

**Liberty
Independent School District
2010 - 2011**



Panther Pride

Employee Handbook

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Introduction

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

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. Policy manuals are located in the principals' offices, the superintendent's office, the business and curriculum offices and are available for employee review during normal working hours. District policies can be accessed online at www.libertyisd.net.

Employee Handbook Receipt Confirmation Page

Name _____

Campus _____

**Please sign and date at the bottom of this page and forward to
the Assistant Superintendent's Office.**

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

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

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

I understand that I have an obligation to inform my supervisor or Pam Christopher, Payroll and Benefit Coordinator, of any changes in personal information, such as phone number, address, etc. I also accept responsibility for contacting my supervisor or the Superintendent if I have questions or concerns or need further explanation.

Signature

Date

LIBERTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
PERSONAL LEAVE REQUEST FORM
 (Exception to Policy)

Name:	SS#:
Employee's Signature:	Date Submitted:

Policy DEC (LOCAL): Discretionary – to be taken at the individual employee’s discretion, subject to limitations set out below:

1. Discretionary leave shall not be allowed on the day before a school holiday, the day after a school holiday, days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams, days scheduled for TAKS test, or professional or staff development days.
2. Use of discretionary personal leave shall be considered granted unless the principal or designee notifies the employee to the contrary of the request upon notice to employee by principal or designee.

DATE(S) FOR REQUESTED LEAVE:
Reason for Leave:

Date Received by Principal:
Exception to Policy Approved: Leave Granted
Exception to Policy Denied: Leave Denied
Principal Date

Date Received by Superintendent: _____

Exception to Policy Approved: Leave Granted _____

Exception to Policy Denied: Leave Denied _____

 Superintendent Date

District information

Description of the district

Area	129.290 square miles
Assessed Property Value	\$661,441,082.00
Value per Student	\$297,277.00
Operating Expenditure Per Pupil	\$7,608.80
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	13.80 to 1
Teacher Count	161

Mission Statement

The mission of Liberty ISD is to ensure that every student reaches his or her full potential.

Approved by LISD Board of Trustees
August 18, 2009

Facilities Vision Statement

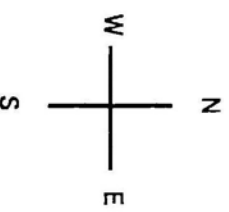
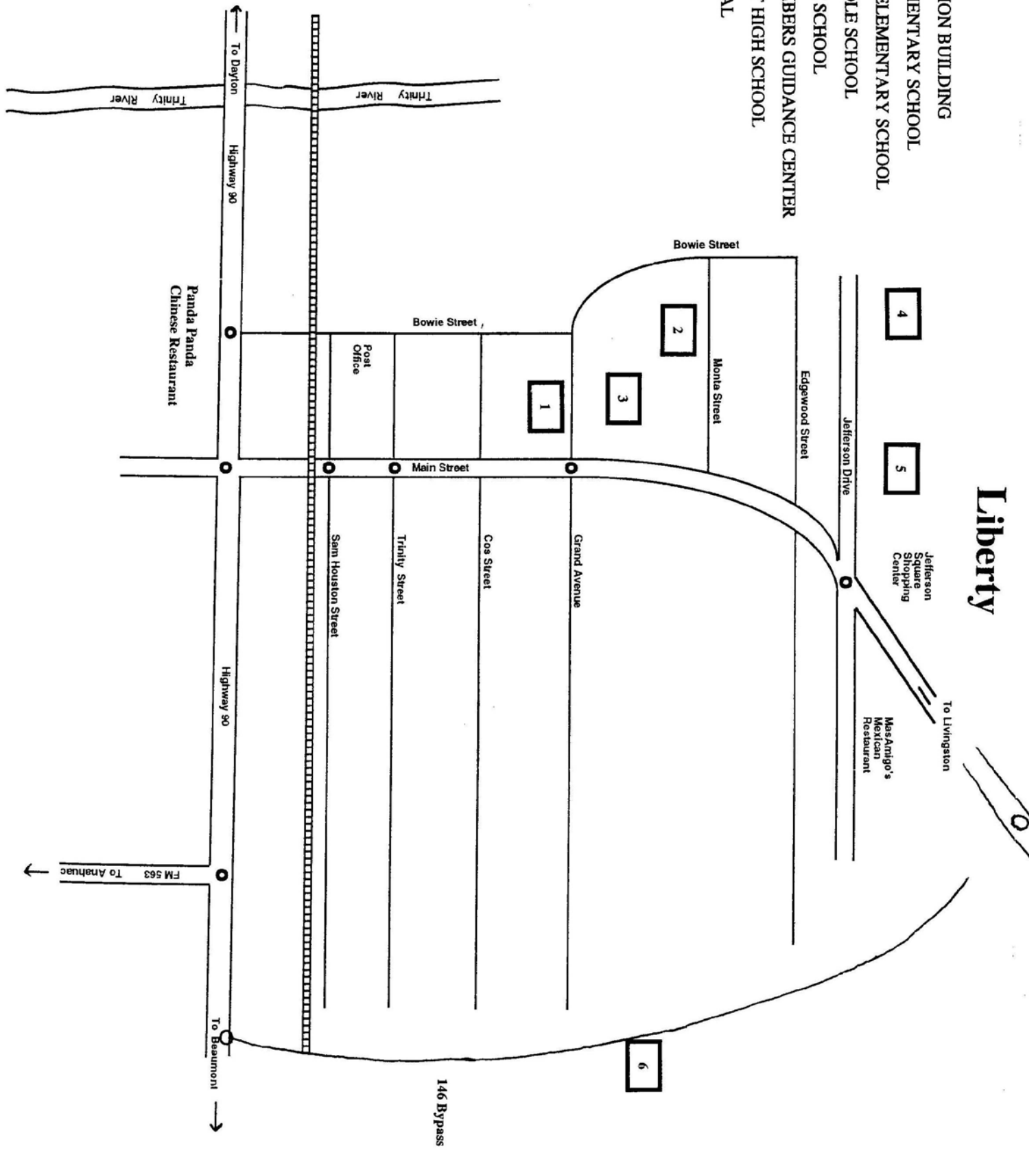
LISD Facilities will foster safe, innovative, aesthetically pleasing, learner-centered environments that inspire academic excellence, promote integrity and community pride, and prepare all students for success in the classroom and beyond.

Finalized by LISD Facilities Task Force
November 10, 2009

Approved by LISD Board of Trustees

Liberty

- 1 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
- 2 LIBERTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 3 SAN JACINTO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 4 LIBERTY MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 5 LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL
- 6 HARDIN CHAMBERS GUIDANCE CENTER & GULF COAST HIGH SCHOOL
- TRAFFIC SIGNAL



District goals and objectives

- Goal 1: Student Performance, Curriculum, and Communication**
Liberty Independent School District will be rated RECOGNIZED in 2010-2011.
- Objective 1.1 Disaggregate TAKS Reading Objectives for ALL STUDENTS and focus on Weaknesses below 90% answered correctly, including special education students.
- Objective 1.2 Disaggregate TAKS Writing objectives for All Students, including Special Education students, and focus on weaknesses below 90% answered correctly.
- Objective 1.3 Disaggregate TAKS English Language Arts (ELA) objectives for ALL Students, Including Special Education students, and focus on weaknesses below 90% answered correctly.
- Objective 1.4 Disaggregate TAKS math objectives for ALL Students, including Special Education students, and focus on weaknesses below 80% answered correctly.
- Objective 1.5 Disaggregate TAKS Science objectives for ALL Students, including Special Education students, and focus on weaknesses below 80% answered correctly.
- Objective 1.6 Disaggregate TAKS Social Studies objectives for ALL Students, including Special Education students, and focus on weaknesses below 80% answered correctly.
- Objective 1.7 Improve services for AT-Risk students supported by SCE funds and Title 1 funds.
- Objective 1.8 Address identified needs in the Bilingual/ESL program.
- Objective 1.9 Address identified needs in the CTE program.
- Objective 1.10 Improve services for Dyslexic students.
- Objective 1.11 Address identified needs in the Gifted and Talented (GT) program.
- Objective 1.12 Address identified needs in the Special Education program.
- Objective 1.13 Recruit, attract and retain highly qualified staff.
- Objective 1.14 Provide high quality staff development.
- Objective 1.15 Support library media services through local funds.
- Objective 1.16 Ensure that Title 1 Schoolwide planning includes the following 10 components:
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
 - Reform Strategies
 - Recruit and Retain Highly Qualified Staff
 - Quality Professional Development
 - Strategies For Attracting Highly Qualified Staff

- Parental Involvement
- Early School Transition Activities
 - Transition/Orientation from preschool to elementary; elementary to junior high; junior high to high school
- Teachers Use of Assessments or Teachers Making Assessment Decisions
- Timely Assistance/Early Intervention
- Coordination of Local, State, and Federal Services/Funds.

