- School officials with legitimate educational interests

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

## Parent and Student Complaints

*Policy FNG*

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

Parents are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with the teachers 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 and Available Health Services**

*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<sup>®</sup>), 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 campus health office for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

When students bring medications (except asthma and anaphylaxis meds) to school, they must be kept in the campus health office under lock and key; the student may not keep them.

## **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 their campus principal. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students can be found in Policies FFI (LOCAL) and FFI (legal) of the policy manuals located at central office and on-line at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/543>.

## **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.

# Instructional Expectations

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## **Non-Negotiables Spring Hill ISD Teachers (all grades)**

- 1) SHISD teachers are expected to teach the TEKS and Critical Teaching Concepts identified in the State standards. SHISD will use the TRS YAG. It will be refined each year by Spring Hill ISD teachers. Once a scope and sequence is created, it must be followed. Changes can be made with approval from the Assistant Superintendent of School Support. All approved YAG/IFD changes will be implemented district-wide.
- 2) Everyone will follow the common assessments plan as directed.
- 3) All lessons and instructional practices will incorporate aspects of the Fundamental 5 as guided by Spring Hill ISD.
- 4)

## **Expectations of all Spring Hill ISD Teachers**

- 1) Everyone participates and has a voice in the PLC process, instructional planning, common assessment creation and data disaggregation.
- 2) All teachers have a working knowledge of their grade level and subject TEKS.
- 3) The Spring Hill ISD scope and sequence provides the "What" and "When" of instruction. These are non-negotiable to ensure curricular alignment. The "How" is left up to the teacher to determine; based on the needs of their students and desired achievement outcomes. SHISD encourages teachers to be critical consumers of their resources and select the most appropriate lessons for their students in order to decrease gaps in student performance.
- 4) It is expected that intervention for struggling students starts in the classroom. We expect parents to be contacted throughout the year as to the academic progress of their child.

## **Spring Hill ISD Expectations for Lesson Plan Components (all teachers)**

- 1) TEKS and SE/Critical Concepts identified for each lesson
- 2) Every lesson will be framed. The lesson frame will include an objective written in student friendly language. (i.e. Lesson Frame (F1)). The "We will" statement will be large and prominent, stated, and referred back to throughout the lesson as appropriate. The closure "I will" will be written in student friendly language, stated, and referred back to throughout the lesson as appropriate. The closure will assess (informally/formally) what the student is expected to learn that day and will change each day.
- 3) Teach within the Power Zone. (F2)
- 4) Create opportunities in the lesson for natural breaks with pre-planned question stems for SGPT. (F3) Should be every 8-12 minutes.
- 5) Opportunity for critical writing with pre-written question stems and/or a form graphic organizer. (F5)
- 6) Reminders to recognize student effort and reinforce correct behavior or academic success. (F4)
- 7) Lesson Closure. (F1) Last half of the Lesson Frame with a check for understanding.

## THE FUNDAMENTAL 5

**Spring Hill ISD expects to see evidence of usage of the “Fundamental 5.”** We believe that these fundamental practices set up all other high yield instructional practices. They are:

1. Framing the lesson
2. Work in the power zone
3. Small group purposeful talk
4. Recognize and Reinforce
5. Critical Writing

### Spring Hill ISD “Common Time”

The teacher’s contractual expectations allow for time before school and after school for teachers to offer after school tutorials, department and subject level meetings, faculty meetings, continuing education, and other meetings as necessary. All staff should be aware that this is protected time to work with staff and students to improve all aspects of the school district; especially teaching and learning. Since it falls under normal contract hours, all rules pertaining to employee absences will apply. It is unacceptable to arrive late or leave early during the designated common time.

The following are regulations specific to this time and should help clarify teacher expectations during this common time period.

