

# **AZLE ISD**

## **2019–2020 Employee Handbook**

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of a disability, please e-mail, [elford@azleisd.net](mailto:elford@azleisd.net).



*"It makes a difference to this one."*

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# AZLE ISD Employee Handbook Receipt

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Campus/Department \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby acknowledge that I have been given the option of viewing the AZLE ISD Employee Handbook by accessing the Azle ISD website at [www.azleisd.net](http://www.azleisd.net), or a hard copy version located in the administrative office of my campus/department. I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document.

I understand that I can access the complete text of all school board policies "on line" through the district internet at [www.azleisd.net](http://www.azleisd.net) or <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1109> This includes the policies the district is required (by the Texas Education Code) to furnish to each administrator and teacher employed by term contract, which include but may not be limited to DAA (equal employment opportunity);

DBAA (employment requirements and restrictions criminal history and credit reports); DC (employment practices); DCB (term contract employment), DEA (salaries, wages, and stipends); DEC (leaves and absences); DFAC (return to probationary status); DF (termination of employment); DFB, DFBA, DFBB (termination of term contracts); DFD (hearings before hearing examiner); DFE (resignations); DFF (reduction in force); DGBA (employee complaints); DH (employee standards of conduct); DHE (searches and drug/alcohol testing); DI (employee welfare); DK (assignments and schedules); DIA (employee welfare- freedom from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation); DN series (performance appraisal). I understand that these policies include both (LEGAL), (LOCAL) and/or (EXHIBIT) portions, and that I am responsible for accessing any and all portions of the policies.

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please sign and date this receipt and **return it to your campus/department secretary** who will forward to the Human Resources Department.

# 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 the Human Resources Department.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official district policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of district policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate district office. District policies can be accessed online at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1109>.

# District Information

## **Azle ISD Strategic Plan**

### MOTTO:

“It Makes a Difference to This One”

### VISION:

Providing a World Class Education

### MISSION:

Making a Difference to Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day

### VALUES:

Kids First, Innovation, Integrity, Perseverance, Compassion, Excellence, Respect, Resilience

### GOALS:

1. Students will read at or above level by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
2. Students will have a plan for the future after graduation:
  - +15 hours of college/dual credit or Advanced Placement AND/OR
  - At least one industry certification AND/OR
  - Enrollment in a post-secondary institution or the military
3. Students will participate in an extra or co-curricular activity in grades 7-12.
4. Azle ISD will partner with our families and our community for student success.

## **Board of Trustees**

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

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

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

Current board members include:

- President-Bill Lane
- Vice President-Erik Loeffelholz
- Secretary-Shannon Hart
- Member-Timothy Brown
- Member-Sarah Bennett
- Member-Jeff Edwards
- Member-Sam Merck

The board usually meets on the third Monday of each month at the AISD Administration building located at 300 Roe St in Azle. Special meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted at the AISD School Administration Office at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held with a two-hour notice.

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



# Administration

## Central Administration

Superintendent	Tanya Anderson
Assistant Superintendent	Todd Smith
Director of Special Services	Gwen Shelton
Director of Technology	Eddie Alford
Director of Business & Finance	Matt Adams
Director of Curriculum	Amanda Wimpee
Director of Athletics	Becky Spurlock
Director of Human Resources	Mark Kehoe
Director of Career and Technical Education	Dr. Suzanne Murr
Coordinator of Secondary Education & Federal Programs	Jordan Thiem
Coordinator of Elementary Education & District Testing	Sheri Welch

## Auxiliary Service Personnel

Superintendent Adm. Assistant	Renee Ball
Human Resources Specialist	Diane Eversole
District Publications	Diretha Burton
Payroll Clerk	Monica Landreth
Benefits Clerk	Jamie Carroll
Substitute Coordinator	Shelley Unger
Transportation/Maintenance/Custodial Supervisor	Randy Spiker
Food Service Supervisor	Almarie Talavera

## **School Directory**

Azle High School (9-12)	817/444-5555
Principal-Randy Cobb	
Alternative Campus (all levels)	817/444-4564
Principal-Dianne Boone	
Azle Junior High (7-8)	817/444-2564
Principal-Brian Roberts	
Forte Junior High (7-8)	817/270-1133
Principal-Bill Manley	
Azle Elementary (5-6)	817/444-1312
Principal-Gina Lee	
Hoover Elementary (5-6)	817/444-7766
Principal-Joni Bettis	
Cross Timbers Elementary (K-4)	817/444-3802
Principal-Angela Holt	
Eagle Heights Elementary (K-4)	817/237-4161
Principal-Amy Rollmann	
Liberty Elementary (K-4)	817/444-1317
Principal-Lisa Koehler	
Silver Creek Elementary (K-4)	817/444-0257
Principal-Heidi Nelson	
Walnut Creek Elementary (K-4)	817/444-4045
Principal-Jessica Hanson	

# Employment

## Equal Employment Opportunity

*Policies DAA, DIA*

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

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment should contact Mark Kehoe, the district Title IX coordinator. Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should contact Gwen Shelton, the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator. Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent.

Contact Information: 300 Roe St. Azle, Texas 76020 (817) 444-3235

## Job Vacancy Announcements

*Policy DC*

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis to the district's website <https://a1-7.applitrack.com/azle/onlineapp/>.

## Employment after Retirement

*Policy DC*

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

## **Contract and Noncontract Employment**

### *Policy DC series*

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

**Probationary Contracts.** Nurses and full-time professional employees new to the district and employed in positions requiring SBEC certification must receive a probationary contract during their first year of employment. Former employees who are hired after a two-year lapse in district employment or employees who move to a position requiring a new class of certification may also be employed by probationary contract. Probationary contracts are one-year contracts. As a District of Innovation, 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 a probationary contract may exceed one school year.