Objective 1.17 Review Comprehensive Guidance Plan, and revise as needed.

Objective 1.18 Continue communication between Federal Grants Administration, Campus Principals, and Business Office.

Objective 1.19 Monitor alignment between Federal Grant applications, Campus and District Improvement plans, and budget.

Objective 1.20 Integrate technology throughout the instructional program at all grade levels and in all subject areas.

Objective 1.21 Increase the number of graduates taking the SAT/ACT.

Objective 1.22 Monitor student attendance and dropout to achieve state standards.

Goal 2: Personnel and Staff Development

Parents, community members, and educators at Liberty Independent School District will be active partners in the education of our students.

Objective 2.1 Provide opportunities for parental and community involvement.

Goal 3: School Safety

Liberty Independent School District will have a safe, orderly environment that Promotes successful learning.

Objective 3.1 Implement the Crisis Management Plans.

Objective 3.2 Provide a drug and tobacco education program.

Objective 3.3 Implement Positive Behavior Support strategies derived from the Texas Behavior Support Initiative.

Objective 3.4 Increase security and safety for all district facilities.

Board of trustees

Policies BA, BB, BD, and BE Series

Texas law grants the board of trustees the power to govern and oversee the management of the district's schools. The board is the policy-making body within the district and has overall responsibility for the curriculum, school taxes, annual budget, employment of the superintendent and other professional staff, and facilities. The board has complete and final control over school matters within limits established by state and federal 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. Trustees are elected annually and serve three-year terms. Trustees serve without compensation, must be registered voters, and must reside in the district.

Current Board Members:

Mr. Lloyd Pierce	President
Mr. Bobby Pope	Vice-President
Mrs. June Jackson	Secretary
Mr. Matthew Harris	Member
Mr. Brandon Smith	Member
Mr. Frank Davis	Member
Mr. Bruce Bell	Member

The board usually meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. In the event that large attendance is anticipated, the board may meet at Liberty High School, in the Special Events Room. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the District's website and at the administration building at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a 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 to consult with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

Board of Trustees Schedule of Meetings 2010-2011

September 14, 2010	January 18, 2011	May 17, 2011
October 19, 2010	February 15, 2011	June 21, 2011
November 16, 2010	March 15, 2011	July 19, 2011
December 21, 2010	April 19, 2011	August 16, 2011

Administration

Dr. Cynthia Lusignolo	Superintendent
Randy Gunter	Assistant Superintendent/General Legal Counsel
Margaret Lee	Chief Financial Officer
Margaret Gardzina	Director of Federal Programs
Jim Cox	Director of Technology
Susan Hewett	Director of Special Education
Robert Ward	Director of Maintenance Operations

School directory

San Jacinto Elementary School - Grades EC, PK-1

Address	1629 Grand Avenue
Principal	Stacey Cain
Phone	336-3161

Liberty Elementary School – Grades 2-5

Address	1002 Bowie
Principal	Tom Connelly
Phone	336-3603

Liberty Middle School – Grades 6-8

Address	2515 Jefferson Drive
Principal	David Taylor
Phone	336-3582

Liberty High School – Grades 9-12

Address	2615 Jefferson Drive
Principal	Bruce Lacefield
Phone	336-6483


Gulf Coast High School and Hardin Chambers Guidance Center

Address	1715 Hwy 146 Bypass
Principal	James Young
Phone	336-1045

LIBERTY ISD School Calendar

[Revised] 2010-2011

Board Approved March 9, 2010

AUGUST 2010							Instructional Days	FEBRUARY 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1 st Semester (93 days) 2 nd Semester (87 days) First day of school.....August 23, 2010 Last day of schoolJune 2, 2011 Graduation June 3, 2011	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8	9	10	N11	N12	N13	14		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	21		20	21	22	23	24	25	26
22	[23	24	25	26	27	28		27	28					
29	30	31												
SEPTEMBER 2010							Reporting Periods	MARCH 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	August 23 – October 1 29 October 4 – November 12 29 November 15 – January 20 35 January 24 – March 4 30 March 7 – April 21 29 April 25 – June 2 28 Instructional Days 180 Staff Development 5 Teacher Workdays 2 Total 187 days	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4		6	[7	8	9	10	11	12
5	H6	7	8	9	10	11		13	H14	H15	H16	H17	H18	19
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		20	21	22	23	24	25	26
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		27	28	29	30	31		
26	27	28	29	30										
OCTOBER 2010							Holidays	APRIL 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	Labor Day September 6 TVE October 20 Thanksgiving Nov. 24-26 Christmas Dec. 20-31 MLK Jan. 17 Spring Break March 14-18 Good Friday April 22 Memorial Day May 30 Enrichment Days Jan. 18-20; April 14-15; May 27,31; June 1-3	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1]	2		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	[4	5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13	E14	E15	16
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		17	18	19	20	21]	H22	23
17	18	19	H20	21	22	23		24	[25	26	27	28	29	30
24	25	26	27	28	29	30								
31														
NOVEMBER 2010							Staff Development / Teacher Workdays	May 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	August 11,12,13 New Teacher Training August 16-20 Staff Development January 21 Teacher Workday June 3 Teacher Workday Codes N New Teacher Staff Development S Staff Development/Student Holiday W Workday/Student Holiday H School Holiday E Enrichment Days C Comp days	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12]	13		8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	[15	16	17	18	19	20		15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	H24	H25	H26	27		22	23	24	25	26	E27	28
28	29	30					29	H30	E31					
DECEMBER 2010							Bad Weather Days	JUNE 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	January 21, 2011 June 4, 2011 School Times SJE 8:00-3:00 LES 8:00-3:00 LMS 7:49-3:10 LHS 7:49-3:10	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	11
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		12	13	14	15	16	17	18
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		19	20	21	22	23	24	25
19	H20	H21	H22	H23	H24	25		26	27	28	29	30		
26	H27	H28	H29	H30	H31									
JANUARY 2011								JULY 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S		S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1							1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8		3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	10	11	12	13	14	15		10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	H17	E18	E19	E20]	w/c	21	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
23	[24	25	26	27	28	29	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
30	31						31							

Employment

Equal employment opportunity

Policies DAA, DIA

The Liberty Independent School District 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. 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 for any of the reasons listed above should contact Dr. Cynthia Lusignolo, Superintendent, Liberty ISD Administration Building, 1600 Grand Avenue, Liberty, Texas 77575, phone number 936-336-7213.

Job vacancy announcements

Policy DC

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are distributed on a regular basis and posted on the district's Web site.

Employment after retirement

Policy DC

- Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed in limited circumstances or on a 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).

Contract and noncontract employment

Policy DC Series

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

Probationary contracts. Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the district and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification must receive probationary contracts during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after at least a two-year lapse in district employment also may be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one-year

contracts. The probationary period for those who have been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district may not exceed one school year. For those with less experience, the probationary period will be three school years (i.e., three one-year contracts) with an optional fourth school year if the board determines it is unclear whether a term or continuing contract should be given.

Term and continuing contracts. Full-time professionals employed in positions requiring certification and nurses will be employed by term or continuing contracts after they have successfully completed the probationary period. Teachers employed before 1987-88 are employed by continuing contract. Teachers employed after that date are employed by term contracts. Most campus principals and central office administrators are employed under multiple-year 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 policies. Employment policies can be accepted online or copies will be provided upon request.

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

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

Searches and alcohol and drug testing

Policy DHE

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

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 Robert Ward, Director of Maintenance Operations at 336-7213.

Health and 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) and extracurricular athletic activity safety. Certification or documentation of training must be issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, Univeristy Interscholastic League, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification. Employees subject to this requirement must submit their certification or documentation to Regina Cooper at Liberty High School by August 25, 2010.

Reassignments and transfers

Policy DK

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

An employee with the required qualifications for a position may request a transfer to another campus or department. A written request for transfer must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. A teacher requesting a transfer to another campus before the school year begins must submit his or her request by April 15. Requests for transfer during the school year will be considered only when the change will not adversely affect students and after a replacement has been found. All transfer requests will be coordinated by the assistant superintendent's office and must be approved by the receiving supervisor.

Workload and work schedules

Policies DL, DEA

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 required days of service and scheduled holidays will be distributed each school year.