- All teachers are expected to be in their classrooms and available to students for tutorials when not in meetings at least twice a week.
- Once meetings are scheduled, each teacher’s tutorial days should be posted, visible, and communicated to the students.
- **\*\*All coaches will adhere to the same expectations as all staff while their sport is not in season.**
- All teachers are expected to participate in subject level PLCs and department meetings as directed by the campus principal. Subject level PLCs should be scheduled with your supervising administrator so they can attend each meeting.
- Libraries will be open for students during this time.
- Nurses’ offices will remain open during this time.
- All offices will remain open for students during this time.
- Credit Recovery Labs will be during this time.
- **Teachers can assign any student to a mandatory common time school tutorial for any reason they deem appropriate. In order for this to happen:**
  - Student needs 24 hour notice
  - Teachers must call the student’s parent
  - Communicate with that students’ assistant principal

### Tutoring

Classroom teachers are expected to provide before school and/or after school tutoring opportunities for their assigned students at least twice a week. Tutoring hours must be posted and communicated to students and parents. A teacher may not tutor, for money, a student enrolled in their class (es) or that they directly teach/assign grades to.

## Appendix—Supplementary Information

### At-Risk Students

At risk identification criteria can be found in the Board Policy Manual under policy EHBC (Legal). Teachers should become familiar with these criteria and develop with the administration, strategies for remediation. Each teacher should view at risk students as a personal professional challenge. Together, the staff of Spring Hill ISD can make a difference in every child's life. Spring Hill ISD should have 100% of its students passing all sections of the STAAR test. It may take a few years to reach this goal, but with positive attitudes and total dedication, the staff of Spring Hill ISD can do it.

### COBRA-Initial Continuation Notice

If you (the employee) are covered by your employer's group health plan, you have a right to choose this continuation coverage if you lose your group health coverage because of a reduction in your hours of employment, or, the termination of your employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct on your part).

If you are the spouse of an employee covered by the group health plan, you have a right to choose this continuation coverage for yourself if you lose group health coverage under the group health plan for any of the following four reasons:

- The death of your spouse;
- A termination of your spouse's employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct) or the reduction in your spouse's hours of employment;
- Divorce or legal separation from your spouse; or
- Your spouse becomes entitled to Medicare.

In the case of a dependent child of an employee covered by the group health plan, he/she has the right to continuation of coverage if group health coverage under the group health plan is lost for any of the following five reasons:

1. The death of a parent;
2. A termination of your spouse's employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct) or the reduction in your spouse's hours of employment;
3. Parent's divorce or legal separation;
4. A parent becomes entitled to Medicare; or
5. The dependent ceases to be a "dependent child" under the group health plan.

Under the new law, the employee or a family member has the responsibility to inform the company's Plan Administrator of a divorce, legal separation, or, a child losing dependent status under the group health plan within 60 days of the later of the date of the event or the date on which coverage would be lost because of the event.

If you do not choose continuation coverage, your group health insurance will end.



## **SHISD Guidelines for Treatment of Staff in Campus Health Office**

**Medications:** Over the counter medications will be available on a limited basis. Staff requesting medications will be allowed access to them and may choose to take what they feel is appropriate for themselves. Staff members requesting anti-diarrheal medication will be sent home in accordance with SHISD illness policy.

### **Vital Signs:**

**Temperatures:** may be taken per staff request. Staff will be required to follow SHISD fever policy and will be sent home for a temp of 100.0 or higher.

**Blood Pressure:** an automatic blood pressure machine will be available for staff use. Any staff with a blood pressure greater than 140 over 90 and symptomatic (such as severe headache, blurred vision and dizziness per National Institute of Health) will be recommended to leave and follow up with their doctor.

**Blood Glucose:** For staff members requiring blood glucose monitoring that do not have a monitor with them; a monitor is available in the health office for emergency use. Staff with extremely high or low blood glucose levels will be recommended to consult their doctor.

Staff members should consult their own physicians for instruction whenever possible. In the event of an emergency the school health office will advise according to the SHISD illness/injury policy. Health office personnel will notify campus administrators *immediately* of all staff that have been advised to go home. Staff members that are advised to go home or consult immediate medical attention and choose not to do so **MUST** sign a waiver in the health office reflecting their choice to go against medical advice. Staff members may not remain at school if they meet criteria per SHISD illness policy that would require they be sent home, i.e.: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, head injury, severe allergic reaction, etc.

In addition, staff members that are sent home due to the same medical issue on consecutive days must consult their physician, per supervisor's direction. (per DEC (Local)) The health office staff will consult with staff's supervisor regarding need for medical evaluation. For the staff member's personal safety and that of our students a doctor's note to return to work needs be provided.