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

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

**Noncertified Professional and Administrative Employees.** Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require SBEC certification (such as noninstructional administrators) are most often employed by a Chapter 21 probationary or term contract.

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

## **Certification and Licenses**

### *Policies DBA, DF*

Professional employees whose positions require SBEC certification or professional license are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained or renewed their credentials to the Human Resources Department in a timely manner.

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

## **Recertification of Employment Authorization**

### *Policy DC*

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

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

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

### *Policy CQ, 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, and work areas including district-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on district premises or work sites or used in district business.

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug testing policies and related educational material should contact the Assistant Superintendent.

## **Health Safety Training**

*Policies DBA, DMA*

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

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

## **Reassignments and Transfers**

*Policy DK*

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the superintendent or designee when the superintendent or designee determines that the assignment or reassignment is in the best interest of the district. Reassignment is a transfer to another position, department, or facility that does not necessitate a change in the employment contract. Campus reassignments must be approved by the principal at the receiving campus except when reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or program changes. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be reassigned at any time unless an extracurricular or supplemental duty assignment is part of a

dual-assignment contract. Employees who object to a reassignment may follow the district process for employee complaints as outlined in this handbook and district policy DGBA (Local).

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

## **Workload and Work Schedules**

*Policies DEAB, DK, DL*

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

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

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

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

*Policies DEAB, DG*

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

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

## **Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications**

*Policies DK, DBA*

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

Texas law requires that parents be notified if their child is assigned for more than 30 consecutive instructional days to a teacher who does not hold an appropriate teaching certificate. This notice is not required if parental notice under ESSA is sent. Inappropriately certified or uncertified teachers include individuals on an emergency permit (including individuals waiting to take a certification exam) and individuals who do not hold any certificate or permit. However, as District of Innovation, Azle ISD is exempt from some aspects of the Texas teacher certification laws. 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 State Board of Education at (512) 936-8400.

## **Outside Employment and Tutoring**

*Policy DBD*

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

## **Performance Evaluation**

*Policy DN series*

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



performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

## **Employee Involvement**

*Policies BQA, BQB*

At both the campus and district levels, Azle 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 Human Resources Department.

## **Staff Development**

*Policy DMA*

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

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

# Compensation and Benefits

## Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

*Policies DEA, DEAA, DEAB*

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

All employees will receive written notice of their pay and work schedules before the start of each school year. Classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time nurses, and full-time counselors will be paid no less than the minimum state salary schedule.

Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule.

Azle ISD rewards employees for years of service to the district with longevity pay. Upon completion of each five-year increment of service, the district pays an additional \$300.00 to professional employees and \$150.00 to auxiliary and paraprofessional personnel. Employees earning a longevity stipend must remain employed through the first semester to earn the stipend.

The district pays all salaried employees over 12 months regardless of the number of months employed during the school year.

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

## Paychecks

Paychecks will not be released to any person other than the district employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization.

The schedule of pay dates for the 2019-20 school year follows:

<u>CUT OFF FOR PAYROLL</u>	<u>PAYDAY</u>
August 23, 2019	September 25, 2019
September 20, 2019	October 25, 2019
October 18, 2019	November 21, 2019
November 15, 2019	December 19, 2019
December 20, 2019	January 17, 2020
January 24, 2020	February 25, 2020
February 21, 2020	March 25, 2020
March 27, 2020	April 24, 2020
April 24, 2020	May 22, 2020
May 29, 2020	June 25, 2020
June 26, 2020	July 23, 2020
July 31, 2020	August 25, 2020

## Automatic Payroll Deposit

Azle ISD utilizes direct deposit for all employee paychecks. A notification period of ten days is necessary to activate this service into a designated account. To request a payroll deposit account change, an employee must visit the Azle ISD business office to complete the required paperwork. No email or phone requests will be accepted. Contact Payroll for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

## Payroll Deductions

*Policy CFEA*

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

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)
- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Temporary and part-time employees not eligible for TRS membership must have local retirement deducted.
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable

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

## **Time Clock Guidelines**

In order to comply with state and federal employment laws, the following procedures will be required for all non-exempt employees:

- All non-exempt employees will clock in and out on a daily basis in the time clock system
- No remote clocking in/out allowed
- All non-exempt employees will submit their time weekly for supervisor approval
- Overtime must have prior approval from a supervisor and be noted in the time clock system in the notes section.
- Failure to gain approval prior to working overtime may result in disciplinary action
- Three edits during an employee's pay period may result in disciplinary action

## **Overtime Compensation**

*Policy DEAB, DEC*

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

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01 am Sunday and ends at 12:00 pm Saturday. Nonexempt employees do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours.

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

Compensatory time earned (if allowed) must be used according to a schedule that is mutually agreeable to the employee and supervisor.

Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

*Policy DEE*

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and Director of Finance 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 (Texas Comptroller). Mileage reimbursement covers all vehicle costs including gas, maintenance, and insurance. All travel requests must be made ten (10) days in advance, and all receipts returned to the business office within ten (10) days from the return date of the trip.

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

### *Policy CRD*

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

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

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

The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. New employees must complete enrollment forms within the first 30 days of employment. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment each year or when they experience a qualifying event (e.g., marriage, divorce, birth). Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees should contact Benefits in the Business Office for more information.

## **Supplemental Insurance Benefits**

### *Policy CRD*

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

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

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

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

## **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

### *Policy CRE*

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

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 Benefits. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. (See *Workers' Compensation Benefits for* more information.)

## **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 or the Human Resources Department.

## **Teacher Retirement**

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

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

## Other Benefit Programs

*Policy DEB*

### Tax Sheltered Investments

Azle ISD allows employees to payroll deduct a specific amount of their salary monthly into tax sheltered investment plans. Contact Benefits for more information.