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

Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees. Support employees are employed at will and will receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and auxiliary employees are not exempt from overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor.

Notification to parents regarding qualifications

Policies DK, DBA

In schools receiving Title I funds, the district is required by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to notify parents at the beginning of each school year that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. NCLB also requires that parents be notified if their child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.

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

Employees who have questions about their certification status can call the office of the assistant superintendent.

Outside Employment and Tutoring

Policy DBD

Teachers are not allowed to privately tutor their students for pay, except during the summer months. Employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor any outside employment that may create a potential conflict of interest with their assigned duties and responsibilities or the best interest of the District. Supervisors will consider outside employment on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it should be prohibited because of a conflict of interest.

Performance evaluation

Policy DN Series

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least

annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the district. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda also can be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, participate in a performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

District teachers shall be appraised annually, except teachers who are eligible for less frequent evaluations in accordance with law and the following local criteria. The eligible teacher shall:

1. Be on an educator term or continuing contract;
2. Be SBEC certified;
3. Have been rated at least Proficient for three consecutive years;
4. Be teaching at the same campus as last school year; and
5. Be assigned to a campus that is not low-performing, unacceptable, or does not meet the defined Annual Yearly Progress standards.

Eligible teachers shall be appraised every three years. Teachers shall be evaluated on a staggered basis and in accordance with administrative guidelines.

During any school year when a complete Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) is not scheduled for an eligible teacher, either the teacher or the principal may require that an appraisal be conducted by providing written notice to the other party.

In the years that PDAS is not scheduled for an eligible teacher, an annual review process shall consist of:

1. Walk-throughs.
2. Anecdotal observations.
3. A summative conference.

The regular PDAS procedures and requirements shall not apply to the alternative annual review process.

Employee involvement

Policies BQA, BQB

At both the campus and district levels, Liberty ISD offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional effectiveness of the district. As part of the district's planning and decision-making process, employees are elected to serve on district- or campus-level advisory committees. Plans and detailed information about the shared decision-making process are available in each campus office or from the Superintendent's Office, 336-7213.

Staff development

Policy DMA

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

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

Compensation and benefits

Salaries, wages, and stipends

Policies DEA, DEAA

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The district's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All district positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as nonexempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek. (See *Overtime*, page 16.)

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

Employees should contact the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources for more information about the district's pay schedules or their own pay.

Annualized Compensation

Policy DEA

The District pays all salaried employees over 12 months regardless of the number of months employed during the school year. Salaried employees will be paid equal monthly or bi-monthly payments, beginning with the first pay period of their contract year. Employees that separate after the last day of instruction will continue to receive paychecks through the end of the summer.

Paychecks

Payroll is disbursed the 5th and 20th of each month. If the 5th or 20th falls on a holiday, the payroll is paid the last business day before the holiday. Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization. During summer breaks, employees may pick up paychecks at the Business Office after 10:00 a.m. If paychecks have not been picked up by 4:00 p.m., they will be mailed.

An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated.

Pay dates for the 2010-2011 School Year

PAYROLL CUTOFF	DIRECT DEPOSIT PAY DAY	PAPER CHECK PAY DAY
8/25/2010	9/2/2010	9/3/2010
9/9/2010	9/17/2010	9/20/2010
9/24/2010	10/4/2010	10/5/2010
10/8/2010	10/18/2010	10/19/2010
10/27/2010	11/4/2010	11/5/2010
11/10/2010	11/18/2010	11/19/2010
11/19/2010	12/2/2010	12/3/2010
12/8/2010	12/16/2010	12/17/2010
12/16/2010	1/4/2011	1/5/2011
1/10/2011	1/19/2011	1/20/2011
1/26/2011	2/3/2011	2/4/2011
2/9/2011	2/17/2011	2/18/2011
2/23/2011	3/3/2011	3/4/2011
3/3/2011	3/11/2011	3/11/2011
3/25/2011	4/4/2011	4/5/2011
4/11/2011	4/19/2011	4/20/2011
4/26/2011	5/4/2011	5/5/2011
5/11/2011	5/19/2011	5/20/2011
5/24/2011	6/2/2011	6/3/2011
6/7/2011	6/16/2011	6/20/2011
6/21/2011	6/30/2011	7/5/2011
7/7/2011	7/19/2011	7/20/2011
7/25/2011	8/3/2011	8/4/2011
8/10/2011	8/18/2011	8/19/2011

Automatic payroll deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of 10 days is necessary to activate this service. Contact Pam Christopher, Payroll Administrator, at 336-7213, x223, for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Payroll deductions

Policy CFEA

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

- Automatic payroll deductions for the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or social security employee contribution
- Federal income tax
- Medicare tax applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include deductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance; annuities; higher education savings plans; and savings deposits and loan payments through Liberty County Teachers Federal Credit Union. 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 DEA

The district compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees (hourly employees and paraprofessional employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a work week 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 workweek and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. Sunday and ends at midnight Saturday.

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:

- Overtime must be approved by employee's supervisor prior to accrual/earning
- Employees can accumulate up to 60 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 discretion.
- An employee is required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).
- Weekly time sheets 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 office 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.

DEE
(REGULATION)

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS: EMPLOYEE EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

TRAVEL

This travel procedure applies to the following TASB classifications:

AUTHORIZATION

- Teachers, Librarians, RN's
- Paraprofessionals
- Manual trades

AND

PLANNING

Each District employee who is authorized to travel assumes, with the acceptance of that authorization, a responsibility to limit travel expense claims to those actually incurred on travel that is clearly for the purpose of discharging essential official business of the District. Travel planning should take into consideration the most economical means of accomplishing the authorized task.

Administrators who are responsible for making travel assignments and for approving travel plans have the additional responsibility of limiting travel plans to those trips that are clearly in accordance with Board policy, the District improvement plan, or official Board action.

Employees must secure written approval for travel on the appropriate District form.

TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

To receive reimbursement for travel, the employee must submit the green copy of the Travel Expense Form with actual mileage indicated and "paid" receipts attached to the form. Employee expenses associated with authorized trips will be reimbursed in accordance with the following allowances:

HOTEL	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The cost of the hotel room will be reimbursed, provided the traveler's reimbursement claim is submitted with an attached "paid" bill or receipt from a commercial hotel, motel, or other commercial lodging establishment. The maximum daily rate for lodging is set forth in the State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide. The District will not pay for room service, movies, personal telephone calls, or other types of personal service.
MEALS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. An employee will receive reimbursement for meals for overnight trips only to the maximum amounts established below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Breakfast (20% of state authorized rate) b. Lunch (25% of state authorized rate) c. Dinner (55% of state authorized rate) <p style="margin-left: 40px;">A "paid" bill or receipt from the food establishment must be submitted with the reimbursement claim. The receipt must carry the date of the meal, the name and location of the food establishment, and the signature of the employee.</p>
REGISTRATION FEES	<p>Registration fees paid by the employee will be reimbursed if the employee submits a "paid" bill or receipt from the meeting sponsor. Reimbursement will not include membership fees in a professional organization.</p>
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	<p>Actual costs for public transportation will be reimbursed. Employees, when traveling by commercial airline, must travel tourist/economy class when such space is available. Receipts for public transportation must be attached to the traveler's request for reimbursement.</p> <p>Taxi cab expenses will be reimbursed at actual cost. To the extent possible, employee must attach receipts for any taxi expenses.</p> <p>Car rentals will be reimbursed at actual cost. Receipts for car rental costs must be attached to the traveler's request for reimbursement. A detailed justification for the car rental must be attached to the request for reimbursement.</p>
PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION	<p>Travel outside of the District in the employee's private vehicle will be reimbursed at a rate equal to the rate authorized in the State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide provided a district vehicle is unavailable. Mileage claims will be based on the shortest practical route between the District and the destination via intermediate points at which official business is conducted, as well as documented incidental travel in the destination city.</p>

When two or more employees of the District travel with the same itinerary on the same dates, only one may claim a travel reimbursement for mileage in a personal vehicle. If a district vehicle is available, no reimbursement shall be permitted for mileage in a personal vehicle unless approved in writing, in advance. An exception may be made if more than four employees use more than one vehicle to attend a meeting or conference.

When an employee travels for District business in a private vehicle when a district vehicle is not available, he or she must furnish evidence of insurance to the District.

**PARKING
COSTS**

An employee who drives a vehicle to a meeting and is required to pay a parking fee will be reimbursed, provided a receipt is submitted with the reimbursement request form.