Staff injuries will be treated according to SHISD illness/injury protocol. Staff members requiring immediate medical attention will be routed through the Workers Compensation program and be sent to clinic/hospital as needed on an individual basis. All Workers Compensation paperwork will be completed with the assistance of health office personnel and faxed to SHISD central office personnel immediately. A follow up telephone call will also be made to the Workers Compensation Benefit employee at Central Office, within the hour.



# **Computer Use, Technology Equipment Agreement and Acceptable Use Policy for Staff**

## *Policy CQ Local*

Each employee is given access to the Spring Hill ISD's electronic communications system. Through this system, the employee will be able to communicate with other schools, colleges, organizations, and people around the world through the Internet and other electronic information systems/networks. The employee will have access to hundreds of databases, libraries, and computer services all over the world. With this educational opportunity comes responsibility. It is important that each employee read the Spring Hill ISD policy, administrative regulations, and agreement form and ask questions if he/she needs help in understanding them. Inappropriate system use will result in the loss of the privilege to use this educational tool.

Please note that the Internet is a network of many types of communication and information networks. It is possible that an employee may run across areas of adult content and some material an employee might find objectionable. While Spring Hill ISD will use filtering technology to restrict access to such material, it is not possible to absolutely prevent such access. It will be the employee's responsibility to follow the rules for appropriate use.

It will be the employee's responsibility as a teacher to monitor the computers in the classroom and in the computer labs to make sure students follow the rules for appropriate use.

### **RULES FOR APPROPRIATE USE**

- Each person will be assigned an individual account and is responsible for not sharing the password for that account with others or using it to log on students.
- Staff need to monitor students to ensure that students use their own login to sign on a computer.
- The account is to be used mainly 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 computer or network resources, and
  - Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance.
- The employee will be held responsible at all times for the proper use of the account, and Spring Hill ISD may suspend or revoke access if someone violates the rules.
- All Internet use by students must be supervised by adults. The student must have permission to use the Internet and must be supervised by Spring Hill ISD staff at all times. Searches on the Internet, by students, need to be for directed, specific educational purposes only.
- Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communication system by students and employees shall not be considered private.
- Designated district staff shall be authorized to monitor such communication at any time to ensure appropriate use.

### **INAPPROPRIATE USES**

- Using the system for any illegal purpose.
- Disabling or attempting to disable any Internet filtering device.
- Encrypting communications to avoid security review.

- Borrowing someone's account with or without permission.
- Posting personal information about self or others (such as addresses and phone numbers).
- Downloading or using copyrighted information without permission from the copyright holder.
- Intentionally introducing a virus to the computer system.
- Posting messages or accessing materials that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- Wasting school resources through the improper use of the computer system, including, but not limited to: personal email account access (e.g. Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo, etc.), instant messaging, online shopping, non-instructional or non-educational games, personal use of streaming media such as online radio stations or video broadcasts, or participating in chats (chat rooms) unless sponsored and overseen by district staff.
- Wasting school resources by inappropriate use of the network for sending and receiving a large number of personal messages, including using group email distributions lists to send non-administrative or non-instructional messages to other users.
- Gaining unauthorized access to restricted information or resources.
- Downloading or installing programs without explicit permission from the network administrator.
- Use that violates the student code of conduct or employee standards of conduct.

### **TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT**

- Technology equipment may be available for teacher checkout through the technology department or the campus media centers for teacher use during the school year. This equipment may include a teacher laptop, LCD projector, document camera, student response system, mimeo interactive or other equipment.
- This equipment is for instructional/educational use and should be used to further technology in the classroom.
- Staff members will be responsible for securing equipment in such a manner that it will not be subject to theft or damage.
- A work order needs to be submitted to the technology department, in a timely fashion, for any equipment needing repairs or not functioning properly.
- Laptops and classroom computers need be logged onto the SHISD network at least once a week for updates.
- SHISD suggests that staff members who are issued a laptop include insurance coverage of the laptop on his/hers homeowners or renters insurance if they plan to take the laptop home to do school work.
- All technology equipment must be turned in at the end of the school year or during the school year if teacher retires, takes an unpaid leave of absence, changes campuses, or if requested by the technology department.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE**

- Suspension of access to the system;
- Revocation of the computer system account; or
- Other disciplinary or legal action, in accordance with the Employee Standards of Conduct and applicable laws.