## Leaves and Absences

*Policies DEC, DECA, DECB*

The district offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. *Any employee who is absent more than five (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 and fitness to return to work.* For information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the district contact Benefits at 817/444-3235.

Paid leave must be used in ½ day increments. Earned comp time must be used before any available paid state and local leave. Accumulated leave must be used before an employee may take unpaid leave. Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave will be used in the following order:

- Local leave
- State sick leave accumulated prior to the 1995-96 school year
- State personal leave

Employees must follow district and department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence. (Absences should be entered into AESOP by 6:30 A.M.)

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

**Medical Certification.** Any employee, who is absent more than 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, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee’s fitness to return to work.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits covered employers from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we ask that



employees and health care providers do not provide any genetic information in any medical certification. 'Genetic information,' as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member, or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

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

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

## Personal Leave

State law entitles all employees to five days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave is earned at a rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  a workday for each 18 days worked. A day of personal leave is equivalent to the number of hours per day in an employee's usual assignment (8 hours 15 minutes for professional employees), whether full-time or part-time. State personal leave accumulates without limit, is transferable to other Texas school districts, and generally transfers to education service centers. Personal leave may be used for two general purposes: nondiscretionary and discretionary.

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

**Discretionary.** Leave taken at an employee's discretion that can be scheduled in advance is considered discretionary leave. An employee wishing to take discretionary personal leave must submit a request to his or her principal or supervisor 3 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.

**Leave Proration.** If an employee separates from employment with the district before his or her last duty day of the year, or begins employment after the first duty day, state personal leave will be prorated based on the actual time employed. When an employee separates from

employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck will be reduced by the amount of state personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year.

## **State Sick Leave**

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

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

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

## **AZLE ISD Sick Leave Bank**

The following information is very important to all employees of Azle ISD.

- Periodic changes may be made in this program. Please read the information carefully before applying.
- When applying for Sick Leave Bank days, please fill out forms carefully. The Azle ISD Sick Leave Bank Executive Committee cannot be responsible for improperly filled out forms.
- Only a physician should fill out the Physician's Statement. It must be filled out completely. For purposes of the Sick Leave Bank, "physician" is defined as a doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery (as appropriate) by the State in which the doctor practices.
- Requests not completely filled out by Requestor and/or doctor will be returned to Requestor, delaying the process.
- The Azle ISD Sick Leave Bank is not responsible for late or undelivered requests for Sick Leave Bank days.
- The committee makes a reasonable effort to notify eligible employees of the opportunity to participate in the Sick Leave Bank and is not responsible for any employee's lack of knowledge of the Sick Leave Bank.

## **SICK LEAVE BANK INTRODUCTION**

This Sick Leave Bank is a pool of local sick leave days donated by current and departing school district employees. The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide additional paid sick leave days to participating members who have exhausted all available state and local leave and are absent from work for more than five consecutive days due to:

- A qualifying catastrophic personal illness or injury;
- Certain non-catastrophic conditions; or
- A qualifying family member's catastrophic illness or injury.

Membership in the Sick Leave Bank is limited to full-time employees (not temporary or regular substitutes) of Azle ISD who donate one (1) local leave day to the Sick Leave Bank. Once donated, sick leave days become the property of the Sick Leave Bank and individual members may no longer restrict their use in any manner.

Members may qualify for benefits when a catastrophic illness or injury results in the member's incapacity to perform his/her job function for an extended period of time. A catastrophic illness or injury is a condition defined as life threatening and does not include mere passing disorders or ailments. Qualifying conditions require treatment by a physician, hospitalization, emergency room treatment or outpatient treatment at a hospital. Although some degree of permanency is usually involved, the illness need not necessarily be incurable or permanent. Examples of illnesses which may qualify for the benefits of the catastrophic program include, but are not limited to: cancer, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, stroke, organ transplants, and muscular dystrophy.

Non-catastrophic conditions may qualify members for benefits when they result in greater than normal recovery time because of complications and calls for hospitalization, emergency room treatment, or out-patient treatment at a hospital and treatment by a physician.

A member may also qualify for benefits when unable to perform his/her job function due to a spouse, parent or child's catastrophic illness or injury. For purposes of the Sick Leave Bank, "child" refers to a son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands *in loco parentis*.

Questions regarding the program and completed Request Forms should be directed to the person indicated below. Response to any questions will come from the Executive Committee or their designee, usually the payroll department. The payroll department will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee based on the Request, the bylaws and his/her discussion with the applicant's doctor and/or office staff.

Payroll Department  
300 Roe Street  
Azle, TX 76020

## **Rules:**

### **Eligibility and Membership**

- 1) All full-time employees (not temporary or regular substitutes) of Azle ISD who qualify for sick leave benefits are eligible to join the Sick Leave Bank (SLB).
- 2) Membership is voluntary. Eligible employees may join the SLB by donating one (1) day of accrued or anticipated local sick leave.
- 3) Donated sick leave days become property of the Azle ISD Sick Leave Bank. Members are not entitled to reimbursement for or refund of donated sick leave days. Additionally, members may not restrict the use of donated days in any manner.
- 4) Membership in the SLB does not guarantee or otherwise entitle employees to the use of SLB days. Usage of SLB days is entirely dependent on the availability of donated sick leave days and the approval of a Request by the Executive Committee.
- 5) A maximum of five (5) earned local sick leave days may be contributed to the SLB by a separating employee. State personal days cannot be donated to the SLB.
- 6) A member of the Sick Leave Bank will lose the right to use the benefits of the Program upon:
  - a) Termination of employment with the Azle ISD;
  - b) Suspension without pay (no Sick Leave Bank benefits during the period of suspension);
  - c) Abuse or misuse of the rules of the Sick Leave Bank as determined by the Executive Committee.