**MISCELLANEOUS
EXPENSES**

The District will make reimbursement for other miscellaneous expenses, such as tips, tolls, and the like, when the employee documents those expenses and presents receipts, to the extent feasible.

**REIMBURSEMENT
DEADLINE**

The District will make reimbursement for properly documented expenses only if the request for reimbursement is submitted to the business office on the appropriate forms, with any necessary receipts attached, no later than 30 days after the trip.

**ADVANCED
TRAVEL
FUNDS**

The District may advance funds for lodging and conference fees. If an employee needs travel funds issued in advance, the following procedures will apply:

1. The employee must submit a purchase requisition, approved by the immediate supervisor, to the business office 10 days before the funds are needed.
2. Not later than 10 days after the trip, the employee must attach all bills and receipts to the travel reimbursement request and submit the form, with any unexpended funds, to the administrator who approved the advance. Failure to file timely travel reports may require the employee to repay the entire cash advance to the District.
3. Administrators will immediately review the travel report, sign the travel reimbursement form, and forward the report to the Superintendent or designee.

**LIBERTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
TRAVEL EXPENSE FORM**

Name:	Campus:
Travel Date:	Return Date:
Travel Destination:	Purpose of Trip:
List of all attendants:	

**Hover over the red triangles if you have a question about what is required in each area.*

MEALS, MILEAGE, & OTHER

Adults (subject to reimbursement with itemized receipts required within 30 days):		PO#
Breakfasts @ \$7 each	\$ -	(Must depart before 6 AM and be out at least 6 hours or overnight stay)
Lunches @ \$9 each	\$ -	(Must depart before 10 AM, return after 2 PM, and be out at least 6 hours)
Dinners @ \$20 each	\$ -	(Applies to overnight stay only)
	\$ -	TOTAL ADULT MEALS

**Meals are based on the State's approved rate of \$36 per day or actual expenditures, whichever is less.*

***20% of daily rate designated for breakfast; 25% of daily rate designated for lunch; 55% of daily rate designated for dinner.*

Students (advances permissible with receipts required within 3 days of travel date):	
Meals @ \$4 each	\$ -
	TOTAL STUDENT MEALS

Mileage will only be reimbursed if a school vehicle is not available. Please attach documentation from transportation department stating no LISD vehicle was available for this trip.

Mileage (subject to reimbursement with actual mileage log required):		Beginning Mileage
Miles @ .50 each	\$ -	Ending Mileage
	TOTAL MILEAGE	

**Mileage paid at the State's approved rate of .50 per mile.*

(Estimate mileage for PO, but reimbursement based on actual miles)

Other reimburseable expenses (subject to reimbursement with receipts required within 30 days):	
Description:	
Description:	\$ -
Description:	\$ -
	\$ -
	TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES

WORKSHOP FEES AND DUES

Vendor:	Amount:	PO#
Address:	Pick up check <input type="checkbox"/>	To Campus <input type="checkbox"/>
	Mail check on or before _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

LODGING

Vendor:	PO#	
Address:	Confirmation #	
	Pick up check <input type="checkbox"/>	
	To Campus <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Mail check on or before _____	
Per night X	nights plus	in taxes =

**State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide sets the maximum reimbursement at \$85 (not including applicable taxes) per person per day.*

AUTHORIZATION & CODING

Requestor:	Date:	Coding:
Principal:	Date:	
Director:	Date:	
Superintendent:	Date:	

**LIBERTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
DIRECT PAYMENT FORM**

REQUESTED BY: _____ **DATE:** _____

CAMPUS: ADMIN _____

FUNDING SOURCE

Local / State / Federal Funds (these funds are a part of the District budget)

Activity Funds (funds raised by either campus or student activities)

Activity Fund: _____

PAYMENT DETAILS

Vendor: _____ Amount: _____ PO# _____

Address: _____ Pick up check To Campus

_____ Mail check on or before _____

Reason for Payment: _____

AUTHORIZATION & CODING

*Activity Officer: _____ Date: _____ Coding: _____

*Activity Sponsor: _____ Date: _____

Requestor: _____ Date: _____

Principal: _____ Date: _____

Director: _____ Date: _____

Superintendent: _____ Date: _____

**Signatures required only if using student activity funds*

Health, dental, and life insurance

Policy CRD

Group health insurance coverage is provided through TRS-ActiveCare, the statewide public school health insurance program. The district's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the board of trustees. Employees eligible for health insurance coverage include the following:

- Employees who are active, contributing TRS members
- Employees who are not contributing TRS members and who are regularly scheduled to work at least 10 hours per week

TRS retirees who are enrolled in TRS-Care (retiree health insurance program) and employees who are not contributing TRS members who are regularly scheduled to work less than 10 hours per week are not eligible to participate in TRS-ActiveCare.

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment each spring. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees should contact the Business Office, at 336-7213, x 223, for more information.

Supplemental insurance benefits

Policy CRG

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for dental, vision, supplemental life, catastrophic illness, and disability. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact the Business Office, for more information.

Cafeteria plan benefits (Section 125)

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

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

Workers' compensation insurance

Policy CRE

The district, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The district has workers' compensation coverage from September 1 through August 31, effective on the first day of employment. 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 the employees' immediate supervisor and the business office. 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 23, for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

Workers' compensation benefits

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

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

Unemployment compensation insurance

Policy CRF

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact the Business Office at 336-7213.

Teacher retirement

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

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify the Business Office, as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits are 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.state.tx.us). See page 7 and 8 for information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

Other benefit programs

Other benefit programs available to employees of Liberty ISD include the following:

- Tuition-free attendance for children of nonresident employees
- Catastrophic sick leave pool

Leaves and Absences

Policy 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 contact the Business Office for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the District.

Employees must follow district and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate leave request form or certification. Any employee who is absent more than 5 days because of a personal or family illness must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness (in terms not required to violate any HIPPA rights), and-in the case of personal illness-the employee's fitness to return to work.

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

Use of Leave. Leave is available for the employee's use at the beginning of the year. However, state personal and local leave is earned bi-monthly. If an employee leaves the district before the end of the work year, the cost of any unearned leave days taken shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

Leave must be used in half day increments. However, if any employee is taking family and medical leave, leave shall be recorded in one-hour increments. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

- State personal leave
- State sick leave
- Local sick leave

Personal leave

State law entitles all employees to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is earned at a rate of one-half a workday for each 18 workdays of employment, up to the statutory maximum of 5 workdays annually. A day of earned personal leave is equivalent to an assigned workday. State personal leave accumulates without limit is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. There are two types of personal leave: nondiscretionary and discretionary.

Nondiscretionary. Leave taken for personal or family illness, emergency, 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. Non-discretionary leave will be granted to employees in the same manner as state sick leave.

Discretionary. Leave taken at an employee's discretion and that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor 5 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.

State Sick leave

Previously accumulated state sick leave is available for use and may be transferred to other school districts in Texas. State sick leave can be used only in one 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.

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

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

Local leave

Local sick leave shall accumulate without limit and shall be taken with no loss of pay.

Local sick leave days are nontransferable when an employee leaves the District.

A professional employee who has exhausted earned sick and personal leave benefits and has been employed in the District five or more years shall be permitted up to 30 days of extended sick leave to be used only for the employee's personal illness or disability, including pregnancy-related disability. The substitute's daily rate shall be deducted from the employee's pay during this time whether or not a substitute is employed.

Upon retirement from the district, a teacher employed by the District for ten or more years shall be paid for unused local leave up to 30 workdays. The following reimbursement shall apply:

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Rate per Day</u>
0 – 9	None
10 – 14	\$20 per day
15 – 19	\$25 per day
20 – 24	2/3 regular daily rate
25 and up	Full daily rate

In the event of the death of a full-time teacher at any age, the estate shall be paid an amount equal to the retirement benefits in the above schedule.

A catastrophic leave pool is the voluntary donation by a school employee of local sick and personal leave days for the purpose of assisting a fellow employee suffering from personal illness or disability, or illness or disability in the immediate family. Such catastrophic conditions may include such conditions as cancer, leukemia, stroke, Hodgkin’s disease, AIDS/HIV, and heart disease.

This pool shall be:

1. Allowed when the employee has used all state and local sick and personal leave days, and vacation days, if applicable.
2. Established at the time of request for assistance.
3. Made up of voluntary contributions by members of the school faculty and staff. Contributions may consist of from one to four local sick or personal leave days per person. No staff member may contribute more than four days to the pool per school year.