The employee agreement must be renewed each academic year. Employees with question about computer use and data management can contact Travis Brown, Director of Technology

### **Distribution of Organization’s Material**

Professional organizational material may not be distributed on school time, but may be distributed in school mailboxes or personally, before or after school. The intra-school mail shall not be used.

### **Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value – Texas Public School Nutrition Policy**

All Texas public schools participating in the federal child nutrition programs must comply with the nutrition policies set forth in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) fall into four categories of foods and beverages and are restricted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture under the child nutrition programs.

### **Fundraising/Soliciting by School Groups**

No teacher, employee, student, or club of the Spring Hill schools shall solicit funds or sell items for profit unless prior approval has been given by the principal of the school involved and by the superintendent of the school system. The superintendent may, if he prefers, submit the requests to the school board. It is anticipated that only in rare cases will this matter be submitted to the board.

### **Sick Bank Guidelines for Spring Hill ISD**

**Purpose:** The catastrophic sick leave bank is to provide paid leave to full-time district employees in the event of a personal catastrophic illness or injury or that of an immediate family member. Catastrophic illness or injury shall be defined as an illness, injury or disability that is life-threatening and requires major medical treatment, e.g. surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, etc.

**Contribution:** A district employee may voluntarily donate local or state or a combination of both sick leave days up to 5 days per school year. Employees who donate days must keep a minimum of 9 days, either state and/or local, in their sick leave record. Donated days become the property of the District and are not refundable.

**Eligibility:** To receive days from the District sick leave bank, an employee suffering from a catastrophic situation as defined under “Purpose” shall have exhausted all available paid leave. An employee must donate at least one day per school year by September 30th to be eligible to participate in the sick leave bank for that year. An employee may receive up to 20 days from the bank per school year, provided the bank has days available for withdrawal.

**Request for days:** Requests for catastrophic sick leave bank days shall be submitted to the Superintendent on the official request form. The superintendent will determine if the employee’s illness or disability or that of an immediate family member, qualifies for use of days from the bank and the number of days the employee may use. Any decision made by the Superintendent may be appealed in accordance with DGBA (LOCAL).

## **SECTION VII: AMENDMENT PROCESS**

A. These Administrative procedures may be amended upon recommendation of HR followed by approval of the Superintendent of Spring Hill ISD

B. Any policy change in this program must also be approved by the Board of Trustees of the Spring Hill ISD. These changes would include, but are not limited to:

1. Eligibility
2. Ineligibility requirements
3. Change in number of days within pool
4. Decisions having financial impact on the district

### **Student and Sponsor Travel**

All overnight trips should be cleared by the Superintendent prior to discussions and planning with students and/or parents. Out-of-state trips must be approved by the Board.

Staff members and student activity sponsors must receive approval for professional leave and/or travel expenses. The Request for Professional Leave and/or Transportation Forms must be submitted to the building principal who will forward the approved request to the central office for approval by the superintendent or his designee. Forms will then be returned to the building principal who will disburse them to the appropriate personnel. A minimum of one week notification is requested for travel approval. The same guidelines apply for use of bus requests.

### **Guidelines for Request for Chartered Bus Trips by Athletic Teams**

Chartered buses may be requested by coaches for teams only under the following conditions:

- Requests will only be considered for playoff events beyond district Championships.
- Game sites must be outside of a 100-mile radius from Spring Hill.
- The Athletic Director, Principal and Superintendent must agree that the above conditions have been met.
- The district will bear the cost for the trip.
- Time constraints and other expenses will be determined prior to the event by the Athletic Director, Principal and Superintendent.

### **Workers' Health and Safety**

The Texas Workers' Compensation Commission has established a 24-hour toll free telephone number for reporting unsafe conditions in the workplace that may violate occupational health and safety laws. Spring Hill ISD is prohibited by law from suspending, terminating or discriminating against any employee who in good faith reports an alleged occupational health or safety violation. Contact the Division of Worker's Health & Safety, Texas Workers' Compensation Commission at 1-800-452-9595.