### **Administration**

- 1) The SLB will be administered by an eight (8) member SLB Executive Committee comprised of three (3) Professional, teacher or nurse representatives, one (1) administrator, one (1) maintenance and operations employee, one (1) food services employee, one (1) paraprofessional, and one (1) secretarial/clerical employee. The eight (8) members of the Executive Committee shall be appointed by the Superintendent and may serve for no more than two (2) consecutive school years. The committee's executive director will be appointed by the committee.
- 2) The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility of reviewing SLB Request Forms, verifying the validity of submitted information, and approving or denying the requests by majority vote. There must be a quorum of five (5) Executive Committee members present to vote on requests. The executive director shall only vote when necessary to break ties. Voting may take place in person, or, upon agreement by the Executive Committee, via confidential e-mail or by phone during the summer break. Unless required by law, a requesting member's identity will not be disclosed to Executive Committee members.
- 3) The payroll department shall be responsible for calling committee meetings, providing information to eligible employees and SLB members, receiving SLB Request Forms on behalf of the Executive Committee, advising the Executive Committee, communicating Executive Committee decisions regarding SLB Requests to members, and providing other assistance to the Executive Committee as requested.

- 4) The payroll department and human resource departments shall provide information to the Executive Committee upon its request for any data maintained in their files regarding use of the Sick Leave Bank.
- 5) The payroll department shall maintain records regarding the Sick Leave Bank for three years.
  - a) The payroll department shall report the status of the Sick Leave Bank at any time upon the request of the Superintendent or the Board of Education.
  - b) An annual report will be submitted to the Superintendent in August of each school year.
  - c) An annual report will be sent to each school to be posted in September of each school year.
- 6) Recommendations for changes regarding the SLB, other than editing or clarification, may be presented to the Azle ISD Board of Trustees upon a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

### **Condition of Use**

- 1) Use of SLB days shall be limited to enrolled members for qualifying personal illness, injury, condition or for qualifying family member's catastrophic illness or injury or condition during regularly scheduled duty days.
- 2) Members may apply for use of SLB days after more than five (5) consecutive days of absence and all available state and local leave has been exhausted.
- 3) The following conditions must be met in order for an application to be considered as ongoing :
  - a) The employee's requested absence will relate to the same medical condition as on the original application that was approved.
  - b) The treatment for the illness will be ongoing as stated on the original physician's statement.
  - c) The employee will submit medical certification of his or her ability to return to work at least one-half day or to full duty as required by Human Resources.
  - d) Additional documentation (such as doctor's note) for an ongoing illness should be turned in within 10 days after the employee is released to return to work.
- 4) The use of the SLB will be limited to the number of days in the Program on October 1 of the current school year.
- 5) A member may apply for days from the SLB only after being absent from work the number of days requested. Days will not be given in advance. The first request for days must be made within ten (10) days from the date the employee returns to duty.
- 6) In no case will the granting of sick leave days from the Bank cause a member to receive more than his/her annual salary.

### **Use of the Sick Leave Bank for member's illness or injury**

- 1) All illnesses or accidents require doctor's care, hospitalization, emergency room treatment or out-patient treatment at a hospital.

- 2) The Executive Committee may approve a lifetime maximum number of (75) Sick Leave Bank days to a member for personal catastrophic illness or injury.
- 3) Pregnancy and delivery will not be considered as a catastrophic illness covered under this Sick Leave Bank except when unusual and life-threatening complications occur. Bed rest and hypertension are not considered unusual complications. Approval of Sick Leave Bank days shall be made pursuant to the rules for non-catastrophic conditions below.
- 4) The Executive Committee may approve ten (10) days for non-catastrophic conditions which require extended recovery time due to complications. The Executive Committee may approve an additional twenty (20) days in ten (10) day increments for extenuating circumstances for a lifetime maximum number of thirty (30) days.
- 5) The Executive Committee may approve five (5) days for depression and mental illness diagnosed severe. The Executive Committee may approve an additional five (5) days for extenuating circumstances, for a lifetime maximum number of ten (10) days.
- 6) The Executive Committee may approve a lifetime maximum number of ten (10) days for catastrophic back ailments.

#### **Use of Sick Leave Bank for family illness or injury**

- 1) Approval of days for a qualifying family catastrophic illness or injury (spouse, parent or dependent child) will be limited to a lifetime maximum of fifteen (15) days and must meet all other criteria as a member's illness or injury as listed above.

#### **2) Procedure for Sick Leave Bank Requests**

- 1) All forms for participation in the Sick Leave Bank shall be available in the principal's office at each Azle ISD school, the Human Resource Department and the Payroll Department. These forms shall be given or sent to any employee upon request.
- 2) All requests to draw upon the Sick Leave Bank must be made upon a Sick Leave Bank Request Form. All requests must be accompanied by the Sick Leave Bank Physician's Statement confirming the cause of illness or confinement and certifying the existence of a disability to perform assigned duties. The form must be legible, personally signed by the physician, dated and completed in lay language. The Executive Committee will not honor any physician's statement unless it is on the official Sick Leave Bank Physician's Statement Form and is filled out completely. Incomplete forms will not be processed until all information is received. The applicant must have worked in the school year in which the request for days is made.
- 3) In case an employee's incapacity is of such a nature that he/she cannot personally apply for days, the application may be submitted in his/her behalf to the payroll department by an authorized agent or member of his/her family.
- 4) An eligible employee who has filed for Workers' Compensation benefits may be able to access days through the Sick Leave Program if their condition meets eligibility criteria. Such

employees must have exhausted all of their own accumulated sick, personal leave, and vacation days. Any days awarded from the Sick Leave Bank will be offset by any Workers' Compensation wage benefits received. Applicant's request must meet guidelines of the SLB.