The catastrophic leave pool shall be created by voluntary donations by District faculty and staff for a specific individual and the donated days shall be designated to a specific pool. A maximum of 60 days may be contributed to a specific pool. An individual employee for whom a pool is established may participate in the pool until he or she has used a total of 60 days maximum from the pool.

Request for the establishment of the pool shall be made in writing to the campus principal. Pooling may be requested when an employee has exhausted his or her state, local, sick and personal leave days, and vacation days, if applicable. An attending physician statement confirming the cause of illness or confinement and certifying the existence of an inability to perform assigned duties shall be attached by the recipient to the request form at the time the request for days is made.

The pool ceases to exist when the employee returns to work or each voluntary donation reaches the four day maximum contribution and is exhausted.

The Board, upon recommendation of the superintendent, shall grant a sabbatical leave to qualified personnel for the purpose of study, travel, and for such other purposes as may be approved by the Board. The following shall apply:

- 1) Upon recommendation of the superintendent, the Board may grant a sabbatical leave to a contract employee who has been employed at least three consecutive years and who has not had a sabbatical leave during the three immediately preceding years. The leave granted shall not exceed two semesters.
- 2) An employee on sabbatical leave shall receive no compensation during the period of absence. An employee on sabbatical leave shall receive the same scheduled increment and/or adjustments in salary as he or she would have received were he or she occupying the regular assignment. An employee on sabbatical leave shall retain accumulated sick leave, but shall receive no additional sick leave during the absence.
- 3) The employee, upon return from sabbatical leave, shall be restored to the first available position for which the employee holds proper certification.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
LEAVES AND ABSENCES

DEC
(LOCAL)

SECTION I
DEFINITIONS AND
ADMINISTRATION

FAMILY	<p>The term "immediate family" is defined as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Spouse.2. Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands <i>in loco parentis</i>.3. Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands <i>in loco parentis</i> to the employee.4. Sibling, stepsibling, sibling-in-law.5. Grandparent and grandchild.6. Any person residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death. <p>For purposes of the Family and Medical Leave Act, the definitions of spouse, parent, son or daughter, and next of kin are found in DECA (LEGAL).</p>
FAMILY EMERGENCY	<p>The term "family emergency" shall be limited to disasters and life-threatening situations involving the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family.</p>
WORKDAY	<p>A "equivalent workday" for purposes of earning, use, or recording shall mean the number of hours per day equivalent to the employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time.</p>
CASTASTROPHIC ILLNESS OR INJURY	<p>A catastrophic illness or injury is a severe condition or combination of conditions affecting the mental or physical health of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family that requires the services of a licensed practitioner for a prolonged period of time and that forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee and to lose compensation from the District. Complications resulting from pregnancy shall be treated the same as any other condition.</p>
AVAILABILITY	<p>The District shall make paid leave for the current school year available on the employee's first scheduled work day.</p> <p>The District shall not approve paid leave for more workdays than have been accumulated in prior years plus those to be earned during the current year. Any absences beyond available paid leave shall result in deductions from the employee's pay.</p>

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
LEAVES AND ABSENCES

DEC
(LOCAL)

EARNING LEAVE

An employee shall not earn leave when he or she is in unpaid status. An employee using full or proportionate paid leave shall be considered to be in paid status.

When an employee has used more leave than he or she has earned, the District shall deduct the cost of unearned leave days from the employee's final paycheck for the year or from the last paycheck after the employee ceases to be employed by the District.

RECORDING

1. Leave shall be recorded in half-day increments for all employees.
2. If the employee is taking intermittent FMLA leave, leave shall be recorded in one-hour increments.
3. If the employee chooses to offset leave against workers' compensation benefits, leave shall be recorded in the amount used.

ORDER OF USE

Earned compensatory time shall be used before any available paid state and local leave. [See DEA]

Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave shall be used in the following order, as applicable:

1. Local personal leave.
2. Local sick leave.
3. State sick leave accumulated before the 1995-96 school year.
4. State personal leave.

CONCURRENT USE
OF LEAVE

When an absent employee is eligible for FMLA leave, the District shall designate the absence as FMLA leave.

The District shall require the employee to use temporary disability leave and paid leave, including compensatory time, concurrently with FMLA leave.

An employee receiving workers' compensation income benefits may be eligible for paid or unpaid leave. An absence due to a work-related injury or illness shall be designated as FMLA leave, temporary disability leave, and/or assault leave, as applicable.

MEDICAL
CERTIFICATION

An employee shall submit medical certification of the need to leave if:

1. The employee is absent more than five consecutive workdays because of personal illness or illness in the immediate family;
2. The District requires medical certification due to a questionable pattern of absences or when deemed necessary by the supervisor or Superintendent;

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
LEAVES AND ABSENCES

DEC
(LOCAL)

3. The employee requests FMLA leave for the employee's serious health condition or that of a spouse, parent, or child; or
4. The employee requests FMLA leave for military caregiver purposes.

In each case, medical certification shall be made by a health-care provider as defined by the FMLA. [See DECA (LEGAL)]

Note: For District contribution to employee insurance during leave, see CRD (LOCAL).

SECTION II

STATE PERSONAL LEAVE

STATE PERSONAL
LEAVE

For purposes of this section, each employee shall earn state personal leave up to the statutory maximum of five workdays annually at the rate established in administrative regulations.

The Board requires employees to differentiate the manner in which state personal leave is used:

NON-DISCRETIONARY
USE

Non-discretionary use of leave shall be for the same reasons and in the same manner as state sick leave accumulated before May 30, 1995. [See DEC (LEGAL)]

Non-discretionary use also includes leave for well-baby care within the first year after birth, adoption, or placement of a child.

DESCRETIONARY USE

Discretionary use of leave is at the individual employee's discretion, subject to limitations set out below.

LIMITATIONS
REQUEST FOR LEAVE

The employee shall submit a written request for discretionary use of state personal leave to the immediate supervisor or designee in advance in accordance with administrative regulations. In deciding whether to approve or deny state personal leave, the supervisor or designee shall not seek or consider the reasons for which an employee requests to use leave. The supervisor or designee shall, however consider the effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or District operations, as well as the availability of substitutes.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
LEAVES AND ABSENCES

DEC
(LOCAL)

SECTION III

LOCAL LEAVE

LOCAL LEAVE	Professional and paraprofessional employees (secretaries, aides, clerks) shall earn five workdays of paid local sick leave per school year in accordance with administrative regulations. Local leave shall accumulate without limit.
LOCAL PERSONAL LEAVE	Each professional and instructional or clerical paraprofessional (secretaries, aides, clerk) shall be granted two days of personal leave per year. Local personal leave not used by the end of the school year shall be paid at the rate established as part of the Attendance Incentive Program.
DURATION OF LEAVE	Discretionary personal leave may not be taken for more than three consecutive days. Discretionary personal leave shall not be taken for more than a total of six days during the school year. If an employee takes more than six days of discretionary leave during the school year in violation of the provision, the employee shall not be paid for those excessive discretionary leave days.
SCHEDULE LIMITATIONS	Discretionary leave shall not be allowed on the day before a school holiday, the day after a school holiday, days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year examinations, days scheduled for state-mandated assessments, or professional or staff development days.

SECTION IV

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

TWELVE-MONTH PERIOD	For purposes of an employee's entitlement to FMLA, the 12-month period shall be July 1 through June 30.
COMBINED LEAVE FOR SPOUSES	If both spouses are employed by the District, the District shall limit FMLA leave for the birth, adoption, or placement of a child, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition, to a combined total of 12 weeks. The District shall limit military caregiver leave to a combined total of 26 weeks. [See DECA (LEGAL)]

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INTERMITTENT OR
REDUCED SCHEDULE
LEAVE

The District shall permit use of intermittent or reduced schedule FMLA leave for the care of a newborn child or for the adoption or placement of a child with the employee. [See DECA (LEGAL) for use of intermittent or reduced schedule leave due to a medical necessity.]

CERTIFICATION OF
LEAVE

If an employee requests leave, the employee shall provide certification, as required by FMLA regulations, of the need for leave. [See DECA (LEGAL)]

FITNESS-FOR-DUTY
CERTIFICATION

If an employee takes FMLA leave due to the employee's own serious health condition, the employee shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification. If the District will require certification of the employee's ability to perform essential job functions, the District shall provide a list of essential job functions to the employee with the FMLA designation notice.