## SPRING HILL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 2016-17 Teacher Appraisal Timeline

August 15 – Sept	
<b>September 2</b>	<p>Teacher self-assessment and goal setting (review of teacher and student data to self-assess, establish goals and develop a professional development plan with the principal – for teachers receiving formal T-TESS observation)</p> <p><b>Due:</b> Teacher Self-Assessment/Goal Setting/Professional Development Plan Document Part I</p>
<b>September 23</b>	<p>Teacher self-assessment and goal setting (review of teacher and student data to self-assess, establish goals and develop a professional development plan with the principal – for teachers <b>not</b> receiving formal T-TESS observation)</p> <p><b>Due:</b> Teacher Self-Assessment/Goal Setting/Professional Development Plan Document Part I</p>
<b>September 12 – April 20</b>	Formal observations and walk-throughs with ongoing analysis of results and options
<b>April 10</b>	<p>Last day for teachers to turn in evidence for Domain 4</p> <p>Last day for teachers to request a second T-TESS formal observation</p>
<b>April 17</b>	<b>Due:</b> Teacher Self-Assessment/Goal Setting/Professional Development Plan Document Part II and Part III
<b>April 20</b>	<p>Last day to conduct formal observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher has 3 working days to complete and submit a self-reflection of the formal observation.</li> <li>• Teacher will receive a written summary and oral feedback from the T-TESS evaluator in a post-conference meeting within 5 working days of the actual observation.</li> </ul>
<b>April 20 – May 1</b>	<p>Conclude all End-of-Year conferences to discuss final scores for Domains 1-3, review evidence for Domain 4, and discuss next year's goal(s) and professional development plan (confirm Teacher Self-Assessment/Goal Setting/Professional Development Plan Document Part III)</p> <p><b>Note: Domain 4 is not scored in summative form until after the teacher has been afforded the opportunity to present evidence related to each of the 4 dimensions in this domain due by April 10 and reviewed at the End-Of-Year conference.</b></p>
<b>September 2 – May 25</b>	Administrators conduct informal observations and walk-throughs

**No formal observations to take place on following days (walkthroughs are allowable):**

August 22 – September 9	First three weeks of school year
November 18 and November 28	Day before and after a holiday
December 16 and January 3	Day before and after a holiday
January 13 and January 17	Day before and after a holiday
February 17 and February 21	Day before and after a holiday
March 10 and March 20	Day before and after a holiday
April 13 and April 17	Day before and after a holiday

## **On-line Training Requirements**

- FERPA: Confidentiality of Records
- Blood borne Pathogen Exposure Prevention
- Sexual Harassment Prevention:
  - Staff to Staff
  - Student Issues
  - Staff to Student
- Cyber bullying
- HIPPA Overview
- Health Emergencies:
  - Life Threatening Allergies
  - Asthma Awareness
  - Diabetes Awareness
  - Seizures

# SPRING HILL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

*"Proud past... Promising future..."*

## 2016-2017 Academic Calendar

August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### Holidays for All

Labor Day: Sept 5  
 Thanksgiving: Nov 21 - 25  
 Christmas: Dec 19 - 30  
 MLK Day: Jan 16  
 Spring Break: March 13 - 17  
 Good Friday: April 14  
 Memorial Day: May 29

### Staff Days/Student Holidays

Aug 11 - 12, Aug 15 - 19, Oct. 10  
 Nov 21 - 22 (Exchange Days)  
 Jan 2  
 Jan 16 (Exchange Day)  
 Feb 20  
 May 26

### Six Week Grading Period

Students in Grades 1 - 12  
 08/22 - 09/30 - 29 Student Days  
 10/03 - 11/04 - 24 Student Days  
 11/07 - 12/16 - 25 Student Days  
 01/03 - 02/17 - 33 Student Days  
 02/21 - 04/13 - 33 Student Days  
 04/17 - 05/25 - 29 Student Days

### Nine Week Grading Period

Students in PreK - K  
 08/22 - 10/14 - 38 Student Days  
 10/17 - 12/16 - 40 Student Days  
 01/03 - 03/10 - 47 Student Days  
 03/20 - 05/25 - 48 Student Days

1st Semester - 78 Days  
 2nd Semester - 95 Days  
 173 Total Instructional Days  
 Graduation - May 26, 2017

### First / Last Day For Students

Holiday
Staff Development
Early Dismissal
Early Dismissal HS ONLY
Bad Weather Staff Only

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

# Spring Hill ISD Organizational Chart