- 5) The executive director will forward to the Azle ISD Payroll Department the Executive Committee's decision on all requests to draw on the Sick Leave Bank within five (5) working days after the committee issues its decisions.
- 6) After decisions are rendered, the payroll department shall notify the applicants advising them of the committee's decision. Denial due to insufficient information shall be specific as to what information is needed in order to make a decision.
- 7) Decisions by the Executive Committee related to Sick Leave Bank Requests are final with no rights of appeal.

## **AZLE ISD SICK LEAVE BANK FORMS**

All forms for the Sick Leave Bank are included on the following pages.

Those forms are:

- Enrollment Form
- Sick Leave Days Request Form (completed by the employee)
- Physician's Statement\* (completed by the physician)

All forms presented must be completely filled out, or they will be returned to sender.

\*A Physician's Statement is not necessary when requesting days to care for a terminally ill spouse, parent or child. A letter from the attending physician certifying terminal illness should be sent instead.

DISCLAIMER: Your medical information, including days granted and other correspondence, will be kept confidential unless the law requires us to release it.



**AZLE ISD 2019-2020 SICK LEAVE BANK ENROLLMENT**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received and read the Sick Leave Bank Procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to donate 1 local leave day for membership in the SLB

\_\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT wish to join the SLB at this time

\_\_\_\_\_  
EMPLOYEE NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

\_\_\_\_\_  
CAMPUS

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

*You must turn this receipt into the Business Office with your election to join the bank or not by September 30<sup>th</sup>.*

## AZLE ISD SICK LEAVE REQUEST FORM

Name:	
Address:	
City & Zip:	
Home Phone:	Mobile Phone:
I request _____ days from the Sick Leave Bank.	
Date any days granted are to begin:	
First day absent with this illness or accident:	
This is my 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or _____ request (circle one). If 2nd, 3rd, etc., request, give date of last day previously granted: _____	
Additional days granted, if any, will follow in continuity with the last day previously granted.	
Signed/Date:	
<p>This request cannot be acted upon until the Physician's Statement is received. This form completely filled out may be sent to the Azle ISD Payroll Department, 300 Roe Street, Azle, Texas 76020 or faxed to Azle ISD Payroll Department at: 817-270-2255.</p>	
<b>Office Use Only</b>	
Physician's Statement Received:	Date:
Request Approved:	Requested Denied:
Number of Days Approved:	
From:	Through:
Signed/Date:	

## AZLE ISD PHYSICIAN STATEMENT

Patient's Name:	
Address:	
City & Zip:	
Home Phone:	
Diagnosis or nature of illness or injury (Lay Language):	
Date of Consultation:	
Dates Hospitalized:	
Admitted:	Discharged:
Prognosis:	
Is this illness catastrophic or life-threatening?	
Date patient will be able to return to work (if known):	
Total Disability:	
From:	Through (if known):
Partial Disability:	
From:	Through (if known):
Comments or Restrictions:	
Physician's Name:	
Address:	City & State:
Telephone:	
Signature of Examining Physician/Date:	
This form completely filled out may be sent to the Azle ISD's Payroll Dept., 300 Roe Street, Azle TX 76020 or faxed to Payroll Department at: 817-270-2255	

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

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

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

### **Leave Entitlements**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Benefits and Protections**

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

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

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

## **Eligibility Requirements**

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

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

## **Requesting Leave**

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

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

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

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

## **Employer Responsibilities**

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

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

## **Enforcement**

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

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

For additional information:

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

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

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period beginning on the first duty day of the school year.

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

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

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

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

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

In certain cases, instructional employees desiring to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue on family and medical leave until the end of the semester. The additional time off is not counted against the employee's FML entitlement, and

the district will maintain the employees group health insurance and reinstate the employee at the end of the leave according the procedures outlined in policy (see DECA (LEGAL)).

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

**District Contact.** Employees that require FML or have questions should contact **Benefits** at 817/444-3235 for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## **Temporary Disability Leave**

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

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

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

When an employee is ready to return to work, the immediate supervisor and Benefits (817/444-3235) should be notified at least 30 days in advance. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able to resume regular duties. Certified employees returning from leave will be reinstated to the school to which they were previously assigned if an appropriate position is available. If an appropriate position is not available, the employee may be assigned to another campus, subject to the approval of the campus principal. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, the employee will be reinstated to a position at the original campus at the beginning of the following school year.

## **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

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

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

## **Assault Leave**

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

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**

Upon written request, bereavement leave may be granted upon the death of an employee's parent, child, or spouse for up to three workdays, subject to the approval of the Human Resources Department.



## **Jury Duty**

The district provides paid leave to employees who are summoned to jury duty including service on a grand jury. Employees who report to the court for jury duty may keep any compensation the court provides. An employee should report a summons for jury duty to his or her supervisor as soon as it is received and will be required to provide the district a copy of the summons to document the need for leave.

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

## **Compliance with a Subpoena**

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

## **Truancy Court Appearances**

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

## **Religious Observance**

The district will reasonably accommodate an employee's request for absence for a religious holiday or observance. Accommodations such as changes to work schedules or approving a day of absence will be made unless they pose an undue hardship to the district. The employee may

use any accumulated personal leave for this purpose. Employees who have exhausted applicable paid leave may be granted an unpaid day of absence.

## **Military Leave**

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

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

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24 months. Employees should contact **Benefits** (817/444-3235) 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 social media, and through special events and activities.

## **District Communications**

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

## **District Confidentiality**

### **Data Destruction and Sanitization Policy**

The Azle ISD Human Resources Department is authorized to ensure that all employees comply with administrative regulations pertaining to the disposal of surplus items that contain sensitive information. Please visit the Azle ISD website at <https://www.azleisd.net/Page/5066> to review regulations established to protect confidential and personally identifiable information.