END OF SEMESTER
LEAVE

If a teacher takes leave near the end of the semester, the District may require the teacher to continue leave until the end of the semester. [See DECA (LEGAL), LEAVE AT THE END OF A SEMESTER]

FAILURE TO
RETURN

If, at the expiration of FMLA leave, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the District may require reimbursement of premiums paid by the District during the leave. [See DECA (LEGAL), RECOVERY OF BENEFIT COST]

SECTION V

**TEMPORARY
DISABILITY LEAVE**

TEMPORARY
DISABILITY LEAVE

Any full-time employee whose position requires educator certification by the State Board for Educator Certification or by the District shall be eligible for temporary disability leave. The maximum length of temporary disability leave shall be 180 calendar days. [See DBB (LOCAL) for temporary disability leave placement and DEC (LEGAL) for reinstatement.]

An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee as a request for temporary disability leave.

**SECTION VI
WORKERS'
COMPENSATION**

WORKERS'
COMPENSATION

NOTE: Workers' compensation is not a form of leave. The workers' compensation law does not require the continuation of the District's contribution to health insurance. [See CRD (LOCAL) regarding payment of insurance contribution during employee absences.]

An absence due to a work-related injury or illness shall be designated as FMLA leave, temporary disability leave, and/or assault leave, as applicable

PAID LEAVE
OFFSET

An employee eligible for workers' compensation income benefits, and not on assault leave, may elect in writing to use available partial-day increments of paid leave to make up the difference between the employee's income benefits and the pre-injury wage. [See CRE]

**SECTION VII
MISCELLANEOUS**

COURT
APPEARANCES

Absences due to compliance with a valid subpoena or for jury duty shall be fully compensated by the District and shall not be deducted from the employee's pay or leave balance, so long as the employee is not a party to the litigation.

**SECTION VIII
SICK LEAVE POOL**

SICK LEAVE POOL

An employee who has exhausted all paid leave and who suffers from a catastrophic illness or injury or is absent due to the catastrophic illness or injury of a member of the employee's immediate family may request the establishment of sick leave pool, to which District employees may donate local leave or state personal leave for use by the eligible employee. If the employee is unable to submit the request, a member of the employee's family or the employee's supervisor may submit the request to establish a sick leave pool.

The Assistant Superintendent of Personnel shall select and chair a committee composed of one person from each campus, Central Administration, Maintenance and Operations, and Food Service departments. The committee shall review the request for the es-

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(LOCAL)

establishment of a sick leave pool for the requestor and shall determine whether the illness or injury qualifies as a catastrophic illness or injury. The Assistant Superintendent of Personnel shall be a non-voting member.

The pool shall cease to exist when the employee no longer needs leave for the purpose requested, uses the maximum number of days allowed under a pool, or exhausts all leave days donated to the sick leave pool.

The employee shall complete a request form available at the Human Resources Office. The maximum number of days an employee may donate to a leave pool is four per year (cumulative). The maximum number of days per school year an eligible employee may receive from a sick leave pool is sixty. Unused days shall be returned to donors by first returning days in excess of one day donated by an employee, and then reverse order of donations.

SECTION IX
ACCUMULATED
STATE LEAVE

ACCUMULATED STATE
LEAVE

In no event shall a retiring or separating employee be compensated for unused state sick or personal leave days.

Employees of the District serving for ten or more years shall be paid for unused local leave up to thirty work days. The following shall apply:

LISD Years of Service	Rate per Day
0 – 9	None
10 – 14	\$20 per day
15 – 19	\$25 per day
20 – 24	2/3 regular daily rate
25 and up	Full daily rate

If the employee is reemployed with the District, days for which the employee received payment shall not be available to that employee.

The rate established by the Board shall be in effect until the Board adopts a new rate. Any changes to the rate shall apply beginning with the school year following the adoption of the rate change.

In the event of the death of a full-time employee at any age, the estate shall be paid an amount equal to the retirement benefits in the above schedule.

Section X

ATTENDANCE
INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Employees Providing Direct Instruction

Teachers, teacher aides who provide direct instruction to students shall receive the following incentive compensation during the summer after they qualify for the incentive. The actual date of the incentive compensation shall be determined by the Superintendent.

The incentive shall be:

Perfect attendance	\$500
One absence	\$300
Two absences	\$150

Eligible employees shall not be considered absent for school related "no-dock" days, non-duty days, or compensatory time. All other absences shall be considered an absence under the Attendance Incentive Program without regard to the category of leave chosen by the employee.

All Employees

All employees who receive local personal days (professional employees, instructional aides, and clerical staff) shall receive a payment of \$70 (seventy dollars) for each local personal day not used during the school year.

Temporary disability

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 disability leave is not approved, the employee must return to work or be subject to termination procedures.

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

When an employee is ready to return to work, the Business Office 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. Professional employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned as soon as an appropriate position is available. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, professional employees will be reinstated at the beginning of the following school year.

Family and medical leave (FMLA) – general provisions

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

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. Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active military duty and deployed to a foreign country may use their 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 servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list. It also includes a family member who is a veteran with an illness or injury that occurs in the line of duty while on active duty and manifests itself before or after the servicemember became a veteran. The veteran must have been on active duty during the five years preceding the need for treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

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 leave 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.

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 requirements may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 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 the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employee's 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 notify 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

Local Family and Medical Leave 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 leave 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. A husband and wife who are both employed by the district are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FML leave 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 required FMLA leave or have questions should contact the business office for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

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 nonresponsible for purposes of criminal liability.

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

Bereavement leave

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

Other court appearances

Employees will be granted paid leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding. Absences for court appearances related to an employee's personal business must be taken as personal leave or leave without pay (if no personal leave is available). 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, or reserve component of the United States armed forces will be granted a paid leave of absence without loss of any accumulated leave for authorized training or duty orders. Paid military leave will not exceed 15 days each federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30).. 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 state military duty (Texas National Guard or Texas State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the district will be reemployed in the position they would have held if employment had not been interrupted or reassigned to an equivalent or similar position 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 to the Assistant Superintendent, at 336-7213, within 90 days of discharge or separation, within the statutory period. In most cases, the length of military service cannot exceed five years, and the employee must apply for reemployment within the period of time specified by law.

Continuation of health insurance. Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24 months. Employees should contact the Business Office, at 336-7213, for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Employee relations and communications

Employee recognition and appreciation

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

District communications

Throughout the school year, the Administration and campus offices publish newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials in both print and/or electronic form. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements.

Complaints and grievances

Policy DGBA

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

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

DGBA (Local) on the following page.

Employee conduct and welfare

Standards of conduct

Policy DH

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

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

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines 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 first learns of the incident. See *Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification*, page 39 for additional information. The *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*, adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification, which all district employees must adhere to, is reprinted below:

Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

Statement of Purpose

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. 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.

Professional Standards

1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

Standard 1.1 The educator shall not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

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, 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 applicable 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.

2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

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

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

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

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

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

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 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 knowingly treat a student in a manner that adversely affects the student's learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.

Standard 3.3 The educator shall not deliberately or knowingly 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, sex, disability, national origin, religion, or family status.

Standard 3.5 The educator shall not engage in physical mistreatment of a student.

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

Standard 3.7 The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or knowingly allow any student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Policies DH, DIA

Employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other employees 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.

Employees 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 employee should report the complaint directly to the superintendent. A complaint against the superintendent may be made directly to the board.

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

See DIA (Local) on the following page.

Harassment of students

Policies DF, DH, FFG, FFH

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationship between students and district employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment of a student are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student 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 38 for additional information.

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

“Solicitation of a romantic relationship means deliberate or repeated acts that can be reasonably interpreted as solicitations or relationships characterized by an ardent emotional attachment or pattern of exclusivity.” See also policy DF (legal) for additional explanation and examples.

See FFH (Local) on the following page.

Alcohol – and drug-abuse prevention

Policies DH, DI

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

See information on alcohol and drug abuse in DH (Local) and DI (Exhibit) on the following page.

Reporting suspected child abuse

Policies DF, DG, DH, 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 the Texas Family Code and includes any sexual conduct involving an educator and a student or minor.

Reports to Child Protective Services can be made to a local office or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person 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 report suspected child abuse may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

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 agencies. In addition, employees must cooperate with child abuse and neglect investigators. Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report to the appropriate state agency. 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.

Child Sexual Abuse

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed at the superintendent's office. 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. 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. 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*.

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 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
- Destroying, removing, or inappropriately using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
- Failing to provide financial records required by state or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the district

Conflict of interest

Policy DBD

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

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

Gifts and favors

Policy DBD

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

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.

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 Robert Ward, Director of Maintenance Operations, at 336-7213.