### **Security Incident Reporting and Response Policy**

Azle ISD will continually monitor and adjust processes and procedures to protect employee personal information from unauthorized acquisition. For more information on how to notify the district of a security breach involving information processed or maintained by the district, please visit the Azle ISD website at <https://www.azleisd.net/Page/5066>.

# Employee 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:

## **Azle ISD Policy *DGBA***

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1109?filter=DGBA>

# Employee Conduct and Welfare

## Standards of Conduct

### *Policy DH*

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

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

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a district investigation may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day after the superintendent knew of the incident. See *Reports to the Texas Education Agency*, page 63 for additional information.

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

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

#### **Statement of Purpose**

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

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

## **Enforceable Standards**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Standard 3.9** The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors

that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

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

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

*Policies DH, DIA*

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

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

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

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1109?filter=DIA>

## **Harassment of Students**

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

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows



of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*, page 48 and *Bullying*, page 67 for additional information.

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

DHB (Legal) "romantic relationship" link:

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1109?filter=DHB>

FFH (Local) "Student Welfare" link:

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1109?filter=FFH>

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

*Policies DG, FFG, GRA*

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

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

Reports to Child Protective Services can be made online at

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

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

An employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect. In addition, a certified

employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

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

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

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

The district has established a plan for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, for detailed information contact the assistant superintendent. As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or maltreated. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Maltreatment is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

## **Reporting Crime**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Technology Resources**

### *Policy CQ*

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

- Imposes no tangible cost to the district.
- Does not unduly burden the district's 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 technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Director of Technology (817/444-4265).

## **Personal Use of Electronic Communications**

*Policy CQ, DH*

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

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

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

The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the district's computers, network, or equipment.

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

See *Use of Electronic Communications with Students*, below, for regulations on employee communication with students.

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

### *Policy DH*

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

An employee is not subject to provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an

adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

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

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

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

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

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

- The employee shall include at least one of the student’s parents or guardians and an administrator as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student, parent, and administrator receive the same message.
- 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 during hours determined by AISD campus administration. An employee may make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics including:
  - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
  - Copyright law [Policy CY]
  - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DHB]
- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.
- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.
- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.
- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district’s record retention policy.
- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in an improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

## **Criminal History Background Checks**

### *Policy DBAA*

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

## **Employee Arrests and Convictions**

### *Policy DH*

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

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

Moral turpitude includes the following:

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

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

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

*Policy DH, DHE*

Azle 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:

Policy on Line DH (Local) "Employee Standards of Conduct" link: ***alcohol and drug abuse in DH (Local)***

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1109?filter=DH>

Policy on Line DHE Link

<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1109?filter=DHE>

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

*Policies DH, FNCD, GKA*

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

## **Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

*Policy CAA*

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

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the district
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other district assets including employee time



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

## **Conflict of Interest**

*Policy CB, DBD*

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

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

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

## **Gifts and Favors**

*Policy DBD*

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

## **Copyrighted Materials**

### *Policy CY*

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

## **Associations and Political Activities**

### *Policy DGA*

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

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

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

## **Charitable Contributions**

### *Policy DG*

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

## **Safety**

### *Policy CK series*

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

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

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

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

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the Assistant Superintendent.

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

*Policies DH, FNCG, GKA*

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

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

*Policy GKC*

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

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

*Policy CKA*

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

## **Pest Control Treatment**

*Policies CLB, DI*

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

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

# General Procedures

## 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, to release students early, or to cancel school, district officials will post a notice on the district's website, use an automated calling system, and notify local radio and television stations.

## Emergencies

*Policies CKC, CKD*

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

## Purchasing Procedures

*Policy CH*

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the Business Office 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 (817/444-3235) for additional information on purchasing procedures.

## Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Human Resources Department if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. The form to process a change in personal information can be obtained from [deversole@azleisd.net](mailto:deversole@azleisd.net).

## **Personnel Records**

*Policy DBA, GBA*

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

Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

- Address
- Phone number, including personal cell phone number
- Information that reveals whether they have family members
- Personal e-mail address

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

## **Facility Use**

*Policies DGA, GKD*

Employees who wish to use district facilities after school hours must follow established procedures. The campus principal or designee is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact the campus principal or designee to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged. Please contact the Azle ISD Athletic Director for questions regarding athletic facilities.

# Termination of Employment

## Resignations

### *Policy DFE*

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

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

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

## Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

### *Policies DF Series*

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

## Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

### *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 43.)

## **Exit Interviews and Procedures**

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

## **Reports to Texas Education Agency**

*Policy DF, DHB*

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

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

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



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

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

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

# Student Issues

## Equal Educational Opportunities

*Policies FB, FFH*

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

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to Director of Human Resources (817/444-3235), the district Title IX coordinator. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to Director of Special Services (817/444-3235), the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to the Superintendent.

## Student Records

*Policy FL*

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

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

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

## Parent and Student Complaints

*Policy FNG*

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

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

## **Administering Medication to Students**

### *Policy FFAC*

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

## **Dietary Supplements**

### *Policies DH, FFAC*

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

## **Psychotropic Drugs**

### *Policy FFAC*

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

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

- Recommending that a student use a psychotropic drug

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

## **Student Conduct and Discipline**

### *Policies in the FN series and FO series*

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

## **Student Attendance**

### *Policy FEB*

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

## **Bullying**

### *Policy FFI*

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

Policy on line: FFI (Local) Student Welfare Freedom from Bullying

<http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/1109?filter=FFI>

## **Hazing**

### *Policy FNCC*

Students must have prior approval from the principal or designee for any type of "initiation rites" of a school club or organization. While most initiation rites are permissible, engaging in or

permitting “hazing” is a criminal offense. Any teacher, administrator, or employee who observes a student engaged in any form of hazing, who has reason to know or suspect that a student intends to engage in hazing, or has engaged in hazing must report that fact or suspicion to the designated campus administrator.

## **Azle ISD Staff iPad Agreement**

The Azle ISD offers iPads to certain employees for use in their job assignment. Each iPad will include a power adapter (with cord) and Otterbox.

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- The iPad is for educational use in connection with classroom instruction. Unauthorized use of the iPad may result in employment action, up to and including termination of my employment with the District.
- I have no expectation of privacy with respect to the iPad. The iPad is property of the Azle ISD. My iPad, including the internet history, photographs, videos, and applications, may be inspected and reviewed by Azle ISD at any time.
- I will adhere to Azle ISD Board Policy and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 247.2, at all times when using the iPad.
- I am responsible for understanding and adhering to all copyright requirements related to digital media and the use of this iPad.
- All applications, games, and music on my iPad must be legitimately purchased and licensed.
- Additional apps may be added with the understanding that all data will be erased when the iPad is returned to the district.
- If the iPad issued to me is lost or stolen while in my possession, I will be personally responsible for all costs associated with its replacement. I understand that the replacement cost for the iPad will be up to \$294.00; the charger \$29.00; and Otterbox \$48.00. If payment for lost or stolen iPad is not made, no district-owned replacement iPad will be issued.
- I agree to pay a \$125.00 deductible for any accidental damages to the device caused while in my possession. If deductible payment for damaged iPad is not made, no district-owned replacement iPad will be issued.
- In the event of loss, theft or damage to iPad, I will report the issue to my principal or supervisor within 24 hours.
- In the event of theft of iPad, I will do a police report for the stolen district property, and I will cooperate with all reasonable requests from Azle ISD and law enforcement in the investigation, prosecution, and recovery of the iPad.
- To aid in the recovery of a lost or stolen iPad, the district will issue the iPad with the Find My iPad Feature turned on. If the feature is turned off by the employee, recovery of the iPad will be much more difficult.
- I will keep the iPad in a locked closet or desk when not in use.
- As all teacher-assigned iPads are placed on a different wireless network by the technology department, I will not allow students to have access to this iPad.
- Upon leaving Azle ISD, the employee is required to return the iPad to the technology department. If the employee fails to do so, the district will submit the employee's name to the AISD Chief of Police.

My right to use and possess a district-owned iPad terminates no later than the last day of the school year, unless otherwise terminated earlier by Azle ISD, or upon resignation from Azle ISD.

## **Azle ISD Staff Laptop Agreement**

The Azle ISD offers Laptops to certain employees for use in their job assignment. Each iPad will include a power adapter (with cord).

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The laptop is for educational use in connection with classroom instruction. Unauthorized use of the laptop may result in employment action, up to and including termination of my employment with the District.
- I have no expectation of privacy with respect to the laptop. The laptop is property of the Azle ISD. My laptop, including the internet history, photographs, videos, and applications, may be inspected and reviewed by Azle ISD at any time.
- I will adhere to Azle ISD Board Policy and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 247.2, at all times when using the laptop.
- I am responsible for understanding and adhering to all copyright requirements related to digital media and the use of this laptop.
- All applications, games, and music on my laptop must be legitimately purchased and licensed.
- Additional apps may be added with the understanding that all data will be erased when the laptop is returned to the district.
- If the laptop issued to me is lost or stolen while in my possession, I will be personally responsible for all costs associated with its replacement. I understand that the replacement cost for the laptop will be up to \$925.00; the charger \$35.00. If payment for lost or stolen laptop is not made, no district-owned replacement laptop will be issued.
- In the event of loss, theft or damage to laptop, I will report the issue to my principal or supervisor within 24 hours.
- In the event of theft of laptop, I will do a police report for the stolen district property, and I will cooperate with all reasonable requests from Azle ISD and law enforcement in the investigation, prosecution, and recovery of the laptop.
- I will keep the laptop in a locked closet or desk when not in use.
- As all teacher-assigned laptops are placed on a different wireless network by the technology department, I will not allow students to have access to this laptop.
- Upon leaving Azle ISD, the employee is required to return the laptop to the technology department. If the employee fails to do so, the district will submit the employee's name to the AISD Chief of Police.

My right to use and possess a district-owned iPad or laptop terminates no later than the last day of the employment at Azle ISD.

### **Azle ISD Badge / Access Control Agreement**

During onboarding, the technology department will issue employees a district badge. This electronic badge will serve as access to the building(s) for which you are assigned. The following stipulations are required for every employee issued an access control badge:

- If your badge is lost or stolen, Azle ISD employees are required to contact the Technology department immediately. If you think you might have misplaced it, please still contact the Technology Department so we can deactivate your card. Your card can always be reactivated if it is found. Failure to contact the Technology Department may result in not receiving a replacement access control badge.
- If your card is lost or stolen, a \$10 replacement can be made by the Technology Department.
- If you leave Azle ISD, your badge must be returned to Azle ISD Technology Department.

Because all employees are given appropriate access to buildings, the following must be adhered to keep unwanted individuals from accessing the buildings. Failure to adhere to the access rules below could be grounds for termination.

- At no time may an Azle ISD employee loan their Access Card / badge to anyone else. This includes their own children, friends, other employees and students.
- At no time should an Azle ISD employee give access to unauthorized person(s). If someone walks up to a door, they should be directed to the front office.
- At no time should an Azle ISD employee leave a door propped open.