Tobacco use

Policies DH, GKA, FNCD

State law prohibits smoking or using tobacco products on all district-owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off campus. 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 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.

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, any offense involving turpitude, 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
- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Drug or alcohol-related offenses
- Theft
- Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor

Possession of firearms and weapons

Policies FNCG, GKA

Employees, visitors, and students 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. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisors or call the Liberty Police Department at 911 immediately.

Visitors in the workplace

Policy GKC

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

Copyrighted materials

Policy EFE

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.). Rented videotapes are to be used in the classroom for educational purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

See policy EFE legal and local for additional information.

Computer use and data management

Policy CQ

The district's electronic communications systems, including its network access to the Internet, is primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use of the system is permitted if the use:

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

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

Employees and students who are authorized to use the systems are required to abide by the provisions of the district's communications systems policy and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact Jim Cox, Director of Technology, at 336-7213.

Personal Use of Electronic Media

Policy DH

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

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 not use the district's logo or other copyrighted material of the district without express, written consent.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas

Educators, 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 address. [See Policy GBA]
- Copyright law [See Policy EFE]
- 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.

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), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing Web sites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebooks, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn). *Electronic media* also includes all forms of telecommunications 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, 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 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 midnight and 5:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators, including:
 - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
 - Copyright law [Policy EFE]
 - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DF]
- 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 any 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 this or her immediate supervisor.

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 superintendent's office and is available for inspection during normal business hours.

Pest control treatment

Policies DI, CLB

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 in the front office of each campus. Pest control information sheets are available from campus principals or facility managers upon request.

Activity Funds Management

Policy CFD

A student activities account is maintained to manage all class funds, organization funds, and any other funds collected from students for a school-related purpose. Receipts shall be issued by the Business Office for all funds prior to their deposit into the appropriate District account at the District depository. Deposits must be made in the Business Office within 24 hours of receipt of funds by sponsor. When possible, deposit to Business Office on the same day as received by Sponsor.

Income received for a specific group shall be disbursed for that group. Upon the dissolution of any group in which the student activity fund is acting as agent, the school principal shall ensure that any liabilities of the group are liquidated, and the remaining assets of that group shall be transferred to the general operating fund.

Fixed assets that are purchased by organizations are considered property of the District; however, the item shall remain on the campus where it was purchased. The central office shall be provided a copy of the invoice with item(s) properly marked.

Funds collected by student groups shall be used only for purposes authorized by the organization or upon approval of the sponsor. The principal or designee shall approve all disbursements. All funds raised by student organizations must be expended for the benefit of the students.

General procedures

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 notify the following radio station:

KSHN Radio (99.9 FM)

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 to the Business Department on an official district purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the district can be made without a PO number. The district will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the district's business office. Contact the Business Office, at 336-7213, for additional information on purchasing procedures.

Name and address changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Human Resources Office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, home telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. Forms to process a change in personal information can be obtained from the Human Resources Office, at 336-7213.

Personnel records

Policy 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
- Social Security number
- Information that reveals whether they have family members

The choice not to allow public access to this information may be done at any time by submitting a written request to Randy Gunter, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. New or terminating employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public.

Building use

Policies DCA and GKD

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

Termination of employment

Resignations

Policy DFE

Contract employees. Contract employees may resign their position without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the superintendent. 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 the State Board for Educator Certification* on page

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

Dismissal or nonrenewal of contract employees

Policies DFAA, DFAB, DFBA, DFBB, DFCA, DFD, DFF

Employees on probationary, term, and continuing contracts can be dismissed during the school year according to the procedures outlined in district policies. Employees on probationary or term contracts can be nonrenewed at the end of the contract term. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay, or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, and an opportunity for a hearing. The time lines 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 whose certification is revoked for misconduct. Information on the time lines and procedures can be found in the DF series policies that are provided to employees or are available online.

See policy DFAA (Legal), DFAA(Local), DFBB(Legal), DFBB(Local) and DFBB(Exhibit) on the following pages.

Dismissal of noncontract employees

Policy DCD

Noncontract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, 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. Noncontract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (See *Complaints and grievances*, page 25.)

Exit interviews and procedures

Policy DC

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

All district keys, books, property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification

Policy DF

The dismissal or resignation of a certified employee will be reported to the SBEC when the superintendent first learns about an alleged incident of conduct that involves the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other illegal conduct with a student or a minor
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of school property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position
- Committing a crime on school property or at a school-sponsored event
- Violating assessment instrument security procedures
- A reported criminal history
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor

Reports concerning court-ordered withholding

The district is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance 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

Equal Educational Opportunities

Policies FB, FFH

The Liberty ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, 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.

Liberty ISD offers Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in all areas of career and technology. CTE courses are included in the following clusters: Agriculture; Food and Natural Resources; Architecture and Construction; Business, Management and Administration; Education and Training; Health Science; Human Services; Information Technology; Transportation, Distribution and Logistics. It is the policy of Liberty ISD not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender or disability in its vocational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. It is the policy of Liberty ISD not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, disability or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Liberty ISD will take steps to ensure that limited English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and/or participation in career or technology programs.

Questions or concerns about discrimination of students on any of the bases listed above should be directed to the Superintendent at 336-7213.

Student records

Policy FL

Student records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records.

The following people are the only people who have general access to a student's records:

- Parents: Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights
- The student (if 18 or older or emancipated by a court)
- 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 Randy Gunter, Assistant Superintendent or 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

Policy FFAC

Only designated employees can administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. A student who must take prescription medication during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine, in its original, properly labeled container. Contact the principal or school nurse for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

Dietary supplements

Policies DH, FFAC

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

Psychotropic drugs

Policy FFAC

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

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

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

Student Conduct and Discipline

Policies in the FN series and FO series

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

Student Attendance

Policy FEB

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

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.

Bullying

Policy FFI

All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying to the campus principal. The district's policy includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students and is reprinted below:

See information on bullying in FFI (Local) on the following page.

Appendix A:

**School Board Policy: [FN \(Local\)](#) and
[FO \(Legal\)](#) & [FO \(Local\)](#)**

Appendix B:

[SUBTITLE G.](#)

[SAFE SCHOOLS CHAPTER 37 DISCIPLINE; LAW AND ORDER](#)

Appendix C:

DAA (Legal) and DAA(Local)	–Equal employment opportunity
DBD (Legal) and DBD (Local)	–Conflict of Interest
DC (Legal) and DC (Local)	–Employment practices
DEA (Legal) and DEA (Local)	–Salaries, wages, and stipends
DEAA(Legal) and DEAA (Local)	–Salaries, wages, and stipends
DEC (Legal) and DEC (Local)	–Leaves and absences
DFAC (Legal)	–Return to probationary status
DFAA (Legal)	–Suspension/Termination
DFAA (Local)	–Suspension/Termination
DFBB (Legal)	–Term Contract: Non-Renewal
DFBB (Local)	–Term Contract: Non-Renewal
DFBB (Exhibit)	–Term Contract: Non-Renewal
DFD (Legal) and DFD (Local)	–Hearings before hearing examiner
DFE (Legal) and DFE (Local)	–Resignations
DFF (Local)	–Reduction in force
DGBA (Local)	–Employee Complaints/Grievances
DH (Local)	–Alcohol & Drug Abuse-Prevention
DHE (Legal) and DHE (Local)	–Searches & Drug/Alcohol Testing
DHE (Exhibit)	–Searches & Drug/Alcohol Testing
DI (Exhibit)	–Alcohol & Drug Abuse-Prevention
DIA (Local)	–Employee Harassment
DK (Legal) and DK (Local)	–Assignments and schedules
DN (Local)	–Performance appraisal
EFE (Local)	–Copyrighted Material
EFE (Exhibit)	–Copyrighted Material
FFH (Local)	–Student Harassment
FFI (Local)	–Student Welfare

The policies listed above are available in your supervisor’s office upon request or on the Liberty ISD website.

LIBERTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

ACCEPTABLE USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

Rev. 100208
Board Approved 3/9/2010

Introduction

This policy is applicable to all use of computing technology, network, and internet systems, herein referred to as the "System", while using school district property at any location or during school activities at any location. It applies to all System users including, but not limited to, students, faculty, employees, contractors, guests, and visitors.

The Superintendent or designee will oversee the System.

Network and Internet access is provided as an educational tool and is to be considered a privilege, not a right. The school district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the school district and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

All use of the System must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the mission of the district. In addition, educational technology may only be used in a manner consistent with federal and state law, license agreements and district policy. Commercial use of the District's system is strictly prohibited. Limited personal use of the system shall be permitted if the use:

1. Imposes no tangible cost on the District;
2. Does not unduly burden the District's computer or network resources; and
3. Has no adverse effect on an employee's job performance or on a student's academic performance.

System Access

System access is only allowed via login credentials, herein referred to as a "Login ID", assigned at the request of authorized district administrative personnel and created by employees of the LISD Technology Department (herein referred to as "Tech Department") or their designee.

The use of a Login ID constitutes agreement by the System user to abide by the information contained in this Acceptable Use Policy and to assume responsibility for all viewing, changes, access, and subsequent results associated with that account. The System user is responsible for their Login ID and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use the account. Under no conditions should a Login ID or password be provided to another person.

An "Access to Network Systems Agreement" form, herein referred to as "Agreement Form", must be signed and remain on file with the district for all System users. Some exceptions regarding the life of an Agreement Form exist for student System users and are noted in the section "Student Access Under Age 18" below.

Inappropriate Use and Internet Safety

Network and Internet access is a privilege which requires a high level of personal responsibility and may be denied due to inappropriate use.

Inappropriate use shall include but not be limited to:

1. Using the System for commercial purposes.
2. Using the System for personal purposes which:
 - a. Impose tangible cost on the District;
 - b. Unduly burdens the District's computer or network resources; and
 - c. Has an adverse effect on an employee's job performance or on a student's academic performance.
3. Using the System to transmit malicious information, rumors, or information known to be inaccurate.
4. Using the System to transmit ethnically or racially offensive language or slurs,
5. Using the System to transmit sexually oriented, or threatening materials or messages either public or private.
6. Using the System to bully, harass, demean, or otherwise harm any person or entity.

7. Posting private information about another person.
8. Using the System to send, receive, or view information regarding pornography, extreme violence, obscenities, nudity, drugs or other substances prohibited on school grounds, weapons, or otherwise objectionable material.
9. Engaging in any illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of person, etc.
10. Damaging the security of the System.
11. Using another individual's Login ID or password.
12. Participating in computer "hacking" activities of any form.
13. Forging or attempting to forge electronic mail messages.
14. Attempting to read, delete, copy or modify electronic mail of other System users.
15. Attempting to disrupt the System or destroy data by spreading computer viruses.
16. Vandalizing the System.
17. Violating copyright laws.
18. Failing to follow network etiquette procedures.
19. Submitting false or misleading information to obtain or retain access to the System.
20. Accessing the System in any manner inconsistent with the mission of the school district.
21. Interfering with official school district communications.

Improper or unethical use may result in revocation of a user's Login ID and cessation of System access, disciplinary actions consistent with the district policy and, if appropriate, the Texas Penal Code or other state and federal laws. This may also require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, hardware, or software costs (also see the section entitled "Discipline" below).

Network Etiquette

System users are expected to observe the following network etiquette (also known as netiquette):

- Be polite. For example, messages typed in capital letters are the computer equivalent of shouting and are considered rude.
- Use appropriate language. No swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent, threatening language, or language which may be offensive to others.
- Be respectful of others' opinions.
- Don't assume that a sender of e-mail is giving his or her permission for you to forward or distribute the message to third parties or to give his/her e-mail address to third parties. This should only be done with permission or when you know that the individual would have no objection.
- Be considerate when sending attachments with e-mail (where this is permitted). Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system and is in a format which the recipient can open.

Inappropriate Access to Material

As required by federal CIPA regulations, the System is equipped with an internet content filter. The System user will make no attempts to bypass the filter or access material that is denied by the filter unless authorized by the filter's "Override" feature.

If access to inappropriate material mistakenly occurs for a:

- Student - Immediately report it to a teacher, Principal, or Assistant Principal;
- Other - Immediately report it to the Principal or Assistant Principal, AND to the Tech Department.

This will help protect you against a claim that you have intentionally violated this Policy.

Student Access and Internet Safety

Students under the age of 18 must have the written approval of a parent or guardian before being allowed System access as indicated by a signed Agreement Form. Student privileges will be granted only for **one academic year**. A signature on the Agreement Form indicates that the person signing the form has read, understood, and agrees to information contained on the form and any supplemental information which may be provided with the form.

Students will have access to the System for class assignments and research with their teacher's permission and supervision.

Personal information such as addresses and telephone numbers will remain confidential when communicating on the system. Students will never reveal such information without permission from their teacher, LISD adult, parent, or guardian.

Students will never make appointments to meet people in person that they have contacted on the internet via the System without district and parent permission.

Security and Usage Guidelines

Under no circumstances will a System user login to a computing device (e.g. desktop, laptop, or netbook computer, or ANY other device which connects with to System) and then leave that computing device out of their sight while remaining logged in. All System users MUST either **completely log out** of the computing device or initiate a (much faster) **"system lock" procedure** prior to leaving that computing device out of sight. The System user may request assistance from a campus administrator, teacher, or the Tech Department if they do not know the proper "system lock" procedure.

System users will not seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or the Login ID belonging to other System users, or misrepresent other System users, or attempt to gain unauthorized access to the System.

Communications may not be encrypted so as to avoid security review.

A System user guide will be published and available for viewing and distribution via the internet or from any campus or administrative office. District employees will provide assistance to view the user guide if necessary.

All System users are responsible and compelled to notify a Tech Department employee or campus administrator promptly upon discovery of any suspected security breach.

The district reserves the right to remove a Login ID from the System or to disconnect any System user to prevent unauthorized activity or inappropriate use at any time.

Network and Internet access is provided as an educational tool and is to be considered a privilege, not a right. The school district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the school district and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

Copyright

System users may not illegally download or capture music, mp3 files, movies, books, stories, poetry, or any other copyrighted works.

System users may download material for their own use in accordance with applicable copyright laws, district policy and administrative regulations. The Fair Use doctrine allows an individual to reproduce portions of copyrighted work for non-commercial purposes, in some instances. Reproduction beyond fair use requires the permission of the copyright holder or authorized person. The permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the author in accordance with applicable copyright laws, district policy and administrative regulations. Violations of copyright law could lead to civil liability with excessive penalties.

The System user will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. **Plagiarism** is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were your own. **Copyright infringement** occurs when a person inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, the System user should follow the expressed requirements. If the System user is unsure whether or not they can use a work, then they should request permission from the copyright owner.

Liability

The district does not warrant that the functions and services performed by or the information or software contained in the educational technology resources will meet the System user's requirements or that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, or that defects will be corrected. The district's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The district does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied including, without limitation, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any content or services provided by the System and any information or software contained therein.

The Agreement Form shall include a provision that the System user, parents or guardians (if applicable), will hold the district harmless from user violations of copyright laws, software licensing requirements, access of inappropriate materials, violations by the user of others' rights to confidentiality, free speech and privacy, and damage to internal and external systems accessed by the System user.

Updates

If, after the user signs an Agreement Form, some of the user's information changes, the user must notify the campus and/or district personnel of such changes and complete a new Agreement Form.

Also, a new Agreement Form may periodically be required to reflect changes in the law or technology. Such information must be provided if the user wishes to continue to use the System.

Discipline

A user who violates this policy, shall at a minimum, have his or her access to the System terminated, which the district may refuse to reinstate for the remainder of the user's association with the school district.

A user violates this policy by his or her own action or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates this policy if he or she permits another to use his or her Login ID or password to access the System, including any user whose access has been denied or terminated.

The school district may also take other disciplinary action in such circumstances. Violations which may be criminal will be referred to appropriate law enforcement officials.

ACCESS to NETWORK SYSTEMS AGREEMENT

LIBERTY ISD

Rev. 100208
Board Approved 3/9/2010

SECTION I - For All System Users (Including Students, Faculty, Administrators, and Staff)

I have read, understand, and will abide by the LISD Acceptable Use Policy. I further understand that any violation of the guidelines is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action will be taken.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

SECTION II - For Parent or Guardian (Required for STUDENTS Only)

(For students under age 18, a parent or guardian must also read and sign this agreement which is valid for the current school year only)

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read, understand, and will abide by the LISD Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that this access is intended for educational purposes. The District has taken steps to monitor internet use. However, I recognize that the District cannot restrict all access to inappropriate materials and I will not hold them responsible for inappropriate materials acquired by my child on the network. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use is not in a school setting.

Please check **ONE** of the following two items:

_____ I ***do*** give permission for my child to access the Internet, use school computers and the LISD computer network. I certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

_____ I ***do not*** give permission for my child to access the Internet, use school computers or the LISD computer network. I certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

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