## **Azle Independent School District Local Area Network, E-Mail, and Internet - Acceptable Use Policies Employee Agreement**

### **Introduction**

The Azle Independent School District (AISD) provides its users with Local Area Network (LAN), electronic mail (email), and Internet access necessary for the performance and fulfillment of curriculum requirements and individual job responsibilities.

It is important that you read the District policy, administrative regulations, and agreement form and ask questions if you need help understanding the contents. Your network access is provided so that you may support educational curriculum needs and fulfill personal job responsibilities in accordance with AISD education needs. It is not intended for non-AISD use. Inappropriate use of AISD network resources can result in the loss of the privilege of using these educational and administrative tools.

Any connection to the Internet offers an opportunity for non-authorized users to view or access AISD information. Therefore, it is important that all network connections be secure, controlled, and monitored. Consequently, you should have no expectation of privacy while using AISD-owned or AISD-leased equipment. Information passing through or stored on AISD equipment can and will be monitored. You should understand that AISD maintains the right to monitor and review Internet, e-mail, and LAN use as necessary.

### **Rules for Appropriate Use**

The LAN, e-mail, and Internet connections of AISD exist primarily to support district and education-related activities (e.g., classroom instruction, district staff duties, etc.).

In general, the support of AISD network resources requires a consistent operating environment. A major component of this environment is the software configuration on each computer on the AISD network. It is vitally important that the configuration on each computer be as consistent and static as possible. Any uncoordinated and/or unauthorized changes (e.g., by downloading software from the Internet) to one or more computer configurations can result in significantly degraded network performance.

It is understood that new software requirements come up frequently in a school environment. The district will strive to meet all educational and/or administrative technology needs, provided they are coordinated with appropriate AISD personnel.

Therefore, it is vitally important that you do not alter the configuration of your machine in any way, unless it has been coordinated and approved by the Technology Department.



### **Permitted Use**

Occasional and reasonable personal use is permitted, but not supported, provided it does not interfere with the performance of the AISD network, or performance of personal duties and responsibilities. Some examples of acceptable personal use might include:

- Corresponding with non-district entities via email, such as family members, athletic organizations, or local vendors
- Personal shopping or banking via the internet
- Non-school related information searches via the internet

You are responsible for the proper use of your personal network account. You must ensure that you do not share your ID and password with anyone else, regardless of circumstances. You can be held responsible for the misuse of your ID by other individuals.

### **Prohibited Uses**

In general, improper uses of the AISD LAN, e-mail, and Internet systems fall into three categories:

- Copyright infringements or software licensing violations
- Illegal activities
- Degradation or abuse of network resources

Examples of improper use which fall into the above categories include, but are not limited to:

- Any illegal purpose.
- Any attempt to access, modify or manipulate AISD network systems with the intention of degrading or prohibiting system access, compromising user or system passwords, or modifying or destroying data.
- Accessing or distributing materials which are offensive, abusive, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- Any activity or use which promotes discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- Threatening or violent behavior.
- Commercial messages.
- Using someone else's network account (with or without permission).
- Abuse of AISD network resources. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Physical defacement, damage or destruction of network resources
  - Excessive printing, particularly for personal needs
  - Misrepresenting yourself and the AISD to others
  - Any activity which interferes with the ability of others to make effective use of the AISD network resources (e.g., playing internet games)
- Creation and/or distribution of software viruses.
- Gaining unauthorized access to restricted information or resources.
- Any activity which results in unnecessary network traffic that may interfere with the ability of others to make effective use of the AISD network resources.
- Gambling.
- Forwarding e-mail chain letters.
- Spamming e-mail accounts from AISD e-mail services or company machines.

- Downloading of unauthorized and/or unlicensed software or files. Improper/unauthorized downloads include, but are not limited to:
  - Pornographic material.
  - Utilities, tools and applications used to seek out system vulnerabilities and crack passwords.
  - Web browser enhancements (HotBars, ToolBars, Bonzai Buddy, Gator, etc.)
  - Games of any kind.
  - Instant messaging clients not provided by AISD (AOL, MSN Messenger, Bonzai Buddy, etc.)
  - Copyrighted material without permission from the copyright holder.
  - Illegal/unlicensed software of any kind.

### **Purchasing of Hardware/Software**

Hardware and software purchases must be made through the Technology Department. Donations must also be coordinated through Technology. Teachers and staff are not allowed to plug any hardware into the Azle ISD network that has not been authorized by the Technology Department (This includes hardware or software brought from home).

All donated equipment/software must meet AISD Technology standards. The technology department has the right to reject any technology denotations if they do not meet minimum standards for our network.

### **Other Responsibilities**

In addition to abiding by the requirements set forth above, you are responsible for:

- Honoring acceptable use policies of networks accessed through AISD's LAN, e-mail, and Internet services;
- Abiding by existing federal, state, and local telecommunications and networking laws and regulations;
- Following copyright laws regarding protected commercial software or intellectual property.

### **Consequences for Inappropriate Use**

Violations of these policies will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If it is determined that a user has violated one or more of the above policies, management can take disciplinary measures. These can include:

- Suspension of personal network account;
- Revocation of the computer system account; or
- Other disciplinary or legal action, including termination, in accordance with AISD policies and applicable laws.

**Azle Independent School District  
Local Area Network, E-Mail, and Internet - Acceptable Use Policies  
Employee Agreement**

Please print clearly.

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Goes By: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the District's Local Area Network, E-Mail, and Internet – Acceptable Use Policies and agree to abide by their provisions. In consideration for the privilege of using the District's electronic communications system and in consideration for having access to the public networks, I hereby release the District, its operators, and any institutions with which they are affiliated from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my use of, or inability to use, the system, including, without limitation, the type of damages identified in the District's policy and administrative regulations.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that my computer use is not private and that the District will monitor my activity on the computer.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my picture to be displayed on the District's web pages.

Employee's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_